

CHROMIUM PLATING  
Hard Deposit

1. SCOPE:

1.1 Purpose: This specification covers the engineering requirements for electrodeposition of a hard chromium plate and the properties of the deposit.

1.2 Application: Primarily for use on ferrous parts for increasing abrasion resistance, increasing tool and die life, maintaining accuracy of gages, reconditioning worn or undersized parts, and increasing corrosion resistance. Plated high strength parts may require special treatments to reduce the embrittling effects of hydrogen pickup.

2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS: The following publications form a part of this specification to the extent specified herein. The latest issue of Aerospace Material Specifications shall apply. The applicable issue of other documents shall be as specified in AMS 2350.

2.1 SAE Publications: Available from SAE, 400 Commonwealth Drive, Warrendale, PA 15096.

2.1.1 Aerospace Material Specifications:

AMS 2350 - Standards and Test Methods

2.2 ASTM Publications: Available from American Society for Testing and Materials, 1916 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

ASTM B487 - Measurement of Metal and Oxide Coating Thicknesses by Microscopical Examination of a Cross Section

ASTM B499 - Measurement of Coating Thicknesses by the Magnetic Method: Nonmagnetic Coatings on Magnetic Basis Metals

ASTM B504 - Measurement of Thickness of Metallic Coatings by the Coulometric Method

ASTM B578 - Measurement of Microhardness of Electroplated Coatings

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2.3 U.S. Government Publications: Available from Commanding Officer, Naval Publications and Forms Center, 5801 Tabor Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19120.

2.3.1 Military Standards:

MIL-STD-794 - Parts and Equipment, Procedures for Packaging and Packing of

3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

3.1 Preparation:

- 3.1.1 Surfaces of parts to be plated shall be substantially free from blemishes, pits, tool marks, and other irregularities.
- 3.1.2 Parts to be finished after plating shall have smooth surfaces before plating. Parts not finished after plating shall have surface finish before plating equal to or smoother than that required on the parts after plating.
- 3.1.3 Parts having hardness higher than 40 HRC and which have been ground after heat treatment shall be suitably stress-relieved before cleaning for plating. Temperatures to which parts are heated and time at heat shall be such that maximum stress-relief is obtained without reducing mechanical properties of parts below specified limits.
- 3.1.4 When magnetic particle inspection is required, parts shall be so inspected before plating except as permitted in 3.1.4.1, and shall be so inspected after plating and complete finishing.
- 3.1.4.1 Parts having specified maximum hardness of 40 HRC or lower need not be magnetic particle inspected before plating if the specified maximum plate thickness is 0.0015 in. (0.038 mm) or less.
- 3.1.5 Parts, prior to immersion in the plating solution, shall have chemically clean surfaces prepared with minimum abrasion, erosion, or pitting. Except as specified in 3.1.5.1 and 3.1.5.2, the final step in cleaning shall consist of anodically cleaning the parts in a chromic acid solution of concentration approximately equal to that of the chromic acid solution used in plating or in the plating bath.
- 3.1.5.1 For plating nickel alloys, and for plating other alloys on which a deposit of nickel is used as an undercoating for chromium, the final step in cleaning shall consist of anodically cleaning the parts in a sulfuric-hydrofluoric acid solution (25% by volume  $H_2SO_4$  and 4.5% by volume HF) or in a 40% (by volume) solution of sulfuric acid.
- 3.1.5.2 Other methods of cleaning may be used when agreed upon by purchaser and vendor.

3.1.6 Electrical contacts between the parts and power source shall be made in such a manner as will ensure that neither chemical or immersion deposition nor electrical arcing or overheating will occur. If parts are to be plated all over, contact points shall be located where specified or where agreed upon by purchaser and vendor. If parts are not required to be plated all over, contact points shall be located in areas on which plating is not required or is optional.

### 3.2 Procedure:

3.2.1 Parts shall be plated by electrodeposition of chromium from a chromic acid solution containing added sulfate or fluoride ions. The chromium shall be deposited directly on the basis metal without a coating of other metal underneath, except in the case of parts made of maraging steels, corrosion-resistant steels, or aluminum alloys, on which a preliminary deposit of nickel or other suitable metal is permissible.

3.2.1.1 The size and shape of parts and the thickness of plate should be considered in providing adequate racks and anodes for plating.

3.2.2 After plating, parts shall be rinsed in cold water and dried.

3.2.3 Steel parts, after being dried, shall be heated as follows to minimize the embrittling effects of cleaning and plating; heating shall be at  $375^{\circ}\text{F} + 10$  ( $190^{\circ}\text{C} + 5$ ) in air, preferably in a circulating-air furnace:

3.2.3.1 Parts having specified minimum tensile strength lower than 220,000 psi (1515 MPa) shall be heated for not less than 3 hours.

3.2.3.2 Parts having specified minimum tensile strength of 220,000 psi (1515 MPa) or higher shall be heated for not less than 23 hours.

