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Mineral Industry Surveys

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TIN IN FEBRUARY 2015

Domestic reported consumption of primary tin in February 2015 was 1,940 metric tons (t), the same as in January 2015 and an increase of 20% from that of February 2014. Peru, Bolivia, Belgium, and Indonesia were, in descending order of quantity, the leading sources of refined tin imports in February 2015.

The Platts Metals Week average New York dealer price of Grade A tin for February 2015 was $8.58 per pound, a 6% decrease from the January 2015 price of $9.12 per pound and a decrease of 19% from the February 2014 average price of $10.61 per pound. During February 2015, global London Metal Exchange Ltd. (LME) stocks of tin decreased by 965 t to 10,875 t.

The Chamber of Mines of the Democratic Republic of Congo [Congo (Kinshasa)] reported that Congo (Kinshasa) produced 10,800 t of cassiterite concentrate containing about 6,450 t of tin in 2014, a 42% increase from production in 2013. According to the Chamber of Mines, production could have been higher but production growth was limited by high electricity costs, a shortage of railroad rolling stock, and a Government policy that freezes bank accounts of mining companies during disputes (ITRI Ltd. 2015a). Congo (Kinshasa) accounted for about 2% of global production.

Tin producers in Indonesia continued to attempt to increase tin prices by reducing domestic exports and production of tin. The monthly average LME cash price in February was $18,284 per metric ton, less than the $19,500 per metric ton that Indonesia's tin producers set as the price at which they will stop limiting exports. In addition, China, the world's leading consumer of tin, has been importing more tin from Burma, reportedly reducing the influence of Indonesia's tin producers on the international market (Dragomanovich, 2015a, b; ITRI Ltd., 2015b).

Researchers at the Ohio State University announced that they have successfully made a new semiconductor using tin and germanium that can conduct electricity at 100% efficiency at room temperature (Pugsley, 2015). This may allow for further miniaturization of microprocessors and circuitry. Semiconductors made with this technology may lead to more efficient and powerful LEDs and lasers (Ohio State University, The, 2013).

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TABLE 1
SALIENT TIN STATISTICS[1]

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

		2015		
	2014[p]	January	February	January–February
Production, secondary[e, 2]	11,100	931	931	1,860
Reported consumption:				
Primary	23,300	1,940	1,940	3,880
Secondary	2,920	243	241	483
Imports for consumption, refined tin	35,600	3,300	1,900	5,200
Exports, refined tin and tin alloys	5,700	305	158	463
Stocks at end of period	6,970	7,010	6,860	6,860
Prices (average cents per pound):[3]				
Metals Week New York dealer, Grade A	1,023.05	912.21	858.03	885.12
London Metal Exchange cash	993.75	882.38	829.36	855.87
Kuala Lumpur	992.53	NA	NA	NA

[e]Estimated. [p]Preliminary. NA Not available.

[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: Platts Metals Daily.

TABLE 2
AVERAGE TIN PRICES

(Cents per pound)

Period	Metals Week New York dealer, Grade A	London Metal Exchange cash	Kuala Lumpur
2014:			
February	1,060.69	1,034.34	1,027.14
March	1,072.33	1,047.45	1,044.18
April	1,095.19	1,061.99	1,055.08
May	1,086.44	1,056.98	1,055.14
June	1,064.38	1,032.72	1,035.47
July	1,044.89	1,014.89	1,018.88
August	1,038.00	1,010.75	1,013.19
September	985.81	957.77	960.81
October	934.36	902.78	902.65
November	936.11	905.46	903.36
December	930.88	899.03	896.34
January–December	1,023.05	993.75	992.53
2015:			
January	912.21	882.38	NA
February	858.03	829.36	NA
January–February	885.12	855.87	NA

NA Not available.

Source: Platts Metals Daily.

TABLE 3
TINPLATE PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES[1]

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Period	Tinplate waste production (strips, cobbles, etc.) (gross weight)	Tinplate (all forms)			
		Production			
		Gross weight	Tin content	Tin per metric ton of plate (kilograms)	Shipments[2] (gross weight)
2014:					
February	452	71,000	444	6.2	102,000
March	348	92,300	495	5.4	114,000
April	1,510	87,800	498	5.7	122,000
May	2,330	92,500	502	5.4	120,000
June	2,910	93,600	505	5.4	123,000
July	2,800	90,200	490	5.4	115,000
August	2,930	87,400	476	5.4	110,000
September	3,820	98,900	489	4.9	116,000
October	4,970	79,500	442	5.6	108,000
November	4,970	80,200	459	5.7	78,500
December	4,970	80,800	453	5.6	85,000
January–December	32,900	1,030,000	5,680	5.5	1,300,000
2015:					
January	4,970	80,700	458	5.7	NA
Feburary	4,970	60,700	450	7.4	NA
January–February	9,940	141,000	908	6.6	NA

NA Not available.

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

[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	2014	2015		
		January	February	January–February
Imports:				
Metal (refined tin):				
Belgium	219	303	303	606
Bolivia	4,550	526	436	962
Brazil	3,030	190	65	255
China	3,470	91	80	171
Indonesia	8,140	330	299	629
Malaysia	6,050	1,380	250	1,630
Peru	9,260	354	460	814
Singapore	375	--	--	--
Thailand	291	--	--	--
Other	218	131	3	134
Total	35,600	3,300	1,900	5,200
Other (gross weight):				
Alloys	1,570	150	159	309
Bars and rods	1,890	83	83	166
Foil, tubes, pipes	90	6	(2)	6
Plates, sheets, strip	116	6	1	7
Waste and scrap	49,700	4,050	1,950	6,000
Miscellaneous[3]	2,240	129	86	215
Exports (unwrought tin and tin alloys)	5,700	305	158	463

-- Zero.

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

[2]Less than ½ unit.

[3]Includes tin powders and flakes (HTS code 8007.00.3200) and other articles of tin not elsewhere specified or included (HTS code 8007.00.5000).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF TIN IN THE UNITED STATES, BY FINISHED PRODUCT[1]

(Metric tons of contained tin)

Product	2014[p]	2015						
		January			February			January–February
		Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total	
Alloys (miscellaneous)[2]	3,560	221	2	223	217	2	219	442
Babbitt	340	23	W	23	22	W	22	45
Bronze and brass	1,710	60	86	146	59	86	145	291
Chemicals	5,440	455	W	455	458	W	458	913
Solder	4,160	196	W	196	197	W	197	393
Tinning	584	32	--	32	34	--	34	66
Tinplate[3]	5,680	458	W	458	450	W	450	908
Other[4]	4,740	498	154	652	498	152	650	1,300
Total reported	26,200	1,940	243	2,190	1,940	241	2,180	4,360

[p]Preliminary. 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]Includes terne metal.

[3]Includes secondary pig tin and tin components of tinplating chemical solutions.

[4]Includes britannia metal, collapsible tubes and foil, jewelers' metal, pewter, tin powder, type metal and white metal.