

Tesla whistleblower to meet with SEC, attorney says

By Lora Kolodny

- Tesla whistleblower Martin Tripp is slated to meet with the SEC, his attorney Stuart Meissner says.
- Tesla and Solar City are facing ongoing SEC investigations, which the company has not yet disclosed, according to the independent research firm Probes Reporter.
- Ongoing investigations into Tesla and SolarCity do not indicate a finding of wrongdoing, but could shake some investors' confidence.

Tesla whistleblower Martin Tripp — who CEO Elon Musk characterized as a [saboteur and disgruntled ex-employee](#) — is slated to meet with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, his attorney Stuart Meissner told CNBC. Meissner also shared this development on Twitter.

[Stuart D. Meissner@StuartMeissner](#)

Good News -received a call back this week from SEC Enforcement on Mr. Tripp's [\\$TSLA](#) Whistleblower submission. Will be following up next week. We intend to fully cooperate. Will not be commenting on our interactions going forward out of respect for the SEC. <http://www.secwhistleblowerattorney.net>

The SEC did not reply to a request for further information. [Tesla](#) declined to comment on the matter.

In his complaint with the commission, [Tripp alleges that Tesla](#) has made several "material omissions and misstatements" to investors and taken steps that potentially compromised the safety of its customers.

An interview with regulators could ignite a new SEC investigation into Tesla, could be used in ongoing investigations or could go nowhere at all. As a general rule, the SEC does not offer details or comments about ongoing investigations.

This is not the first time the SEC has tangled with the electric vehicle maker. According to public records attained by the independent research firm, [Probes Reporter](#), Tesla faced but did not disclose an [SEC investigation into the Model 3](#) in 2016, which closed without enforcement action. The firm is tracking additional, undisclosed SEC investigations into SolarCity and Tesla.

Probes Reporter CEO John P. Gavin said:

"The SEC would be irresponsible if they did not follow-up on a well thought out whistleblower complaint. However, that does not mean that anyone has done anything wrong or that wrongdoing will be found. But it could be."

According to the most [recent available data](#), since August 2011 the SEC has received over 22,000 whistleblower tips, and last year received more than 4,400 tips. By the end of 2017, the SEC had only granted 46 awards to whistleblowers.

Meissner has a [deep background](#) working with the SEC, and whistleblowers.

He previously represented a former Monsanto executive who alleged accounting fraud at that company. The effort led to a settlement of \$80 million between the SEC and Monsanto in February 2016, and netted a reward of \$22.5 million for Meissner's client.

He also helped draft the SEC's whistleblower rules, which allow it to run its bounty programs.

Meissner told CNBC, "Getting a call back is 70 percent of determining if there will ever be SEC action, in my experience, especially with regard to the statutes that are in play with regard to the Tripp submission."

Shares in Tesla closed up almost 4 percent on the day. The company is due to report its second-quarter earnings on August 1st.