

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

Linda M. White (Data)
Telephone: (703) 648-7986
Fax: (703) 648-7975
E-mail: lwhite@usgs.gov

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

TIN IN DECEMBER 2012

Domestic consumption of primary tin in December 2012 was estimated to be 2,210 metric tons (t), about the same as in November 2012 and in December 2011. Tin imports for consumption in 2012 were 36,900 t, an increase of 8% compared with those for 2011. Peru, Indonesia, Bolivia, and Malaysia in descending order, were the leading sources of refined tin imports in 2012.

The Platts Metals Week average composite tin price in December was \$13.82 per pound, compared with \$12.56 per pound in November 2012 and \$11.63 per pound in December 2011. The average composite price in 2012 was \$12.83 per pound, a decrease of 19% from the average composite tin price for 2011 of \$15.75 per pound.

In November, Indonesia's state-controlled tin company, PT Timah (Bangka), announced that it expected its tin output to decrease to the 30,000-t range in 2012 and remain steady in 2013 as it limited production to boost profits. Timah aimed to reduce production costs in 2013 to around \$15,000 per metric ton of tin from \$16,000 to \$18,000 in 2012. Timah's first deep-water bucket-wheel dredge was about to start operation and two more similar vessels could be commissioned in 2013 if the first one proves successful. The company was also expanding its ore processing capacity to allow for better recovery of byproduct minerals. The company planned to develop an industrial zone on Bangka Island, which would host Timah's second tin chemicals plant. Timah also gained permission in principle to explore a 10,000-hectare site in southern Burma with "potential reserves" estimated to be similar to Timah's main tin-producing region of Bangka Island (Kettle, 2012).

In November, Venture Minerals Ltd. (West Perth, Western Australia, Australia) announced that it had completed a Bankable Feasibility Study (BFS) on its Mount Lindsay tin-tungsten project in Tasmania. The capital cost of the project was

estimated at \$206 million (A\$198 million), based on an expanded processing capacity of 1.75 million metric tons per year of ore. The expected mine life was 9 years. Operating costs per metric ton of ore from open pit and underground mining were estimated at \$60. Proven and probable reserves were estimated at 14 Mt grading 0.2% tin, containing 30,000 t of tin (Venture Minerals Ltd., 2012).

Gippsland Ltd. (Claremont, Western Australia, Australia) announced plans to increase production of tin-in-concentrate at its Abu Dabbab alluvial tin mine in Egypt to 720 metric tons per year starting in February 2013. Mining at this placer deposit began in the spring of 2012 (ITRI Ltd., 2012)

Update

On February 28, 2013, the Platts Metals Week composite price for tin was \$14.25 per pound.

References Cited

- ITRI Ltd., 2012, Gippsland increases tin production forecast: Frogmore, United Kingdom, ITRI Ltd. news release, November 29, 1 p. (Accessed March 7, 2013, at https://www.itri.co.uk/index.php?option=com_zoo&task=item&item_id=2604&Itemid=149.)
- Kettle, Peter, 2012, Timah reveals production and investment plans: Frogmore, United Kingdom, ITRI Ltd. news release, November 22, 1 p. (Accessed March 7, 2013, at https://www.itri.co.uk/index.php?option=com_zoo&task=item&item_id=2593&category_id=3&Itemid=143.)
- Venture Minerals Ltd., 2012, Bankable Feasibility Study delivers more than \$550 million in net revenue—Mt Lindsay tin/tungsten project: Subiaco, Western Australia, Australia, Venture Minerals Ltd. press release, November 7. (Accessed March 7, 2013, at http://www.ventureminerals.com.au/images/documents/VMS0305_BFS_delivers_more_than_550_million_in_Net_Revenue_-_07_November_2012.pdf.)

TABLE 1
SALIENT TIN STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

	2012			
	2011 ^P	November	December	January– December
Production, secondary ^{c,2}	11,100	922	878	11,000
Consumption:				
Primary	28,300	2,200 ^r	2,210	27,300
Secondary	6,280	511 ^r	514	6,200
Imports for consumption, metal	34,200	2,980	3,680	36,900
Exports, metal	5,450	182	80	5,560
Stocks at end of period	5,230	6,360 ^r	6,400	6,400
Prices (average cents per pound): ³				
Metals Week composite ⁴	1,574.67	1,256.35	1,382.38	1,283.37
Metals Week New York dealer	1,215.90	971.69	1,071.25	989.60
London, standard grade, cash	1,184.05	938.69	1,035.85	957.26
Kuala Lumpur	1,187.54	935.20	1,035.09	958.44

^cEstimated. ^PPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

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

³Source: Platts Metals Week.

