

Mineral Industry Surveys

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COBALT IN FEBRUARY 2015

U.S. cobalt consumption during January through February 2015 was 5% more than consumption during the same period in 2014. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals in January through February 2015 was 34% more than that imported during the same period in 2014. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals in January through February 2015 was 8% more than that exported during the same period in 2014.

Prices

February 2015 prices for cobalt metal, in dollars per pound, are listed below. Monthly average cobalt prices were lower than those in January.

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	13.80–14.50	14.15
LME cash mean ²	12.95–13.49	13.17

¹Source: Platts Metals Daily, minimum 99.8% cobalt cathode.

²London Metal Exchange, mean of the cash buyer and cash seller price, minimum 99.3% cobalt briquettes, cathode, ingot, or rounds (converted from dollars per metric ton and rounded to the nearest cent).

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TABLE 1
REPORTED CONSUMPTION AND STOCKS OF COBALT MATERIALS¹

(Metric tons, contained cobalt)

Period	Consumption, U.S. industry ^{p,2}	Stocks, end of period					Total
		U.S. industry ^{p,2}	U.S. Government ^{4,5}	LME ^{3,4}			
				U.S. warehouse	Non-U.S. warehouse		
2014:							
February	648	813	301	36	548	584	
March	668	795	301	36	530	566	
April	633	794 ^r	301	34	514	548	
May	642	790	301	22	517	539	
June	646	777	301	20	527	547	
July	652	776	301 ^e	19	523	542	
August	648	764	301 ^e	19	497	516	
September	654	736	301	19	484	503	
October	641	830	301 ^e	9	482	491	
November	636	846	301 ^e	9	480	489	
December	665	872	301	9	480	489	
January–February	1,300	813	301	36	548	584	
January–December ⁶	7,780	872	301	9	480	489	
2015:							
January	681 ^r	872	301	9	471	480	
February	680	867	301	8	470	478	
January–February	1,360	867	301	8	470	478	

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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

²Data for cobalt metal, metal powder, oxide and other chemical compounds, and scrap reported by U.S. cobalt processors and consumers. Includes estimates.

³London Metal Exchange.

⁴Cobalt metal.

⁵Data from Defense Logistics Agency, DLA Strategic Materials.

⁶U.S. industry data based on monthly reports.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF COBALT, BY COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period and country of origin	Metals ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6}
	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2014:								
February	465	\$12,500	192	\$4,150	124	\$1,410	648	1,510
March	1,250	34,800	259	6,010	224	2,280	1,510	3,020
April	857	26,400	258	6,330	298	3,020	1,140	4,160
May	894	27,100	255	6,280	220	1,920	1,150	5,300
June	698	21,100	251	5,650	102	1,020	911	6,210
July	577	17,100	179	4,070	94	1,050	735	6,950
August	858	25,900	191	4,900	133	1,150	1,030	7,980
September	767	24,000	233	5,650	197	2,880	1,010	8,990
October	681	21,500	176	4,670	132	1,600	853	9,840
November	764	24,200	96	2,270	61	804	853	10,700
December	505	16,000	147	3,620	164	1,600	660	11,400
January–February	1,170	31,600	375	8,280	208	2,140	1,510	XX
January–December	9,020	270,000	2,420	57,700	1,830	19,500	11,400	XX
2015:								
January	1,070	27,800	106	2,570	196	2,400	1,220	1,220
February:								
Australia	26	742	--	--	--	--	26	130
Belgium	3	93	54	1,370	10	80	45	71
Brazil	--	--	--	--	5	56	1	81
Canada	8	408	--	--	--	--	8	12
China	105	3,570	42	978	44	556	151	407
Finland	(7)	22	22	534	234	2,600	97	190
France	2	75	--	--	--	--	2	8
Germany	6	453	(7)	19	--	--	7	7
India	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5
Ireland	(7)	8	--	--	--	--	(7)	(7)
Italy	--	--	(7)	2	--	--	(7)	(7)
Japan	74	2,180	--	--	--	--	74	139
Korea, Republic of	(7)	4	--	--	--	--	(7)	(7)
Madagascar	21	620	--	--	--	--	21	105
Morocco	30	897	--	--	--	--	30	60
Norway	78	2,180	--	--	--	--	78	338
Peru	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Russia	161	4,950	--	--	--	--	161	161
South Africa	10	309	--	--	--	--	10	202
Sweden	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	5	49	1	2
United Kingdom	(7)	16	27	657	56	733	40	48
Zambia	49	1,440	--	--	--	--	49	49
Total	574	18,000	145	3,560	353	4,080	801	2,020
January–February	1,650	45,700	252	6,130	549	6,480	2,020	XX

XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²Unwrought cobalt, excluding alloys; includes cobalt cathode and cobalt metal powder; may include intermediate products of cobalt metallurgy.

