

PM-appointed gov't employee remained on payroll despite links to illegal fundraising

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A former SNC-Lavalin executive who was appointed to Montreal's port authority was allowed to remain on the public payroll for months, despite known links to an illegal fundraising scheme, CTV News has learned.

Former SNC-Lavalin vice-president Normand Morin was named by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the port authority in 2006. The post paid about \$25,000 a year.

It's a job Morin held despite his alleged involvement in illegal political financing, and despite the fact that his tenure expired in September.

For more than 18 months, the Harper government knew of the allegations against Morin.

"He is still on the board. He is at the tail end of the mandate. We don't know yet when it will be up," said Port of Montreal spokesperson Sophie Roux.

The Prime Minister's Office took action on Thursday night, telling CTV's Ottawa Bureau Chief Robert Fife that Morin has now been removed from his position.

"This individual was advised in October that he would not be re-appointed," PMO spokesperson Stephen Lecce said. "As of today, this individual is no longer a member of the board."

Morin name first came up at the Charbonneau Commission, a public inquiry into widespread corruption allegations within Quebec's construction industry.

SNC-Lavalin vice-president Pierre Cadotte told the corruption inquiry the company illegally contributed more than \$1 million in donations to Quebec's political parties between 1998 and 2010.

Morin and two other top executives were involved in the slush fund, Codette alleged.

Cadotte refused to say if it was in exchange for specific contracts.

According to unsealed police affidavits released earlier this month, Morin confirmed to police his unofficial job was to monitor and arrange political financing.

"He admitted to the police that he was making illegal fundraising for the Liberal Party of Quebec," said NDP MP Alexandre Boulerice.

Prior to the PMO's statement to CTV News, opposition MPs had been questioning why Morin wasn't stepping down.

"Why is this individual still on the Montreal Port Authority," said Liberal MP David McGuinty. "Why hasn't action been taken already."