

Mineral Industry Surveys

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PRECIOUS METALS IN NOVEMBER 2003

U.S. mines produced 23,500 kilograms (kg) of gold and 105,000 kg of silver in November 2003, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Compared with that of October 2003, production of gold was up 14% in California and down 3.5% in Nevada, and production of silver was up 7% in Nevada.

Gold

The expected renewal of the Central Bank Gold Agreement in September 2004 could increase the yearly limit on gold sales from 400,000 kg (12.9 million troy ounces) to 500,000 kg (16.1 million ounces). However, the gold sales are expected to remain below the levels seen between 1995 and 1999. Fourteen central banks in Europe and the European Central Bank signed the Washington Agreement in September 1999 to restrict the amount of gold the banks could sell to 2 million kg (64.3 million ounces) throughout the 5 years of the agreement, which expires September 2004. The United States, which has the world's largest central bank gold reserves, did not sign this agreement, but has shown no indication of selling gold (American Metal Market, 2003a).

Harmony Gold Mining Co. Ltd. (South Africa) took control of gold producer Avgold Ltd. (South Africa) with the purchase of a 42.2% stake in Avgold from Anglovaal Mining Ltd. (South Africa). The purchase raised Harmony's total stake in Avgold to 53.7%. In addition, African Rainbow Minerals Ltd. (South Africa) took control of Anglovaal with a 63.2% total stake purchase, which paved the way for the creation of a base metals and platinum company. As part of this transaction, Anglovaal was renamed African Rainbow Minerals Ltd. The South African Government requires that companies disadvantaged by apartheid control at least 15% of mining companies' local assets within 5 years, and at least 26% within 10 years (American Metal Market, 2003b).

The London Bullion Market Association (LBMA) gold clearing statistics fell in October. Gold ounces transfered decreased 14.5% in comparison with those of September, reaching 439,000 kg (14.1 million ounces). The number of gold transfers declined 4% to an average of 804 per day from 838 per day. In comparison with those of October 2002, ounces transferred were 19.5 % lower in October 2003, but the number of transfers increased 22% (Platts Metals Week, 2003c).

A Zimbabwean businessman was arrested with more than 144 kg (4,600 ounces) of gold worth about \$2 million. The South African police were using the gold dealer as an important lead in an alleged gold smuggling triangle involving Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mozambique. Gold dealers were using forged export documents from either Zambia or Mozambique to offload gold in South Africa (Platts Metals Week, 2003a).

Gold Fields Mineral Services reported that the world's gold producers decreased their rate of de-hedging in the third quarter of 2003. There were no major buybacks so the magnitude of the decline was considerably lower. Most hedge-book commitments were made in the 1990s, when gold prices were low, to lock in higher gold prices in the future. Interest rates, however, plummeted in recent years, which made hedging less attractive. Moreover, gold prices rose above the gold prices at which producers had made their forward sales. Thus, many producers were caught with commitments to deliver gold at prices below current levels, which forced some producers to roll over their positions and sell at spot prices. Gold mining companies sold their gold for an average price of \$366 per ounce in the third quarter of 2003, which was about \$3 per ounce higher than the average spot price for gold and over \$15 per ounce higher than the price of gold in the second quarter of 2003. As a result, world gold producers delivered about 70% of gold mine production in the third quarter at prices above average spot, compared with 84% in the second quarter (Platts Metals Week, 2003d).

The Bank of China (BOC), one of four big state-owned banks, opened gold trading to individuals on November 18 in Shanghai. BOC set the lower limit for gold transactions at 10 grams to encourage individuals to participate in trading gold. Opening gold trading should boost Chinese consumption of gold and private investment in gold. The Shanghai Gold Exchange, which was set up in 2002, ended more than 50 years of Government control over the gold market in China (Platts Metals Week, 2003b).

Silver

On November 10, 2003, Coeur d'Alene Mines Corporation (Coeur), a large US-based primary silver producer, announced the execution of a letter of intent granting Coeur an option to purchase the assets of Minera Real de Cosala S.A. de C.V. (MRC). MRC operates the La Verde underground silver mine and owns several other concessions situated over 8,500 hectares in Sinaloa State, Mexico. Small scale underground mining has taken place at La Verde for over 20 years, with total reported production of over 900 metric tons (t) of silver and 18,000 t of copper. In addition to the main La Verde deposit, there are reportedly numerous other mineralized zones in the immediate area that have the potential to contain additional silver reserves. Coeur will conduct a confirmation sampling and drilling program over the next several months, which will focus on the viability of developing a large-scale low-cost operation (Coeur d'Alene Mines Corporation, 2003).

