Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:
Kim B. Shedd, Tungsten Commodity Specialist
National Minerals Information Center
Telephone: (703) 648-4974
Email: kshedd@usgs.gov

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

Internet: https://www.usgs.gov/centers/national-minerals-information-center/mineral-industry-surveys

TUNGSTEN IN JANUARY 2023

U.S. reported consumption of tungsten concentrate, net production of intermediate tungsten products, including metal powder and tungsten carbide powder, and industry stocks of tungsten materials were withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

On January 31, 2023, the U.S. Government stockpile inventory of tungsten concentrates held by DLA Strategic Materials was unchanged from that on December 31, 2022 (table 1).

In January 2023, the amount of tungsten contained in U.S. imports of materials listed in table 2 was slightly less than the monthly average in 2022. The amount of tungsten contained in U.S. exports of materials listed in table 3 was 9% less in January than the monthly average in 2022.

Prices

The following tungsten price comparisons are U.S. Geological Survey calculations based on Argus Metals International prices. The January 2023 monthly average price for tungsten concentrate, ex works China, was 6% higher than that in December 2022 and 4% lower than that in January 2022. The January 2023 monthly average price for ammonium paratungstate, European Union market, was unchanged from in December 2022 and was 3% higher than that in January 2022 (fig. 1).

Industry News

Tungsten West plc (United Kingdom) released the results of an updated feasibility study on restarting production at the Hemerdon tungsten and tin mine in Devon, United Kingdom.

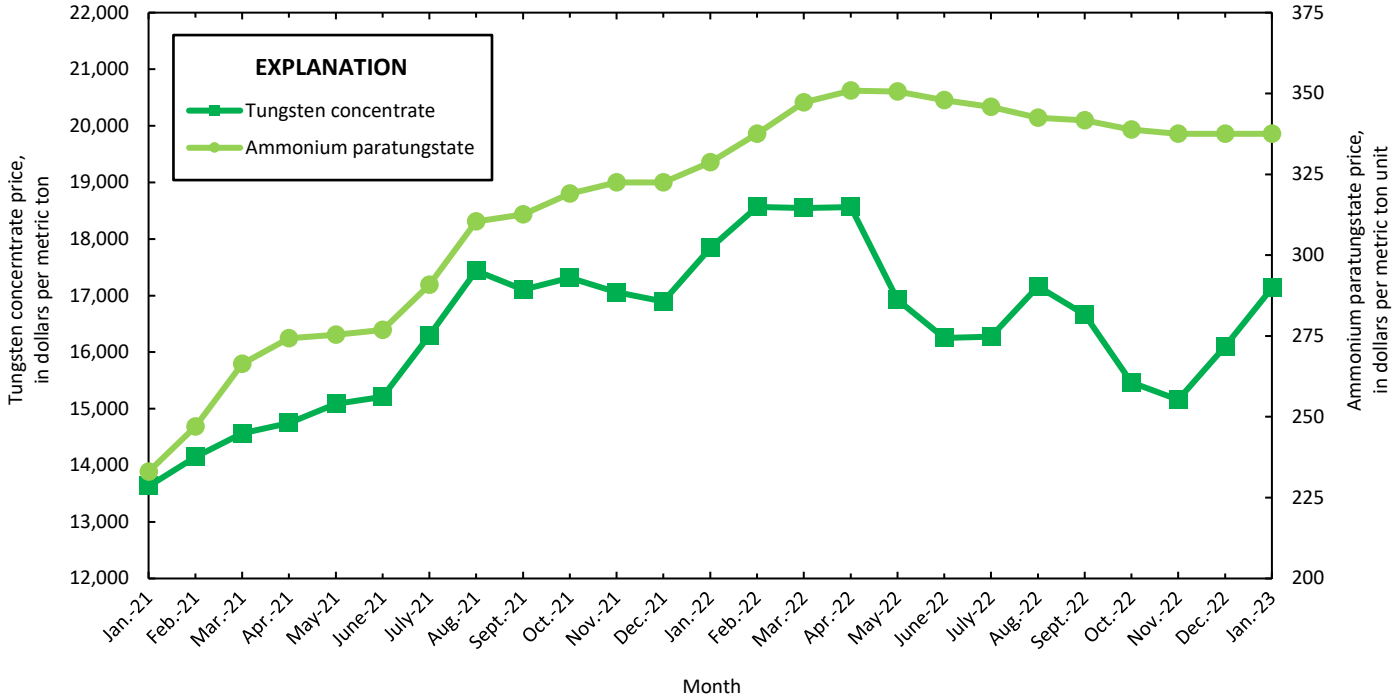

Figure 1. Monthly average prices for tungsten concentrate and ammonium paratungstate for January 2021 through January 2023. Source: Argus Metals International.

