

Mineral Industry Surveys

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PLATINUM-GROUP METALS IN JANUARY 2005

Platinum prices for January averaged \$861.71 per troy ounce, 1% more than both the average December 2004 price and the average January 2004 price. January's average palladium price was \$188.05 per troy ounce, 3% less than the average December 2004 price, and 15% less than the average January 2004 price. Other average January 2005 platinum-group metal (PGM) prices were as follows: iridium, \$168.19 per troy ounce (5% below the average December 2004 price); rhodium, \$1,418.10 per troy ounce (7% above the average December 2004 price); and ruthenium, \$66.05 per troy ounce (7% below the average December 2004 price).

Imports of platinum increased in December by 60% compared with those for November, owing to a large increase in imports from South Africa. Imports of palladium increased by 35% during the same period, for the same reason. Exports of platinum decreased by 13% compared with those of November, with palladium exports increasing by 11% during the same period.

On February 7, the Defense National Stockpile Center (DNSC) announced the January 2005 PGM sales results under Basic Ordering Agreement DLA-PGM-002. In January, DNSC sold 108.86 kilogram (kg) of palladium for an overall value of approximately \$660,000 to Mitsui & Co. Precious Metals, New York, NY (Defense National Stockpile Center, 2005).

PolyMet Mining Corporation (Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada) announced the company had submitted the necessary paperwork for the Draft Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the NorthMet project, Babbitt, Minnesota. Once the EAW is approved, PolyMet will need to file the needed Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). When the NorthMet project is completed, it will be the first base metal and precious metal mine in the State of Minnesota (PolyMet Mining Corporation, 2005).

North American Palladium Ltd. (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) produced about 9,610 kg of palladium and 782 kg of platinum in

2004 as compared to 8,980 kg of palladium and 738 kg of platinum in 2003 at the Lac des Iles Mine. Although the grade of the ore was lower than in previous years, North American Palladium had increased the amount of ore processed per day (North American Palladium Ltd., 2005).

Lonmin plc (London, United Kingdom) announced the restart of the smelter at their platinum operations in South Africa. The first matte was tapped on January 20. Normal operations were expected to resume in February (Lonmin plc, 2005b). Lonmin also announced it had entered into a joint venture with Inco Limited (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) to explore six of Inco's properties in the Sudbury Basin, Ontario, Canada (Lonmin plc, 2005a).

Update

Beginning February 1, the Zimbabwean Government was to take over the marketing of platinum in Zimbabwe. The responsibility of all PGM sales was to move to Zimbabwe's central bank, which also handles the sales of gold. Although Zimbabwe has proven to be a popular site for exploration and mining of PGMs, much of the refining takes place in South Africa (Johnson Matthey plc, 2005; Platts Metals Week, 2005).

References Cited

- Defense National Stockpile Center, 2005, Stockpile announces PGM BOA sales for January 2005: Fort Belvoir, VA, Defense National Stockpile Center news release, February 5, 1 p.
- Johnson Matthey plc, 2005, Platinum 2004 update 2: London, United Kingdom, Johnson Matthey plc, February, 7 p.
- Lonmin plc, 2005a, Lonmin and INCO agree Canadian Platinum Group Metals (PGM) exploration joint venture: London, United Kingdom, Lonmin plc press release, January 18, 1 p.
- Lonmin plc, 2005b, Smelter resumes normal operations, insurance claims settled: London, United Kingdom, Lonmin plc press release, January 18, 1 p.
- North American Palladium Ltd., 2005, North American Palladium Ltd. announces 2004 financial results: Toronto, Ontario, Canada, North American Palladium Ltd. press release, January 25, 12 p.

Platts Metals Week, 2005, Zimbabwe's bank takes control of marketing platinum: Platts Metals Week, v. 76, no. 6, February 7, p. 1, 11.

PolyMet Mining Corporation, 2005, PolyMet advances permitting for NorthMet project: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, PolyMet Mining Corp. press release, January 11, 2 p.