Platinum-Group Metals

The price of platinum averaged \$762 per ounce in November, the highest level since February 1980. Higher prices were not totally the result of a shortage of the metal. As with gold and many other metals, funds have been buying platinum. Their interest is for technical reasons as well as concerns about production delays at Anglo Platinum Ltd. (Angloplats), the world's leading platinum producer. Palladium too has benefited from the general rise in commodity prices. The average price in November was \$200 per ounce, down 17 % from November 2002 but still maintaining the \$200 per ounce level. Palladium's price activity continues to be driven by speculative fund buying. Speculators have been attracted back to palladium during most of 2003 because of its growing discount to platinum. They are wagering that the price differential will cause autocatalyst manufacturers to return to the lower cost palladium, ultimately pushing prices higher and narrowing the palladium-platinum price gap (Platts Metals Week, 2004).

Platinum production in South Africa is expected to reach 145,000 kg in 2003, boosted by expansion projects at Angloplats. Ongoing expansion projects at Angloplats will reportedly raise the group's platinum output to 72,000 kg. This, however, will be 3,100 kg short of the level of production the group had anticipated. Future supply from South Africa may decline if Angloplats, which is expected to update the market on its planned projects by the end of 2003, decides to curb its expansion plans. The largest impact on Angloplat's expansion

plans has been the effect of the rand/dollar exchange rate on the PGM industry. Another factor has been the decline in the price of the "platinum metals basket." Despite the recent increase in platinum prices, the price of the basket, which includes palladium, platinum, and rhodium, has dropped significantly since 2000 as palladium and rhodium prices declined. Global supplies of platinum in 2003 were forecast by Johnson Matthey plc to rise by only 2% to 190,000 kg. In addition to that of South Africa, Zimbabwean production will increase significantly. Sales of platinum from Russia, however, are expected to decline to the level of mine production, as sales from Government stockpiles decline. Norilsk Nickel, the world's leading palladium producer, expects to sell its full production of palladium in 2003, increasing shipments by 53% over its 2002 shipments to 92,000 kg. According to Johnson Matthey, palladium output will also increase significantly in Zimbabwe, in line with increased platinum production. Mine output of palladium is expected to decline in North America due to lower output at Inco and Stillwater Mining Corporation (Mining Journal, 2003; Johnson Matthey plc, 2003, p. 2-10).

On November 5, 2003, the Defense National Stockpile Center (DNSC) announced the aggregated October 2003 PGM sales results under Basic Ordering Agreement, DLA-PGM-002. During October, DNSC sold 9.3 kg of iridium for an overall value of approximately \$25,000. The material was sold to Standard Bank London, New York, NY, and PGM Trading Corp., New York, NY (Defense National Stockpile Center, 2003).

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Platts Metals Week, 2004, Monthly prices: Platts Metals Week, v. 75, no. 1, January 5, p. 10.

TABLE 1

MINE PRODUCTION OF RECOVERABLE GOLD AND SILVER IN THE UNITED STATES, BY STATE $^{\rm 1}$

				Other		
Gold	Alaska	California	Nevada	States ²	Total	
2002:						
November	W	519	19,400	4,090	24,000	
December	W	534	22,800	4,350	27,700	
January-December	W	9,180	240,000	48,500	298,000	
2003:						
January	W	507	19,000	3,620	23,100	
February	W	476	16,800	3,210	20,500	
March	W	445	17,800	3,950	22,200	
April	W	425	15,700	3,850	20,000	
May	W	396	17,600	3,650	21,600	
June	W	381	21,200	4,120	25,700	
July	W	301	20,600	3,770	24,700	
August	W	306	19,200	3,990	23,500	
September	W	341	18,600	4,040	22,900	
October	W	240	20,200 r	4,080 ^r	24,500	
November	W	274	19,500	3,770	23,500	
January-November	W	4,090	206,000	42,000	252,000	
				Other		
Silver	Arizona	Idaho	Nevada	States ³	Total	
2002:						
November	W	W	24,200	81,000	105,000	
December	W	W	32,600	81,400	114,000	
January-December ^p	W	W	424,000	996,000	1,420,000	
2003:						
January	W	W	24,700	81,400	106,000	
February	W	W	19,600	75,300	94,800	
March	W	W	25,800	83,400	109,000	
April	W	W	21,500	71,500	93,000	
May	W	W	27,700	78,400	106,000	
June	W	W	26,600	79,000	106,000	
July	W	W	28,900	69,600	98,500	
August	W	W	28,800	68,100	96,900	
September	W	W	32,200	73,700	106,000	
October	W	W	28,600	77,700	106,000	
November	W	W	30,600	74,800	105,000	
January-November	W	W	295,000	833,000	1,130,000	

(Kilograms)

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Other States."

