

SNC-Lavalin staff used rival consortium's plans to alter their own designs

SNC-Lavalin engineers used a rival consortium's designs for Montreal's \$1.3-billion superhospital project, Quebec's corruption inquiry has heard.

By: The Canadian Press, Published on Thu May 22 2014 Toronto Star

MONTREAL—Testimony at [Quebec's corruption probe](#) has revealed SNC-Lavalin engineers cheated and used a rival consortium's designs for Montreal's \$1.3-billion superhospital project.

SNC-Lavalin engineer Yves Gauthier and Charles Chebl, his superior, both admitted they changed elements of their plans to reflect their rivals', which were deemed technically better.

Gauthier testified Thursday he received copies of the privileged information from Chebl, who in turn said he was shown the documents by his superior, ex-SNC boss Riyadh Ben Aissa.

Chebl then had them emailed to him by McGill University Health Centre executive Yanai Elbaz. Ben Aissa and Elbaz are among eight people [charged in connection](#) with alleged fraud of \$22.5 million surrounding the superhospital project.

SNC officials stand accused of bribing McGill executives Elbaz and hospital boss Arthur Porter to secure the contract.

Gauthier says the cheating made him feel uncomfortable but he did as he was asked by Chebl.

Chebl said he also felt ill at ease at the time using a rival company's documents, but did so under pressure from senior bosses now implicated in the alleged fraud.

Gauthier also testified he went to Quebec provincial police in 2012 after learning of the alleged fraud.

The superhospital contract, a private-public partnership between government and private construction firms, is one of Canada's most expensive public works projects.