



# Department of Justice

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## **EXECUTIVE OF JAPANESE AUTOMOTIVE PARTS MANUFACTURER INDICTED FOR ROLE IN CONSPIRACY TO FIX PRICES**

WASHINGTON – A Detroit federal grand jury returned a one-count indictment against an executive of a Japanese manufacturer of automotive parts for his participation in a conspiracy to fix prices of seatbelts, the Department of Justice announced today.

The indictment, filed today in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, charges Hiromu Usuda, an executive at Takata Corp., with conspiring to rig bids for, and to fix, stabilize and maintain the prices of, seatbelts sold to Toyota Motor Corp., Honda Motor Company Ltd., Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., Mazda Motor Corp., Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd. – more commonly known by its brand name, Subaru – and/or certain of their subsidiaries, for installation in vehicles manufactured and sold in the United States and elsewhere. Usuda served as Group and Department Manager in the Customer Relations Division at Takata, from January 2005 until at least February 2011.

“Antitrust violators who refuse to accept responsibility for their crimes leave us no choice but to indict,” said Brent Synder, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division’s criminal enforcement program. “We will continue to prosecute those that commit these crimes.”

The indictment alleges, among other things, that from at least Jan. 1, 2005, through at least February 2011, Usuda and others attended meetings with co-conspirators and reached collusive agreements to rig bids, allocate the supply and fix the prices of seatbelts sold to the automobile manufacturers. It alleges that Usuda participated directly in the conspiratorial conduct and that he directed, authorized and consented to his subordinates’ participation.

Takata is a Tokyo-based manufacturer of automotive parts, including seatbelts. Takata supplies automotive parts to automobile manufacturers in the United States, in part, through its U.S. subsidiary, TK Holdings Inc., located in Auburn Hills, Michigan. Takata pleaded guilty on Dec. 5, 2013, for its involvement in the conspiracy, and was sentenced to pay a criminal fine of \$71.3 million. Four other executives from Takata have pleaded guilty, have been sentenced to serve time in a U.S. prison and to pay criminal fines for their roles in the conspiracy.

Including Usuda, 50 individuals have been charged in the government’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.

Usuda is 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.

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 four of 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](http://www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html) or call the FBI's Detroit Field Office at 313-965-2323.

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