

Volkswagen to stash cars at Berlin's problem airport

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Combining Germany's national embarrassments

Car giant Volkswagen will stock cars awaiting strict new emissions tests at Berlin's under-construction airport, combining the German national embarrassments of the carmaker's "dieselgate" scandal and the much-delayed travel hub.

"In this case, our normal logistics spaces aren't enough," a Volkswagen spokesman told AFP on Wednesday, saying the firm faces delays to [emissions tests](#) on between 200,000 and 250,000 cars.

The firm will store vehicles at VW's testing grounds near its Wolfsburg HQ as well as the Berlin airport and "is looking into other spaces," he added.

Like other carmakers, VW is scrambling to adapt to a new emissions testing regime known as the Worldwide harmonised Light vehicles Test Procedure or WLTP, forcing it to slow production in Wolfsburg as well as storing untested cars.

WLTP is designed to more accurately reflect vehicles' emissions performance under real driving conditions, making it longer and more complex than previous procedures.

Volkswagen for years fooled regulators under previous testing regimes.

It admitted in 2015 to building software known as a "defeat device" into 11 million diesel vehicles worldwide, reducing [harmful emissions](#) in the lab but allowing them to shoot up in on-road driving.

Other carmakers like Daimler and BMW have since fallen under suspicion and this year were forced to recall thousands of vehicles for software updates.

As a blow to Germany's pride in its engineering prowess and reputation for honesty in business, the endless, convoluted "dieselgate" scandal has been matched in recent years only by the succession of disasters at Berlin's new international airport.

First slated to open in 2011, the opening of the hub named for former Chancellor Willy Brandt has been repeatedly pushed back over issues ranging from fire safety to structural integrity.

Meanwhile, one former manager at the project was jailed in 2016 for accepting a bribe and prosecutors said last year they were probing another.

Authorities now hope to open the doors—another of the many technical problems at the troubled [airport](#)—by October 2020.

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