



Department of Justice

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FORMER MITSUBA EXECUTIVE AGREES TO PLEAD GUILTY TO BID RIGGING AND PRICE FIXING ON AUTOMOBILE PARTS INSTALLED IN U.S. CARS

Executive Agrees to Serve 13 Months in U.S. Prison

WASHINGTON – A former executive of Japan-based Mitsuba Corporation has agreed to plead guilty and serve 13 months in a U.S. prison for conspiring to fix the prices of products installed in cars sold in the United States and elsewhere, the Department of Justice announced today.

A one-count felony charge was filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan in Detroit against Kazumi Umahashi, a Japanese national and former General Manager of Mitsuba. Umahashi conspired from in or about June 2005 to in or about December 2009 by agreeing upon bids and prices for, and allocating the supply of, windshield wiper systems and starter motors sold to Honda Motor Co. Ltd. and its subsidiaries and affiliates in the United States and elsewhere, according to the charge. Umahashi also has agreed to pay a \$20,000 criminal fine and cooperate with the department's ongoing investigation. The plea agreement is subject to court approval.

"The Antitrust Division has uncovered dozens of conspiracies to fix prices in the automotive industry," said Brent Snyder, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division's criminal enforcement program. "The impact of these schemes has affected nearly every American. We will continue our efforts to hold culpable companies and individuals accountable for their illegal actions."

Mitsuba manufactures and sells a variety of automotive parts, including starter motors, which are small electric motors used in internal combustion engines, and windshield wiper systems. On Nov. 6, 2013, Mitsuba pleaded guilty for its involvement in the conspiracy and agreed to pay \$135 million in criminal fines.

Umahashi is charged with price fixing and bid rigging in violation of the Sherman Act, which carries a maximum sentence for individuals of 10 years and a fine of \$1 million. The maximum fine for an individual 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.

Including today's charges, 48 individuals have been charged in the department's ongoing investigation into price fixing and bid rigging in the auto parts industry. Additionally, 32 companies have pleaded guilty or agreed to plead guilty and have agreed to pay a total of more than \$2.4 billion in fines.

This prosecution arose from 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 with the assistance of the FBI's Detroit Field Office and 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 Detroit Field Office of the FBI at 313-965-2323.

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