

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact

Kim B. Shedd, Cobalt Commodity Specialist
U.S. Geological Survey
989 National Center
Reston, VA 20192
Telephone: (703) 648-4974, Fax: (703) 648-7757
E-mail: ksheddd@usgs.gov

Annie Hwang (Data)
Telephone: (703) 648-7952
Fax: (703) 648-7995
E-mail: ahwang@usgs.gov

Internet: <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals>

COBALT IN MAY 2013

U.S. cobalt consumption during January through May 2013 was slightly less than consumption during the same period in 2012. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals during January through May 2013 was 15% less than that imported during the same period in 2012. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals during January through May 2013 was slightly more than that exported during the same period in 2012.

Prices

Prices for cobalt metal, in dollars per pound, in May 2013 are listed below.

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	12.30–14.00	13.08
LME cash mean ²	12.35–13.00	12.59

¹Source: Platts Metals Daily, minimum 99.8% cobalt cathode.

²London Metal Exchange, mean of the cash buyer price and the cash seller and settlement price, minimum 99.3% cobalt briquettes, cathode, ingot, or rounds (converted from dollars per metric ton and rounded to the nearest cent).

TABLE 1
U.S. REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF COBALT MATERIALS¹

(Metric tons, contained cobalt)

Period	Metal ²	Oxide and other chemical compounds ³	Scrap	Total
2012: ^p				
May	295	180	195	670
June	298	182	186	666
July	329	177	183	689
August	312	187	166	665
September	297	185	191	672
October	331	182	181	694
November	329	174	163	666
December	311	176	181	668
January–May ^f	1,550	895	905	3,350
January–December	3,760	2,160	2,160	8,070
2013:				
January	311	180	182	673
February	308	179	182	669
March	304	180	182	666
April	304	186	182	672
May	286	183	182	651
January–May	1,510	908	910	3,330

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Includes metal powder.

³Data may include other cobalt materials.

TABLE 2
U.S. REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF COBALT, BY END USE¹

(Metric tons, contained cobalt)

End use	2012 ^p		2013	
	January–May	January–December ^{2,3}	May	January–May
Steel	224	536	45	224
Superalloys	1,580 ^r	3,810	292	1,540
Magnetic alloys	105	252	21	106
Other alloys ⁴	W	W	W	W
Cemented carbides ⁵	322 ^r	774	65	322
Chemical and ceramic uses ⁶	928 ^r	2,240	191	946
Miscellaneous and unspecified	192 ^r	460	38	192
Total	3,350 ^r	8,070	651	3,330

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Miscellaneous and unspecified."

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

²Data based on monthly reports.

³May include revisions to previously published data.

⁴Includes nonferrous alloys, welding materials, and wear-resistant alloys.

⁵Includes diamond tool matrices, cemented and sintered carbides, and cast carbide dies or parts.

⁶Includes catalysts, driers in paints or related usages, feed or nutritive additives, glass decolorizer, ground coat frit, pigments, and other uses.

TABLE 3
U.S. REPORTED STOCKS OF COBALT MATERIALS¹

(Metric tons, contained cobalt)

Period	U.S. industry ^{1,2}		Total	U.S. Government, metal ⁶	LME, ³ metal		Total
	Metal and scrap ⁴	Oxide and other chemical compounds ⁵			U.S. warehouse	Non-U.S. warehouse	
2012:							
May	560	179	739	301	22	330	352
June	556	174	730	301	21	334	355
July	541	182	723	301	21	335	356
August	541	168	709	301	21	340	361
September	529	168	697	301	31	350	381
October	516	172	687	301	31	367	398
November	533	171	704	301	51	367	418
December	527	168	695	301	51	378	429
2013:							
January	520	180	700	301	48	387	435
February	541	170	711	301	44	386	430
March	565	168	733	301	44	407	451
April	556	171	727	301	46	392	438
May	550	167	718	301	46	369	415

¹Preliminary.

²Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

³Stocks reported by cobalt processors and consumers.

⁴London Metal Exchange.

⁵Includes metal powder.

⁶Data may include other cobalt materials.

⁷Data from Defense Logistics Agency, DLA Strategic Materials; uncommitted material only.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF COBALT, BY COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period and country of origin	Metals ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6}
	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2012:								
May	839	\$25,700	118	\$2,490	172	\$2,130	987	5,150
June	579	18,500	269	5,420	180	2,450	843	5,990
July	624	18,300	93	2,420	164	1,910	749	6,740
August	840	24,000	194	4,730	235	2,690	1,070	7,810
September	671	18,900	112	2,420	124	1,470	796	8,600
October	774	22,200	208	4,940	78	798	948	9,550
November	622	18,700	144	3,410	144	1,500	770	10,300
December	611	16,700	124	2,750	98	881	732	11,100
January–May	4,030	127,000	1,170	25,100	784	9,260	5,150	XX
January–December	8,750	264,000	2,320	51,200	1,810	20,900	11,100	XX
2013:								
January	684	17,300	149	3,260	85	793	816	816
February	758	18,500	141	2,690	163	2,310	917	1,730
March	677	17,400	225	4,490	117	923	873	2,610
April	861	22,500	187	4,060	120	1,310	1,030	3,640
May:								
Australia	2	31	--	--	--	--	2	205
Austria	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6
Belgium	2	74	75	1,570	--	--	56	188
Brazil	44	1,080	--	--	6	71	46	269
Canada	26	812	--	--	--	--	26	120
China	85	2,130	24	525	25	376	112	682
Congo (Kinshasa)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8
Finland	8	351	34	747	31	305	43	339
France	1	33	--	--	18	67	5	18
Germany	(7)	4	--	--	--	--	(7)	7
India	--	--	--	--	20	200	5	23
Ireland	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(7)
Italy	1	35	--	--	--	--	1	2
Japan	93	2,360	--	--	--	--	93	337
Korea, Republic of	7	174	--	--	--	--	7	29
Madagascar	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	209
Morocco	21	541	--	--	--	--	21	91
Netherlands	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5
Norway	104	2,670	--	--	--	--	104	662
Russia	76	1,880	--	--	--	--	76	432
South Africa	38	1,350	--	--	--	--	38	161
Sweden	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	10	78	3	17
Uganda	30	709	--	--	--	--	30	30
United Kingdom	(7)	22	59	1,160	13	207	47	306
Zambia	44	1,090	--	--	--	--	44	252
Total	581	15,300	191	4,000	124	1,300	759	4,400
January–May	3,560	91,100	893	18,500	610	6,640	4,400	XX

XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²Unwrought cobalt, excluding alloys; includes cobalt cathode and cobalt metal powder; may include intermediate products of cobalt metallurgy.

³Includes cobalt acetates, cobalt carbonates, cobalt chlorides, and cobalt sulfates.

⁴Customs value.

⁵Estimated from gross weights.

⁶May include revisions to previously published data.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ADDITIONAL COBALT MATERIALS, BY COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period and country of origin	Unwrought cobalt alloys		Cobalt waste and scrap		Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles	
	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)
2012:						
May	59	\$1,870	86	\$1,060	19	\$2,610
June	91	3,230	38	433	27	2,820
July	67	2,090	97	1,530	28	3,020
August	67	1,990	59	884	26	2,570
September	55	1,780	55	690	24	2,480
October	56	1,990	54	777	21	2,410
November	89	2,620	88	1,470	20	1,750
December	76	2,140	57	751	13	1,360
January–May	354	11,800	372	6,290	121	12,000
January–December	856	27,600	820	12,800	279	28,400
2013:						
January	87	2,650	43	565	15	1,560
February	80	2,300	58	709	15	1,910
March	50	1,470	45	635	17	1,960
April	89	2,890	52	1,230	26	2,470
May:						
Australia	18	1,250	--	--	--	--
Austria	--	--	--	--	(3)	8
Belgium	7	210	(3)	12	--	--
Canada	59	1,580	3	33	2	599
China	--	--	--	--	1	155
Finland	(3)	19	--	--	--	--
France	(3)	12	8	172	2	109
Germany	3	192	1	10	1	244
Ireland	--	--	18	230	--	--
Israel	--	--	--	--	(3)	16
Japan	--	--	2	30	(3)	20
Korea, Republic of	--	--	2	23	--	--
Netherlands	--	--	14	207	--	--
Singapore	--	--	2	30	--	--
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	(3)	14
United Kingdom	--	--	14	238	8	514
Total	87	3,260	65	985	15	1,680
January–May	393	12,600	262	4,120	88	9,570

-- Zero.

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

²Customs value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
U.S. EXPORTS OF COBALT MATERIALS¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period	Unwrought cobalt, powders, matte, waste and scrap ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6}
	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2012:								
May	353	\$10,700	70	\$323	20	\$1,750	408	1,540
June	229	8,210	18	65	3	32	243	1,780
July	215	7,350	73	245	22	198	273	2,050
August	345	10,000	80	490	1	10	403	2,460
September	392	10,600	36	229	19	158	423	2,880
October	279	9,010	(7)	9	40	320	289	3,170
November	265	7,410	(7)	12	58	526	279	3,450
December	287	8,090	33	397	20	154	316	3,760
January–May	1,410	45,700	157	1,090	63	2,180	1,540	XX
January–December	3,420	106,000	397	2,540	226	3,580	3,760	XX
2013:								
January	276	8,200	32	108	--	--	299	299
February	252	6,850	6	81	20	164	261	560
March	319	9,270	48	875	23	189	360	919
April	281	8,050	3	88	19	162	288	1,210
May	343	9,570	3	92	24	225	351	1,560
January–May	1,470	41,900	92	1,240	85	740	1,560	XX

XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²May include other intermediate products of cobalt metallurgy and unwrought cobalt alloys.

³Cobalt acetates and cobalt chlorides.

⁴Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

⁵Estimated from gross weights.

⁶May include revisions to previously published data.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 7
U.S. EXPORTS OF WROUGHT COBALT, COBALT ORE,
AND CONCENTRATES¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period	Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles		Cobalt ore and concentrates	
	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)
2012:				
May	132	\$8,800	3	\$58
June	110	7,250	(3)	16
July	190	10,300	1	42
August	152	8,910	1	39
September	117	7,570	--	--
October	198	10,900	1	36
November	180	9,400	1	35
December	231	11,300	--	--
January–May	644	40,600	30	260
January–December	1,820	106,000	35	428
2013:				
January	152	8,390	1	30
February	206	9,230	--	--
March	236	11,900	63	95
April	155	8,080	--	--
May	229	10,900	85	121
January–May	978	48,600	149	246

-- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.