



ICSG PRESS RELEASE

Copper: Preliminary Data for February 2003

The International Copper Study Group (ICSG) released preliminary February 2003 data for world copper supply and demand in its May 2003 Copper Bulletin.

According to ICSG data, the apparent refined copper surplus for the first 2 months of 2003 amounted to 52,000 tonnes (t). This compares with a surplus of 161,000 tonnes (t) in the same period of last year. Preliminary results for February 2003 show a surplus of 13,000 t of refined copper.

The decrease in the calculated surplus resulted from a 3.5% increase in world copper usage levels in the first 2 months of 2003, compared with the same period of 2002, and a 1.1% decline in world refined copper production over the same comparative periods. Refined copper production fell despite a 2.5% growth in world mine output for the first two months of 2003. The main contributors to the increase in refined copper usage were China (+23%), Japan (+19%) and Taiwan (+18%), while usage in the European Union was down by 9%. Contractions in refined copper production occurred in Canada (-27%), Germany (-9%) and the United States (-6%).

Copper stocks held at the major metal exchanges (LME, COMEX, SHFE) have decreased by a total of 157,000 t since the end of last year. At the end of April 2003 they totalled 1,136,055 t, a decrease of 81,153 t from stocks held at the end of March 2003. Stock levels decreased at the warehouses of all major exchanges. The average LME cash price for April 2003 was US\$1,587.5 per tonne, as compared with the March average of US\$1,659 per tonne.

World Refined Copper Usage and Supply Trends, 1997-2003

Thousand metric tonnes, copper

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2002		2003		2003	
							Jan-Feb	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	
World Mine Production	11,550	12,246	12,766	13,191	13,659	13,566	2,145	2,198	1,153	1,238	1,144	1,054
World Mine Capacity	12,392	13,107	13,801	14,204	14,460	15,055	2,397	2,498	1,259	1,306	1,311	1,188
Percent Capacity Utilization	93.2	93.4	92.5	92.9	94.5	90.1	89.5	88.0	91.6	94.8	87.3	88.7
Primary Refined Production	11,383	12,021	12,421	12,643	13,684	13,429	2,225	2,207	1,125	1,153	1,142	1,065
Secondary Refined Production	2,103	2,054	2,127	2,132	1,902	1,891	300	289	146	147	148	141
Refined Production (Secondary+Primary)	13,486	14,075	14,548	14,776	15,586	15,320	2,524	2,496	1,272	1,300	1,291	1,206
World Refinery Capacity	15,439	16,093	16,869	16,993	17,665	18,227	2,912	3,001	1,517	1,571	1,575	1,426
Percent Capacity Utilization	87.4	87.5	86.2	87.0	88.2	84.1	86.7	83.2	83.8	82.7	81.9	84.5
Percent Scrap in Total Refined Production	15.6	14.6	14.6	14.4	12.2	12.3	11.9	11.6	11.5	11.3	11.5	11.7
World Usage ^{1/}	13,093	13,468	14,266	15,102	14,807	15,069	2,363	2,445	1,215	1,155	1,252	1,192
Four Weeks of World Usage	1,007	1,036	1,097	1,162	1,139	1,159	1,122	1,160	1,134	1,044	1,169	1,192
Refined Stocks, End of Period ^{2/}	1,189	1,509	1,634	1,318	2,109	2,212	2,185	2,134	2,151	2,212	2,134	2,115
Period Stock Change	373	319	126	-316	790	103	76	-78	3	61	-78	-19
Refined Surplus/Deficit ^{3/}	393	607	282	-327	779	251	161	52	57	144	38	13

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