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Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2009

Consumption of primary antimony in the first quarter of 2009 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be slightly lower than that in the fourth quarter of 2008 and 41% lower than that in the first quarter of 2008. During the first 2 months of 2009, antimony imports totaled 3,350 metric tons (t), compared with a total of 4,780 t for the comparable period of 2008. During the first 2 months of 2009, China was the leading supplier of antimony metal and antimony oxide to the United States.

Antimony prices remained in a fairly narrow range during the first quarter of 2009. The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price for antimony metal started the first quarter in the range of $1.90 to $1.95 per pound, rose to a high of $2.05 to $2.10 per pound by early February, and finished March at $2.00 to $2.05 per pound.

Unlike many other metals worldwide, whose production was adversely affected by the global economic turmoil, antimony output increased substantially in 2008. According to statistics from the China Nonferrous Metals Industry Association, China produced 183,000 t of refined antimony and 94,360 t of antimony-in-concentrate in 2008, up by 20% and 17%, respectively, compared with production in 2007. Hunan and Guangxi Provinces continued to rank as the top two Provinces by tonnage output in 2008. Hunan Province produced 72% of China’s antimony output, an increase from 68% in 2007, mostly owing to the startup of numerous greenfield operations in response to antimony’s price surge in recent years. Chongqing, Jiangxi, and Ningxia were also emerging regions for antimony output in 2008 (China Metal Market—Precious & Minor Metals, 2009).

The Government of China announced changes in its export quotas for antimony, indium, molybdenum, tin, and tungsten for 2009. The 2009 export quota for antimony and antimony products was 58,700 t, compared with 59,900 t in 2008 (Platts Metals Week, 2008).

Anchor Resources Ltd. (Sydney, New South Wales, Australia) announced that a successful negotiation of an access agreement with a local landowner allowed exploration to start at its Bielsdown antimony project in New South Wales (the old Wild Cattle Creek antimony mine). A drilling program proposal was submitted to the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (Anchor Resources Ltd., 2009).

Update

On May 15, 2009, the Platts Metals Week price for antimony was $2.10 to $2.20 per pound.

References Cited

Anchor Resources Ltd., 2009, Drilling proposal for Bielsdown antimony project: Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, Anchor Resources Ltd. press release, April 6, 3 p. (Accessed April 24, 2009, at http://www.anchorresources.com/appendixes/original/AHR_ASX_Release_20090406.pdf.)
China Metal Market—Precious & Minor Metals, 2009, Overview of China’s antimony and indium production in 2008: China Metal Market—Precious & Minor Metals, no. 108, March, p. 1.
Platts Metals Week, 2008, China’s antimony export quota down: Platts Metals Week, v. 79, no. 42, October 20, p. 15.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS[1]

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2008		2009
	Year[p]	Fourth quarter	First quarter
Production:			
Primary smelter	--	--	--
Secondary	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:	29,000	6,700 r	3,350 2
Ore and concentrate	163	43	23 2
Metal	7,050	1,590 r	510 2
Oxide[3]	21,800	5,060 r	2,810 2
Exports:	4,850	816 r	241 2
Metal, alloys, and scrap (gross weight)	1,290	331 r	85 2
Oxide[3]	3,560	485 r	156 2
Consumption of primary antimony	7,980	1,560	1,540
Price: Average cents per pound[4]	279.54	269.23	199.75
Stocks, end of period[5]	XX	951	863

[p]Preliminary. [r]Revised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. XX Not applicable.
-- Zero.
[1]Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.
[2]Data for January and February only; March data were not available at time of publication.
[3]Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.
[4]Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.
[5]Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES[1]

(Metric tons, antimony content)

	2008[2]	2009[2]
Class of material	Fourth quarter	First quarter
Oxide	549	475
Other[3]	402	388
Total	951	863

[1]Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.
[2]Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who held 52% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2007.
[3]Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3

CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY [1, 2]

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2008 Year[p]	2008 Fourth quarter	2009 First quarter
Oxide	7,670	1,490	1,460
Other[3]	307	69	81
Total	7,980	1,560	1,540

[p]Preliminary.

[1]Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

[2]Estimated 100% coverage based quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 73% of the total antimony in 2007.

[3]Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4

CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL PRODUCED [1]

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2008 Year[p]	2008 Fourth quarter	2009 First quarter
Metal[2]	W	W	W
Nonmetal[3]	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:			
Plastics	190	41	47
Other[4]	485	20	19
Total	675	62	66
Reported consumption	2,390	441	500
Total consumption[5]	7,980	1,560	1,540

[p]Preliminary. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption."

[1]Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

[2]Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

[3]Includes ammunition, antimonial lead, bearing metals and bearings, cable coverings, castings, sheet and pipe, and solder.

[4]Includes ammunition primers, pigments, ceramics and glass, and plastics.

[5]Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 74% of the total antimony in 2007.

TABLE 5

U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY[1]

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2008 Year[p, 2]	2008 December	2008 Fourth quarter[2]	2009 January	2009 February	2009 January-February
Ore and concentrate:						
Bolivia	88	--	23	11	--	11
Other	76	--	20	--	12	12
Total	164	--	43	11	12	23
Metal:						
China	5,190	321	1,200	92	149	241
Mexico	865	43	212	61	52	113
Peru	433	18	73	36	55	91
Other	571	66	104	60	5	65
Total	7,050	447	1,590	249	261	510
Oxide:[3]						
Belgium	1,590	38	166	51	60	111
China	12,100	1,080	3,360	1,210	792	2,000
Mexico	7,640	341	1,450	289	324	614
Other	462	30	93	45	41	87
Total	21,800	1,490	5,060	1,600	1,220	2,810
Grand total	29,000	1,930	6,700	1,860	1,490	3,350
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	14	--	--	--	--	--

[p]Preliminary. -- Zero.

[1]Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

[2]May include revisions to prior months data.

[3]Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.