Average production from the mine was expected to be 2,300 metric tons per year (t/yr) of tungsten in concentrate and 310 t/yr of tin in concentrate. The mine life was set at 27 years at an annual average steady-state mining rate of 3.5 million metric tons of ore per year. The life-of-mine model assumed lower grade ore would be stockpiled during the initial years of production and then would be processed from year 17 onwards. The study included a complete redesign of the crushing circuit to reduce capital expenditure and optimization of the x-ray transmission ore-sorting operational parameters to reduce operating expenditure. At the time of the announcement, Tungsten West had received two of the four permits required to start operations and anticipated the approval of the remaining permits during the quarter ending March 31, 2023 (Tungsten West plc, 2023).

Reference Cited

Tungsten West plc, 2023, Updated feasibility study delivers further value: London, United Kingdom, Tungsten West Plc. news release, January 16. (Accessed March 14, 2023, at https://www.londonstockexchange.com/news-article/TUN/updated-feasibility-study-delivers-further-value/15796275.)

TABLE 1
U.S. SALIENT TUNGSTEN STATISTICS[1]

(Metric tons, tungsten content)

Period	Concentrate				Intermediate products	
		Imports for consumption	Stocks, end of period			
	Consumption		Industry[2]	U.S. Government[3]	Net production[4]	Stocks, end of period[5]
2022:						
January	W	125	W	6,570	W	W
February	W	82	W	6,390	W	W
March	W	96	W	6,300	W	W
April	W	181	W	6,170	W	W
May	W	256	W	6,080	W	W
June	W	156	W	6,080	W	W
July	W	224	W	6,080	W	W
August	W	134	W	6,000	W	W
September	W	245	W	6,000	W	W
October	W	202	W	6,000	W	W
November	W	197	W	5,970	W	W
December	W	239	W	5,880	W	W
January–December	W	2,140	W	5,880	W	W
2023, January	W	153	W	5,880	W	W

W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

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

[2]Consumer stocks.

[3]Data from the Defense Logistics Agency Strategic Materials.

[4]Net production of tungsten metal powder and tungsten carbide powder.

[5]Producer stocks of tungsten metal powder and tungsten carbide powder.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF TUNGSTEN, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY[1]

(Metric tons, tungsten content)

Period and country or locality of origin	Ores and concen-trates	Ammonium tungstates	Ferro-tungsten	Metal powder	Tungsten carbide powder	Other[2]	Total
2022	2,140	1,200	52	2,010	1,990	3,340	10,700
2023, January:							
Austria	--	--	--	19	--	1	20
Bolivia	66	--	--	--	--	--	66
Canada	--	--	--	38	23	4	65
China	6	70	--	97	55	84	311
Germany	2	28	--	--	(3)	5	35
India	--	--	--	--	--	25	25
Israel	--	--	--	10	--	(3)	10
Japan	(3)	--	--	14	--	2	16
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	13	--	(3)	13
Portugal	33	--	--	--	--	--	33
Russia	25	--	--	--	--	--	25
Spain	21	--	--	--	--	(3)	21
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	--	45	45
United Kingdom	--	--	--	(3)	--	3	3
Vietnam	--	--	--	14	--	172	186
Other	--	--	--	(3)	(3)	4	4
Total	153	97	--	205	79	346	880

-- Zero.

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

[2]Includes other unwrought tungsten, wrought tungsten, calcium and other tungstates, tungsten oxides, tungsten chlorides, other tungsten compounds, ash and residues containing mainly tungsten, and other mixtures of inorganic compounds containing tungsten. Tungsten content estimated in part.

[3]Less than ½ unit.

Note: Imports of waste and scrap in January 2023 totaled 501 metric tons, tungsten content.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF TUNGSTEN, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY[1]

(Metric tons, tungsten content)

Period and country or locality of destination	Ores and concentrates[2]	Ammonium tungstates	Metal powder[2]	Tungsten carbide powder	Other[3]	Total
2022	609	8	787	512	461	2,380
2023, January:						
Brazil	--	--	(4)	4	--	4
Canada	--	--	60	16	2	78
China	--	--	(4)	1	9	9
Costa Rica	--	--	--	--	3	3
Czechia	--	--	--	10	--	10
Germany	--	(4)	--	2	1	3
India	--	--	1	(4)	9	9
Israel	--	--	--	3	(4)	3
Mexico	--	1	3	1	9	13
Philippines	--	--	(4)	--	3	3
Vietnam	56	--	--	--	--	56
Other	--	1	2	5	7	14
Total	56	2	65	41	43	207

-- Zero.

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

[2]Tungsten content estimated from reported gross weight.

[3]Includes unwrought tungsten, including bars and rods obtained simply by sintering, wrought tungsten, ferrotungsten, and other tungstates. Tungsten content estimated in part.

[4]Less than ½ unit.

Note: Exports of waste and scrap in January 2023 totaled 58 metric tons, tungsten content.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.