

Supreme People's Court Presiding Judge Chen Wenquan Elaborates on 640 Million RMB Trade Secret Case

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On March 7, 2025, Judge CHEN Wenquan, the Supreme People's Court judge that presided over the [case that yielded the largest intellectual property damages in China's history](#), elaborated on the case. In decision [?2023???????1590?](#) released June 14, 2024, the SPC applied 2X punitive damages on appeal in a dispute between two well-known (and unnamed) domestic automotive companies regarding new energy vehicle chassis technical trade secrets that were misappropriated in a personnel poaching scheme. The plaintiff is believed to be Geely Holding Group and the defendant is WM Motor. Note that WM Motor is reportedly insolvent so collection is unlikely. Below, Judge Chen only mentioned the non-monetary obligations were fulfilled.

Judge Chen stated:

To build a strong country in science and technology, it is necessary to encourage and protect fair competition. In recent years, disputes over technical secrets caused by employee "job hopping" have occurred frequently, especially some newly established enterprises have illegally seized other people's technology, personnel and resources in order to gain competitive advantages quickly, seriously disrupting the market order. The right holder in this case is one of the largest private automobile companies in my country. As early as 2014, it used its traditional models to develop, trial-produce, and produce hybrid and pure electric vehicles, made huge R&D investments, and has achieved initial R&D results. In order to gain competitive advantages quickly, competitors have poached senior management and technical R&D personnel related to the right holder on a large scale, and used the technical secrets mastered by the right holder's former employees to apply for patents, manufacture and sell related models.

The outstanding feature of this case is that it is a case of infringement of technical secrets caused by the organized and planned large-scale poaching of new energy vehicle technical personnel and technical resources by improper means. On the basis of the overall judgment of the infringement of technical secrets, the People's Court applied double punitive damages in accordance with the law and awarded more than 640 million RMB, setting a new record for the amount of compensation awarded in domestic intellectual property infringement lawsuit. More importantly, the trial of this case has always been based on the judicial concept of protecting innovation in an innovative way, and has made pioneering explorations in the

specific way, content, scope of civil liability for stopping infringement, and the calculation standard of delayed performance of non-monetary payment obligations. After the judgment was made, the infringer took the initiative to perform the **non-monetary obligations** determined by the judgment on time. As a typical case of the People's Court protecting scientific and technological innovation in accordance with the law, this case not only effectively cracked down on malicious infringement of intellectual property rights, actively regulated and guided enterprises to operate in good faith and in accordance with the law, but also helped to stimulate the innovation and creation of enterprises, help develop new quality productivity, promote high-quality development of new industries and new fields, and promote the creation of a business environment that respects originality, legal operation, and fair competition.

The original text is available [here](#) (Chinese only).

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