

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ALUMINUM IN OCTOBER 2020

Domestic primary aluminum production in October 2020 was 75,000 metric tons (t). The average daily production in October 2020 was 2,430 t, essentially unchanged from that in September 2020, 17% less than that in October 2019, and 10% less than that in October 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

Total aluminum recovered from scrap in October 2020 was 277,000 t, slightly less than that in September 2020, 3% less than that in October 2019, and 13% less than that in October 2018. Of this, 150,000 t of aluminum was recovered from new scrap, and 127,000 t was recovered from old scrap (fig. 1, table 1).

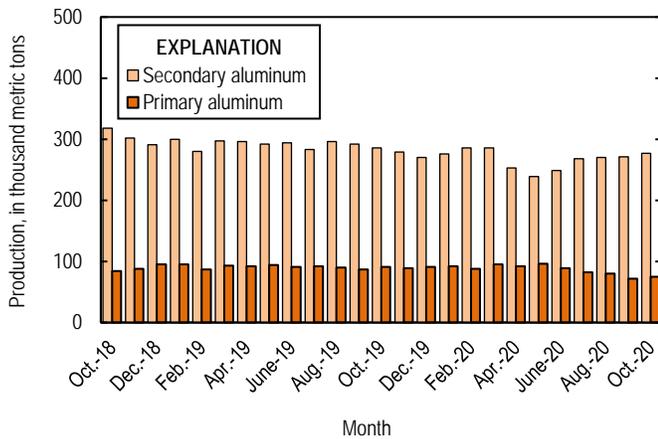


Figure 1. Monthly domestic primary and secondary aluminum production from October 2018 through October 2020.

Prices and Stocks

The October 2020 average U.S. spot market price of primary aluminum ingot was \$0.942 per pound, essentially unchanged from that in September 2020, slightly less than that in October 2019, and 16% less than that in October 2018. The average cash price in October 2020 of primary aluminum ingot on the London Metal Exchange (LME) was \$0.818 per pound, 3% more than that in September 2020, 5% more than that in October 2019, but 11% less than that in October 2018 (fig. 2, table 6).

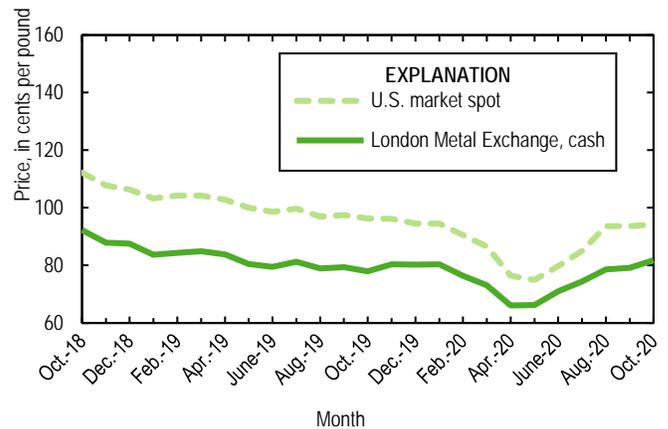


Figure 2. Average monthly prices for primary aluminum from October 2018 through October 2020. Source: Platts Metals Week.

Inventories of primary aluminum in LME-approved warehouses, including off-warrant inventories, in the United States decreased to 212,748 t at the end of October from 223,809 t at the end of September. Inventories of secondary aluminum (North American Secondary Aluminum Alloy Contract) in LME-approved warehouses, including off-warrant inventories, in the United States decreased to 30,043 t at the end of October from 32,923 t at the end of September (London Metal Exchange Ltd., 2020a-d).

Update

Alcoa Corp. announced that it will sell the Warrick rolling mill in Evansville, IN, to Kaiser Aluminum Corp. The rolling mill capacity was 310,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) and was used to produce sheet for beverage cans and other packaging products. Alcoa would continue to own the 269,000-t/yr primary aluminum smelter adjacent to the rolling mill and would supply rolling ingot to the mill. The sale was expected to be completed by April 2021 pending regulatory approval (Alcoa Corp., 2020; Roh, 2020).

