

Tesla whistleblower files formal SEC complaint

Ex-worker alleges Tesla mislead investors, installed damaged batteries

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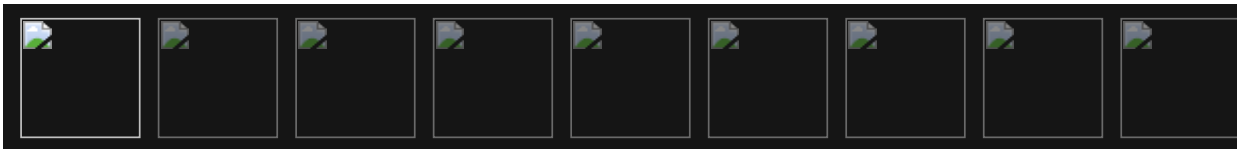


Image Credit: Drew Phillips

The former [Tesla](#) employee who [Elon Musk](#) accuses of trying to sabotage the company and stealing trade secrets has reinforced his claims that he's a whistleblower by filing a formal complaint with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Martin Tripp's July 6 whistleblower tip accuses [Tesla](#) of having installed unsafe, punctured batteries into cars, exaggerating to investors about [Model](#)

3 production numbers by as much as 44 percent, lowering vehicle specifications, and using scrap and waste materials in vehicles in the company's mad rush to meet Musk's production goals for the [Model 3](#).

Tripp's complaints, [per Bloomberg](#), were summarized in a statement from the New York law firm Meissner Associates, which has represented other whistleblowers and is led by Stuart Meissner, a former assistant district attorney in Manhattan and assistant New York state attorney general.

Tesla hasn't commented on the complaint. It [filed a lawsuit against Tripp](#) last month in a federal court in Nevada, alleging that the former Gigafactory process technician hacked Tesla's manufacturing operating system, wrote data-exporting code to run on other employees' computers and sent proprietary data and photos to unnamed third parties. Musk and Tripp also engaged in a testy email exchange in which Musk called his former employee "a horrible human being." Tripp has also set up a [GoFundMe page](#) to raise \$500,000 to hire a lawyer in that case.

"Getting the truth out has become a nightmare," Tripp said in a statement [published by TechCrunch](#). "While we have had to relocate due to threats and harassment, both online and offline, making it difficult to press on, my family and I have also received a ton of support, which keeps us going."

Where all this goes from here is anyone's guess. SEC whistleblowers are eligible for payouts if their voluntary tips lead to successful SEC enforcement actions.