

FOLLOW THE TANKER

After three rounds, nearly 10 years and countless twists and turns, the U.S. Air Force tanker contest could reach a conclusion early next year.

That's when the Air Force is expected to announce which bidder — the Boeing Co. or Airbus' parent company, EADS — wins a \$35 billion contract to replace 179 aerial refueling tankers.

But this most recent attempt by the Air Force to replace its

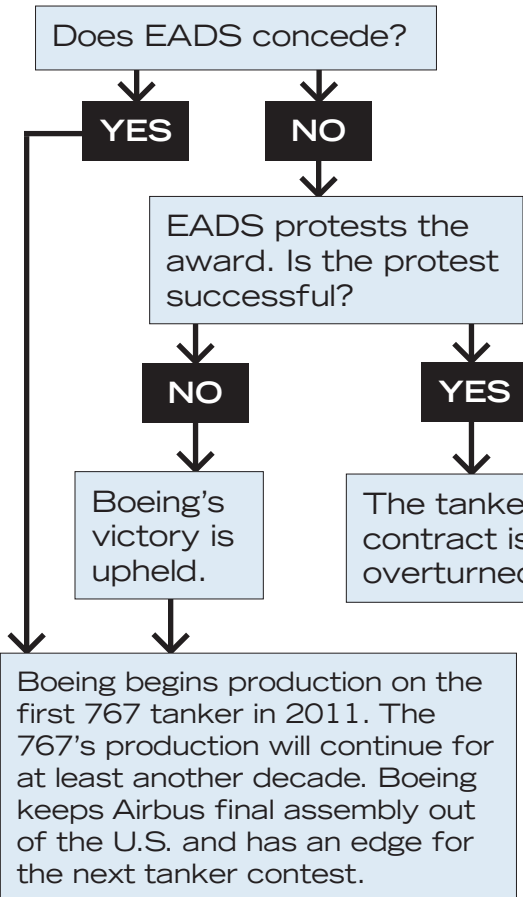
Eisenhower-era KC-135 tankers already oozes controversy after a mix-up by the Air Force of competitors' confidential tanker data. The mistake makes the contest ripe for a possible protest to government auditors and for more delays.

Here's a look at potential outcomes in the tanker saga.

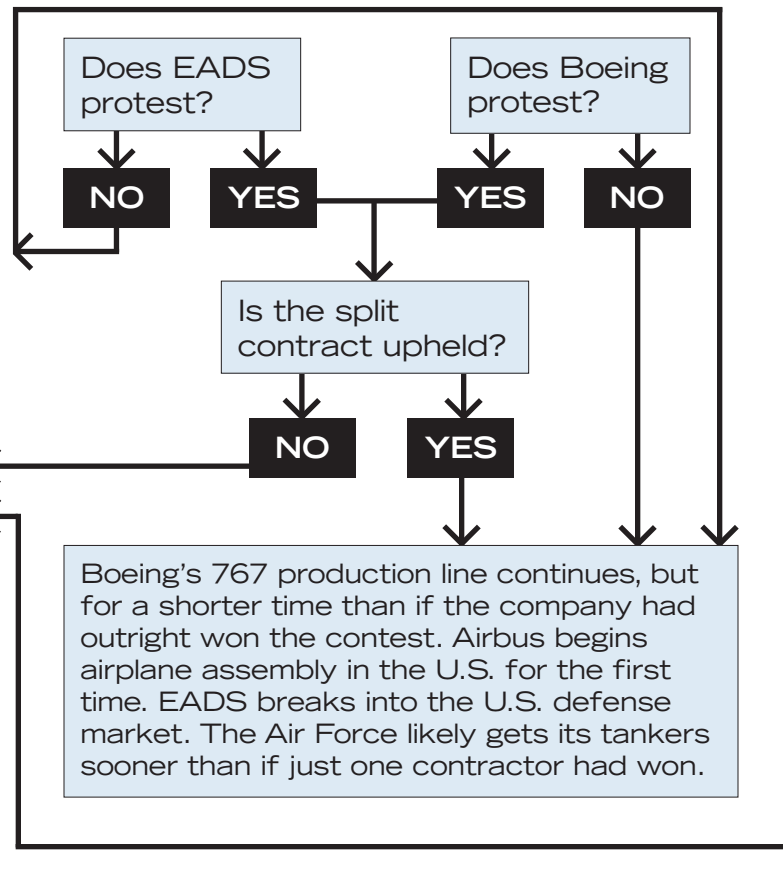
— Michelle Dunlop



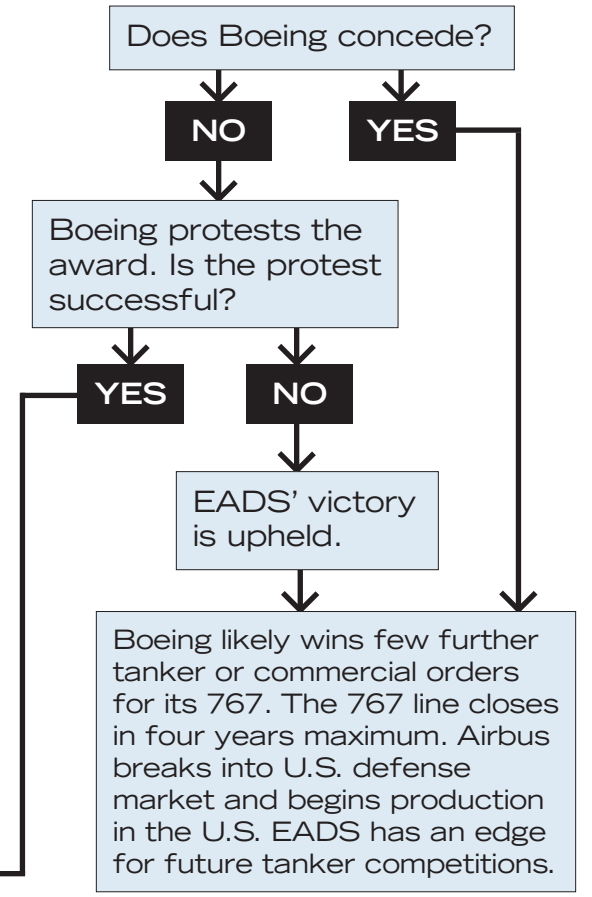
If Boeing is awarded the tanker contract ...



If the Air Force splits the contract ...



If EADS wins the contract ...



The Air Force starts over, and the fate of the 767 is uncertain. Delivery of tankers to the Air Force is pushed out even further. The cycle of bidding and protesting resumes. Go back to the top and begin again.