

Outgoing Airbus CEO poised for 37 mln euro payout: report

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Airbus chief executive Tom Enders stands to receive a retirement package worth nearly 37 million euros (\$41 million), an investor advisory firm said

The chief executive of European aerospace giant Airbus stands to receive a 37 million euro (\$41 million) severance package when he steps

down next week, according to calculations by an investor advisory firm released Tuesday.

The company acknowledged the "soundness" of the calculations made by Proxinvest, which were based on financial filings under German CEO Tom Enders.

Enders, 60, will step down at Airbus's annual shareholder meeting in Amsterdam, where the conglomerate is based.

Shareholder advocates note that means Enders's package will not be subject to a shareholder vote, as would be standard under French corporate guidelines which were tightened by France's employers' association last year.

According to Proxinvest, Enders will receive a total of 26.3 million euros in retirement pay over the next 20 years, along with stock and performance bonuses valued at 7.3 million.

He will also benefit from a one-year noncompete clause worth 3.2 million.

"That's a pretty costly noncompete clause, 12 months goes by fast," Proxinvest's director Loic Dessaint told AFP.

"If he wants to advise another company in a year and a half, he has the right," he said.

In total Enders's package would be worth 36.8 million euros.

The amount is likely to raise eyebrows in France, not least because the French government owns an 11 percent stake in the aircraft group, along with Germany's 11 percent and Spain's 4.2 percent.

Media reports claim that Enders announced his resignation after failing to win board backing for a new term.

Although Airbus posted a 30 percent surge in net profit last year to just over three billion euros, it has recently been confronted with a series of setbacks.

In December, the French newspaper Le Monde said US authorities were investigating the firm for suspected bribery and corruption, exposing it to billions of dollars in potential fines.

Last year Airbus paid 81 million euros to settle a German inquiry into the suspected kickbacks in the sale of Eurofighter jets to Austria.

Its offices were also raided last year as part of an inquiry into alleged influence-peddling related to helicopter sales to Kazakhstan.

And last year Airbus pulled the plug on its A380 superjumbo after it failed to win over enough clients, forcing it to announce more than 3,000 job cuts.

Earlier this year French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire pressured the board of Renault, in which France owns a 15 percent stake, to curb the severance pay for CEO Carlos Ghosn.

Ghosn, who awaits a Japanese trial on charges of under-reporting millions of dollars in pay as head of Renault's partner Nissan, was poised to receive tens of millions of euros upon his retirement.

But Renault's board later vowed to block the bulk of the package, including millions of stock options, to avoid the prospect of an embarrassing "golden parachute".

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