TABLE 1
 PLATINUM-GROUP METALS PRICES¹

(Dollars per troy ounce)

	Platinum	Palladium	Rhodium	Iridium	Ruthenium
2004:					
Low/date	771.00 May 10	180.00 Dec. 17	500.00 Jan. 5 and 6	87.00 Feb. ²	41.00 Jan. 5 and 6
High/date	940.00 Apr. 19	340.00 Apr. 12	1,525.00 Aug. 9 and 10	230.00 Mar. and Apr. ²	80.00 Nov. ²
Average	848.76	232.93	983.24	185.33	64.22
2005, January:					
Low/date	847.00/4	182.00/4	1,330.00 ²	162.00/31	62.00/28 and 31
High/date	874.00/24	193.00/24	1,530.00/28 and 31	170.00 ²	67.00 ²
Average	861.71	188.05	1,418.10	168.19	66.05

¹Quotes from Engelhard Industries.

²Occured multiple days in month listed.

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PLATINUM METAL, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms metal content, unless otherwise specified)

Period and country	Platinum grain and nuggets		Platinum sponge		Other unwrought platinum		Platinum, other		Platinum waste and scrap		Platinum coins	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)
2003	849	\$18,600	69,700	\$1,480,000	7,210	\$143,000	4,990	\$89,700	5,670	\$37,200	16	\$426
2004:												
October	6	160	3,620	96,000	850	23,100	171	3,500	30,100	19,100	1	32
November	3	59	4,420	116,000	310	8,350	168	3,670	892	8,150	4	129
December:												
Australia	--	--	--	--	--	--	177	5,080	--	--	(2) ³	8
Belgium	--	--	120	3,290	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Canada	(2)	8	--	--	1 ³	18	10	267	1,230 ³	800	--	--
Chile	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	135	1,920	--	--
China	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	140	--	--
Colombia	--	--	--	--	11	287	--	--	70	371	--	--
Dominican Republic	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(2) ³	10	--	--
France	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	109	--	--
Germany	--	--	425	11,800	28 ³	733	100 ³	1,910	--	--	1 ³	51
Israel	--	--	--	--	1	18	--	--	--	--	--	--
Italy	--	--	--	--	48	1,170	--	--	--	--	--	--
Japan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(2)	8	--	--
Jordan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10 ³	108	--	--
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	122	8,130	--	--
Mexico	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(2)	600	--	--
Norway	--	--	137	3,780	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Philippines	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	194	--	--
Russia	--	--	--	--	276	7,480	--	--	--	--	--	--
Singapore	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	288	--	--
South Africa	163	4,150	4,440	121,000	--	--	8 ³	98	--	--	--	--
Switzerland	--	--	--	--	1	18	9 ³	134	--	--	--	--
United Kingdom	1	17	1,680	44,700	--	--	3	90	40	1,220	--	--
Total	164	4,170	6,800	185,000	366	9,710	308	7,580	1,630	13,900	2	59
Year to date	376	9,520	68,800	1,830,000	6,710	178,000	4,550	105,000	590,000	135,000	12	345

-- Zero.

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

²Less than 1/2 unit.

³All or part of these data have been referred to the U.S. Census Bureau for verification.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PLATINUM-GROUP METALS, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms metal content, unless otherwise specified)

Period and country	Unwrought palladium		Palladium, other		Iridium ²		Unwrought osmium		Unwrought ruthenium		Rhodium ³	
	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)
2003	83,500	\$518,000	21,000	\$145,000	2,200	\$6,090	53	\$430	15,900	\$16,700	12,000	\$202,000
2004:												
October	7,880	46,000	2,610	16,800	136	885	30	248	451	887	783	29,400
November	7,210	53,000	1,900	13,000	237	1,550	--	--	2,490	5,780	1,080	44,600
December:												
Belgium	474	3,040	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	77	3,280
Canada	178	1,790	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
France	--	--	3	13	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Germany	322	2,130	159 ⁴	1,540	2 ⁴	28	--	--	230	553	140	5,960
Italy	--	--	91	663	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	113
Japan	112	603	166 ⁴	231	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Norway	186 ⁴	2,820	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Russia	2,540	16,400	1,120	7,030	--	--	--	--	--	--	65	2,540
South Africa	3,680	24,800	1	11	37	205	--	--	2,610	6,070	349	14,200
Switzerland	1	4	460	3,220	--	--	--	--	--	--	234	10,000
United Kingdom	2,850	18,700	4	47	77 ⁴	431	--	--	31	76	327 ⁴	13,200
Total	10,300	70,200	2,010	12,800	116	664	--	--	2,870	6,700	1,200	49,300
Year to date	106,000	786,000	20,700	145,000	3,230	18,000	75	421	18,800	35,900	13,200	397,000

-- Zero.

