

Mineral Industry Surveys

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COBALT IN MARCH 2015

U.S. cobalt consumption from January through March 2015 was 6% more than consumption during the same period in 2014. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals from January through March 2015 was 12% more than that imported during the same period in 2014. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals from January through March 2015 was 4% more than that exported during the same period in 2014.

Prices

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

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	12.70–14.20	13.28
LME cash mean ²	12.13–13.02	12.50

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	Stocks, end of period						Total
	Consumption, U.S. industry ^{p,2}	U.S. industry ^{p,2}	U.S. Government ^{4,5}	LME ^{3,4}			
				U.S. warehouse	Non-U.S. warehouse		
2014:							
March	698 ^r	867 ^r	301	36	530	566	
April	687 ^r	841 ^r	301	34	514	548	
May	680 ^r	844 ^r	301	22	517	539	
June	684 ^r	824 ^r	301	20	527	547	
July	689 ^r	831 ^r	301 ^e	19	523	542	
August	679 ^r	818 ^r	301 ^e	19	497	516	
September	691 ^r	781 ^r	301	19	484	503	
October	675 ^r	871 ^r	301 ^e	9	482	491	
November	676 ^r	890 ^r	301 ^e	9	480	489	
December	710 ^r	955 ^r	301	9	480	489	
January–March	2,060 ^r	867 ^r	301	36	530	566	
January–December ⁶	8,230 ^r	955 ^r	301	9	480	489	
2015:							
January	747 ^r	913 ^r	301	9	471	480	
February	714 ^r	903 ^r	301	8	470	478	
March	726	927	301	8	463	471	
January–March	2,190	927	301	8	463	471	

^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 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:								
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–March	2,420	66,400	634	14,300	432	4,420	3,020	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	574	18,000	145	3,560	353	4,080	801	2,020
March:								
Australia	99	2,790	--	--	--	--	99	229
Belgium	3	151	50	1,190	--	--	39	110
Brazil	--	--	--	--	6	86	2	83
Canada	104	3,570	(7)	3	--	--	104	116
China	258	7,650	15	329	38	580	283	690
Czech Republic	--	--	--	--	(7)	2	(7)	(7)
Finland	75	2,500	35	796	158	1,890	158	348
France	3	111	--	--	--	--	3	10
Germany	11	770	--	--	--	--	11	19
India	--	--	--	--	20	170	5	11
Ireland	(7)	3	--	--	--	--	(7)	(7)
Italy	1	24	--	--	--	--	1	1
Japan	50	1,490	--	--	--	--	50	189
Korea, Republic of	(7)	10	--	--	--	--	(7)	(7)
Madagascar	84	2,560	--	--	--	--	84	189
Morocco	20	579	--	--	--	--	20	80
Norway	276	7,920	--	--	--	--	276	614
Peru	--	--	--	--	1	17	(7)	1
Russia	93	2,770	--	--	--	--	93	253
South Africa	36	827	--	--	--	--	36	238
Sweden	2	126	--	--	--	--	2	7
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	3	28	1	3
United Kingdom	(7)	18	103	2,420	17	234	80	129
Zambia	21	623	--	--	--	--	21	70
Total	1,140	34,500	203	4,740	243	3,010	1,370	3,390
January–March	2,780	80,200	454	10,900	792	9,490	3,390	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:						
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–March	203	6,240	274	4,080	63	6,330
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	97	3,030	45	553	9	1,340
March:						
Australia	12	775	--	--	--	--
Austria	--	--	--	--	(3)	45
Belgium	13	432	1	12	--	--
Canada	73	2,170	2	44	2	741
China	6	124	1	4	5	365
Czech Republic	--	--	(3)	4	--	--
France	(3)	59	23	441	4	314
Germany	--	--	--	--	5	382
India	--	--	23	172	--	--
Ireland	--	--	27	295	--	--
Japan	(3)	3	5	58	(3)	27
Korea, Republic of	--	--	(3)	3	--	--
Mexico	--	--	1	21	(3)	6
Norway	11	460	--	--	--	--
Saudi Arabia	--	--	6	83	--	--
Singapore	--	--	2	23	--	--
Sweden	--	--	--	--	(3)	2
Switzerland	--	--	--	--	(3)	13
Taiwan	--	--	3	64	--	--
United Kingdom	2	123	27	572	4	274
Total	117	4,150	120	1,790	21	2,170
January–March	249	8,360	227	3,350	51	5,480

-- 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:								
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–March	949	27,300	87	1,340	122	940	1,040	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
March	332	9,450	97	592	(7)	3	403	1,090
January–March	984	25,500	129	1,150	40	352	1,090	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:				
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–March	444	25,900	1	35
January–December	1,790	106,000	714	1,610
2015:				
January	154	8,960	--	--
February	202	11,100	--	--
March	152	9,450	--	--
January–March	509	29,500	--	--

-- 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.