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

²Includes Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and State indicated by symbol W.

³Includes Alaska, California, Colorado, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, New York, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, and States indicated by symbol W.

TABLE 2SELECTED PRECIOUS METAL PRICES

(Dollars per troy ounce)

	Gold	Silver	Platinum	Palladium
Engelhard Industries:				
2002:				
Low/date	278.62 January 29	4.26 January 31	454.00 February 1	225.00 December 23
High/date	350.54 December 27	5.15 June 4 and July 15	610.00 December 17	439.00 January 3
Average	311.33	4.62	542.56	339.68
2003:				
September:				
Low/date	371.28/3	5.02/2	698.00/17	199.00/3
High/date	392.01/25	5.35/11	717.00/9 and 25	235.00/9
Average	380.37	5.21	707.90	214.29
October:				
Low/date	371.53/13	4.83/6	712.00/6	187.00/16
High/date	389.56/24	5.23/24	765.00/30	216.00/1
Average	380.21	5.04	734.91	203.74
November:				
Low/date	379.19/4	4.99/3 and 6	743.00/3	191.00/26
High/date	398.02/14	5.42/14	774.00/13	210.00/4
Average	390.44	5.21	762.78	200.17
Year to date:				
Low/date	321.09 April 7	4.39 March 24	605.00 April 30	151.00 April 16
High/date	398.02 November 14	5.42 November 14	774.00 November 13	273.00 January 23
Average	360.79	4.85	683.89	203.19
Handy and Harman:				
2002, Average	310.13	4.62	XX	XX
2003:				
September	379.07	5.21	XX	XX
October	378.92	5.04	XX	XX
November	389.13	5.21	XX	XX
Average year to date	359.52	4.84	XX	XX
London Final: ¹				
2002, Average	309.97	4.60	XX	XX
2003:				
September	378.95	5.17	XX	XX
October	378.92	5.00	XX	XX
November	389.91	5.18	XX	XX
Average year to date	359.56	4.81	XX	XX

XX Not applicable.

¹Silver price reported as "London Spot/US Equiv."

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 3 U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF GOLD¹

(Kilograms of gold content, unless otherwise specified)

	Ores and	Doré and	Refined	Ash and residues	m 14	Waste and scrap	Metal powder	Gold compounds
Period and country	concentrates ²	precipitates	bullion ³	residues	Total ⁴	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)
Imports for consumption:	2 720	12 200	172.000		217.000	11,000	10 700	10 100
2002	2,720	42,200	172,000		217,000	11,900	10,700	18,100
2003:			10.000		10 -00	1.000	210	2 220
August	520	7,670	10,300		18,500	1,090	240	3,230
September	575	7,730	16,200		24,500	3,000	128	501
October:								5
Australia			10		10		1	2,000 5
Brazil			1,920		1,920			
Canada	149		14,500 5		14,600	224 5	2	
Chile			575		575			
Colombia		3,520	571		4,100	95	13	
Costa Rica						109		
Dominican Republic			31		31	754	25	
Germany			(6)		(6)		(6) 5	618 ⁵
Honduras		445			445		351	
Mexico		187 ⁵	1,540		1,730	159		
Nicaragua		227			227			
Peru		2,280			2,280			
United Kingdom		718 5			718			
Venezuela			314		314			
Other		9	141		150	57 ⁵	2	25 ⁵
Total	149	7,390	19,600		27,100	1,400	394	2,640
Year to date	1,840	70,600	128,000		200,000	12,500	3,720	30,300
Exports:			- ,		,	,	- ,	,
2002	556	71,700	185,000		257,000	85,800	10,900	417,000
2003:		,			,	,		,
August	90	14,000	31,600		45,700	15,900	69	27,600
September	35	12,800	16,900		29,700	13,900	101	63,300
October:		12,000	10,900		27,700	15,700	101	05,500
Australia								429 5
Brazil	 							120 5
Canada			32		32	7,750	1	28,600 ⁵
Dominican Republic	14				52 14	61		23,000 1,770 ⁵
France	7				7			1,770
	- /		72		72	1,620		 363 ⁵
Germany								303
Guatemala			19		19	156		
Hong Kong			1		1		4	
Israel								5,520 5
Japan		(6)			(6)	42	8	234 5
Mexico	6		2,050		2,060			
Singapore						10	1	
South Africa	1				1			
Switzerland		15,000	2,860		17,800			
Taiwan							8	
United Kingdom	. 7	5	6,780		6,790	7,860	36	
Other	1		135		136			
Total	36	15,000	12,000		27,000	17,500	58	37,100
Year to date	599	110,000	194,000		304,000	130,000	773	400,000

⁻⁻ Zero.

