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BUREAU OF MINERAL RESOURCES, GEOLOGY AND GEOPHYSICS.

THE AUSTRALIAN MINERAL INDUSTRY

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Statistics of Production, Imports and Exports in this Quarterly Review are provisional only. They are revised in later publications of the Bureau of Mineral Resources or the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics.

Statistics referring to the mineral industry in Australia as a whole are compiled jointly by the Bureau of Mineral Resources and the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics from production data received from State Mines Departments, and from overseas trade statistics furnished by the Bureau of Census and Statistics but subject to check by the Bureau of Mineral Resources.

Data referring to production of refined metals and to prices are received direct from industries concerned. To all who have contributed information for this quarterly publication the Bureau extends its thanks.

Import data shown are imports cleared for home consumption. The value of imports quoted represents the f.o.b. value converted to Australian currency at the current rate of exchange on day of export of goods.

The value of exports includes the cost of containers and is the f.o.b. value.

All tonnages are in long tons (2,240 lbs.) unless otherwise stated.

All values are in terms of Australian currency unless otherwise stated.

The following abbreviations are used throughout:—

Estimated	e	Queensland	Q'land
Incomplete	i	New South Wales	N.S.W.
Data not yet received	blank space	Aust. Capital Territory	A.C.T.
		Victoria	Vic.
Not available	n.a.	Tasmania	Tas.
Not recorded	n.r.	South Australia	S.A.
Not elsewhere included	n.e.i.	Western Australia	W.A.
None	—	Northern Territory	N.T.
Less than unity	†	Commonwealth Bureau of Census & Statistics	C.B.C.S.
Smelter production	s.p.	Royal Mint	R.M.
Concentrates	Cons.	Aust. Mines & Metals Assoc. (Inc.)	A.M.M.
Amended from previous issue	*		

AUSTRALIAN MINERAL INDUSTRY

QUARTERLY REVIEW

MAY, 1954.

AUSTRALIAN MINERALS AND METALS — 1953 AND CURRENT REVIEW.

During 1953, the mineral industry settled down to its first year since 1939 of freedom from controls except currency restrictions. In most countries, as in Australia, the year commenced with generally a slack demand for mineral commodities, but improved through the year. By contrast, a high level of consumption in America gave place to a reduced demand as the year progressed. For most mineral commodities the over-all world effect for 1953 was one of little general change in production-consumption levels. However, many stockpiling programmes were approaching completion, and unless there is an increase in real civil consumption, a considerable surplus production capacity of several of the base metals seems likely. The effects of this in various countries will be governed to a large extent by the policies of the United States, the main consuming country. The recent extended stockpiling programme there will help to take off the market part of over-production of some commodities, but there is no information as to the likely extent of this factor.

Base metals as a group are the main section of the Australian mineral industry, and overseas prices of these are of vital importance to Australian producers. With recommencement of dealings in copper, on the 5th August, the London Metal Exchange was back to its pre-war position as the world's most important base metal terminal market, and its influence in determining world prices became stronger as the year progressed. However, the resumption has been characterised by a marked difference from pre-war dealing; comparatively little avail has been made to date of the basic function of the Exchange, to wit, dealing in futures, giving scope for hedging and other advantages. The emphasis on spot buying has meant a persistent tendency for tightness in supply of cash metal. There are several reasons for this greater interest in spot buying. The new generation has a naturally cautious attitude to Exchange dealings, whilst acquiring experience of open marketing after the long years of controls; an attitude which is unlikely to disappear entirely until full convertibility of all currencies returns. Also it has been claimed that producers, particularly of copper, have not made available for Exchange dealings sufficient metal of the grades, conforming to the standard market contract, to fulfil consumers' requirements, and many producers have preferred to sell direct to continental countries rather than through merchants and brokers on the London Metal Exchange. Uncertainty of the market, and early expectations of many consumers that prices might fall further, led to buying only for current requirements. This attitude has also followed from the greatly increased prices of metal over pre-war, necessitating the maintenance of lower consumer stocks to avoid undue increase in working capital. A new factor in post-war metal marketing is the great movement of metals towards the United States, so that conditions there have a much profounder underlying influence on London Metal Exchange dealings than hitherto. Further, there has been a remarkable revolution in post-war industry, in its scope, volume, management, technology, marketing, national and international outlook. The post-war generation is increasingly devising new methods of approach to industrial problems. All these, and other factors cannot fail to lead to some permanent change in the pattern of Exchange dealings.

The prices of the principal metals descended to new levels which, in the writer's opinion, are within the new normal general range for each metal under the present day degree of inflation. Copper kept to the upper limit of its range, lead in the higher part, and zinc and tin each towards the lower limit of its respective range. The lower prices for lead and zinc are unprofitable to high cost producers particularly in the United States; their case for tariff protection was considered in detail by the U.S Tariff Commission, which, however, left the decision to Congress, considering it to be a matter of public policy. The low price of tin was influential in the completion of an International Tin Agreement now awaiting ratification by sufficient countries before it comes into operation.

