

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE SECOND QUARTER 2010

Consumption of primary antimony in the second quarter of 2010 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be 4% lower than that in the first quarter of 2010 and 5% higher than that in the second quarter of 2009. During the first 5 months of 2010, antimony imports totaled 10,700 metric tons, 45% more than those during the comparable period of 2009. China was the leading supplier of antimony metal and antimony oxide to the United States in the first 5 months of 2010.

Antimony prices generally rose during the second quarter of 2010. The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price for antimony metal started the second quarter in the range of \$3.08 to \$3.25 per pound, increased moderately during the quarter, and finished June at \$3.70 to \$3.80 per pound.

The Chinese Government shut down about 100 antimony smelters based in Lengshuijiang City, Hunan Province, between March 20 and March 31, 2010. The Government action was aimed at closing illegal mines and curbing pollution. The city has been a major source of antimony ore for 113 years and now accounts for 60% of the world total of antimony output (China Metal Market—Precious & Minor Metals, 2010).

The price of antimony has risen by 53% in 2010. Most of the factors affecting price in the past year have taken place in China, the world's leading antimony producer. China's output

represented more than one-half of global antimony consumption, estimated to be about 110,000 to 120,000 metric tons per year. A drought in the southwest area of China contributed to tightening supplies by reducing smelter output in Yunnan and Guizhou Provinces, and an accident at the Hsikwangshan Twinkling Star Antimony Co. in October 2009 reduced output there. The recent shutdowns in Lengshuijiang City were expected to further reduce antimony production. The cumulative effect of these output reductions may result in increased prices (Sim, 2010).

Update

On September 15, 2010, the Platts Metals Week dealer price for antimony was \$4.75 to \$4.85 per pound.

References Cited

- China Metal Market—Precious & Minor Metals, 2010, About 100 illegal antimony enterprises in Hunan Lengshuijiang City shut down : China Metal Market—Precious & Minor Metals, no. 122, May, p. 9.
- Sim, Glenys, 2010, Antimony prices in China may extend record on supply outlook from closures: Bloomberg.com, May 13, 1 p. (Accessed October 7, 2010, at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2010-05-13/antimony-prices-in-china-may-extend-record-on-supply-outlook-from-closures>.)

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2009 ^P	2010	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Production:			
Primary smelter	W	W	W
Secondary	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:	20,200	5,720	4,950 ²
Ore and concentrate	167	24	57 ²
Metal	4,750	966	1,150 ²
Oxide ³	15,200	4,730	3,740 ²
Exports:	2,260	521	401 ²
Ore and concentrate	170	31	26 ²
Metal, alloys, waste and scrap	385	68	62 ²
Antimony oxide ³	1,710	422	313 ²
Consumption of primary antimony	7,230	1,970	1,900
Price, average, cents per pound ⁴	235.55	294.03	384.67
Stocks, end of period ⁵	1,480	1,500 ^r	1,460

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

²Data for April and May only; June data were not available at time of publication.

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

⁴Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

⁵Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2010	
	First quarter	Second quarter
Oxide	937 ^r	906
Other ³	564	557
Total	1,500 ^r	1,460

^rRevised.

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

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents that consumed 42% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2008.

³Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2009 ^p	2010	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Oxide	4,510	1,420	1,370
Other ³	2,730	552	525
Total	7,230	1,970	1,900

^pPreliminary.

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

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 29% of the total antimony in 2008.

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

TABLE 4
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL PRODUCED^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2009 ^p	2010	
		First quarter	Second quarter
Metal ²	W	W	W
Nonmetal ³	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:			
Plastics	164	104	108
Other ⁴	69	25	22
Total	233	129	130
Reported consumption	1,930	600	548
Total consumption ⁵	7,230	1,970	1,900

^pPreliminary. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption."

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

²Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

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

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

⁵Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 29% of the total antimony in 2008.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2010					
	2009	First quarter ²	March	April	May	January-May
Ore and concentrate:						
Bolivia	83	24	12	24	--	48
Other	84	--	--	--	33	33
Total	167	24	12	24	33	81
Metal:						
Australia	95	77	77	--	--	77
Bolivia	58	18	--	--	--	18
China	3,040	672	167	559	464	1,700
Mexico	1,170	192	9	15	45	252
Peru	212	--	--	--	--	--
Vietnam	119	--	--	40	--	40
Other	54	7	3	29	2	38
Total	4,750	966	256	643	510	2,120
Oxide:³						
Belgium	1,540	576	195	217	115	908
Bolivia	1,610	166	--	27	--	193
China	9,310	3,250	1,660	1,420	1,560	6,230
France	378	129	--	--	--	129
Japan	151	94	53	10	12	116
Mexico	2,020	339	106	123	219	681
Netherlands	128	111	79	--	--	111
Taiwan	95	46	8	16	16	78
Other	1	17	--	--	--	17
Total	15,200	4,730	2,100	1,820	1,930	8,470
Grand total	20,200	5,720	2,370	2,480	2,470	10,700
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	11	9	9	--	3	12

-- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to prior months data.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.