

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

Elsie D. Isaac (Data)
Telephone: (703) 648-7950
Fax: (703) 648-7975
E-mail: eisaac@usgs.gov

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

TIN IN NOVEMBER 2006

Domestic consumption of primary tin in November was estimated to be about 1% lower than that in October and about 11% lower than that in November 2005. Estimated domestic consumption of primary tin in the first 11 months of 2006 was about 9% lower than that in the comparable period of 2005. Imports of refined tin during the first 10 months of 2006 were 35,500 metric tons (t), an increase of 9% above that for the comparable period of 2005.

The Platts Metals Week average composite price for tin in November was \$6.40 per pound, about 3% higher than that in October and about 55% higher than that in November 2005.

The investment bank Societe Generale (SG) (Paris, France) predicted a world tin supply deficit of 10,000 t in 2007, compared with an estimated 3,000 t deficit in 2006. Looking forward to 2008, SG predicted the 2007 deficit would be cut in half to 5,000 t. SG noted two factors causing these deficits—the increased demand for tin, growing more than 30% in the past 4 years, and the recent forced closure of small tin smelters in Indonesia. The demand has been fueled by growing use of lead-free solder, which is often composed of 96% tin, mandated by European Union regulations that became affective in mid-2006. SG believed that some sort of compromise eventually would be reached in Indonesia. However, the world tin production will have barely risen in 2006, and the growth in 2007 will be largely confined to Brazil and China. Although SG feels that tin output could climb 3% in 2007, production was forecast to rise from 355,000 t in 2006 to 365,000 t in 2007. SG expected world tin consumption to climb from 332,000 t in 2005 to 368,000 t in 2006, to a forecast 385,000 t in 2007 and 400,000 t in 2008 (Platts Metals Week, 2006).

The President of Bolivia reportedly charged that Glencore International AG (Baar, Switzerland) acquired tin assets in his country “unlawfully.” Glencore purchased the properties in 2005 after the previous chief executive departed the company.

According to reports, the President claimed that mining firms were “cheating Bolivia” and vowed that in 2007 his office would focus on higher taxes on the mining industry. Glencore operates five mines and a tin smelter in Bolivia through its subsidiary Sinchi Wayra (formerly known as COMSUR). The Vinto tin smelter produced 11,800 t of refined tin in 2005 (CRU Week in the News, 2006§¹).

In Indonesia, more than 20 small, independent tin smelters were shut down by the Government in October. The Government investigated their legality, and there was some uncertainty as to when and how many of them ultimately may be granted new operating licenses. Prior to their closure, the smelters were producing about 6,000 metric tons per month of refined tin, or about 20% of world supply (CRU Week in the News, 2007§).

Update

On January 12, 2007, the Platts Metals Week composite price for tin was \$6.71 per pound..

Reference Cited

Platts Metals Week, 2006, SG predicts tin deficits for 2007-2008: Platts Metals Week, v. 77, no. 52, December 25, p. 3.

Internet References Cited

CRU Week in the News, 2006 (November 30), Tin, accessed November 30, 2006, at URL <http://www.crumonitor.com>.
CRU Week in the News, 2007 (January 18), Tin, accessed January 18, 2007, at URL <http://www.crumonitor.com>.

¹References that include a section mark (§) are found in the Internet References Cited section.

TABLE 1
SALIENT TIN STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

	2005	2006		January- November
	January- December ^p	October	November	
Production, secondary ^{e, 2}	10,800	900	900	9,900
Consumption:				
Primary	35,900	2,750	2,720	31,100
Secondary	10,800	692	697	7,670
Imports for consumption, metal	37,500	4,180	NA	NA
Exports, metal	4,330	485	NA	NA
Stocks at end of period	5,400	5,650 ^r	5,640	XX
Prices (average cents per pound): ³				
Metals Week composite ⁴	483.04	620.68	640.18	XX
Metals Week New York dealer	329.69	470.33	480.00	XX
London, standard grade, cash	304.00	426.00	426.00	XX
Kuala Lumpur	301.83	441.79	457.07	XX

^eEstimated. ^pPreliminary. ^rRevised. NA Not available. XX Not applicable.

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
2005	496.08	469.82	483.04
2006:			
January	521.70	492.15	503.78
February	517.39	499.65	507.70
March	533.89	508.89	517.91
April	605.47	508.89	569.88
May	609.29	527.83	572.77
June	533.94	504.15	516.34
July	570.52	521.54	545.14
August	572.74	538.14	548.13
September	589.75	575.67	578.78
October	673.37	574.43	620.68
November	655.39	623.76	640.18

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)	
2005 ^P	W	2,270,000	7,670	3.4	1,860,000
2006:					
January	4,890	183,000	584	3.2	166,000
February	4,640	174,000	591	3.4	138,000
March	4,870	185,000	626	3.4	166,000
April	4,640	169,000	602	3.6	144,000
May	4,860	179,000	604	3.4	166,000
June	4,820	189,000	639	3.4	165,000
July	4,660	167,000	561	3.4	152,000
August	5,210	158,000	540	3.4	159,000
September	4,420	164,000	547	3.3	143,000
October	4,730	161,000	538	3.3	144,000
November	4,700	160,000	532	3.3	NA

^PPreliminary. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

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	2005	2006		
		September	October	January- October
Imports:				
Metal (unwrought tin):				
Bolivia	5,400	720	525	7,130
Brazil	2,150	175	184	853
Chile	20	--	--	--
China	4,510	247	396	3,590
Hong Kong	--	--	99	99
Indonesia	5,220	166	45	3,630
Malaysia	1,530	47	--	245
Peru	18,300	2,380	2,720	17,400
Thailand	45	--	--	60
United Kingdom	67	169	198	1,290
Other	264	23	5	1,140
Total	37,500	3,930	4,180	35,500
Other (gross weight):				
Alloys	7,460	172	300	5,770
Bars and rods	1,030	309	266	2,090
Foil, tubes, pipes	8	--	3	11
Plates, sheets, strip	324	33	12	222
Waste and scrap	3,530	59	266	1,430
Miscellaneous	3,310	382	494	2,990
Total	15,700	955	1,340	12,500
Exports (metal)	4,330	527	485	4,380

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

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

(Metric tons of contained tin)

Product	2005			2006				
	January	October			November			January-
	December ^p	Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total	November
Alloys (miscellaneous) ²	1,240	180	--	180	176	--	176	1,750
Babbitt	276	16	W	16	17	W	17	228
Bar tin and anodes	275	26	W	26	26	W	26	286
Bronze and brass	3,700	120	134	254	106	139	245	2,840
Chemicals	8,680	616	W	616	616	W	616	7,060
Collapsible tubes and foil	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Solder	12,200	583	250	833	583	250	833	9,370
Tinning	740	36	--	36	34	--	34	440
Tinplate ³	7,670	538	--	538	532	--	532	6,390
Tin powder	W	W	--	W	W	--	W	W
White metal ⁴	W	W	--	W	W	--	W	W
Other	1,070	33	8	41	31	8	39	508
Total reported	35,900	2,150	392	2,540	2,120	397	2,520	28,900
Estimated undistributed consumption ⁵	10,800	600	300	900	600	300	900	9,900
Grand total	46,700	2,750	692	3,440	2,720	697	3,420	38,800

^pPreliminary. 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.

²Includes terne metal.

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

⁴Includes pewter, britannia metal, and jewelers' metal.

⁵Estimated consumption of plants reporting on an annual basis.