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# VW Refuses to Give American States Documents in Emissions Inquiries

By [DANNY HAKIM](#) and [JACK EWING](#) JAN. 8, 2016

Citing German privacy laws, [Volkswagen](#) has refused to provide emails or other communications among its executives to attorneys general in the United States, impeding American investigations into the company's emissions-cheating scandal, according to officials in several states.

The revelation signals a turning point in the now openly fractious relations between [Volkswagen](#) and American investigators, after claims by the Justice Department, in its own inquiry [this week](#), that the company had "impeded and obstructed" regulators and provided "misleading information."

Significantly, investigators say, Volkswagen's actions limit their ability to identify which employees knew about or sanctioned the deceptions. Finding the people responsible for the cheating is important to the lawsuits: Penalties would be greater if the states and others pursuing Volkswagen in court could prove that top executives knew of or directed the activity.

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