

Mineral Industry Surveys

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COBALT IN APRIL 2016

U.S. cobalt consumption during January through April 2016 was slightly less than consumption during the same period in 2015. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals in January through April 2016 was 14% less than that imported during the same period in 2015. The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals in January through April 2016 was slightly more than that exported during the same period in 2015.

Prices

Monthly average cobalt prices decreased from those of the prior month. The following listed prices are for cobalt metal in April, in dollars per pound.

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	10.50–11.60	11.01
LME cash mean ²	10.16–10.77	10.41

¹Source: Platts Metals Week, 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}	U.S. industry ^{p,2}	U.S. Government ^{3,4}	Stocks, end of period		Total
				LME ^{3,5}		
				U.S. warehouse	Non-U.S. warehouse	
2015:						
April	719	907	301	8	457	465
May	717	910	301	8	443	451
June	719	912	301	8	345	353
July	727	917	301	23	423	446
August	709	919	301	110	418	528
September	697	911	301	110	448	558
October	724	912	301	110	448	558
November	725	886	301	125	441	566
December	713	912	301	165	465	630
January–April	2,870 ^r	907	301	8	457	465
January–December ⁶	8,600	912	301	165	465	630
2016:						
January	715	916	301	169	450	619
February	709	947	301	169	445	614
March	705	981	301	193	458	651
April	718	968	301	197	457	654
January–April	2,850	968	301	197	457	654

^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.

³Cobalt metal.

⁴Data from Defense Logistics Agency Strategic Materials.

⁵London Metal Exchange.

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)		
2015:								
April	804	\$24,100	127	\$2,820	215	\$1,810	964	4,350
May	565	16,300	181	4,150	327	3,970	815	5,170
June	785	23,300	210	4,440	212	2,290	1,000	6,170
July	845	24,800	110	2,590	107	1,110	958	7,130
August	843	25,000	144	3,440	182	1,750	1,000	8,130
September	661	19,900	154	3,620	107	939	803	8,940
October	623	18,000	149	3,340	287	1,940	812	9,750
November	650	17,500	110	2,500	261	1,440	800	10,500
December	714	18,200	112	2,410	141	1,540	840	11,400
January–April	3,590	104,000	581	13,700	1,010	11,300	4,350	XX
January–December	9,270	267,000	1,750	40,200	2,630	26,300	11,400	XX
2016:								
January	612	14,200	100	1,980	104	1,340	720	720
February	1,050	23,100	171	3,010	106	1,160	1,210	1,930
March	720	17,500	173	3,260	170	1,860	903	2,830
April:								
Australia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	186
Austria	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(7)
Belgium	4	144	68	1,450	18	121	58	172
Brazil	--	--	--	--	19	267	6	11
Canada	62	2,770	--	--	--	--	62	529
China	7	215	42	794	38	421	51	235
Finland	43	967	38	587	95	902	100	301
France	1	38	--	--	--	--	1	19
Germany	5	281	--	--	--	--	5	29
Ireland	(7)	4	--	--	--	--	(7)	(7)
Italy	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	(7)
Japan	92	2,180	--	--	--	--	92	479
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Kuwait	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5
Madagascar	63	1,420	--	--	--	--	63	273
Morocco	52	1,120	--	--	--	--	52	122
Netherlands	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5
Norway	272	6,730	--	--	--	--	272	644
Peru	--	--	--	--	1	18	(7)	(7)
Russia	41	905	--	--	19	33	46	227
Singapore	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	24
South Africa	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	98
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
United Kingdom	20	814	42	848	4	30	52	144
Zambia	40	821	--	--	--	--	40	220
Total	701	18,400	190	3,680	194	1,790	899	3,730
January–April	3,080	73,100	634	11,900	575	6,150	3,730	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)
2015:						
April	132	\$3,880	60	\$558	23	\$2,240
May	112	3,770	69	1,020	13	1,860
June	83	2,960	56	801	10	1,920
July	37	1,360	82	1,210	23	2,260
August	104	3,610	82	1,410	13	1,380
September	108	3,920	66	873	24	1,850
October	95	2,960	53	903	12	1,450
November	97	2,990	57	1,000	19	1,870
December	236	5,990	60	951	24	1,450
January–April	381	12,200	287	3,910	74	7,730
January–December	1,250	39,800	812	12,100	211	21,800
2016:						
January	82	2,600	43	698	10	1,590
February	109	3,460	58	793	13	1,550
March	91	2,750	82	1,150	11	1,440
April:						
Austria	--	--	--	--	(3)	3
Belgium	13	328	--	--	(3)	23
Canada	18	377	(3)	5	3	867
China	5	128	1	6	1	256
France	--	--	6	91	(3)	27
Germany	--	--	--	--	2	111
India	--	--	--	--	(3)	3
Ireland	--	--	13	187	(3)	39
Japan	(3)	3	4	31	1	73
Mexico	--	--	1	18	(3)	15
Norway	3	125	--	--	--	--
Singapore	--	--	1	12	--	--
Switzerland	--	--	--	--	(3)	3
Taiwan	--	--	5	92	(3)	16
United Kingdom	28	1,110	13	176	2	106
Total	67	2,080	43	619	9	1,540
January–April	350	10,900	225	3,260	42	6,120

-- 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)		
2015:								
April	308	\$8,640	1	\$44	38	\$322	318	1,400
May	238	7,260	1	28	19	158	243	1,650
June	382	9,310	4	103	--	--	385	2,030
July	295	6,810	32	584	6	30	319	2,350
August	295	5,870	8	334	--	--	300	2,650
September	277	5,630	1	28	29	182	284	2,940
October	223	5,160	15	354	26	189	240	3,180
November	302	5,530	1	57	4	16	304	3,480
December	322	7,020	--	--	19	150	327	3,810
January–April	1,290	34,100	130	1,200	78	674	1,400	XX
January–December	3,630	86,700	192	2,680	180	1,400	3,810	XX
2016:								
January	305	5,930	7	118	10	43	312	312
February	336	6,600	4	45	33	107	347	659
March	289	6,850	72	236	19	132	345	1,000
April	399	7,530	2	51	29	130	408	1,410
January–April	1,330	26,900	85	450	91	413	1,410	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.

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)
2015:				
April	155	\$9,130	--	--
May	156	8,680	1	\$6
June	144	8,660	--	--
July	170	9,540	3	18
August	176	9,830	--	--
September	166	9,090	--	--
October	142	8,470	--	--
November	124	7,550	1	11
December	143	7,710	--	--
January–April	664	38,600	--	--
January–December	1,890	108,000	6	35
2016:				
January	117	6,880	--	--
February	128	7,360	--	--
March	163	9,110	--	--
April	140	8,190	--	--
January–April	548	31,500	--	--

-- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.