

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:

James F. Carlin, Jr., Tin Commodity Specialist
U.S. Geological Survey
989 National Center
Reston, VA 20192
Telephone: (703) 648-4985, Fax: (703) 648-7757
E-mail: jcarlin@usgs.gov

Elsie D. Isaac (Data)
Telephone: (703) 648-7950
Fax: (703) 648-7975
E-mail: eisaac@usgs.gov
MINES FaxBack: (703) 648-4999
Internet: <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals>

TIN IN AUGUST 2000

Domestic consumption of primary tin in August was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be slightly higher than that in July and 1% higher than that in August 1999.

The *Platt's Metals Week* average composite price for tin in August was \$3.64 per pound, slightly lower than that in July and 2% higher than that in August 1999. The average price for August represents the lowest average price of tin for any month in 2000. During 2000, the average price has declined in all but one month.

Crown, Cork and Seal Corp. (Philadelphia, PA), the world's largest packaging manufacturer, announced the development of a new beverage can end that offers reduced metal usage and easier opening. Crown believes the new style can end will afford substantial savings in material costs and can be applied equally to tinplate or aluminum ends. Currently, almost all beverage can ends in the United States are aluminum, but tinplate shares the remaining worldwide market (Canning and Filling, 2000).

In Indonesia, PT Timah Tbk, the world's largest integrated tin producer, announced plans to cut tin production to 35,000 metric tons (t) in 2000 from nearly 40,000 t in 1999. Also, Timah announced that it would seek to open new tin mines in Myanmar and Vietnam (American Metal Market, 2000).

In Bolivia, it was reported that the privatization of COMIBOL's Vinto tin smelter and the Huanuni and Colquiri tin mines earlier this year caused tin production to decline. New owners, Allied Deals Corp. (Vinto/Huanuni) and COMSUR (Colquiri), are formulating their development plans and modernizing the former government-operated facilities. Colquiri was closed in April for refurbishment. Nevertheless, refined tin output in 2000 is expected to be near the 10,500 t produced by COMIBOL in 1999, largely due to Allied's contract to process some 6,000 tons per year (t/yr) of tin-in-concentrate from Brazil. Allied expects to spend \$10 million on new investment in Huanuni over the first 2 years of its privatization contract. Plans to introduce new mining techniques at the 360-meter-deep underground mine will require at least 18 months to implement. Increased feed to the Vinto tin smelter is a priority (Metal Bulletin, 2000).

In London, it was reported that a new proposal has been made to reopen the South Crofty tin mine, which was England's last operating tin mine when it closed in 1998. The new effort follows an abortive attempt made last year to reopen the mine. A local Cornwall firm, Baseresult plc, reportedly is negotiating with South

Crofty plc (the mine's owner) for the mine, land comprising the mine-site, and processing equipment from the Wheal Jane concentrator plant nearby. South Crofty's mining permit was extended to allow the negotiations to continue. Baseresult plans to produce 2,000 t/yr of tin at an operating cost of \$2,800 per ton of tin, well below the current cost of \$5,510 per ton. However, officials believe the mine can only be profitable if the company diversifies the operation to include other activities (such as waste management from energy facilities in the region). Officials also expressed confidence that Baseresult can extend the life of the mine beyond the 7 years during which it plans to mine the upper levels of the deposit (Platt's Metals Week, 2000a).

In Jakarta, the Government announced that it has granted PT Koba Tin a 10-year extension of its contract to operate in Indonesia. Koba Tin is 75%-owned by Iluka Resources NL (Australia). Koba has been mining tin at a rate of 10,000 t/yr (Platt's Metals Week, 2000b).

Recycling rates for European steel packaging (mostly tinplate) in 1999 have been reported. Comparatively high rates were reported for Germany (80%), The Netherlands (78%), and Austria (75%); lower rates were reported for Finland (16%), Portugal (15%), and Italy (10%). Overall, the steel can recycling rate in Europe averaged 47% in 1999 (Container Recycling Report, 2000).

Update

On October 6, 2000, the *Platt's Metals Week* composite price for tin was \$ 3.66 per pound.

References Cited

- American Metal Market, 2000, Indonesia's PT Timah projects steady tin prices in 2000, 2001: American Metal Market, v. 108, no. 179, September 15, p. 4.
- Canning and Filling, 2000, End of the era?: Canning and Filling, September, p. 28-29.
- Resources Recycling, Inc., 2000, Steel can recycling: Container Recycling Report, v. 11, no. 9, September, p. 3-4.
- Metal Bulletin, 2000, Bolivia tin privatization finally set to increase output: Metal Bulletin, no. 8506, September 7, p. 15.
- Platt's Metals Week, 2000a, Baseresult targets 2,000 mt/yr tin at South Crofty: Platt's Metals Week, v. 71, no. 39, September 25, p. 12.
- 2000b, Indonesia extends Koba's contract: Platt's Metals Week, v. 71, no. 37, September 11, p. 11.