References Cited

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Roh, Michael, 2020, Alcoa sells rolling mill to Kaiser for \$670mln: Fastmarkets-AMM, v. 128, no. 48–3, December 2, p. 9.

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TABLE 1
COMPONENTS OF ALUMINUM SUPPLY¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Primary production	Secondary recovery ²			Imports for consumption			Total new supply ³	Stocks, end of period ⁴
		New	Old	Total	Metals and alloys, crude	Plates, sheets, bars, etc.	Total		
2019 ^P	1,093	1,920	1,540	3,470	3,800	1,490	5,290	9,840	1,600
2019:									
October	91	156	130	286	319	109	428	805	1,630
November	89	150	128	279	302	106	408	776	1,600
December	91	149	121	270	317	95	412	773	1,600
January–October	912	1,620	1,290	2,920	3,180	1,290	4,470	8,290	1,600
2020:									
January	92	151	125	276	347	111	458	827	1,650
February	88	161	124	286	261	93	354	727	1,580
March	95	158	127	286	308	102	410	790	1,590
April	92	133	120	253	338	87	425	770	1,590
May	96	128	111	239	316	80	396	730	1,530
June	89	132	117	249	262	88	350	688	1,430
July	82	146	122	268	253	84	337	687	1,410
August	80	144	126	270	270	85	355	705	1,410
September	72	147	124	271	214	79	293	637	1,400
October	75	150	127	277	231	80	311	663	NA
January–October	861	1,450	1,220	2,670	2,800	889	3,690	7,230	NA

^PPreliminary. NA Not available.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except "Primary production"; may not add to totals shown.

²Metallic recovery from purchased, tolled, or imported scrap, expanded for full coverage of industry.

³Primary production, secondary recovery, and imports for consumption.

⁴Inventory levels reflect total for U.S. and Canadian producers; data from the Aluminum Association Inc.

TABLE 2
ESTIMATED FULL COVERAGE CONSUMPTION OF AND METALLIC RECOVERY FROM
PURCHASED NEW AND OLD ALUMINUM SCRAP¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Secondary smelters		Independent mill fabricators		Foundries		Other consumers		Total	
	Con- sump- tion	Metal recovery	Con- sump- tion	Metal recovery	Con- sump- tion	Metal recovery	Con- sump- tion	Metal recovery	Con- sump- tion	Metal recovery
2019 ^P	2,300	1,750	1,770	1,620	101	93	4	4	4,180	3,470
2019:										
October	193	148	143	130	8	8	(2)	(2)	345	286
November	193	147	136	124	8	8	(2)	(2)	338	279
December	187	144	129	118	8	8	(2)	(2)	326	270
January–October	1,920	1,460	1,500	1,380	84	77	3	3	3,510	2,920
2020:										
January	189	144	135	124	8	8	(2)	(2)	333	276
February	189	144	145	134	8	8	(2)	(2)	343	286
March	191	145	147	135	6	5	(2)	(2)	344	286
April	182	140	119	108	6	5	(2)	(2)	307	253
May	174	135	108	98	6	5	(2)	(2)	289	239
June	175	136	118	107	6	5	(2)	(2)	300	249
July	182	139	132	120	8	8	(2)	(2)	323	268
August	184	141	133	121	8	8	(2)	(2)	326	270
September	187	143	132	121	8	8	(2)	(2)	328	271
October	189	145	136	124	8	8	(2)	(2)	334	277
January–October	1,840	1,410	1,310	1,190	74	68	3	3	3,230	2,670

^PPreliminary.

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

²Less than ½ unit.

