

Bekaert acquires ISO/TS 16949 certification

Bekaert announced that it has been certified according to the ISO/TS 16949 standard for its high quality automotive DLC coatings production plant in Bons-en-Chablais, France. The ISO/TS 16949 standard is designed specifically for suppliers in the automotive industry and is a coveted mark of quality and compliance within the industry's best practices. Customers of companies that have attained ISO/TS 16949 are assured of on-time delivery to specific quality and reliability standards.

To meet ISO/TS16949 standards, a company must develop a quality management system that supports continuous improvement, with the emphasis on eliminating defects and reducing variation and waste in the supply chain. TS16949 applies to the design, development, production throughout the supply chain, and to the installation and servicing of automotive-related products. Most companies still work with national certifications or with the ISO 9000 certification: however, in recent years the market has increasingly demanded a more complete and internationally recognized regulatory framework. In this context, the ISO/TS 16949 provides a worldwide automotive certification, attributed to companies that comply with fixed production norm standards.

Increased and high volume production at Bons-en-Chablais

With the commencement of high-volume production at Bons-en-Chablais, Bekaert introduced a quality management system, receiving full ISO 9001 certification in 2005. With ISO/TS 16949, Bekaert has now further underlined its status, as a reliable and dedicated partner to the automotive industry. The Bons-en-Chablais plant has recently been expanded with a high volume coating equipment for automotive DLC coatings, in order to comply with the increased demand of their automotive customers. Michael De Maegt, General Manager Bekaert DLC, commented, "We are pleased our plant in France complies with the strict regulations of this certification, especially after its recent expansion. Our close cooperation and interaction with customers have allowed us to grow steadily, while continuously improving quality standards and delivery times."

Solid reputation in coatings for automotive and racing applications

In early 2005, Bekaert entered the automotive sector with Dylun Plus automotive coatings, offering the lowest friction coefficient available on the market and based on Bekaert's bestselling Cavidur coatings for racing engine applications. Where parts lack the necessary surface finish, Bekaert can perform the surface engineering prior to the coating process.

Bekaert is regarded as a high-level market player in the automotive industry worldwide and is planning to expand this ISO/TS 16949 certification to its production plant in Raleigh-Durham, NC USA. "Achieving the ISO/TS 16949 for our production plant in France was the first of many milestones in our positioning as a global supplier of automotive DLC coatings. We are equally focused on our development in the US automotive market and we strive to deliver our US customer base the same level of quality assurance and delivery within their time frames. Attaining the same certification for our US plant is the next logical step," De Maegt concludes.