

Welcome to the first edition of Willings Services Limited fact files on the counterfeiting of the fake £1 coin.

Firstly, we must point out that with over twenty years experience in repairing, servicing and reprogramming electronic coin validators, we would not consider ourselves to be an experts on the authentication of genuine or counterfeit coins.

We would however consider ourselves to be the UK's leading experts on the repair, servicing and reprogramming of electronic coin validator.

The information contained within these files may not be correct. Therefore if you have any information on counterfeit coins or find any errors in our information, then please send your comments to E-newsletter@willings.co.uk.

With over 20 years knowledge in the vending industry dealing with coin validators and counterfeit coins, its very difficult to know were to begin. So we have decided to start with a very brief history of the NRI electronic coin validator.

The introduction of the first electronic coin validators by NRI back in 1972 lead the way in the fight against counterfeit coins within the vending industry. Compared to the mechanical coin validators which could only measure the weight, thickness and diameter of a coin, the electronic coin validators could now also measure an electronic signature.

The late seventies/early eighties saw the introduction of the first coin validator with change tubes. However, it did not take the counterfeiters very long to realized that if they came up with a coin the matched the electronic signature of a genuine coin, then they would be able to convert counterfeits into real money.

So began a battle between the counterfeiters and the coin validator manufactures and over the years the coin validator measuring systems improved, unfortunately so did the counterfeits.



Since its formation in 1989 WSL has been at the forefront of the fight against counterfeit coins. Even in these early years WSL realized that there were two basic types of counterfeit coins, those targeted at the vending industry and those targeted at retail outlets.

For those of you who are not familiar with the vending industry it is worth noting how vast it has become, the following are just a few of the many sectors in which vending can be split into :-

- Snack vending sometimes know as beverage includes hot and cold drinks, food, and snacks, etc..
- Transportation, excluding parking but including railways, underground networks, busses and congestion charge payment equipment, etc..
- Parking, which includes fixed and variable fee pay machines, pay and display machines, pay on foot systems, etc..
- Amusement, excluding bingo halls, betting and casino but including fruit machines, kiddy rides, etc..
- Gaming, such as bingo halls, betting and casino, etc..
- And one of the most recent sectors, self service till in super markets.

From just this small list it's obvious that some sectors would be more prone to targeted crime than other.

For the purpose of our fact files when we use the words "vending industry" it could mean any one or all of the sectors within the vending industry.

Finally, before we begin it must be noted that until September 2008 all of the counterfeit coins we have collected came from within two sectors of the vending industry. The announcement in September 2008 by the BBC and a number of national newspapers of the Royal Mints random sampling tests changed this.

For the first time in WSL history a third sector of the industry had reported a counterfeit problem and on a scale never seen before.



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- Electronic coin validators;
- Electronic change-givers;
- Cashless payment systems;
- Coin validator computer interfaces;
- Escrows;
- Hoppers;
- Anti pin systems;
- Steppers
- Timers;
- Power supplies;
- Displays;
- Mechanical coin validators;
- Tokens.