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

²Unwrought and other forms of iridium.

³Unwrought and other forms of rhodium.

⁴All or part of these data have been referred to the U.S. Census Bureau for verification.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. EXPORTS OF PLATINUM-GROUP METALS, BY COUNTRY¹

(Kilograms of metal content, unless otherwise specified)

Period and country	Platinum ²		Platinum waste and scrap		Palladium ²		Iridium, osmium, and ruthenium ^{2,3}		Rhodium ²	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)		(thousands)
2003	22,200	\$345,000	23,700	\$377,000	22,300	\$110,000	989	\$7,850	479	\$15,100
2004:										
October	1,410	29,500	2,080	38,700	1,900	8,820	76	436	2	287
November	1,500	29,300	2,760	50,600	2,100	7,340	27	175	1	190
December:										
Australia	3 ⁴	59	--	--	20 ⁴	133	--	--	--	--
Austria	2	30	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Belarus	--	--	--	--	23 ⁴	40	--	--	--	--
Brazil	99	2,470	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cambodia	(5) ⁴	4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Canada	62 ⁴	1,370	111	1,050	205 ⁴	1,460	--	--	(5) ⁴	8
China	2 ⁴	24	17	81	2 ⁴	5	--	--	--	--
Czech Republic	3 ⁴	44	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Denmark	--	--	--	--	11 ⁴	67	--	--	--	--
Finland	2 ⁴	30	--	--	1	6	--	--	--	--
France	10 ⁴	135	--	--	42 ⁴	216	--	--	--	--
Germany	782 ⁴	12,000	24	326	226 ⁴	863	--	--	--	--
Guatemala	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(5) ⁴	4
Honduras	--	--	--	--	(5)	4	--	--	--	--
Hong Kong	80 ⁴	1,710	--	--	599 ⁴	3,570	7	41	1 ⁴	103
Hungary	(5) ⁴	8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Iceland	--	--	--	--	1	7	--	--	--	--
India	--	--	--	--	2 ⁴	6	--	--	--	--
Ireland	5	127	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Israel	--	--	--	--	275 ⁴	572	--	--	--	--
Italy	--	--	--	--	16	79	--	--	--	--
Japan	547 ⁴	13,600	101	2,570	141	769	1 ⁴	16	--	--
Korea, Republic of	1 ⁴	12	--	--	25 ⁴	83	--	--	--	--
Liechtenstein	(5)	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Malaysia	(5) ⁴	5	--	--	1 ⁴	25	21	133	--	--
Mexico	4 ⁴	78	--	--	1	5	--	--	(5) ⁴	15
Netherlands	5 ⁴	73	--	--	9 ⁴	56	--	--	--	--
Netherlands Antilles	2	40	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
New Zealand	(5)	5	--	--	6	51	--	--	--	--
Norway	--	--	--	--	6	81	--	--	--	--
Philippines	1 ⁴	8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Poland	(5) ⁴	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Singapore	2 ⁴	42	--	--	1	11	1	15	(5) ⁴	10
Spain	(5) ⁴	3	--	--	3	22	--	--	--	--
Sweden	7 ⁴	101	--	--	2	22	--	--	--	--
Switzerland	2 ⁴	34	--	--	29	238	--	--	--	--
Taiwan	27 ⁴	660	--	--	233 ⁴	568	--	--	--	--
Thailand	3 ⁴	47	--	--	4	39	(5) ⁴	3	(5) ⁴	15
Turkey	(5)	9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
United Kingdom	257 ⁴	4,480	1,570	29,200	444 ⁴	1,630	19 ⁴	143	--	--
Total	1,910	37,300	1,820	33,300	2,330	10,600	49	351	1	155
Year to date	20,000	374,000	28,400	520,000	31,400	142,000	1,090	8,800	311	7,800

-- Zero.

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

²Unwrought and other forms.

³Gross weight.

⁴All or part of these data have been referred to the U.S. Census Bureau for verification.

⁵Less than 1/2 unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.