

Mineral Industry Surveys

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BAUXITE AND ALUMINA IN THE SECOND QUARTER 2016

Imports of crude and dried bauxite in the second quarter of 2016 were 1.42 million metric tons (Mt), 8% less than those in the first quarter of 2016 and 41% less than those in the second quarter of 2015 (fig. 1). Jamaica (73%) and Brazil (25%) were the leading sources of crude and dried bauxite imports in the second quarter of 2016. Guinea did not supply any bauxite imports during the second quarter; during 2015, Guinea was the source of 23% of crude and dried bauxite imports (table 1). The decrease in bauxite imports in the first and second quarters of 2016 is attributable to the temporary shutdown of Alcoa Inc.'s 2.3-million-metric-ton-per-year (Mt/yr) alumina refinery in Point Comfort, TX, in the second quarter of 2016 (Alcoa Inc., 2016). Alcoa operates a bauxite mine in Guinea that supplied the refinery in Texas.

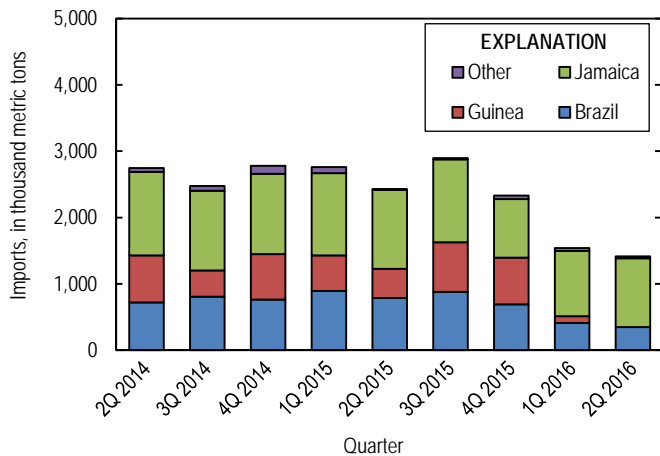


Figure 1. Quarterly imports of crude and dried bauxite from the second quarter 2014 through the second quarter 2016. Sources: Jamaica Bauxite Institute and U.S. Census Bureau.

Imports of alumina during the second quarter of 2016 were 305,000 metric tons (t), 16% more than those in the first quarter of 2016 but 23% less than those in the second quarter of 2015 (fig. 2). The leading sources of imported alumina during the

second quarter of 2016 were Brazil (47%), Australia (31%), and Suriname (7%).

Exports of alumina during the second quarter of 2016 were 366,000 t, 13% less than those in the first quarter of 2016 and 34% less than those in the second quarter of 2015 (fig. 2). The leading destinations for alumina exported during the second quarter of 2016 were Iceland (33%), Russia and the United Arab Emirates (17% each). Decreased alumina exports are attributable to the shutdown of the Point Comfort refinery.

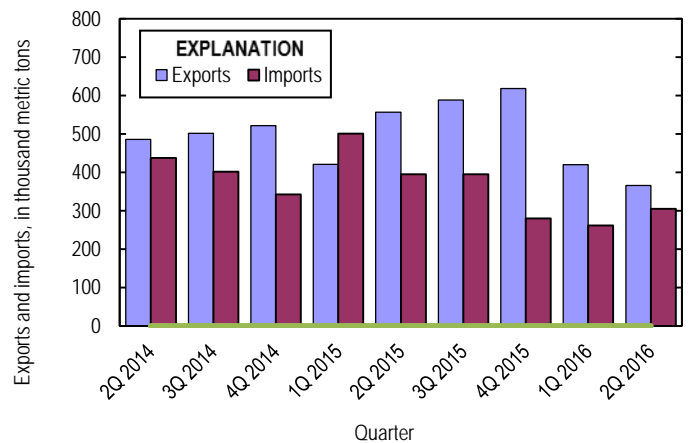


Figure 2. Alumina exports and imports from the second quarter 2014 through the second quarter 2016. Sources: Jamaica Bauxite Institute and U.S. Census Bureau.

