

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2012

Consumption of primary antimony in the first quarter of 2012 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be 3% less than that in the fourth quarter of 2011 and 43% less than that in the first quarter of 2011.

The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price range for antimony metal started January at \$5.50 to \$5.90 per pound, decreased to \$5.20 to \$5.70 per pound during mid-January, then increased to \$5.70 to \$5.85 per pound in mid-March.

GeoProMining Ltd. (Moscow, Russia), a privately held company, operated exploration projects and mines in several countries including Armenia, Georgia, and Russia. The focus of its activity was on mine acquisition and exploration for antimony, copper, gold, molybdenum, and silver. In 2011, GeoProMining was the leading antimony producer outside of China, with most of its production coming from Russia. Antimony accounted for about 25% of the company's total revenue. In 2011, the company produced 6,350 metric tons (t) of antimony and planned to increase output by 30% by 2014. GeoProMining produced a concentrate containing 66% antimony and shipped it via the Magadan seaport in Russia's Far East to customers in China (Khrennikov, 2012).

U.S. Antimony Corp. (USAC) (Thompson Falls, MT) announced that it had completed the construction of its delayed Corral Blanco flotation mill project in Guanajuata, Mexico, and was ready to start production. The flotation mill has the capacity to produce 150 metric tons per day of 50% to 60% antimony-content concentrate, which also contained gold and silver. USAC transported ore from its nearby Los Juarez Mine to feed

the new flotation mill. Concentrate from Corral Blanco was expected to be transported to USAC's Madero sulfide and oxide smelter in Coahuila State in northern Mexico to produce antimony trioxide for use in catalysts, ceramics, and flame retardants (Watts, 2012).

In China, three antimony smelters in Hechi and Nanning Prefectures in Guangxi Province, received notices from the municipal governments to upgrade their smelting and wastewater treatment facilities as a result of a cadmium pollution leak. One antimony smelter in Nanning reportedly elected to shut down its facilities because they were outdated, and the operator could not afford the upgrade (Mining Journal, 2012).

Update

On May 24, 2012, the Platts Metals Week dealer price range for antimony was \$5.90 to \$6.20 per pound.

References Cited

- Khrennikov, Ilya, 2012, Russian antimony miner for iPads looks at IPO to challenge China: Bloomberg, March 5, 2 p. (Accessed March 7, 2012, at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-05/russian-antimony-miner-for-ipads-looks-at-ipo-to-challenge-china.html>.)
- Mining Journal, 2012, Minor metals—A mixed month—Buying interest from some regions seems to be growing: Mining Journal, March 9, p. 13.
- Watts, Mark, 2012, US Antimony Corp. completes Mexico flotation mill: Industrial Minerals, January 10, 1 p. (Accessed January 13, 2012, via <http://www.indmin.com>.)

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2011 ^P		2012
	Year	4th quarter	1st quarter
Imports for consumption:	23,500	5,470 ^r	6,020
Ore and concentrate	288	94 ^r	138
Metal	5,040	713 ^r	1,250
Oxide ²	18,200	4,670 ^r	4,630
Exports:	4,250	902 ^r	873
Ore and concentrate	83	5	8
Metal, alloys, waste and scrap	581	143 ^r	124
Antimony oxide ²	3,590	754 ^r	741
Consumption of primary antimony	9,970 ^r	2,590 ^r	2,500
Price, average, cents per pound ³	650.30 ^r	625.14	533.00
Stocks, end of period ⁴	1,220 ^r	1,220 ^r	1,190

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

³Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

⁴Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2011 ^P	2012
	4th quarter ^r	1st quarter
Oxide	659	631
Other ²	557	563
Total	1,220	1,190

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2011 ^p		2012
	Year	4th quarter ^f	1st quarter
Oxide	9,380	2,370	2,320
Other ²	591	217	178
Total	9,970	2,590	2,500

^pPreliminary. ^fRevised.

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

²Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL PRODUCED¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2010	2011 ^{r,p}				1st quarter– 4th quarter	2012 1st quarter
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter		
Metal ²	2,190	646	622	699	742	2,710	729
Nonmetal ³	3,540	920	901	869	971	3,660	664
Flame-retardants:							
Plastics	2,610	764	807	709	732	3,010	707
Other ⁴	576	138	140	166	147	591	158
Total	3,180	902	947	875	879	3,600	865
Grand total	8,910	2,470	2,470	2,440	2,590	9,970	2,500

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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.

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

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2011			2012			
	Year ²	December	4th quarter ²	January	February	March	January– March
Ore and concentrate:							
China	56	--	--	12	28	--	40
Italy	223	37	89	19	20	49	88
Other	9	--	6	--	10	--	10
Total	288	37	94	31	57	49	138
Metal:							
Belgium	94	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bolivia	67	15	15	--	--	15	15
China	3,620	180	456	303	310	354	967
Hong Kong	57	--	--	20	--	--	20
India	607	50	160	60	80	40	180
Japan	97	4	4	15	--	--	15
Mexico	309	12	23	--	20	20	40
United Kingdom	142	--	16	16	--	--	16
Other	44	--	40	--	--	--	--
Total	5,040	261	713	414	410	429	1,250
Oxide:³							
Belgium	1,750	111	361	127	141	134	402
Bolivia	1,050	--	322	197	99	116	412
China	12,900	1,480	3,360	1,000	1,610	724	3,340
France	31	16	31	16	--	75	91
Japan	303	13	26	43	65	26	134
Mexico	1,010	61	227	69	48	106	223
Taiwan	142	16	39	8	8	16	32
Thailand	973	--	299	--	--	--	--
Total	18,200	1,700	4,670	1,460	1,970	1,200	4,630
Grand total	23,500	2,000	5,470	1,910	2,440	1,670	6,020
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	47	--	3	2	3	6	11

-- Zero.

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

²May include revisions to prior month's data.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.