

Mineral Industry Surveys

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COBALT IN JUNE 2020

The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals in June 2020 was 22% less than that imported in June 2019. For the first 6 months of 2020, the amount of cobalt contained in imports was 10% less than that imported during the same period in 2019 (table 2). The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals in June 2020 was 40% more than that exported in June 2019 and during the first 6 months of 2020, the amount exported was 13% less than that exported during the same period in 2019 (table 4).

The following listed prices are for cobalt metal in June, in dollars per pound.

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	14.20–15.60	14.85
LME cash mean ²	12.93–13.38	13.20

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).

Prices

In June, the monthly average U.S. spot cobalt price decreased by 3% from that in May and increased slightly from that in June 2019. The monthly average LME cash mean price was slightly lower than that in May and 4% higher than that in June 2019.

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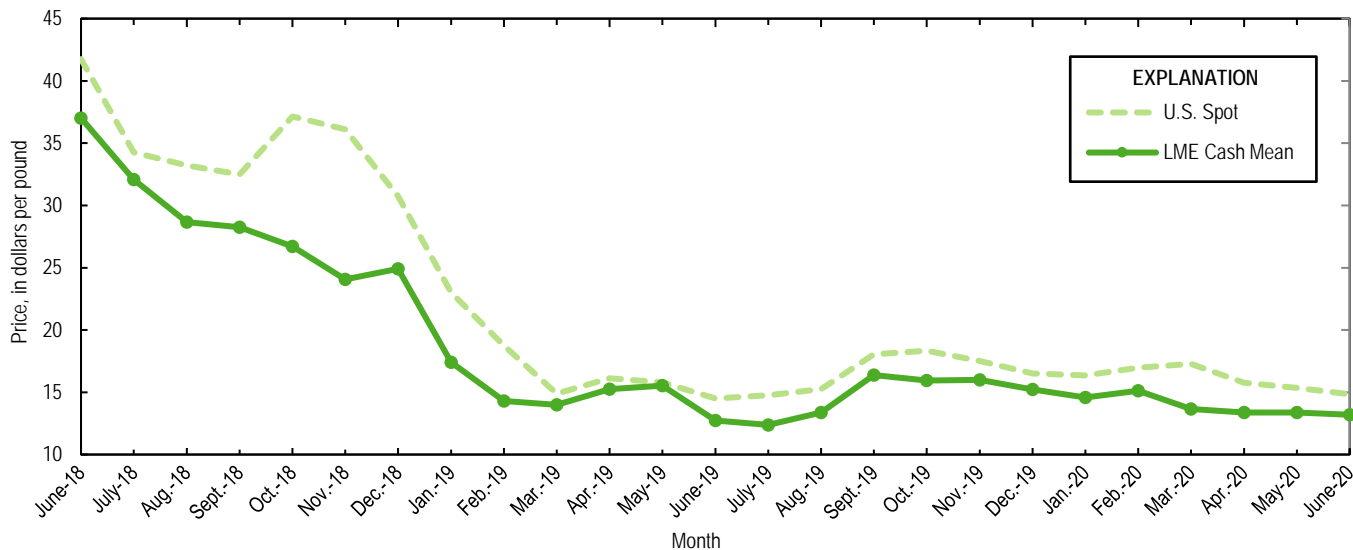


Figure 1. Average U.S. spot prices and LME cash mean prices for June 2018 through June 2020. Sources: Platts Metals Week and London Metal Exchange.

TABLE 1
REPORTED STOCKS OF COBALT METAL, END OF PERIOD

(Metric tons, contained cobalt)

Period	U.S. Government ²	LME ¹		Total
		U.S. warehouse	Non-U.S. warehouse	
2019:				
June	302	200	659	859
July	302	191	649	840
August	302	191	645	836
September	302	191	643	834
October	302	111	600	711
November	302	111	576	687
December	302	102	583	685
2020:				
January	302	95	555	650
February	302	94	551	645
March	302	92	551	643
April	302	91	513	604
May	302	89	513	602
June	302	89	513	602

¹London Metal Exchange.

²Data from Defense Logistics Agency Strategic Materials.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF COBALT, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