Update

On August 1, Sherwin Alumina Co. LLC announced that it would temporarily shut down its 1.65-Mt/yr alumina refinery in Gregory, TX, in September when bauxite stocks are exhausted. Sherwin cited a dispute with its bauxite supplier, Noranda Aluminum Holding Corp., for the cutoff of its supply and shutdown of the refinery. Sherwin had previously filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on January 11, 2016, citing low alumina prices. On February 8, 2016, Noranda also filed for

bankruptcy protection, citing low alumina prices as well as losses on sales of bauxite to Sherwin from its mine in St. Ann, Jamaica. (See Bauxite and Alumina in the Fourth Quarter 2015.) The companies had been contesting terms of a bauxite supply contract in the bankruptcy proceedings without coming to a long-term agreement (Lim, 2016; Matyi, 2016; Sherwin Alumina Co. LLC, 2016).

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TABLE 1
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CRUDE AND DRIED BAUXITE¹

(Metric tons)

Country	2015	2016		
		1st quarter	2d quarter	1st quarter– 2d quarter
Imports (for consumption):				
Brazil	3,250,000	411,000 ^r	348,000	759,000
Guinea	2,430,000	101,000	--	101,000
Jamaica ²	4,560,000	985,000	1,040,000	2,030,000
Other	169,000	44,100	28,500	72,600
Total	10,400,000	1,540,000^r	1,420,000	2,960,000
Exports:				
Canada	2,740	750	1,210	1,960
Mexico	--	19	--	19
Other	632	171	226	397
Total	3,370	940	1,430	2,370

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Source: Jamaica Bauxite Institute.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CALCINED BAUXITE, BY COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons)

Country	2016							
	2015		1st quarter		2d quarter		1st quarter– 2d quarter	
	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other
Imports (for consumption):								
Australia	--	117,000	--	48,000	--	49,500	--	97,500
Brazil	40	--	547	--	--	--	547	--
China	56,100	14,700	11,300	2,210	13,800	3,390	25,100	5,600
Greece	--	26,400	--	--	--	--	--	--
Guyana	35,500	260,000	11,100	58,500	5,330	98,500	16,400	157,000
Turkey	15,500	--	--	--	--	25,000	--	25,000
Other	165	1,080	461	50	25	323	486	373
Total	107,000	419,000	23,400	109,000	19,100	177,000	42,500	286,000
Exports:								
Canada	5,580	--	1,110	--	1,230	--	2,340	--
China	2,040	--	3,510	--	3,810	--	7,320	--
Mexico	135	555	20	27	2,740	--	2,760	27
Other	548	90	157 ^r	26	56	46	213	72
Total	8,310	645	4,800^r	53	7,840	46	12,600	99

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF ALUMINA¹

(Metric tons, calcined equivalent)

Country	2015	2016		
		1st quarter	2d quarter	1st quarter– 2d quarter
Imports (for consumption):²				
Australia	672,000	88,100	95,800	184,000
Brazil	401,000	72,000	142,000	214,000
Jamaica ³	37,700	48,600	4,270	52,900
Suriname	244,000	15,000	19,900	34,900
Venezuela	53,100	--	--	--
Other	165,000	38,600	43,400	82,000
Total	1,570,000	262,000	305,000	568,000
Exports:⁴				
Canada	809,000	59,500	8,710	68,300
China	107,000	37,200	986	38,200
Egypt	422,000	30,000	5	30,000
Iceland	121,000	118,000	119,000	238,000
Mexico	87,400	27,400	30,000	57,400
Netherlands	98,000	20,700	27,500	48,200
Norway	367,000	19	53	72
Russia	840	21	62,900	62,900
Sweden	1,430	251	31,600	31,900
United Arab Emirates	1,460	62,500	62,200	125,000
Other	207,000	64,200 [†]	22,500	86,700
Total	2,220,000	420,000	366,000	786,000

[†]Revised. -- Zero.

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

²Includes imports of aluminum hydroxide reported in calcined equivalent. As shipped, aluminum hydroxide: 144,000 metric tons (t) in 2015; 36,400 t in the first quarter of 2016; 63,400 t in the second quarter of 2016.

³Source: Jamaica Bauxite Institute.

⁴Includes exports of aluminum hydroxide reported in calcined equivalent. As shipped, aluminum hydroxide: 105,000 t in 2015; 32,400 t (revised) in the first quarter of 2016; 36,500 t in the second quarter of 2016.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.