



Department of Justice

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SEVEN MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC CORP. AND HITACHI AUTOMOTIVE SUPPLY LTD. EXECUTIVES INDICTED FOR ROLE IN CONSPIRACY TO FIX PRICES

Two Executives Also Charged with Obstruction of Justice

WASHINGTON – A federal grand jury in Detroit returned two separate indictments against seven executives from two Japanese manufacturers of automotive parts for their participation in a conspiracy to fix prices of certain automotive parts, the Department of Justice announced today.

A three-count indictment was filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. Count one charges Atsushi Ueda, Minoru Kurisaki, and Hideyuki Saito of Mitsubishi Electric Corp. (MELCO) with conspiring to fix the prices of certain automotive products, including starter motors, alternators and ignition coils, sold to Ford Motor Company, General Motors LLC, Chrysler Group LLC, Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd., Nissan Motor Company Ltd., and Honda Motor Company Ltd. in the United States and elsewhere.

Count two charges Kurisaki and Saito with knowingly conspiring to obstruct justice by destroying documents and corruptly persuading, and attempting to persuade others, to destroy documents.

Count three charges Saito with knowingly and corruptly persuading, and attempting to persuade, executives to destroy documents and delete electronic data that may contain evidence of antitrust crimes in the United States and elsewhere.

Ueda and Kurisaki served as President and General Manager, respectively, in the Automotive Equipment Group. They are no longer employed by MELCO. Saito currently serves as a high-level manager within the Automotive Equipment Group at MELCO.

A one-count indictment, also filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, charges Takashi Toyokuni, Ken Funasaki, Kazunobu Tsunekawa and Tomiya Itakura of Hitachi Automotive Systems Ltd. with conspiring to fix the prices of various automotive parts, including starter motors, alternators, air flow meters, valve timing control devices, fuel injection systems, electronic throttle bodies, ignition coils and inverters and/or motor generators sold to various automobile manufacturers such as, Ford Motor Co., General Motors LLC, Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., Toyota Motor Corp., and Honda Motor Co. Ltd., in the United States and elsewhere.

Toyokuni, Funasaki, Tsunekawa, and Itakura all served as high-level managers in the Business Planning Department at Hitachi Automotive during the charged conspiracy and currently serve in various senior management positions at the company.

“Protecting American consumers from anticompetitive practices is our top priority,” said Brent Snyder, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division’s criminal enforcement program. “The Antitrust Division will continue to pursue the auto parts makers and executives who engaged in this blatant and harmful criminal scheme.”

Both indictments allege that the executives indicted today participated directly in the conspiratorial conduct, and directed, authorized, and consented to their subordinates’ participation. The executives are charged with participating in a conspiracy that existed from at least as early as January 2000 and continued until about February 2010. Among other things, the executives and their subordinates, according to the indictment, participated in meetings with co-conspirators and reached collusive agreements to rig bids, allocate the supply and fix the prices of certain automotive parts sold to automobile manufacturers.

MELCO is a corporation headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. MELCO pleaded guilty on Nov. 6, 2013, for its involvement in this conspiracy, and was sentenced to pay a criminal fine of \$190 million.

Hitachi Automotive is a corporation headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. Hitachi Automotive pleaded guilty on Nov. 6, 2013, for its involvement in this conspiracy, and was sentenced to pay a criminal fine of \$195 million.

Including Toyokuni, Funasaki, Tsunekawa, Itakura, Ueda, Kurisaki and Saito, 43 individuals have been charged in the government’s ongoing investigation into price fixing and bid rigging in the auto parts industry. Twenty-six of these individuals have pleaded guilty and have been sentenced to serve prison terms ranging from a year and one day to two years. Additionally, 28 companies have pleaded guilty or agreed to plead guilty and have agreed to pay a total of more than \$2.4 billion in fines.

The seven defendants are charged with price fixing in violation of the Sherman Act, which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$1 million criminal fine for individuals. The maximum fine may be increased to twice the gain derived from the crime or twice the loss suffered by the victims of the crime, if either of those amounts is greater than the statutory maximum fine. The maximum penalty for obstruction of justice is 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 criminal fine for individuals.

Today’s indictment is the result of an ongoing federal antitrust investigation into price fixing, bid rigging, and other anticompetitive conduct in the automotive parts industry, which is being conducted by the Antitrust Division’s criminal enforcement sections and the FBI. Today’s charge was brought by the Antitrust Division’s Washington Criminal I Section and the FBI’s Detroit Field Office, with the assistance of the FBI headquarters’ International Corruption Unit. Anyone with information on price fixing, bid rigging and other anticompetitive conduct related

to other products in the automotive parts industry should contact the Antitrust Division's Citizen Complaint Center at 888-647-3258, visit www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html or call the FBI's Detroit Field Office at 313-965-2323.

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