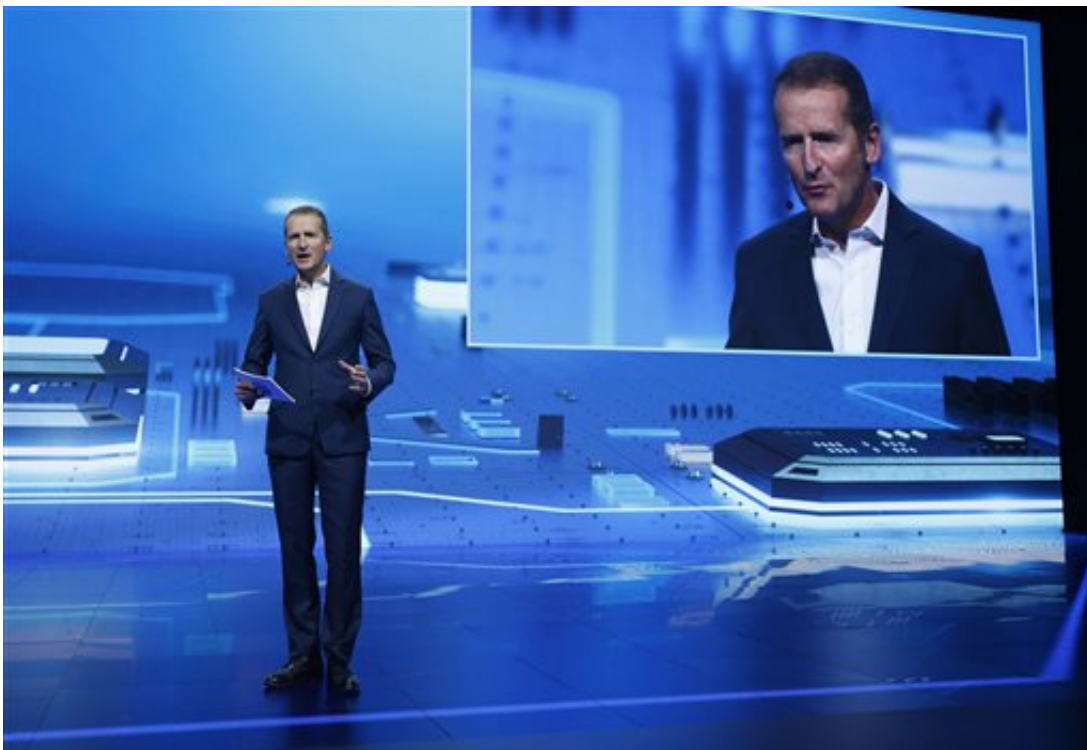


VW exec sees US fixes soon in emissions test cheating

January 6 2016, by Tom Krisher



Herbert Diess, chairman of the board of Volkswagen Brand, speaks during a keynote address at CES International, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)

The top executive of the Volkswagen brand worldwide says he's optimistic that U.S. environmental regulators will approve fixes within the coming weeks or months for diesel engines that cheat on emissions tests.

Brand CEO Herbert Diess said Tuesday night at the CES gadget show in Las Vegas that the company is having constructive discussions with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

But the EPA didn't sound as optimistic, issuing a statement Wednesday saying that talks with VW so far "have not produced an acceptable way forward."

Diess says VW already has received approval to fix 8.5 million cheating cars in Europe. Repairs will start this month and most will be fixed this year.

But the U.S. cars are more problematic because they emit up to 40 times more toxic nitrogen oxide than allowed. Nearly 600,000 cars are affected in the U.S., with a total of 11 million worldwide. Diess spoke as the company unveiled a concept of an electric-powered Microbus that could go into production in 2019.

U.S. fixes likely will include complicated recalls and take several years for some of the older models. VW has admitted cheating by installing software that turns emissions controls on during government tests and turns them off on real roads.



Herbert Diess, chairman of the board of Volkswagen Brand, speaks during a keynote address at CES International, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)

Diess apologized for the scandal. "I'm optimistic that we will find a solution, we will bring a package together which satisfies our customers first and foremost and then also the regulators," he said.

But the EPA statement said it and CARB will keep insisting that VW come up with "effective appropriate remedies as expeditiously as possible at no cost to owners."

The U.S. Justice Department has sued Volkswagen over emissions-cheating software, potentially exposing the company to more than \$20 billion in fines for violations of the federal Clean Air Act. VW could

also rack up additional significant civil penalties based on the specific facts determined at trial.



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The company and its executives could still face separate criminal charges, while a raft of private class-action lawsuits filed by angry VW owners are pending.

The company first acknowledged in September that the cheating software was included in its diesel cars and SUVs sold since the 2009 model year, as well as some recent diesel models sold by the VW-owned Audi and Porsche brands.



Herbert Diess, chairman of the board of Volkswagen Brand, unveils the BUDD-e electric and connected car during a keynote address at CES International, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/John Locher)



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