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Rising Star: Crowell & Moring's Michael Samuels

By **Tom Lotshaw**

Law360 (August 27, 2026, 4:03 PM EDT) -- Crowell & Moring LLP's Michael Samuels has worked on transactions involving government contracts, including a $4.4 billion Motorola Solutions acquisition and a $1.3 billion RTX Corp. division sale, earning him a spot among the government contracts law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

The biggest deal of his career:

Samuels co-led regulatory diligence for a cross-practice team that advised Motorola Solutions on its acquisition of Silvus Technologies that closed in August 2025. Government contract and technology matters were major factors to navigate, according to Samuels.

"Sometimes government contracts drive the deal and other times it's a small piece. Here it was definitely in the former category," Samuels said. "Government contracts issues were threshold issues."

Based in Los Angeles, Silvus Technologies develops mobile ad-hoc network technologies that facilitate secure and high-speed data, video and voice communications without fixed infrastructure.

The company serves a range of customers, from makers of drones and autonomous systems to defense, intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

"There were government contracts issues that were fundamental to the transaction and intellectually and legally challenging," Samuels said of the deal, which was Motorola Solutions' biggest since its 2011 split from consumer-facing Motorola Mobility.

Other notable transactions:

Samuels, who worked on more than 50 mergers and acquisitions deals over the past year, has helped advise defense-giant RTX in a

Michael Samuels
Crowell & Moring

Age: 39
Home base: Washington, D.C.
Position: Partner
Law school: George Washington University Law School
First job after law school: Associate at Miles & Stockbridge

series of divestitures, including the $1.3 billion sale of its cybersecurity, intelligence and services division to private equity firm Blackstone that closed in March 2024.

That transaction raised a host of national security, clearance and contract novation matters, according to Samuels, transitioning the division out of RTX and standing it up as a new entity, Nightwing, which quickly became a significant government contractor in its own right.

Samuels led government contracts diligence for Audax Private Equity in its $1 billion sale of Trexon to Amphenol Corp. in August 2025. Trexon is a supplier of specialty, mission-critical cable and connector solutions for a range of applications, including the defense and space industries.

He also co-led government contracts diligence for a June 2024 investment that private equity firm Madison Dearborn Partners made in Omni Federal, a company that serves the defense and intelligence communities with mission and enterprise software solutions grown out of the U.S. Department of Defense's software factory ecosystem.

What motivates him:

Samuels started his career in litigation and enjoys aspects of it, but he said he also enjoys the more collaborative nature of deal work, helping clients negotiate and navigate transactions and contextualize and calibrate government contract and regulatory matters within a broader business framework.

"One thing I like about deal work, no matter who you're representing, you're all sort of rowing in the same direction to a mutually beneficial outcome. Obviously you're still a zealous advocate for your client, but I do like that more collaborative aspect of working toward a common and positive outcome for everyone," Samuels said.

"Getting to that common goal in a collaborative, while still in some sense adversarial and competitive scenario, is a very attractive combination," he added.

Samuels said he's also motivated by his teammates as well as working at a firm that recruited him, invested in him and has helped him build and develop a team.

"I like mentoring and training and building up the team under me, and I've spent a lot of time doing that. It pays off in many ways and has become an important part of the job for me," he said.

Why he's a government contracts attorney:

As someone who grew up in Washington, D.C., Samuels said government contracts were always on his radar.

He was primarily interested in intellectual property cases when he landed an internship with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, but he soon learned clerks handled the bulk of those, leaving him to work on other matters, including government contracts cases.

Samuels enjoyed those cases and went on to apply to George Washington University's government contracts program.

"You can do a little bit of everything within government contracts. It's an industry that encompasses if not everything, most things," Samuels said, pointing to areas such as litigation, intellectual property, investigations and cybersecurity, as well as transactions and client counseling.

"The variety of the subject matter and areas of law have kept me in it," Samuels added. "There is plenty happening all the time that is new and different and changing, and it feels like you can get as much variety as you can handle."

His proudest moment:

While helping corporate clients navigate major deals is rewarding, Samuels said some of his proudest moments have come from seeing the individual impacts of pro bono work assisting veterans, immigrants and domestic violence clinics.

He pointed to one matter last year, where he and other attorneys helped a veteran go before the Naval Discharge Review Board and get his discharge upgraded from other than honorable to honorable.

The upgrade made the man, a single father, and his daughter eligible for a number of benefits.

"In speaking with him, I could tell how much it meant to him personally," Samuels said. "Our deal clients are always very appreciative, but they usually do not cry on the phone when a deal closes."

--As told to Tom Lotshaw. Editing by Alyssa Miller.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2026 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2026, to be eligible for this year's award.
