

Florida Bar to sanction quartet of specialities

It seems the schticks keep getting narrower all the time.

Witness the recent move by the **Florida Bar Association** to add four fresh areas of specialization in which lawyers can be certified.

"Usually they come in just one or two at a time," Bar program specialist **Cherie Morgan** said of this year's bumper crop of new categories. "This was a very hectic year."

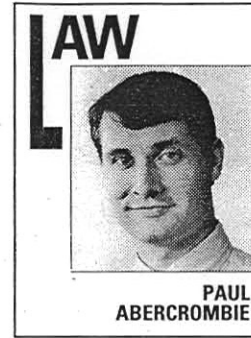
The new categories are: admiralty and maritime; aviation; business litigation; and city, county and local government.

Since the twin areas of civil trial and tax got the nod to become sanctioned specialties more than a dozen years ago, the Bar's specialty menu has grown to 14 distinctions aimed at helping folks find the right lawyer for the right job.

Of course, attorneys are plenty happy to be pigeon-holed.

"I think it's a significant accolade," said **Peter M. Cardillo**, who is one of 52 attorneys in the state's inaugural business litigation category. "It's a distinction that's worth the hassle."

The hassle — a day-long written exam



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— is "kind of like taking a mini-Bar (exam)," he added.

Cardillo, a partner in the Tampa firm of **Broad and Cassel**, is his firm's sole business litigation specialist.

As for giving a leg up to those shopping for an attorney, he said, "The pro-

gram is designed to say, 'Hey, this lawyer is more qualified to handle business litigation cases.' It's the same thing with marital and family law. If you're certified in that, you know it's because he's undergone additional scrutiny from the Bar and has more experience in it than other lawyers."

That said, dishing out new distinctions can be a little like splitting hairs.

"We really were kind of surprised when the business litigation people wanted their own category," Morgan said. "They could already be part of the civil trial area, but I guess

they thought people would think that civil trial is personal injury, so they wanted something to set themselves apart."

Meanwhile, at least one new wannabe specialty could be coming around the bend: elder care law.

"We anticipate that we may be looking at standards this year, in September," said **Dawna Bicknell**, the Bar's director of legal specialization and education. If the nominee passes muster with the Bar's board of governors and board of legal specialization and education, it'll then head for a final word from the state **Supreme Court**.

"Elder care law may be the next (category), but you really just don't know," Morgan said. "Sometimes (support for a nominated category) really gets cranked up. Sometimes it doesn't."

There are 40 Florida attorneys board-certified in admiralty and maritime law; 16 in aviation law; and 45 in city, coun-



Peter Cardillo