TABLE 3
 CONSUMPTION OF AND RECOVERY FROM PURCHASED
 NEW AND OLD ALUMINUM SCRAP IN OCTOBER 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	Consumption		Calculated metallic recovery	
	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage	Tabulated reports	Estimated full coverage
Secondary smelters	158,000	189,000	121,000	145,000
Independent mill fabricators	121,000	136,000	110,000	124,000
Foundries	7,040	8,450	6,440	7,730
Other consumers	273	328	273	328
Total	286,000	334,000	238,000	277,000

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

TABLE 4
PURCHASED AND TOLL-TREATED ALUMINUM-BASE SCRAP IN OCTOBER 2020¹

(Metric tons)

	October				January–October ²	
	Stocks, opening ²	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed	Stocks, closing	Net receipts ³	Melted or consumed
New scrap:						
Extrusion	20,500	38,000	38,200	20,300	419,000	420,000
Can stock clippings	4,450	26,100	26,100	4,480	250,000	250,000
Other wrought sheet/clippings	8,820	36,200	37,300	7,710	334,000	340,000
Casting	3,550	5,870	5,870	3,550	58,300	58,300
Borings and turnings	4,810	17,100	17,200	4,770	146,000	146,000
Dross and skimmings	10,900	37,900	37,900	10,900	368,000	368,000
Total new scrap	53,000	161,000	163,000	51,700	1,580,000	1,580,000
Old scrap:						
Used castings	7,380	28,200	28,200	7,380	264,000	264,000
Used extrusion	7,320	17,600	17,600	7,320	176,000	176,000
Used cans (shredded, loose, baled)	9,350	41,600	41,700	9,180	396,000	396,000
Other wrought products	5,320	23,400	24,400	4,280	225,000	235,000
Fragmentized shredder (auto shredder)	4,150	11,700	11,700	4,140	118,000	118,000
Total old scrap	33,500	122,000	124,000	32,300	1,180,000	1,190,000
Total all classes	86,500	284,000	286,000	84,000	2,760,000	2,770,000

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

²May include revisions to previously published data.

³Includes data on imported aluminum-base scrap.

TABLE 5
ALUMINUM ALLOYS PRODUCED AT SECONDARY SMELTERS IN THE UNITED
STATES IN OCTOBER 2020^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

	October				January–October ³	
	Stocks, opening ³	Production	Net shipments	Stocks, closing	Production	Net shipments
Die-cast alloys:						
13% Si, 360, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	3,270	2,440	2,440	3,270	20,500	20,500
380 and variations	8,820	19,300	19,300	8,820	162,000	162,000
Sand and permanent mold:						
95/5 Al-Si, 356, etc. (0.6% Cu, max.)	2,180	3,020	3,020	2,180	25,400	25,400
No. 319 and variations	3,820	3,850	3,850	3,820	32,300	32,300
F-132 alloy and variations	182	249	249	182	2,090	2,090
Al-Zn alloys	467	81	81	467	681	681
Al-Si alloys (0.6% to 2.0% Cu)	219	133	133	219	1,120	1,120
Al-Cu alloys (1.5% Si, max.)	318	245	245	318	2,060	2,060
Other ⁴	7,560	10,000	10,000	7,560	84,200	84,200
Wrought alloys, extrusion billets	10,400	45,000	45,000	10,400	378,000	378,000
Total all alloys	37,200	84,400	84,400	37,200	709,000	709,000
Less:						
Primary aluminum consumed	XX	15,600	XX	XX	131,000	XX
Primary silicon consumed	XX	1,810	XX	XX	15,200	XX
Other alloying ingredients consumed	XX	795	XX	XX	6,680	XX
Net metallic recovery from aluminum scrap consumed in production of secondary aluminum ingot ⁵	XX	66,200	XX	XX	556,000	XX

XX Not applicable.

¹Excludes integrated aluminum companies.

²Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

³May include revisions to previously published data.

⁴Includes alloys No. 12, Al-Mg, Al-Zn, Al-Cu, Al-Si-Cu-Ni, aluminum-base hardeners, variations of these alloys, plus other aluminum alloys.

⁵No allowance made for melt-loss of primary aluminum and alloying ingredients.

