

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:

Kim B. Shedd, Cobalt Commodity Specialist
 National Minerals Information Center
 U.S. Geological Survey
 989 National Center
 Reston, VA 20192
 Telephone: (703) 648-4974, Fax: (703) 648-7757
 Email: kshedd@usgs.gov

Annie Hwang (Data)
 Telephone: (703) 648-7952
 Fax: (703) 648-7975
 Email: ahwang@usgs.gov

Internet: <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic>

COBALT IN JULY 2019

The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals in July 2019 was 64% more than that imported in July 2018. For the first seven months of 2019, the amount of cobalt contained in imports was 6% more than that imported during the same period in 2018 (table 2). The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals in July 2019 was 59% less than that exported in July 2018 and during the first seven months of 2019, the amount exported was 50% less than that exported during the same period in 2018 (table 4).

2018. The following listed prices are for cobalt metal in July, in dollars per pound.

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	13.50–16.00	14.75
LME cash mean ²	11.57–12.93	12.38

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 July, the monthly average U.S. spot cobalt price increased slightly from that in June and was 57% lower than that in July 2018. The monthly average LME cash mean price decreased slightly from that in June and was 61% lower than that in July

List services and web feed subscribers are the first to receive notification of USGS minerals information publications and data releases. For information on how to subscribe, go to <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/minerals-information-publication-list-services>.

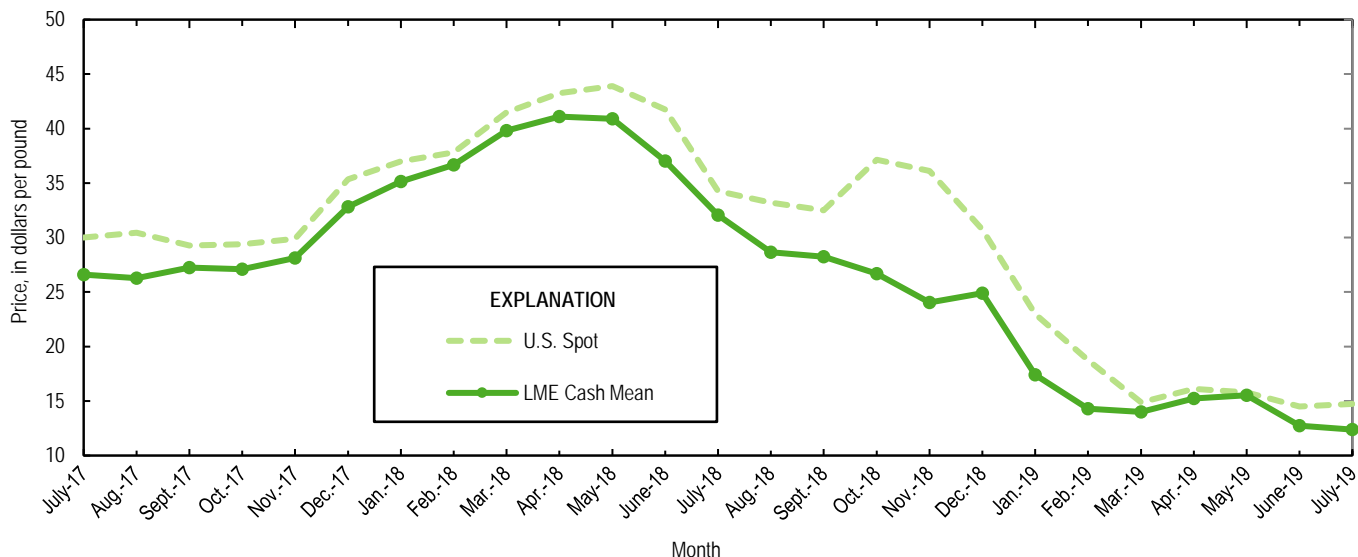


Figure 1. Average U.S. spot prices and LME cash mean prices for July 2017 through July 2019. Sources: Platts Metals Week and London Metal Exchange.*

*Corrections posted on June 16, 2020.

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	
2018:				
July	302	131	520	651
August	302	131	559	690
September	302	131	592	723
October	302	130	611	741
November	302	130	585	715
December	302	130	733	863
2019:				
January	302	184	781	965
February	302	204	779	983
March	302	204	761	965
April	302	204	700	904
May	302	200	661	861
June	302	200	659	859
July	302	191	649	840