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

²Includes gold content of base metal ores, concentrates, and matte imported for refining.

³Bullion also moves in both directions between U.S. markets and foreign stocks on deposit in the Federal Reserve Bank. Monetary gold excluded.

⁴"Waste and scrap," "Metal powder," and "Gold compounds" not included in "Total."

⁵All or part of these data have been referred to the U.S. Census Bureau for verification.

⁶Less than 1/2 unit.

TABLE 4 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF SILVER¹

(Kilograms of silver content, unless otherwise specified)

						Other			Semimanu-	
			Ores			unwrought	Metal	Silver	factured	Waste
			and	Ash and		silver	powder	nitrate	form ³	and scrap
Period and country	Bullion	Doré	concentrates ²	residues	Total	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)
2002	4,020,000	16,600	61,000	63,500	4,160,000	263,000	12,100	572	289,000	816,000
2003:										
August	276,000	21,700	594	10,800	309,000	21,800	916	15	22,800	40,600
September	255,000	19,600	3	5,630	281,000	11,200	2,210	16	42,200	202,000
October:										
Australia				786	786					27
Belgium	3,010				3,010					7
Brazil									28,400	
Canada	117,000	218	547 4	9,400 4	128,000	1,280			422 4	7,580
Chile	7,500				7,500					
China										690
Costa Rica										5,610
Dominican Republic				(5) 4	(5)					686
France	92				92	107	999 ⁴		471 4	5
Germany	261				261		140 4		6,630 ⁴	847
India						(5) 4			1,010 4	
Italy	18,700	54 4			18,700	52 ⁴			824 4	
Japan							1,490 4		1,280 4	7
Jordan										295
Korea, Republic of									1,150	
Malaysia										41,900
Mexico	206,000	16,700 4			223,000	13,400			160	3,730
Peru	113,000	1,100			114,000					
Philippines										23,600
Poland									659 ⁴	
Taiwan				167 ⁴	167				273	2
United Kingdom	238,000			867	239,000		276 4			3,290
Venezuela										208
Other									71	136
Total	704,000	18,000	547	11,200	734,000	14,900	2,910		41,300	88,600
Year to date	3,380,000	178,000	2,220	72,400	3,630,000	261,000	15,700	636	296,000	822,000

-- Zero.

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

²Includes silver content of base metal ores and concentrates.

³Containing 99.5% or more by weight of silver.

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

⁵Less than 1/2 unit.

TABLE 5U.S. EXPORTS OF SILVER1

(Kilograms of silver content, unless otherwise specified)

					Other			Semimanu-	
			Ores		unwrought	Metal	Silver	factured	Waste
			and		silver	powder	nitrate	form ³	and scrap
Period and country	Bullion	Doré	concentrates ²	Total	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)	(gross weight)
2002	624,000	22,700	230,000	877,000	32,700	360,000	81,200	290,000	2,380,000
2003:									
August	19,400	1,550	206	21,200	3,660	37,300	4,340	37,700	141,000
September	440	1,220	31	1,690	1,920	52,700	8,190	20,100	157,000
October:									
Belgium						93		480	19,500
Brazil								299	
Canada	119			119	2,680 4	1,570	4,210	4,610 4	49,400
China						500		245	16,400
Dominican Republic					465 4			225	81
Finland						290			
France					4 4	1,310		403 4	
Germany						5,120		470	12,700
Grenada								217	
Hong Kong						5,210		451	
Italy					34			148	25,400
Japan						6,250		342	332
Jordan								306	
Korea, Republic of					12	5,120		7,470	39
Malaysia								102	
Mexico					711 4	699	232	1,380 4	
Netherlands						476		889	
Saudi Arabia									5,980
Singapore	53			53		1,180 4		465	
Spain								2,220	
Sweden					3 4			55	11,900
Switzerland		1,420		1,420	19	11 4			
Taiwan	12			12		6,600		359	1,810
Thailand								2,490	
United Kingdom						5,950		1,030	4,040
Other			3 4	3	82 4			178 4	119
Total	184	1,420	3	1,600	4,010	40,400	4,450	24,800	148,000
Year to date	134,000	16,700	57,700	208,000	22,800	384,000	54,400	300,000	1,760,000

⁻⁻ Zero.

