

Volkswagen drops Audi chief accused of diesel fraud

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Stadler was arrested in June a week after Munich police raided his home over charges of fraud and falsifying documents that allowed diesel vehicles equipped with software to cheat regulatory emissions tests

German car giant Volkswagen said Tuesday it was removing Rupert Stadler, the chief executive of subsidiary Audi who has been jailed in an

emissions fraud probe since June, from his post and the parent group's board.

"The supervisory boards of Volkswagen AG and Audi AG agreed a deal with Rupert Stadler to end his offices and his contracts," the company said in a statement.

Stadler was arrested in June a week after Munich police raided his home over charges of fraud and falsifying documents that allowed diesel vehicles equipped with software to cheat regulatory emissions tests.

At the time, prosecutors said the custody was aimed at stopping him "seeking to influence witnesses or other suspects" in the investigation.

The allegations are part of the wider "dieselgate" scandal involving 11 million vehicles worldwide from VW and subsidiaries like Audi, Porsche and Skoda that has gripped Volkswagen since 2015.

Volkswagen has yet to name an official successor to Stadler at the head of its high-end brand, after naming Dutch executive Bram Schot as interim boss following the arrest.

"Mr Schot continues to act as interim CEO," a VW spokesman told AFP.

Citing sources close to Volkswagen, news agency DPA reported that Stadler would receive an immediate payment of "significantly less than one million euros" (\$1.15 million) linked to his departure.

Remaining claims "in the double-digit millions" relating to the time left to run on his contracts will be paid out only if Stadler escapes conviction, the sources added.

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