



“The Galvanised Moke – a Misnomer?”

by Tony Cripps.

1. Introduction

As is well known, the body shell complete of a Moke is not factory-galvanised, and especially not hot dipped galvanised. A well-known Mini and Moke business once went to the trouble and expense of hot dip galvanising a fabricated Moke body, and the resulting distortion and weight increase made it unsaleable. Why then are late model Australian Mokes often referred to as having a “gal body”?

2. Zinc Coated Body Panels

For the facelift model Australian Mokes of 1980 onwards, it is the sheet steel stock which is galvanised prior to stamping, welding and metal finishing. However, the term “galvanised”, while accurately reflecting the protection offered by galvanic action, is usually used to describe the hot dipped process such as that used for outdoor furniture. For a Moke, the sheet steel is coated with a very thin layer of zinc using a hot dip process.

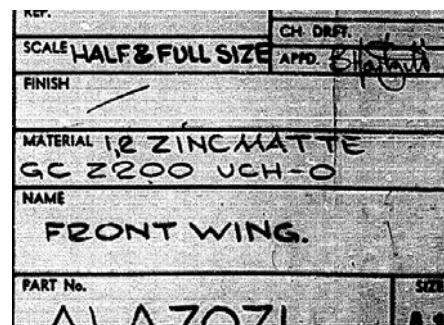
That the panels were made from Galvabond steel has often been repeated in various online articles but is unfortunately incorrect. Galvabond, although a zinc coating, has a speckled appearance and not used for Moke body production.

The facelift Moke panels were in fact made from “Zincmatte GC Z200 UCH-0” which is a form of coated steel like Galvabond but with additional treatment to give a uniform matte finish suitable for painting. It is probably known these days as “Zincanneal” and you can buy it from industrial suppliers for body repair work.

3. History

The confusion probably begins in 1975 where a factory sales brochure mentions that Moke bodies were painted using a “new electrophoretic rust exhibiting system”.

This is in fact an electro-coating of primer, similar in some ways to modern day powder coating, but it is a wet paint electro-deposition. It is not a zinc coating. This process continued to be mentioned in the sales brochures up to about mid-1979. The 1980 facelift brochure doesn’t even mention the electro-coat primer nor the “gal body” or zinc coated panels in the list of facelift features although the official press release whereupon it is said “The introduction of “Zinc Matt” body panels “giving vastly improved body corrosion protection and will ensure that the 1980 Moke lasts the century out”.



In a recent publication that appeared online, it is incorrectly claimed that the Zincmatte material was introduced for body panels in June 1978. This is incorrect. At this time, the change to the body parts was actually that seams and joints were painted with zinc rich primer prior to welding and before going into the electrocoat primer plant.

The idea of using Zincmatte for Moke body panels actually dates back to the development of the 4x4 Moke from 1977. Many new features were designed during the expensive 4x4 development and to justify the cost of this program, they were carried over to the new facelift model for 1980. The change to panels for production models was specified in the technical drawings in May 1979 and introduced for production for all models of the Facelift Moke in Nov 1979.

4. So is it a “misnomer?”

So, is it correct to say one has a “gal body” Moke? Yes. Zincmatte is a process that provides galvanic protection to the underlying steel and is a form of galvanising. Even painting a steel sheet with zinc rich paint is a form of galvanising. For a Moke, most people are aware that the term means that the panels are zinc coated prior to assembly.



Tony Cripps, May 2022