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

²Includes silver content of base metal ores and concentrates.

³Semimanufactured (including silver plated with gold or platinum) forms of silver.

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

TABLE 6 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PLATINUM-GROUP METALS $^{\rm 1}$

(Kilograms of metal content)

	Platinum		Other		Platinum							
	grain and	Platinum	unwrought	Platinum,	waste and	Platinum	Unwrought	Palladium,		Unwrought	Unwrought	
Period and country	nuggets	sponge	platinum	other	scrap	coins	palladium	other	Iridium ²	osmium	ruthenium	Rhodium ³
2002	1,910	72,600	3,490	4,950	77,500	20	94,600	22,000	2,100	36	9,890	8,630
2003:												
August	6	5,130	527	316	22,400	(4)	7,550	1,180	262		2,480	1,140
September	21	8,350	508	415	9,890	(4)	10,500	1,860	93		998	1,080
October:												
Belgium		46					236	13				50
Brazil					(4)							
Canada	4			51 ⁵	83		225					
Chile					61							
China					28		30					
Colombia	2		15		28							
Dominican Republic					1							
France			32 ⁵	(4)				18 5				
Germany		28	78	234	2,020		87	132	1			31
Israel			77									
Italy		81					7	43	1 5			1
Japan			162 5		3		100 5	73 5				12 5
Jordan					2							
Korea, Republic of			1		671							
Mexico					2							
Netherlands				1 5								
Norway		31					566					1
Philippines				1	1							
Russia	111	178					2,550	20				47
Saudi Arabia			342		89							
South Africa	4	5,640 5	248 5	13			1,960	575	129	40	1,030 5	512
Spain					70		3					
Switzerland			1	5				53				
United Kingdom		587	1 5	3 5	1,560		1,400	1	5			167
Total	121	6,590	957	308	4,610		7,160	928	136	40	1,030	821
Year to date	654	61,800	6,140	4,430	153,000	7	67,100	18,100	1,680	53	13,500	10,200

-- 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.

⁴Less than 1/2 unit.

⁵All or part of these data have been referred to the U.S. Census Bureau for verification.

TABLE 7 U.S. EXPORTS OF PLATINUM-GROUP METALS

(Kilograms of metal content, unless otherwise specified)

			Platinum waste and	Iridium, osmium, and		
Period and country	Palladium ²	Platinum ²	scrap	ruthenium ^{2, 3}	Rhodium ²	
2002	42,700	27,800	17,700	1,990	349	
2003:	_					
August	1,710	4,360	1,450	152	34	
September	2,100	1,830	1,600	51	100	
October:	_					
Australia	29 4	2				
Austria		(5)				
Belarus	18 4					
Belgium	2					
Brazil		1 4				
Canada		98	172	1	(5) 4	
China	- 53 ⁴	3 4	14	4 4		
Czech Republic		5 4				
Denmark	- 7	(5)				
Finland	- 2	1				
France	29 ⁴	8		1 4		
Germany	441 4	584 ⁴	375		20 4	
Hong Kong	118	45 ⁴		1 4		
India		5				
Ireland	- 2	19 ⁻⁴		13 4		
Israel	- 2					
Italy	- 6	1				
Japan	123	103	164	2 4		
Kenya		(5)				
Korea, Republic of	- 1	4 ⁴	2			
Liechtenstein	- 1	2	2			
Malaysia	(5)	(5)				
Malaysia	- 14 ⁴	2			(5) 4	
Netherlands	14 138 ⁴	5			(3)	
New Zealand	- 138 - 7	5				
	- / 8	1				
Norway	- 8					
Philippines		(5) 1 ⁴				
Romania						
Singapore	_ 4	10				
Slovenia	4 ⁴					
Spain	11	1				
Sweden	_ 5	12 4				
Switzerland	483 4	673	170			
Taiwan	168 ⁴	51				
Thailand	11	1			(5)	
United Kingdom	172 4	167 ⁴	1,050	26 ⁴		
Total	2,220	1,810	1,950	49	20	
Year to date	18,000	20,100	19,400	791	317	

-- 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.