

Hurd accuser claimed inside info

November 6 2010, By JORDAN ROBERTSON , AP Technology Writer



In this March 6, 2008 file photo, shows (then) Hewlett Packard Company CEO Mark Hurd speaks at HP headquarters in Palo Alto, Calif. A person familiar with the ouster of Hewlett-Packard Co.'s former CEO Mark Hurd tells The Associated Press that the woman who accused Hurd of sexual harassment also claimed that he told her about a major acquisition HP was about to make. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma)

(AP) -- A person familiar with the ouster of Hewlett-Packard Co.'s former CEO Mark Hurd tells The Associated Press that the woman who accused Hurd of sexual harassment also claimed that he told her about a major acquisition HP was about to make.

The person requested anonymity because of not being authorized to discuss the allegations.

The person said the deal in question was HP's \$13.9 billion acquisition of Electronic Data Systems in 2008.

Hurd's accuser, an HP contractor named Jodie Fisher, later appeared to recant her claim of disclosing information in a letter she sent Hurd when she and Hurd settled the matter for an undisclosed amount.

The AP has reviewed that letter, in which Fisher said there were "many inaccuracies" in her original claim against Hurd. She said didn't believe that Hurd's behavior harmed HP.

Fisher's lawyer, Gloria Allred, declined to comment.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Fisher's allegations earlier Friday.

It's generally illegal for an executive to disclose material and nonpublic information with an outside party without an agreement of confidentiality. Exceptions are made for relationships in which there might not be a formal arrangement but there is an expectation of confidentiality.

HP has never publicly mentioned the allegation of disclosing the information against Hurd.

The company, which is the world's biggest maker of personal computers and printers, said its board forced Hurd out over inaccurate expense reports connected to Hurd's dinners with Fisher.

Hurd maintains that he never prepared his own expense reports and didn't intentionally try to keep Fisher's name off any reports. HP's board

said it didn't find evidence of sexual harassment.

Fisher's allegations led to Hurd's resignation Aug. 6. HP's board found no evidence of sexual harassment but wanted to disclose the allegations, which Hurd argued was unnecessary.

Hurd and Fisher both say they didn't have a sexual relationship.

Hurd's resignation stunned investors, who were largely pleased with Hurd's five-year stewardship of HP. He is now a co-president at business software maker Oracle Corp., which is run by his friend Larry Ellison.

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