TABLE 6
 AVERAGE PRICE OF ALUMINUM IN THE UNITED STATES
 AND ON THE LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Cents per pound)

Period	Midwest U.S. market price	LME cash price Grade A
2019:		
October	96.283	77.949
November	96.236	80.375
December	94.488	80.288
January–December	99.537	81.256
2020:		
January	94.545	80.351
February	90.540	76.451
March	86.591	73.070
April	76.450	66.095
May	74.961	66.215
June	79.682	70.943
July	85.022	74.360
August	93.613	78.648
September	93.627	79.167
October	94.236	81.774
January–October	86.927	74.707

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 7
AVERAGE BUYING PRICES FOR ALUMINUM SCRAP

(Cents per pound)

Month	Used beverage cans	Mixed low copper clips	Old sheet	Old cast	Turnings (clean and dry)
2019:					
October	51.59	40.11	34.91	34.37	26.67
November	53.24	39.00	33.74	33.24	26.50
December	53.12	39.00	35.48	34.98	27.12
January–December	54.95	45.96	40.88	39.85	33.59
2020:					
January	53.40	40.10	37.38	37.07	29.62
February	51.66	42.16	39.29	39.24	33.82
March	50.02	41.80	38.95	39.95	35.18
April	40.79	37.12	32.45	34.17	30.21 ^r
May	39.80	36.80	32.35	33.80	29.25
June	44.77	37.50	35.39	35.77	29.91
July	47.45	40.09	37.86	37.20	31.23
August	48.40	42.69	40.52	39.60	34.64
September	50.93	46.10	43.90 ^r	43.60 ^r	37.88 ^r
October	52.18	48.18	46.73	47.00	40.55
January–October	47.94	41.25	38.48	38.74	33.23

^rRevised.

Source: American Metal Market.

TABLE 8
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ALUMINUM IN OCTOBER 2020¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc		Scrap		Total	
	October	January– October	October	January– October	October	January– October	October	January– October
Argentina	10,800	138,000	3	3	--	--	10,800	138,000
Australia	6,170	73,500	29	360	--	19	6,190	73,900
Austria	--	--	1,200	20,100	--	--	1,200	20,100
Bahrain	7,230	62,900	--	17,600	--	--	7,230	80,600
Belgium	--	111	553	4,510	--	--	553	4,620
Brazil	--	--	175	9,070	468	6,230	643	15,300
Canada	158,000	1,990,000	19,500	172,000	36,500	287,000	214,000	2,450,000
Chile	--	--	--	--	124	1,620	124	1,620
China	85	727	7,770	97,200	37	93	7,900	98,000
Colombia	--	--	1,000	5,550	24	613	1,030	6,160
Costa Rica	--	--	--	6	88	1,430	88	1,430
France	152	2,100	349	10,100	14	820	515	13,000
Germany	61	459	4,700	54,700	612	2,390	5,370	57,500
Greece	--	--	1,010	13,900	--	17	1,010	14,000
Guatemala	--	--	--	13	304	3,610	304	3,620
Honduras	--	--	486	4,270	13	79	499	4,350
Hong Kong	--	--	134	1,690	--	--	134	1,690
Iceland	--	566	--	--	--	--	--	566
India	3,540	81,500	823	21,300	--	343	4,370	103,000
Indonesia	--	--	934	17,700	--	--	934	17,700
Italy	9	296	1,370	18,300	--	1,000	1,380	19,600
Japan	--	--	911	11,400	38	728	949	12,100
Korea, Republic of	872	11,000	1,280	23,000	210	2,870	2,370	36,800
Malaysia	--	224	815	6,400	--	24	815	6,650
Mexico	96	107	4,330	27,500	12,900	120,000	17,400	147,000
Netherlands	112	918	482	4,820	129	1,030	723	6,770
New Zealand	39	6,850	1	5	--	--	40	6,850
Norway	--	155	641	2,550	--	--	641	2,700
Oman	--	99	7,460	53,600	--	--	7,460	53,700
Qatar	6,360	55,300	92	118	--	--	6,450	55,400
Romania	--	--	262	5,810	--	36	262	5,850
Russia	13,800	92,700	1,640	17,500	--	39	15,400	110,000
Saudi Arabia	--	5,450	3,160	59,400	--	--	3,160	64,800
South Africa	--	4,470	2,630	28,200	--	--	2,630	32,600
Spain	60	909	1,360	19,400	119	516	1,540	20,800
Sweden	--	--	527	5,750	--	7	527	5,760
Switzerland	--	--	338	4,930	--	--	338	4,930
Taiwan	--	344	682	23,200	6	250	688	23,800
Thailand	155	870	4,370	29,400	27	285	4,550	30,500
Turkey	6	8	1,590	36,500	--	--	1,600	36,500
United Arab Emirates	23,300	273,000	283	1,540	--	35	23,600	275,000
United Kingdom	28	329	178	3,520	256	2,880	462	6,730
Venezuela	--	25	--	--	--	--	--	25
Vietnam	--	--	2,330	18,800	--	9	2,330	18,800
Other	1	133	4,290	37,000	893	9,440	5,190	46,600
Total	231,000	2,800,000	79,700	889,000	52,800	443,000	364,000	4,130,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 9
U.S. EXPORTS OF ALUMINUM IN OCTOBER 2020¹