TABLE 1
SALIENT TIN STATISTICS 1/

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

	1999 p/	2000		
		July	August	January-August
Production, secondary e/ 2/	10,800	900	900	7,200
Consumption:				
Primary	42,800	3,540	3,560	28,300
Secondary	12,300	858	906	7,170
Imports for consumption, metal	47,500	4,030	NA	NA
Exports, metal	6,770	524	NA	NA
Stocks at end of period	XX	8,240 r/	7,880	XX
Prices (average cents per pound): 3/				
Metals Week composite 4/	365.98	366.03	363.52	XX
Metals Week New York dealer	254.54	249.50	249.50	XX
London, standard grade, cash	245.00	242.00	240.00	XX
Kuala Lumpur	240.70	241.63	239.34	XX

e/ Estimated. p/ Preliminary. r/ Revised. NA Not available. XX Not applicable.

1/ Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

2/ Includes tin recovered from alloys and tinplate. The detinning of tinplate (coated steel) yields only a small part of the total.

3/ Source: Platt's Metals Week.

4/ The Metals Week composite price is a calculated formula, not a market price, that includes fixed and finance charges, and a risk factor. It is normally substantially higher than other tin prices.

TABLE 2
METALS WEEK COMPOSITE PRICE 1/

(Cents per pound)

Period	High	Low	Average
1999:			
August	362.04	355.27	358.10
September	372.30	357.68	364.61
October	383.67	363.53	369.61
November	397.54	385.56	391.55
December	403.52	381.53	386.61
Year	403.52	343.72	365.98
2000:			
January	405.27	390.75	397.72
February	391.72	377.25	382.84
March	383.26	364.68	373.01
April	371.49	365.85	368.16
May	369.58	363.91	367.72
June	373.83	362.99	368.23
July	372.25	362.15	366.03
August	372.25	362.15	363.52

1/ The Metals Week composite price is a calculated formula, not a market price, that includes fixed and finance charges, and a risk factor. It is normally substantially higher than other tin prices.

Source: Platt's Metals Week.

TABLE 3
TINPLATE PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES 1/

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Period	Tinplate waste (waste, strips, cobble, etc.) (gross weight)	Tinplate (all forms)			Shipments 2/
		Gross weight	Tin content	Tin per metric ton of plate (kilograms)	
1999 p/	W	1,750,000	9,080	5.2	2,370,000
2000:					
January	W	141,000	718	5.1	184,000
February	W	144,000	785	5.5	175,000
March	W	155,000	810	5.2	203,000
April	W	149,000	736	4.9	170,000
May	W	156,000	816	5.2	219,000
June	W	149,000	795	5.3	203,000
July	W	165,000	780	4.7	182,000
August	W	157,000	795	5.1	214,000

p/ Preliminary. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

1/ Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

2/ Source: American Iron and Steel Institute monthly publication.

TABLE 4
U.S. TIN IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION AND EXPORTS 1/

(Metric tons)

Country or product	1999 p/	2000		
		June	July	January- July
Imports:				
Metal (unwrought tin):				
Bolivia	3,850	1,510	651	4,730
Brazil	4,700	502	662	3,400
Chile	3,980	245	--	1,720
China	13,900	260	937	6,460
Hong Kong	261	--	120	397
Indonesia	7,930	519	479	3,180
Japan	282	--	--	--
Malaysia	944	60	--	104
Peru	11,000	920	1,110	7,060
Russia	--	145	--	145
Singapore	60	--	--	20
Thailand	20	--	--	--
United Kingdom	60	1	5	214
Other	533	72	70	255
Total	47,500	4,230	4,030	27,700
Other (gross weight):				
Alloys	3,090	469	324	2,410
Bars and rods	872	68	112	580
Foil, tubes, pipes	1	--	--	--
Plates, sheets, strip	122	3	7	414
Waste and scrap	2,730	422	104	1,250
Miscellaneous	2,290	1,480	1,550	4,540
Total	9,100	2,440	2,090	9,200
Exports (metal)	6,770	351	524	3,390

p/ Preliminary. -- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
CONSUMPTION OF TIN IN THE UNITED STATES, BY FINISHED PRODUCT 1/

(Metric tons of contained tin)

Product	2000							
	1999 p/	July			August			January- August total 2/
		Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total	
Alloys (miscellaneous) 3/	W	119	W	119	121	W	121	980
Babbitt	22	46	W	46	W	W	W	249
Bar tin and anodes	244	25	W	25	25	W	25	196
Bronze and brass	3,170	102	114	216	100	144	244	1,940
Chemicals	8,140	682	W	682	682	W	682	5,450
Collapsible tubes and foil	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Solder	14,000	1,070	398	1,470	741	338	1,080	11,300
Tinning	508	49	--	49	49	--	49	461
Tinplate 4/	9,080	780	--	780	795	--	795	6,240
Tin powder	W	W	--	W	W	--	W	147
White metal 5/	W	W	--	W	W	--	W	10
Other	6,120	61	46	107	450	124	574	1,260
Total reported	41,300	2,940	558	3,500	2,960	606	3,570	28,300
Estimated undistributed consumption 6/	13,800	600	300	900	600	300	900	7,170
Grand total	55,100	3,540	858	4,400	3,560	906	4,470	35,400

p/ Preliminary. r/ Revised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Other." -- Zero.

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

2/ May include revisions for prior months.

3/ Includes terre metal.

4/ Includes secondary pig tin and tin components of tinplating chemical solutions.

5/ Includes pewter, britannia metal, and jewelers' metal.

6/ Estimated consumption of plants reporting on an annual basis.