

Motorola calls former CFO "treacherous officer"

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(AP) -- A former executive who sued Motorola Inc. for firing him is a "treacherous officer," the telecommunications equipment maker said in court documents responding to his lawsuit.

Former Chief Financial Officer Paul Liska was fired for "serious misconduct and incompetence" and he planned a "scheme designed to portray himself as a whistleblower and demand millions in return for his silence," [Motorola](#) said in documents obtained by the Chicago Tribune and posted Thursday on its Web site.

Liska sued Schaumburg, Ill.-based Motorola in Cook County Circuit Court in Chicago on Feb. 20, a day after he was fired. He claims his dismissal was a "retaliatory discharge," which usually refers to an employee being fired for being a whistleblower.

Liska's attorney, Scott B. Crotty, did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Motorola declined to release the court documents to The Associated Press on Thursday and declined to comment beyond the filings. Liska was terminated "for cause," according to a regulatory filing that Motorola issued on March 3.

Cook County officials would not release Motorola's court filings to the AP.

Liska claims he was praised consistently for his work and has said Motorola was trying to "destroy his reputation in retaliation for raising legitimate concerns" about Motorola's [cell phone](#) unit.

Liska did not receive his signing bonus, [stock options](#) or severance pay.

In February, North America's largest maker of [telecommunications equipment](#) posted a massive fourth-quarter loss as it recorded charges to reflect the shrinking value of its cell phone business. It also suspended its dividend, said CFO Paul Liska had left and gave a disappointing forecast for the fiscal first quarter.

Faced with plunging cell phone revenue, the company had hatched a plan last year to spin off its Mobile Devices business, but persistent losses caused it to postpone that move.

When it reported fourth-quarter earnings back in February, Motorola gave no specific reason for Liska's departure, but co-CEO Greg Brown implied that it was connected to the delay of the phone spin-off. He said at the time that changes in the "business environment" made a change at the CFO post appropriate as well.

Motorola is now the No. 5 cell phone maker worldwide, with a 6.5 percent share.

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