(Metric tons)

Country or locality	Metals and alloys, crude		Plates, sheets, bars, etc.		Scrap		Total	
	October	January– October	October	January– October	October	January– October	October	January– October
Australia	58	492	155	1,730	--	--	213	2,230
Belgium	1	25	16	200	321	5,750	338	5,980
Brazil	40	57	128	2,580	1,050	3,550	1,220	6,180
Canada	3,600	67,300	28,800	249,000	7,550	60,200	39,900	377,000
China	202	1,400	1,550	17,200	9,880	148,000	11,600	166,000
Colombia	--	6	59	626	--	151	59	783
Dominican Republic	1	10	44	253	79	241	124	504
France	32	337	401	6,010	39	1,030	472	7,380
Germany	42	248	165	4,630	1,080	7,880	1,280	12,800
Guatemala	--	3	3	48	--	--	3	51
Hong Kong	--	39	164	614	2,780	51,500	2,940	52,100
India	65	348	89	1,100	38,700	246,000	38,900	248,000
Indonesia	--	8	7	90	3,400	79,300	3,410	79,400
Ireland	2	3	15	467	--	67	17	537
Israel	1	11	1,250	14,300	--	--	1,250	14,300
Italy	19	178	125	1,190	438	4,650	582	6,020
Jamaica	--	81	13	56	--	16	13	153
Japan	14	1,070	447	11,200	3,210	14,500	3,670	26,800
Korea, Republic of	16	606	986	18,000	28,500	243,000	29,500	261,000
Malaysia	398	3,620	227	1,940	44,800	338,000	45,500	343,000
Mexico	10,700	72,800	25,100	221,000	16,100	119,000	51,900	413,000
Netherlands	3	101	35	343	426	1,890	464	2,340
New Zealand	--	--	70	428	--	19	70	447
Norway	--	1	--	20	--	--	--	21
Pakistan	--	39	--	15	1,630	10,900	1,630	11,000
Panama	1	13	--	30	--	--	1	43
Philippines	--	237	26	215	290	5,020	316	5,480
Poland	--	1	30	247	--	163	30	411
Romania	17	98	33	2,020	--	--	50	2,120
Russia	--	1	4	27	5,480	21,500	5,490	21,500
Saudi Arabia	--	13	27	476	289	1,380	316	1,870
Singapore	12	93	201	2,380	--	2,920	213	5,390
Spain	5	16	26	382	662	4,880	693	5,280
Taiwan	165	2,090	225	3,500	4,570	35,100	4,960	40,700
Thailand	--	1	3	627	5,550	59,400	5,560	60,100
Turkey	3	34	164	3,440	2,090	7,900	2,260	11,400
United Arab Emirates	--	4	89	574	930	7,710	1,020	8,280
United Kingdom	24	342	612	5,570	675	2,360	1,310	8,270
Vietnam	--	166	179	1,080	1,490	13,800	1,670	15,100
Other	21	622	409	3,450	1,780	18,000	2,210	22,100
Total	15,500	153,000	61,800	577,000	184,000	1,520,000	261,000	2,250,000

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.