

Press release

30 October 2000

UM increases substantially its FOXROD® copper wire rod capacity

UM Copper, the copper division of n.v. Union Minière s.a. invests in a new installation for the production of its oxygen-free copper wire rod FOXROD®.

In line with its strategy to develop and market products with higher added value, UM Copper commissioned in 1996 an installation for the production of FOXROD®, a product that fits the most stringent requirements of the electrical wire& cable and electronics industry. Facing the growing demand for this product, UM decided today to invest in a new installation for increasing its annual production capacity from 2,500 tonnes up to 15,000 tonnes.

FOXROD®, known in the market as a top-quality product, already proved its technological advantages in e.g. very fine wire for electronics and highly flexible cable. Its specific properties are valued in specialised applications such as fire-resistant cables, robotics, radars, magnetrons, high-end hifi audiocables and superconductors.

This investment will reinforce UM Copper's presence in the strongly growing market of specialised copper products. As far as its copper products are concerned, the markets of the European Union account for 80% of its overall sales.

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PROFILE

Union Minière (UM) is an international metals and materials group, which strives to obtain leadership positions in selected markets. Its activities are centred on 3 business groups: Advanced Materials, Copper & Precious Metals and Zinc. To ensure a rapid response to the market, each business group is divided into several business units and business lines.

The UM Group has industrial operations in Europe, North America, Asia and Africa and serves a global customer base through an international sales network with offices in more than 25 countries.

The underlying principles of UM's strategy across the various business groups are a commitment to technological innovation, operational excellence, recycling and environmental responsibility.

The Group generated a turnover of EUR 3.2 billion in 1999. UM currently employs some 8,000 people.

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