

**BANK OF BOTSWANA**  
**Press Release**

**NEW BOTSWANA COIN**

**The Bank of Botswana has received enquiries from various media houses on the new coin, which was launched by His Excellency the President on February 27, 2014. For public education purposes, the Bank's general response on the issues raised is as follows:**

**Public Reaction**

There will always be different views and/or reactions expressed by individuals whenever a new or different product is introduced. However, as the public gets more familiar with and used to the new coin, they will appreciate the new coin as an improvement on the old coin series.

**Reasons for Change**

The Bank adheres to international best practice for central banks where currency is periodically reviewed taking into account changes in technology, security features, counterfeiting trends, inflation, and cost of currency production as well as social, political, and economic circumstances. In the design and production of the new family of coin, the Bank utilised the latest technology in design and production in order to procure the best currency for Botswana in a cost effective manner.

**Shapes**

Coin processing is increasingly being automated, and round coin is easier for machines to handle than other shapes; hence almost all the new coin with the exception of the 5 thebe and 25 thebe are round. The shapes of 5 thebe and the 25 thebe were retained to enable the visually impaired to differentiate them from the 10 thebe and 50 thebe. Other distinguishing characteristics for the benefit of the visually impaired are the edge types where the 5 thebe, 25 thebe and 1 Pula have smooth edges, the 10 thebe, 50 thebe and 2 Pula have continuous serrations and the 5 Pula has interrupted serrations.

**Metal and Colour**

The colour of a coin is determined by the type of metal used in minting such coin or the plating material used. Traditionally, all coins were made of either pure metals such as copper or zinc, and later on, alloys such as brass, bronze, cupro-nickel became popular. With the general increase in prices of metals over the past several years, especially copper, which constitutes about 75 percent of most alloys used in coin production; many central banks have, on cost consideration, switched to plated steel. Some of the outgoing Botswana coin is still made of these expensive alloys. All the new coin is made of steel with the white (silver coloured) coin or part thereof, plated with nickel, the yellow ones or part thereof with brass and the brown part of the 2 Pula is plated with bronze.

### **Cost**

Increase in financial transactions necessitates minting of more coin on an on-going basis regardless of whether it is new or old coin. The cost of coin is therefore, unavoidable.

### **Procurement**

The Bank follows normal procurement procedures where reputable companies are asked to tender for the production and supply of either banknotes or coin. The Bank procures directly from the security printers (banknotes) and mints (coin). The new coin was minted and supplied by the Royal Canadian Mint.

### **Defects**

While the Bank believes that the new coin is made to the highest standards, there may be a few defective coins that escaped quality control and may inadvertently be released into circulation. However, so far, there has been no evidence of any defects except instances of apparent deliberate mutilation of the coin. Any member of the public coming across defective coin is requested to surrender it to the Bank for a full refund. In the same way, members of the public are reminded that deliberate mutilation of either banknotes or coin is violation of the Bank of Botswana Act (CAP 55:01), which carries a fine of up to P2 500.

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For further information, please contact:

Mr. Andrew Sesinyi

Head of Communications

Tel: 3606083