³Includes cobalt acetates, cobalt carbonates, cobalt chlorides, and cobalt sulfates.

⁴Customs value.

⁵Estimated from gross weights.

⁶May include revisions to previously published data.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ADDITIONAL COBALT MATERIALS, BY COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period and country of origin	Unwrought cobalt alloys		Cobalt waste and scrap		Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles	
	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)
2014:						
February	63	\$1,870	54	\$723	24	\$2,310
March	54	1,730	151	2,320	19	2,040
April	73	2,640	95	1,340	15	2,140
May	88	2,710	123	2,290	12	1,940
June	51	1,630	61	734	17	1,540
July	55	1,750	111	1,910	13	1,820
August	85	3,420	82	1,210	50	2,160
September	48	1,610	92	1,440	9	1,440
October	83	2,720	94	1,420	12	1,670
November	123	3,980	107	1,480	15	1,200
December	233	6,710	92	1,300	17	2,230
January–February	149	4,510	123	1,770	44	4,300
January–December	1,040	33,400	1,130	17,200	224	22,500
2015:						
January	35	1,180	62	1,000	21	1,980
February:						
Belgium	25	846	--	--	--	--
Canada	63	1,900	2	19	1	564
China	9	232	--	--	3	265
France	(3)	49	--	--	1	121
Germany	--	--	11	158	1	181
India	--	--	--	--	(3)	5
Ireland	--	--	19	190	--	--
Japan	--	--	6	58	1	83
Netherlands	--	--	--	--	(3)	4
Singapore	(3)	6	3	33	--	--
Switzerland	--	--	--	--	(3)	6
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	(3)	25
United Kingdom	--	--	5	96	1	83
Total	97	3,030	45	553	9	1,340
January–February	132	4,210	107	1,560	30	3,320

-- Zero.

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

²Customs value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. EXPORTS OF COBALT MATERIALS¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period	Unwrought cobalt, powders, matte, waste and scrap ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6}
	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Quantity	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2014:								
February	359	\$10,500	15	\$251	21	\$105	375	635
March	345	9,570	72	1,070	43	349	407	1,040
April	399	10,800	62	851	20	180	448	1,490
May	505	9,600	27	538	--	--	524	2,010
June	379	9,360	51	529	1	9	415	2,430
July	309	7,930	4	149	10	1,970	314	2,740
August	310	8,590	207	1,390	(7)	34	459	3,200
September	305	8,160	35	137	--	--	330	3,530
October	235	5,610	28	320	1	14	255	3,790
November	297	6,680	29	344	24	221	323	4,110
December	385	8,330	7	127	6	58	392	4,500
January–February	605	17,700	15	264	79	590	635	XX
January–December	4,070	102,000	536	5,720	184	3,420	4,500	XX
2015:								
January	315	7,300	--	--	20	180	319	319
February	337	8,710	32	560	20	170	365	685
January–February	652	16,000	32	560	40	349	685	XX

XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²May include other intermediate products of cobalt metallurgy and unwrought cobalt alloys.

³Cobalt acetates and cobalt chlorides.

⁴Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

⁵Estimated from gross weights.

⁶May include revisions to previously published data.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF WROUGHT COBALT, COBALT ORE,
AND CONCENTRATES¹

(Metric tons, gross weight of material, except as noted)

Period	Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles		Cobalt ore and concentrates	
	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)	Quantity	Value ² (thousands)
2014:				
February	152	\$9,370	1	\$5
March	184	9,860	(3)	4
April	150	9,020	281	365
May	126	8,060	(3)	4
June	160	9,190	165	688
July	170	9,740	6	61
August	164	9,700	--	--
September	143	8,540	103	136
October	143	9,100	1	7
November	135	7,540	17	90
December	156	9,140	140	228
January–February	261	16,000	1	31
January–December	1,790	106,000	714	1,610
2015:				
January	154	8,960	--	--
February	202	11,100	--	--
January–February	357	20,000	--	--

-- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.