



2007 Minerals Yearbook

SINGAPORE

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF SINGAPORE

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Singapore is one of the world's most densely populated countries. The city-state has been transformed from an impoverished island in southeast Asia into one of the richest economies in the Asia and the Pacific region. Singapore is one of the world's busiest ports and identifies itself as "the place where Asia and the West meet." There is little unemployment in Singapore, and the country's annual income per capita is one of the highest in Asia. Because it has limited mineral resources, Singapore must import most of the raw materials needed for manufacturing.

Production

NatSteel Ltd. was the sole integrated melting, rolling, and fabricating steel producer in Singapore. The company agreed to sell its entire steel business to Tata Iron and Steel Co. of India in 2004; the transaction was completed in 2005 and Tata changed the company's name to NatSteel Asia Pte Ltd. The company's plant in Singapore had a design output capacity of 720,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of crude steel from its 80-metric-ton (t) electric arc furnace and 1 million metric tons per year (Mt/yr) of rolled steel. NatSteel intended to expand its steel production capacity to more than 2 Mt/yr by 2010 through acquisition of steel plants in Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam (NatSteel Asia Pte Ltd., 2007).

The construction of a tin refinery by Singapore Tin Industries Pte Ltd., which was a joint venture between KJP International Pte Ltd. and Yunnan Tin Co. Ltd. of China, was completed in June 2006. The plant had a design capacity of 36,000 t/yr of refined tin. The initial production target was 1,500 metric tons per month of refined tin; owing to constraint in the supply of crude tin from Indonesia, however, the company reduced its annual output target to 12,000 t at the end of June 2007. Instead of sourcing crude tin from Indonesia, the company relied more on supplies of crude tin from Australia, Burma, India, and Vietnam. Most of the refined tin output was exported to the United States and European countries. Owing to the ongoing

shortage in the supply of crude tin from Indonesia, the company planned to produce only about 7,000 t of refined tin in 2008 (Business Times, The, 2006; Shenzhen Daily, 2007).

Singapore is one of the major hubs for the international chemical sector. Chemical, petroleum, and petroleum products were Singapore's leading exports and reexports after electronics. The Government planned to increase the output share of the petrochemical products in the manufacturing industry to 30% in 2010. Major multinational petrochemical companies, such as BASF Group, Chevron Corp., Exxon Mobil Corp., Mitsui Chemical Co., Royal Dutch/Shell Group, and Sumitomo Chemical Co., had set up plants on the island.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities.

Outlook

Singapore is expected to experience the slowdown in the global demand for electronics, which is the country's major component of export revenue. The construction sector is likely to be the source of major demand for construction materials during the next 2 years. Several construction projects, including two casino resorts, the expansion of a financial center, and the development of new infrastructure, are in process. The demand for steel products is expected to increase during the next 2 to 3 years, and Singapore may have to rely on steel imports to meet its domestic needs.

References Cited

- Business Times, The, 2006, First tin refinery opens here despite lack of tin deposits: The Business Times, Singapore, June 24, p. 1.
NatSteel Asia Pte Ltd., 2007, NatSteel Pte Ltd. fact sheet: Singapore, NatSteel Asia Pte Ltd., August 20, 2 p.
Shenzhen Daily, 2007, Yunnan Tin limits output to support prices: Shenzhen Daily, November 22, p. 1.

TABLE 1
SINGAPORE: ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ³	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Steel, crude	561,000	610,000	572,000	607,000	620,000
Tin, refined	--	--	--	5,000	10,000

-- Zero.

¹Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Includes data available through March 12, 2008.

³Singapore also produces refinery and petrochemical products from imported oil, but available information is inadequate to make estimates of output.

TABLE 2
SINGAPORE: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2007

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity ^c
Steel, crude	NatSteel Asia Pte Ltd. (Tata Iron and Steel Co., 100%)	Singapore	720
Tin, refined	Singapore Tin Industries Pte Ltd. (KJP International Pte Ltd., 58%, and Yunnan Tin Co. Ltd., 42%)	do.	36

^cEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. do. Ditto.