



ICSG PRESS RELEASE

Copper: Preliminary Data for September 2002

The International Copper Study Group (ICSG) released preliminary September 2002 data for world copper supply and demand in its December 2002 Copper Bulletin.

According to ICSG data, the apparent refined copper surplus for the first nine months of this year amounted to 77,000 tonnes (t), including revised data for prior months. This compares with a surplus of 387,000 t in the January to September period of 2001. Preliminary results for September 2002, however, show a deficit of 18,000 t of refined copper. Continued high apparent usage in China contributed to the September deficit.

World copper usage for January to September of 2002 increased by 1.6% compared with that of the same period last year. Regional developments, however, were quite mixed. The Americas and Europe showed no discernible upturn whereas Asia exhibited a remarkable rise in refined copper usage. Within Asia, however, the growth was inconsistent. Usage in China and South Korea increased by 19.9% and 8.9%, respectively, for the first three quarters of the year compared with that of the same period last year, while usage in Japan and India declined by 6.5% and 8.7%, respectively. World mine output for the January to September period fell 2.1% compared with that of the same period last year. Total refined copper production in the first nine months of 2002 contracted by 1.2%. Capacity utilisation began creeping up from the low rates experienced at midyear, but was still below last year's levels.

Copper stocks held at the major metal exchanges (LME, COMEX, SHFE) at the end of November totalled 1,307,217 t, a decrease of 21,761 t from stocks held at the end of October 2002. Nearly all of the inventory decline was attributed to the Shanghai Metal Exchange. The average LME cash price for November 2002 was US\$1,582.3 per tonne, as compared with the October average of US\$1,483.8 per tonne.

World Refined Copper Usage and Supply Trends, 1996-2002

Thousand metric tonnes, copper

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001		2002			
							Jan-Sep	2001	2002	Jan-Sep	Jun	Jul
World Mine Production	11,128	11,549	12,236	12,757	13,186	13,653	10,199	9,986	1,123	1,090	1,156	1,136
World Mine Capacity	12,019	12,426	13,155	13,868	14,308	14,571	10,887	11,185	1,230	1,277	1,283	1,247
Percent Capacity Utilization	92.6	92.9	93.0	92.0	92.2	93.7	93.7	89.3	91.3	85.4	90.1	91.1
Primary Refined Production	10,681	11,376	12,014	12,408	12,626	13,672	10,152	10,007	1,096	1,106	1,110	1,106
Secondary Refined Production	1,988	2,105	2,051	2,129	2,140	1,901	1,438	1,448	168	164	160	163
Refined Production (Secondary+Primary)	12,669	13,482	14,065	14,537	14,766	15,573	11,590	11,456	1,264	1,270	1,271	1,269
World Refinery Capacity	14,183	15,457	16,097	16,908	17,029	17,575	13,109	13,471	1,483	1,536	1,540	1,494
Percent Capacity Utilization	89.3	87.2	87.4	86.0	86.7	88.6	88.4	85.0	85.2	82.7	82.5	84.9
Percent Scrap in Total Refined Production	15.7	15.6	14.6	14.6	14.5	12.2	12.4	12.6	13.3	12.9	12.6	12.9
World Usage ^{1/}	12,582	13,080	13,447	14,258	15,115	14,830	11,203	11,378	1,254	1,338	1,292	1,287
Four Weeks of World Usage	968	1,006	1,034	1,097	1,163	1,141	1,149	1,167	1,170	1,208	1,167	1,201
Refined Stocks, End of Period ^{2/}	817	1,189	1,508	1,634	1,318	2,104	1,803	2,245	2,223	2,283	2,295	2,245
Period Stock Change	-126	373	319	125	-316	786	485	141	-132	60	72	-38
Refined Surplus/Deficit ^{3/}	86	402	618	280	-349	743	387	77	10	-68	-21	-18

Due to the nature of statistical reporting, the published data should be considered as preliminary since some figures are currently based on estimates and could change.

1/ Based on EU apparent usage

2/ Refined stocks includes those held by exchanges, producers, consumers, merchants and governments

3/ Surplus or deficit is calculated using total refined production minus refined usage