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Profile of Julie Bannerman

Mary Frost

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Julie Bannerman has served as general counsel for Space Systems/Loral, Inc. (SS/L) since the company was formed almost 20 years ago. Her responsibilities have included complex legal and regulatory matters driven by the growing, changing satellite industry. These have included the negotiation and drafting of multi-million dollar satellite purchase contracts and other agreements; compliance with export, trade sanctions, antitrust and other laws; the structuring of strategic and joint ventures; and management of litigation and disputes.

Ms. Bannerman joined SS/L from Ford Motor Company's Office of General Counsel in 1990 when Loral Corporation purchased Ford Aerospace Corporation. At Ford, she handled major litigation and arbitration matters with a focus on Government and international contracts. Prior to joining Ford, Ms. Bannerman was an associate at a national law firm, specializing in Government contracts and litigation.

Ms. Bannerman has a strong background in legal and compliance issues that impact the satellite industry and has worked on legal and transactional matters with lawyers and business partners across the industry. She speaks and writes on satellite-related legal topics.

Ms. Bannerman graduated from Stanford University (BA), Northwestern University (MA), and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law (JD). She was an editor of the Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly and helped found the Hastings Journal of Communications and Entertainment Law.

Ms. Bannerman lives in San Francisco and is married to Ron Bannerman, director of finance and administration for Brandeis Hillel Day School. They have one daughter, Sara, who is entering her junior year at George Washington University in the Elliot School of International Relations. Ms. Bannerman currently serves on the Board of Governors of the Bay Area's Bureau of Jewish Education.

1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

Dumb luck, networking and a desire to be part of a global business. At a Stanford reunion, I met the husband of a college friend, who turned out to be in-house patent counsel for Ford Aerospace in Palo Alto, which was then involved in both Government and global commercial businesses of which satellites and ground systems were just a part. I asked him if the company might be interested in someone with my background in Government Contracts, and he gave me contact information for the chief counsel in Palo Alto. I called the next day and a week later met with Ford Motor Company's chief counsel and joined the company. Some time later, I became Division Counsel for the Space Systems Division, which became Space Systems/Loral, Inc. when Loral purchased Ford Aerospace in 1990.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

I feel I've ridden the waves of many changes in the industry that have impacted the legal, regulatory and transactional aspects of the industry. In the early days, the major satellite buyers were large consortia like Intelsat or governments; the infusion of commercial operators taking satellite technology to new applications had yet to occur.

As new players entered the industry, and satellite manufacturers like SS/L took on greater risks and responsibilities such as procuring launch vehicles and insurance and assuming more post-launch risk, a small number of us developed many of the terms and concepts for risk allocation that can be seen in industry agreements today. Given the huge dollars involved, and the unique risks of the business, these agreements are quite complicated but do serve to allocate risks among the various parties in ways that reflect at least a basic consensus.

At SS/L, we've also become very creative over the years in supporting our customers in ways other than simply selling them satellites - in our transactions, we try to be as nimble and entrepreneurial as they are.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

Being part of the industry as new satellite applications and new companies have come on the scene has been exciting. Being part of the creative team in the early days of establishing the Globalstar satellite-based mobile phone network certainly stands out for me. I remember negotiating a key memorandum of agreement in a shopping mall (I was on vacation)! I also remember watching Bob Berry (former SS/L President) decide in a telecon with our partner Qualcomm to use Qualcomm's cutting-edge CDMA technology in the Globalstar system.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

The changing regulatory landscape for the industry has been challenging. I'm one who believes commercial communications satellites generally do not belong on the Munitions List (for militarily-sensitive products and technologies) and thus subject to complex export controls.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

I see lots of changes in the entities that make up the industry and one constant: continuing development of new applications for satellite technology and new technologies for satellites. In the legal world, I see more focus on intellectual property.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

Especially in organizations where there might not be many women, I believe it's important to seek out women colleagues and mentors and then be a supportive colleague and mentor if you have the opportunity. In my observation, people are people, but women I've worked with often

fit what the studies tend to show: a preference for consensus and consultation. While that style won't work in all contexts, it's a positive influence overall.