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## ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

The effect of surface pre-conditioning treatments on the local composition of Zrbased conversion coatings formed on aluminium alloys

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- Field Emission Auger Electron Spectroscopy was used for local elemental analysis.
- Acid and alkaline pre-conditioning treatments induces Cu-enrichment on AA6014.
- A Cu-containing Zr-based conversion treatment for aluminium alloys was evaluated.
- Cu-rich areas enhance the local formation of Zr-based conversion films on AA6014.
- Thermal pre-conditioning treatments inhibits the formation of Zr-based coatings.

## Abstract

This study investigates the effect of different alkaline, acidic and thermal preconditioning treatments applied to different Al alloy surfaces. The obtained results are compared to the characteristics of Zr-based conversion coatings that were subsequently generated on top of these substrates. Focus is laid on typical elemental distributions on the sample surfaces, in particular on the amount of precipitated functional additives such as Cu species that are present in the substrate matrix as well as in the conversion bath solutions. To this aim, Field Emission Auger Electron spectra, depth profiles and surface maps with superior local resolution were acquired and compared to scanning electron microscopy images of the sample. The results show how de-alloying processes, which occur at and around intermetallic particles in the Al matrix during typical industrial alkaline or acidic cleaning procedures, provide a significant source of crystallization cores for any following coating processes. This is in particular due for Cu-species, as the resulting local Cu structures on the surface strongly affect the film formation and compositions of state-of-the-art Zr-based films. Download English Version:

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