

Bank Al-Maghrib Invests in Green Technology



Hassan Regraga, Managing Director of Dar As-Sikkah.

In 1987, Morocco established its own national banknote printing and minting company, Dar As-Sikkah, a department of the central bank (Bank Al-Maghrib) responsible for printing banknotes, minting coins, and producing secure documents.

Over the years, Dar As-Sikkah has become internationally recognised for its expertise and know-how in security printing, enabling it to become a privileged partner of numerous institutions at national and international levels. As a result, it has been entrusted with the production and personalisation of various secure documents, including Moroccan biometric passports, electronic driver's licences and registration cards, diplomas, certificates, Moroccan visas, stamps and checkbooks.

According to Bank Al-Maghrib, it puts the industrial competitiveness of Dar As-Sikkah at the centre of its efforts and works to equip itself with the most efficient means of production. Hence it has invested in PVD technology from INORCOAT in order to deposit a completely chrome-free protective coating on the printing plates.

As Hassan Regraga, Managing Director of Dar As-Sikkah, explains: 'compared to electroplating, PVD coatings are performed by physical vapour deposition in a vacuum. It is a clean and safe technology that can achieve high performance in coating Intaglio printing plates that have previously been plated using an electroplating process'.

According to INORCOAT, PVD coatings also have the advantage that the layers are much thinner (0.4-4µm) and more uniform than electrodeposited layers (8-12µm). On the one hand, this leads to improved properties from a technological point of view, but also helps to save resources, as the layer thickness is reduced to that

which is technologically necessary. The new technology enables Dar As-Sikkah to improve the production capacity of the printing plates as well as providing greater flexibility in the choice of composition and thickness of the coating.

'Due to the Corona pandemic, the production of the PVD system was faced with special challenges,' said Romain Waidelich of INORCOAT. 'Despite all the adversities, we were able to deliver and start up the system on time!'

The machine was delivered and commissioned earlier this year.

'The new PVD-coated Intaglio printing plates have enabled us to produce long runs without any particular difficulties and in line with our production schedules. Print quality is closely monitored and the results so far are promising. We are confident that the achieved performance will be our new standard,' said Mr Regraga.

'The cooperation with INORCOAT has been excellent. Together we were able to determine the optimal coatings for our printing plates, and as part of the research and development work carried out by Dar As-Sikkah, we jointly developed a formula for coating minting dies for coin production with the new PVD system, which will also serve as a backup solution for the PVD system that has already been used for coating dies since 2014,' he added.

'The investment confirms the bank's will and ambition to be a pioneer of new and environmentally friendly technologies for banknotes. Our main goal is to create a safe and healthy working environment, without risks to the health and safety of our employees and without negative impact on our environment,' he concluded.

About DAR AS-SIKKAH



BANK AL-MAGHRIB

Central department

Staff: More than 320 agents

Certifications: ISO 9001, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001.

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PVD coating machine.

About INORCOAT

INORCOAT PVD solutions are a symbiosis of expertise in coating development, coating equipment and component design and the flexibility and willingness to develop customised technical and technological solutions according to the customer's needs.

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