3.2.4 Grinding after plating should be done with proper coolant, never dry, and never with a very heavy cut.

3.3 Properties: The deposit shall conform to the following requirements:

3.3.1 Thickness: The finished thickness shall be as specified on the drawing, determined on representative parts or test panels in accordance with ASTM B487, ASTM B499, ASTM B504, or other method agreed upon by purchaser and vendor. Recommended maximum thickness of chromium is 0.015 in. (0.38 mm) except on tools and die. Recommended minimum thickness of chromium, when used for protection against corrosion, is 0.002 in. (0.05 mm).

3.3.1.1 The plate shall be substantially uniform in thickness on significant surfaces except that slight build-up at exterior corners or edges will be permitted provided finished drawing dimensions are met.

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3.3.1.2 No requirements are established for minimum thickness of plate for surfaces of holes, recesses, contact areas of parts plated all over, and other areas on which a controlled deposit cannot be obtained under normal plating conditions but such areas shall not be masked to prevent plating. The resulting thickness shall be considered only when such surfaces of parts can be touched by a sphere 0.75 in. (19 mm) in diameter.

3.3.1.2.1 If internal surfaces as defined in 3.3.1.2 are required to be plated to a specified thickness, notes on the part drawing will so specify.

3.3.2 Hardness: Shall be not lower than 700 HV or equivalent.

3.4 Quality: Plate shall be firmly bonded to the basis metal, and shall be smooth and uniform in appearance and, except as noted in 3.4.1, shall be free from frosty areas, pinholes, nodules, blisters, and other imperfections detrimental to performance of the deposit. The method of determining satisfactory adhesion shall be as agreed upon by purchaser and vendor. Visual inspection may be aided by magnification of not greater than 5 diameters.

3.4.1 Pinholes and other imperfections which can be shown to be the result of failure of the deposit to bridge or fill imperfections, such as porosity, in the surface of the basis metal are acceptable.

3.4.2 Double plating and spotting-in after plating are not permitted.

## 4. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS:

4.1 Responsibility for Inspection: The processing vendor shall supply all  $\emptyset$  samples for vendor's tests and shall be responsible for performing all required tests. Results of such tests shall be reported to the purchaser as required by 4.5. Purchaser reserves the right to sample and to perform any confirmatory testing deemed necessary to ensure that processing conforms to the requirements of this specification.

### 4.2 Classification of Tests:

4.2.1 Acceptance Tests: Tests to determine conformance to all technical requirements of this specification are classified as acceptance tests and shall be performed on each lot.

4.2.2 Preproduction Tests: Tests to determine conformance to all technical requirements of this specification are classified as preproduction tests and shall be performed on the initial shipment of a plated part to a purchaser, when a change in material or processing, or both, requires reapproval as in 4.4.2, and when purchaser deems confirmatory testing to be required.

- 4.2.2.1 For direct U.S. Military procurement, substantiating test data, and when requested, preproduction test material shall be submitted to the cognizant agency as directed by the procuring activity, the contracting officer, or the request for procurement.
- 4.3 Sampling: Shall be not less than the following; a lot shall be all parts of the same part number processed in a continuous operation to the same thickness range and presented for vendor's inspection at one time:
- 4.3.1 Coverage and Appearance: All parts in each lot.
- 4.3.2 Thickness: Three parts from each lot.
- 4.3.3 When plated parts are of such configuration or size as to be not readily adaptable to the specified tests, separate test specimens cleaned and plated with the parts they represent may be used. For adhesion tests, such specimens shall be panels of annealed, low-carbon steel approximately 0.032 x 4 x 1 in. (1 x 100 x 25 mm) and for thickness, hardness, and quality tests shall be panels of the same size and type or shall be bars approximately 0.5 in. (10 mm) in diameter and 4 in. (100 mm) long.
- 4.4 Approval:
- 4.4.1 Plated parts shall be approved by purchaser before parts for production use are supplied, unless such approval be waived by purchaser. Results of tests on production parts shall be essentially equivalent to those on the approved sample parts.
- 4.4.2 Vendor shall use manufacturing procedures, processes, and methods of inspection on production parts which are essentially the same as those used on the approved sample parts. If necessary to make any change in type of equipment or in established composition limits and operating conditions of process solutions, vendor shall submit for reapproval of the process a statement of the proposed changes in processing and, when requested, sample parts, test panels, or both. Production parts plated by the revised procedure shall not be shipped prior to receipt of reapproval.
- 4.5 Reports: The processing vendor shall furnish with each shipment a report stating that the parts have been processed and tested in conformance with the requirements of this specification and that they conform to the technical requirements. This report shall include the purchase order number, AMS 2406G, part number, and quantity.
- 4.6 Resampling and Retesting: If any specimen used in the above tests fails to meet the specified requirements, disposition of the parts may be based on the results of testing three additional specimens for each original nonconforming specimen. Except as permitted by 4.6.1, failure of any retest specimen to meet the specified requirements shall be cause for rejection of the parts represented and no additional testing shall be permitted. Results of all tests shall be reported.