

Beat: Miscellaneous

Police: Former ABN Amro banker killed self after killing wife, daughter

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USPA News - A former senior executive at Dutch bank ABN Amro, who was criticized for taking a large pay-off after the bank's nationalization in 2008, committed suicide after killing his wife and daughter, Dutch police said on Monday, days after their bodies were discovered. Jan Peter Schmittmann and his wife, both 57, along with their 22-year-old daughter, were found dead at their residence in the wealthy town of Laren, about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) southeast of Amsterdam, at about 10:30 a.m. local time on Saturday.

Officers were called to the residence after a family friend suspected something had happened. Investigators initially only described the incident as a "family tragedy," a term typically used by Dutch police to describe a murder-suicide, but no details were released. Authorities confirmed on Monday that investigators had concluded that the two women died of a homicide while Schmittmann died of a suicide. "To exclude other possible scenarios, autopsies were carried out to determine the causes of death in addition to the forensic investigation at the residence," a police spokesperson said. "Information was also gathered from the family and acquaintances to get a clear picture of what may have happened. The Netherlands Forensic Institute confirmed the suspicions of police." Police said a suicide note was also found at the scene, though no other details about the crime or circumstances were released. "For the privacy and respect towards the family, no further comment will be made regarding the time of death, the manner of death, and the contents of the farewell letter," the spokesperson added. But in a statement also released on Monday, the relatives of the victims said Schmittmann had been suffering from a severe depression. "We are deeply shocked and dismayed by this unimaginable news," the relatives said. "We knew that Jan Peter was struggling with a severe depression. That it would eventually lead to these events is still incomprehensible for us." The family consisted of four people in total, but the second daughter was not at home at the time of the murder-suicide. "Our immediate concern is to support the other daughter of the family to process this indescribable grief. We hope to do so in peace and privacy," the statement added. Schmittmann served as Senior Executive Vice President at Dutch bank ABN Amro between October 2003 and November 2007, when he was appointed a Managing Board member and became responsible for the bank's domestic operations as the head of Business Unit Netherlands. But after the bank's collapse and subsequent nationalization, Schmittmann was forced to leave and stepped down in December 2008. He was contractually due an 18 million euros (\$24.6 million) termination payment but went to court after the bank refused to pay more than 2.4 million euros (\$3.2 million). The judge eventually ruled in favor of Schmittmann, forcing the bank to pay him 8 million euros (\$10.9 million), making it the bank's biggest ever termination payment. Then-finance minister Wouter Bos described the termination payment as "exorbitant." Schmittmann called Bos' reaction "unsavory." After leaving ABN Amro, Schmittmann founded 5 Park Lane to advise businesses.

Article online:

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