⁴The 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 PRICE¹

(Cents per pound)

Period	High	Low	Average
2011	1,884.94	856.78	1,574.67
2012:			
January	1,461.15	1,181.94	1,298.79
February	1,533.15	1,432.52	1,472.78
March	1,719.32	1,020.42	1,398.32
April	1,400.86	1,288.87	1,345.29
May	1,374.59	1,182.00	1,244.92
June	1,204.60	1,137.01	1,176.26
July	1,165.45	1,074.68	1,134.50
August	1,257.65	1,084.62	1,137.31
September	1,310.50	1,191.92	1,257.23
October	1,362.26	1,214.18	1,296.34
November	1,318.78	1,235.77	1,256.35
December	1,425.91	1,313.11	1,382.38

¹The 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: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 3
TINPLATE PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(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)	
2011	21,500	1,200,000 ^r	6,230 ^r	5.2	1,680,000
2012:					
January	1,070	64,000	453 ^r	7.1 ^r	107,000
February	1,430	71,900	490 ^r	6.8 ^r	121,000
March	1,250	96,300	548 ^r	5.7 ^r	156,000
April	1,240	86,700	514 ^r	5.9 ^r	140,000
May	1,290	65,600	512 ^r	7.8 ^r	155,000
June	1,330	86,000	522 ^r	6.1 ^r	153,000
July	1,430	84,700	515 ^r	6.1 ^r	134,000
August	1,250	82,700	507 ^r	6.1 ^r	170,000
September	1,650	74,600	482 ^r	6.5 ^r	127,000
October	1,740	74,200	481 ^r	6.5 ^r	134,000
November	1,140	62,700	463 ^r	7.4 ^r	117,000
December	1,460	72,300	496	6.9	108,000

^rRevised.

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

²Source: American Iron and Steel Institute monthly publication.

TABLE 4
U.S. TIN IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION AND EXPORTS¹

(Metric tons)

Country or product	2012			
	2011	November	December	January– December ²
Imports:				
Metal (unwrought tin):				
Belgium	261	1	100	625
Bolivia	5,680	429	306	5,100
Brazil	676	226	260	2,930
Chile	60	--	--	--
China	1,490	10	21	174
Indonesia	4,930	718	880	6,180
Malaysia	3,980	300	620	4,590
Peru	14,000	1,220	1,340	14,500
Singapore	645	75	101	424
Thailand	2,310	--	--	1,750
Other	156	1	51	677
Total	34,200	2,980	3,680	36,900
Other (gross weight):				
Alloys	2,000	135	83	1,480
Bars and rods	2,620	151	105	1,800
Foil, tubes, pipes	113	14	3	83
Plates, sheets, strip	52	9	7	60
Waste and scrap	57,700	6,600	4,690	72,500
Miscellaneous	2,740	143	190	2,260
Total	65,300	7,060	5,080	78,200
Exports (metal)	5,450	182	80	5,560

-- Zero.

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

²May include revisions.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
CONSUMPTION OF TIN IN THE UNITED STATES, BY FINISHED PRODUCT¹

(Metric tons of contained tin)

Product	2012							
	2011 ^P	November			December			January– December ²
		Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total	
Alloys (miscellaneous) ³	6,550	584 ^r	3	587 ^r	584	3	587	7,130
Babbitt	222	53 ^r	W	53 ^r	53	W	53	328
Bronze and brass	3,410	70	70	140	69	70	139	2,090
Chemicals	2,640	212 ^r	W	212 ^r	197	W	197	2,600
Solder	3,630	140 ^r	7 ^r	147 ^r	140	W	140	1,980
Tinning	325	21	--	21	20	--	20	257
Tinplate ⁴	6,350	463 ^r	--	463 ^r	496	W	496	5,980
Other ⁵	701	52 ^r	132 ^r	184 ^r	52	139	191	2,320
Total reported	23,800	1,600 ^r	211 ^r	1,810 ^r	1,610	214	1,830	22,700
Estimated undistributed consumption ⁶	10,800	600	300	900	600	300	900	10,800
Grand total	34,600	2,200 ^r	511 ^r	2,710 ^r	2,210	514	2,730	33,500

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Other." -- Zero.

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

²May include revisions.

³Includes terne metal.

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

⁵Includes bar tin and anodes, collapsible tubes and foil, tinpowder, type metal and white metal.

⁶Estimated consumption of plants reporting on an annual basis.