

# “SBIR Sally Says”



## **SBIR/STTR Topic Numbers and Letters**

What’s those “numbers” and “letters” in the Air Force topic numbers mean? Are they important?

For more information, check out the Air Force SBIR/STTR Virtual Shopping mall. [www.sbirsttrmall.com](http://www.sbirsttrmall.com)

### **Rest of the Story:**

Many of you have seen topic numbers like AF091C-001 or AF08-BT02 and wondered what the numbers and letters really mean. Well, AF obviously stands for Air Force.

If there are three numbers (091), the numbers stand for the specific SBIR solicitation. For example, “083” would mean the DoD solicitation 2008.3 and “091” would mean the DoD solicitation 2009.1. The Air Force will typically participate in the FY20xx.3 solicitation for the majority of their topics. The Air Force may have a few FY20xx.1 solicitation topics, but these will almost always be focused on “manufacturing technology” topics. These topics will also be known as “critical” topics. See the solicitation Air Force instructions for specific information.

If there is a letter (B or C), they stand for Broad or Critical topics. Both of these types of topics will have special information included in the Air Force solicitation instructions. Broad topics will typically look at a “broad” range of solutions and thus offer many more Phase I and II awards than our regular topics. Critical topics will typically be focused and will have the possibility of having a large Phase II dollar award (up to multiple millions of dollars). If there is no letter indicated, then the topic is considered a regular topic.

The last three digits represent the sequential topics in that solicitation. For example: AF091-001, AF091-002, AF091-003, etc. Some sequential numbers are not included in the solicitation, and may appear to be “missing” topics. In reality, we had “draft” topics that were removed before the formal solicitation opened.

If there are only two numbers followed by two letters (08-BT), they stand for the specific STTR solicitation. There are no broad or critical topics in the STTR program. For example, “08BT” stands for the second DoD STTR solicitation in 2008. And “09AT” stands for the first DoD STTR solicitation in 2009. The Air Force typically will participate only in the “B” solicitation. The last two digits represent the sequential topics in the solicitation.