



2007 Minerals Yearbook

LEBANON

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF LEBANON

By Thomas R. Yager

Lebanon did not play a significant role in the world's production or consumption of minerals in 2007. Cement production and rock and sand quarrying were the mineral and mineral processing activities that were of the greatest significance to the Lebanese economy.

Production

Lebanon's cement production increased considerably from 2003 to 2007; the increase in cement production led to higher output of limestone for use in cement. The production of other minerals was estimated to be unchanged in 2007.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Lebanon's four cement plants and its phosphatic fertilizers, phosphoric acid, and sulfuric acid plants were privately owned. The country was also estimated to have between 300 and 400 rock and sand quarries, many of which were unlicensed (Bathish and Zeineddine, 2007).

Commodity Review

Metals

Iron and Steel.—In May 2007, Al Tuwairqi Group (ATG) of Saudi Arabia announced plans to build a new rolling mill in Lebanon with a capacity of 500,000 metric tons per year. The company planned to produce rebar from imported billet. ATG was considering the construction of a new electric arc furnace in Lebanon to feed the rolling mill (Metal Bulletin, 2007).

Industrial Minerals

Cement.—Lebanon's cement plants produced 4.9 million metric tons (Mt) of cement in 2007. Holcim (Liban) S.A.L. produced nearly 1.95 Mt of cement in 2007 compared with 1.73 Mt in 2006. Cimenterie Nationale S.A.L planned to complete an upgrade in May 2007 that would increase its clinker production capacity by 90%; the company's cement production was expected to increase to 2 Mt in 2007 from 1.7 Mt in 2006 (Financial Funds Advisors International S.A.L., 2007; Holcim (Liban) S.A.L., 2008, p. 9).

National cement consumption increased to nearly 3.95 Mt in 2007 from 3.42 Mt in 2006 and 3.04 Mt in 2005; cement was also exported to Iraq and Syria. Higher demand may be partially attributable to rebuilding after the conflict between Israel and the Hezbollah organization in 2006. Holcim's market share amounted to 45% in 2007 (Bank Audi S.A.L., 2008; Holcim (Liban) S.A.L., 2008, p. 9).

In September 2006, Lebanon's cement producers agreed to a 1-year price ceiling of \$65 per metric ton to aid reconstruction efforts; the price differential between Lebanon and Syria led to the smuggling of cement to Syria. The price ceiling was ended in September 2007 (Bluhm, 2006; Holcim (Liban) S.A.L., 2008, p. 9).

Mineral Fuels

Petroleum.—Lebanon has no petroleum reserves, and the Zahrani and the Tripoli refineries were shut down in 1989 and 1992, respectively. In October 2006, Qatar Petroleum International (QPI) completed a feasibility study on a new petroleum refinery with a capacity of between 150,000 and 200,000 barrels per day. In February 2007, however, the Government put plans for QPI's new refinery on hold indefinitely (Middle East Economic Digest, 2006; 2007).

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TABLE 1
LEBANON: ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ³	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Cement, hydraulic thousand metric tons	3,900 ^r	4,400 ^r	4,600 ^r	4,400 ^r	4,900
Gypsum	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Lime	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
Limestone, for cement thousand metric tons	4,600	5,900	5,900	5,900 ^r	6,500
Phosphate: ⁴					
Phosphatic fertilizers	53,000 ⁵	85,000 ⁵	85,000	85,000	85,000
Phosphoric acid	166,000 ⁵	175,000 ⁵	180,000	180,000	180,000
Salt	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Sulfuric acid:					
Gross weight	485,000 ⁵	495,000 ⁵	500,000	500,000	500,000
S content	159,000 ⁵	162,000 ⁵	164,000	164,000	164,000

^rRevised.

¹Estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Table includes data available through July 7, 2008.

³In addition to the commodities listed, sand and gravel and other construction materials are also produced, but quantities are not reported, and available information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

⁴P₂O₅ equivalent.

⁵Reported figure.

TABLE 2
LEBANON: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2007

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Aggregates	Holcim (Liban) S.A.L. (Holcim Ltd., 52%)	Beirut	NA
Cement	do.	Chekka	2,200
Do.	Cimenterie Nationale S.A.L.	do.	2,100
Do.	Ciment de Sibleine S.A.L.	Sibleine	1,277
Do.	Seament S.A.L.	Chekka	500
Gypsum	NA	Hosrayel	30
Lime	Seament S.A.L.	Chekka	NA
Petroleum, refined thousand 42-gallon barrels	Ministry of Industry and Petroleum ¹ (Government, 100%)	Tripoli	12,800
Do.	do. ²	Zahrani	6,400
Phosphate fertilizers	Lebanon Chemicals Company S.A.L.	Selaata	NA
Phosphoric acid	do.	do.	NA
Steel	Consolidated Steel Lebanon S.A.L. ³	Amchit	300
Sulfuric acid	Lebanon Chemicals Company S.A.L.	Selaata	NA

Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.

¹Shut down in 1992.

²Shut down in 1989.

³Shut down in 2002.