Period and country or locality of origin	Metals ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵ (metric tons)	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6} (metric tons)
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2019:								
June	558	\$17,800	123	\$3,000	141	\$1,190	687	7,000
July	1,030	33,900	181	4,350	115	1,580	1,200	8,200
August	674	20,100	119	2,670	88	1,120	790	8,990
September	1,420	48,300	123	3,110	191	1,930	1,570	10,600
October	779	27,800	198	5,150	152	1,640	973	11,500
November	829	29,600	167	4,600	231	3,110	1,030	12,600
December	1,210	42,500	102	2,740	103	1,370	1,320	13,900
January–June	6,010 ^r	251,000 ^r	817 ^r	21,700 ^r	1,230 ^r	17,100 ^r	7,000 ^r	XX
January–December	11,900	453,000	1,710	44,300	2,110	27,900	13,900	XX
2020:								
January	1,670	62,300	141	3,560	147	1,330	1,820	1,820
February	803	27,300	112	2,850	76	768	906	2,720
March	1,080	40,600	160	3,810	203	2,360	1,260	3,980
April	927	32,200	103	2,780	279	2,880	1,090	5,070
May	459	15,000	128	3,310	317	4,010	665	5,740
June:								
Australia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	729
Belgium	--	--	20	466	--	--	14	151
Brazil	--	--	--	--	22	301	7	49
Canada	218	6,470	--	--	--	--	218	1,080
China	6	131	16	315	18	164	23	83
Finland	16	114	--	--	117	1,230	52	562
Germany	4	189	--	--	--	--	4	22
Japan	118	4,240	--	--	--	--	118	916
Korea, Republic of	--	--	4	127	--	--	3	22
Madagascar	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	355
Mexico	--	--	--	--	1	8	(7)	41
Morocco	20	650	--	--	--	--	20	140
Netherlands	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	14
Norway	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1,340
Russia	45	1,430	--	--	--	--	45	458
South Africa	19	144	--	--	--	--	19	83
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	3	27	1	38
United Kingdom	(7)	11	19	520	3	37	15	189
Other	(7)	14	1	27	--	--	1	7
Total	446	13,400	60	1,460	164	1,770	539	6,280
January–June	5,390	191,000	704	17,800	1,190	13,100	6,280	XX

^rRevised. 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 COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

Period and country or locality of origin	Unwrought cobalt alloys		Cobalt waste and scrap		Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles	
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)
2019:						
June	21	\$1,550	145	\$1,460	47	\$4,480
July	34	2,430	223	2,420	55	4,640
August	39	2,470	171	2,440	23	3,180
September	22	1,510	155	1,880	41	4,150
October	16	875	158	2,130	47	4,980
November	21	1,240	192	2,950	43	4,480
December	40	2,280	152	2,170	52	5,320
January–June	197 [†]	12,800 [†]	1,050	14,900 [†]	230 [†]	27,000 [†]
January–December	369	23,600	2,100	28,900	491	53,800
2020:						
January	12	738	180	1,620	37	4,360
February	36	1,650	69	769	30	3,570
March	40	1,890	248	2,240	49	5,880
April	49	2,570	167	1,830	31	4,230
May	30	1,390	146	1,640	22	3,660
June:						
Canada	(3)	42	4	24	2	545
France	--	--	17	8	7	667
Germany	(3)	3	6	3	1	750
Hong Kong	--	--	3	32	--	--
Ireland	--	--	25	96	--	--
Singapore	--	--	5	94	--	--
United Kingdom	2	83	--	--	8	924
Other	1	18	5	33	1	343
Total	3	146	65	288	20	3,230
January–June	171	8,390	874	8,380	190	24,900

[†]Revised. -- 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

Period	Unwrought cobalt, powders, matte, waste and scrap ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵ (metric tons)	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6} (metric tons)
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2019:								
June	286	\$10,300	7	\$90	10	\$208	294	2,270
July	214	8,870	44	658	19	170	250	2,520
August	398	10,700	4	115	--	--	401	2,920
September	248	8,830	2	55	26	316	256	3,170
October	260	9,650	5	215	38	487	272	3,450
November	267	8,330	(7)	13	--	--	267	3,710
December	361	11,000	1	25	(7)	4	361	4,070
January–June	2,220 ^r	70,800 ^r	23	630	120	1,390	2,270 ^r	XX
January–December	3,970	128,000	79	1,710	203	2,370	4,070	XX
2020:								
January	335	11,900	8	326	32	93	349	349
February	301	8,930	14	489	3	39	311	660
March	248	8,320	7	249	65	292	268	928
April	351	8,700	3	109	39	340	363	1,290
May	260	9,310	9	380	51	2,060	279	1,570
June	398	8,350	8	329	29	174	411	1,980
January–June	1,890	55,500	49	1,880	219	3,000	1,980	XX

^rRevised. 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.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF WROUGHT COBALT, COBALT ORE,
AND CONCENTRATES¹

Period	Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles		Cobalt ore and concentrates	
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)
2019:				
June	109	\$11,400	(3)	\$5
July	102	11,300	--	--
August	127	13,700	--	--
September	141	12,600	(3)	10
October	229	17,200	(3)	4
November	242	18,700	--	--
December	208	16,700	77	211
January–June	695	74,100	24	378
January–December	1,750	164,000	102	603
2020:				
January	107	11,800	150	515
February	128	14,900	--	--
March	123	13,700	--	--
April	100	10,600	(3)	6
May	109	11,500	--	--
June	97	11,000	--	--
January–June	664	73,600	150	521

-- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.