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)		
2018:								
July	577	\$43,000	133	\$7,820	204	\$1,170	731	7,690
August	674	48,400	56	2,880	35	484	724	8,420
September	604	38,500	122	6,680	551	3,850	851	9,270
October	968	63,900	112	5,170	353	4,000	1,150	10,400
November	462	29,100	102	5,930	385	3,030	640	11,100
December	622	39,300	103	4,250	86	1,780	727	11,800
January–July	5,840 ^r	402,000 ^r	1,190	67,100	3,250 ^r	28,900 ^r	7,690	XX
January–December	9,170	621,000	1,690	92,000	4,660	42,000	11,800	XX
2019:								
January	852	48,000	116	3,880	119	2,040	978	978
February	824	41,400	116	2,630	268	4,670	998	1,980
March	1,240	50,300	102	2,900	159	2,430	1,370	3,340
April	1,260	48,400	161	3,960	239	3,630	1,470	4,810
May	1,220	43,000	190	4,740	286	2,880	1,440	6,250
June	558	17,800	123	3,000	141	1,190	687	6,940
July:								
Australia	104	3,060	--	--	--	--	104	596
Belgium	--	--	68	1,790	9	36	52	244
Brazil	--	--	--	--	4	22	1	37
Canada	104	3,210	--	--	--	--	104	1,410
China	1	50	(7)	13	--	--	1	346
Finland	20	836	38	984	81	851	73	688
France	(7)	15	--	--	--	--	(7)	5
Germany	3	123	--	--	19	665	12	29
India	--	--	--	--	1	7	(7)	12
Japan	113	4,010	--	--	--	--	113	726
Korea, Republic of	--	--	18	201	--	--	13	84
Madagascar	50	1,690	--	--	--	--	50	646
Morocco	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	90
Norway	499	17,800	--	--	--	--	499	1,910
Russia	96	2,880	--	--	--	--	96	834
South Africa	37	275	--	--	--	--	37	204
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	12
United Kingdom	1	24	57	1,360	(7)	3	42	254
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2
Total	1,030	34,000	181	4,350	115	1,580	1,200	8,130
January–July	6,980	283,000	989	25,500	1,330	18,400	8,130	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)
2018:						
July	26	\$1,770	226	\$4,080	24	\$4,050
August	25	1,720	179	2,880	23	2,830
September	24	1,580	186	2,890	32	3,620
October	41	2,380	264	4,170	35	3,880
November	53	3,550	165	3,360	39	4,990
December	85	4,330	212	3,360	23	4,020
January–July	337	18,300	1,430	24,400	189 ^r	25,200 ^r
January–December	565	31,900	2,430	41,100	341	44,600
2019:						
January	29	1,920	173	1,990	42	5,410
February	59	3,490	179	2,520	24	3,350
March	85	4,040	144	2,410	43	4,890
April	38	2,870	253	3,430	34	4,490
May	18	1,140	156	3,360	41	4,510
June	21	1,550	145	1,460	47	4,480
July:						
Belgium	3	111	4	176	(3)	20
Canada	--	--	16	192	3	1,270
China	--	--	6	3	1	476
Costa Rica	--	--	7	60	--	--
France	1	122	15	364	12	624
Germany	(3)	6	(3)	3	6	599
India	--	--	--	--	12	106
Ireland	--	--	61	446	--	--
Italy	--	--	25	30	--	--
Japan	--	--	16	185	2	25
Romania	--	--	16	239	--	--
Taiwan	--	--	3	116	(3)	4
Tunisia	--	--	12	113	--	--
United Kingdom	30	2,180	41	490	19	1,440
Other	(3)	3	1	2	(3)	76
Total	34	2,430	223	2,420	55	4,630
January–July	284	17,400	1,270	17,600	286	31,800

^rRevised. -- 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)		
2018:								
July	605	\$19,100	12	\$686	12	\$35	616	4,880
August	626	19,700	2	83	59	851	642	5,530
September	360	14,200	6	346	42	666	374	5,900
October	312	11,400	2	74	39	496	322	6,220
November	284	11,700	3	64	11	61	289	6,510
December	447	13,000	2	73	22	422	453	6,960
January–July	4,820 ^r	102,000 ^r	54	2,170	106	1,990	4,880 ^r	XX
January–December	6,850	172,000	69	2,810	279	4,490	6,960	XX
2019:								
January	266	9,190	3	126	22	416	273	273
February	518	15,900	4	84	20	258	525	798
March	413	14,300	1	49	6	69	415	1,210
April	424	10,800	4	207	16	157	431	1,650
May	285	9,430	3	74	46	287	299	1,940
June	252	9,180	7	90	10	208	259	2,200
July	214	8,870	44	658	19	170	250	2,450
January–July	2,370	77,700	67	1,290	139	1,560	2,450	XX

^rRevised. XX Not applicable.

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.

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)
2018:				
July	92	\$9,850	35	\$302
August	85	9,370	--	--
September	91	10,600	18	160
October	92	11,900	--	--
November	147	14,000	(3)	11
December	124	13,400	--	--
January–July	626 ^r	67,600	37	391
January–December	1,160	127,000	55	562
2019:				
January	111	12,200	16	103
February	102	11,300	--	--
March	105	13,300	8	264
April	151	13,300	--	--
May	117	12,600	(3)	6
June	109	11,400	(3)	5
July	102	11,300	--	--
January–July	797	85,500	24	378

^rRevised. -- 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.