

## Actions to prevent currency counterfeiting in Mexico

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### **Cooperation Agreement with the Attorney General's Office**

In order to form a united front to prevent currency counterfeiting, in November 2001, Banco de México and the Attorney General's Office (now FGR) signed a General Cooperation Agreement that was renewed 10 years later (November 2011). Under this agreement both institutions commit themselves to:

- undertaking joint actions to combat crimes against the security of money supply;
- undertaking joint training activities;
- developing programs to prevent currency counterfeiting and alteration or any other crime that puts the legal right of money supply at risk; and
- undertaking actions of common interest to both institutions within their respective powers.

One of the first actions from this agreement was the creation of the "PGR (now FGR) - Banxico Steering Group", which is responsible for implementing training and prevention activities and making a strategic analysis of the behavior of currency counterfeiting in Mexico.

Within the Attorney General's Office, the areas involved in this group are the Offices of the Deputy Attorney General for Legal and International Affairs, Organized Crime Investigations; Regional Control, Criminal Procedures and Protection; Human Rights, Care for Victims and Community Services; the Federal Judicial Police; the National Centre for Analysis, Planning and Intelligence against Organized Crime, and the Directorates General for Coordinating Forensic Services and Social Communication. On behalf of Banco de México, the areas involved are the Administration, Issuance, Legal and Institutional Relations Directorates General.

As part of this agreement, Banco de México gives training courses to Public Prosecutor's Offices and the Judicial Police on paper currency identification at the Professional Training Institute (ICAP, for its acronym in Spanish) of the Attorney General's Office, the National Institute of Criminal Sciences, and the Bank's own facilities.

Furthermore, as part of the same agreement, in August 2012, the Prosecutor's Office Specializing in Investigating Currency Counterfeiting and Alteration was created within the Attorney General's Office as the body directly responsible for receiving reports on counterfeiting from Banco de México.

## **Federal Police**

Since 2007, the Bank has collaborated, with the Federal Police in many training programs. During the first two months of 2013, around 200 staff from this government agency received training from Banco de México in “Paper Currency Authentication”, through both in situ and distance courses.

On March 2012, within the former Federal Public Security Ministry (today known as National Security Commission), a Scientific Division was created, which has a Graphology, Documents and Coins Unit. The unit has 21 specialists dedicated, among other tasks, to determining the authenticity of paper money.

## **Other offices of the Department of Justice**

In order to strengthen inter-institutional coordination and step up the fight against currency counterfeiting at the federal level, Banco de México has participated in the XVIII and XXVII Plenary Meetings of the National Conference on Prosecution of Justice held in 2007 and 2012, respectively. On both meetings, the Bank offered training courses to both Attorney Generals and Prosecutors of all states on how to identify national and foreign paper money.

As a result, the country’s attorney generals and prosecutors became more aware of this crime and its implications for Mexico and committed themselves to support the federal authorities by reporting all cases of currency counterfeiting at the state level.

Between September 2012 and March 2013, around 1,000 public officers received courses in 13 states.

## **Public dissemination**

Banco de México and the Attorney General’s Office have launched joint prevention campaigns through radio and TV spots and by distributing flyers and posters.

In order to receive information related to banknotes and coins, Banco de México has made the following toll-free number available to the public: 800-BANXICO (800 226 9426), an email: [dinero@banxico.org.mx](mailto:dinero@banxico.org.mx), and the profile “Divulgación Banxico” on Facebook.

## **Results**

These joint efforts on behalf of Banco de México and the Attorney General’s Office have produced the following notable results:

- The dismantling in 2003 of a printing press located in Xalostoc, in the municipality of Ecatepec, State of Mexico, where counterfeit coins were being produced, as well as the arrest of two people who were each sentenced to 5 years in prison for manufacturing and storing counterfeit money.
- In 2005, the dismantling of a printing press that produced counterfeit banknotes and other official documents located in San Juan del Río, Querétaro. One person was arrested.

- Three house searches in December 2005. Six people were arrested and material and equipment related to the counterfeiting of 100 US dollar banknotes identified as "22301" were seized. The criminal network produced them in Guadalajara and distributed them in California. Over a period of three years they had introduced an equivalent of 8.1 million dollars into the USA, which, at the time, represented the country's largest amount of counterfeit notes in circulation.
- The arrest by the Federal Police of four people and the seizure in November 2012 of material presumably related to the counterfeiting of 50-peso polymer banknotes. The initial notes were seized in June 2010. Over the next two years, the counterfeiters put four different types of notes into circulation, each of which was manufactured significantly better than the former one. 220,000 counterfeit notes were eventually seized. Among the people detained was the suspected leader of a criminal ring who was presumably responsible for both designing the counterfeit notes and negotiating their sale, Juan Manuel Oropeza Olmos, also known as "El Chilango", who is an expert in printing systems, including offset and screen printing.
- The dismantling by the Federal Police of a cell dedicated to the development and distribution of false pieces of the denomination of \$ 500.00, after carrying out the search of four properties in December 2015, two in Nezahualcóyotl, State of Mexico and, two in Mexico City (one in Iztapalapa and one in the Morelos neighborhood), which resulted in the arrest and detention of: Benjamín DÍAZ PRADO (head of a cell), Susana Ivonne TORRES SOSA, Francisco Javier BELLO VÁZQUEZ and Rocío Guadalupe RAMÍREZ ÁLVAREZ .
- In May 23, 2018, the search warrant for two properties located in the Bellavista Housing Unit, Iztapalapa, where the arrest was executed of Noel OLVERA GARCÍA, José Alberto GARCÍA SÁNCHEZ, Leonardo Alberto PALOMO VÁZQUEZ and Aarón Andrey CRUZ MACÍAS.
- Execution of a search warrant for 7 properties and the detention of 9 people, in December 2018. 8 of these people them linked to prosecution for crimes of counterfeiting currency (storage, distribution and production); and organized crime Ricardo DELGADILLO UBALDO. Felipe Angeles, Oscar ROSALES VÁZQUEZ, Jorge DELADILLO UBALDO, Lorena Anay MARTÍNEZ MENDOZA, Selene Berenice DELGADILLO CUEVAS. Río Churubusco, Dulce Karen RODRÍGUEZ ALFARO, Jenifer JAIMES ORTEGA and Jessica Marisol MEDINA NAVA.