As far as can be judged at present 1954 is likely to average out much the same as 1953 for the world mineral industry, with perhaps a slight increase in real consumption. Prices for lead are likely to average about the same as in 1953, for zinc somewhat higher, for copper rather lower, and for tin an unknown level dependent on the ratification of the International Tin Agreement. The manner of operation of the new U.S. stockpiling programme and the extent of U.S. import duties on lead and zinc may affect this forecast.

In Australia controls were removed early in the year on the base metals, except copper. Price control on copper, continued as a protection to local producers in view of the fall in price oversea, was possible because of the accumulated funds in the Copper Pool. The cost difficulties of the tin and copper producers were subjects of Tariff Board enquiries early in 1954, the results of which are awaited.

Although there was a general lift in tonnage production and exports in the Australian mineral industry, lower prices have meant a downturn in the total values of the mineral production and of exports from the peaks of 1952. The preliminary data on Australian production, exports and imports of minerals in 1953 are given in the accompanying Tables (pages 118-120).

An important event in the Australian Mineral Industry was the finding of oil in the first borehole put down on Rough Range, Exmouth Gulf, in Western Australia. Of high wax content, it would appear to be a residual oil, but raises optimism of obtaining payable oil in that area.

The search for oil and uranium in recent months has given a stimulus to mineral exploration in Australia. However, intensity of exploration here lags far behind that in Canada where many millions of dollars so spent annually are regarded in the same manner as a gamble on horse-racing or lotteries; one might speculate on the vast development which would take place in Australia if only part of the financial interest in these locally characteristic pastimes (about £250 million turnover annually, excluding S.P. betting) could be diverted to exploration in the same spirit as in Canada.

Gold. The Australian mine production of gold increased to 1,075,080 oz. in 1953, the first time it exceeded one million ounces since 1942.

World gold production was about the same as in 1952, 26.5 million ounces excluding Russian production. The free market intake dropped from an estimated 12 million ounces in 1952 to 7 million in 1953; this and the entry of Russian gold on the market at the end of the year, and the virtual abandonment of hope that U.S. would lift the dollar price above $35, led to the disappearance of the gold premium by November, when overseas sales of Australian gold ceased. The average premium from sales by the Australian Gold Producers' Association during the year was 11/8d. per fine ounce.

With increase in costs and the loss of the gold premium, the financial position of most of the larger gold producers is back to where it was before devaluation in 1949; several mines are in even worse position. To avoid the probable closing down of several important mines, the industry has approached the Commonwealth Government for a subsidy. In the meantime, producers will tend to increase grade and tonnage of ore mined in an effort to reduce costs, and it is not improbable that production in 1954 will exceed 1,100,000 ounces, approaching the 1942 figure. The recent increase of 2/8d. per ounce in the price paid by the Commonwealth Bank to producers will be of little help.

Lead-Zinc. In 1953 recoverable mine production of lead was higher, at 258,200 tons, as also was refined lead at 172,468 tons, but lead bullion was lower at 34,290 tons. Exports of refined lead and bullion attained a new peak of 148,433 tons and 42,339 respectively. Exports of recoverable lead in concentrate was 34,700 tons. The total value of exports declined because of lower prices oversea, to £25,257,119.

Recoverable mine and refinery production of zinc were higher at 200,800 tons and 90,178 tons respectively. Exports of zinc declined to 36,938, but concentrates increased to 233,309 tons (about 104,500 tons recoverable metal). The total value of exports of refined zinc and concentrates at £9,027,951, is less than half the 1952 figure.

Increased production of lead and zinc has helped to offset to some extent the fall in prices of these metals. The London Metal Exchange price of lead ranged between £74 and £103.15, but mainly in the £90's; g.o.b. zinc opened the year at £96 ranging down to £63$\frac{3}{8}$, but mainly in the £70's. The Australian prices were the f.o.b. equivalents, Port Pirie and Risdon.

Australian production of lead and zinc in 1954 should not be lower than last year; it is likely that total production of each will increase to some extent.

Copper. Australian recoverable mine production of copper in 1953 was 35,900 tons; of blister copper 35,293 tons; and of domestic refined copper 14,679 tons. The great increase in copper production came mainly from Mt. Isa, Queensland, where the new smelter commenced operations in February.

Because of heavy stocks due to earlier import contracts, it became difficult to market all the new copper produced during the year; exports were permitted, particularly of blister from Mt. Isa and some from Mt. Morgan. Excess stocks have now been marketed, but blister production is now far ahead of electrolytic refining capacity. Much of Mt. Isa blister is being exported oversea for refining on toll for the present. If it is established, as seems likely, that Mt. Isa blister can be fire-refined up to acceptable standards, there should be no technical difficulty in treating the full production in Australia. In the meantime, however, experience has shown that Australian blister can be sent oversea for treatment on toll and return at a lower cost than its electrolytic treatment here.

The Tariff Board enquiry on the copper-producing industry was completed in March, 1954; the Board's report is awaited. It is clear that at a domestic price of £300 a ton at least one major producer will be unprofitable.

Production in 1954 is likely to be of the order of 38,000 tons copper. It is now apparent that manufacturers' estimates in recent years of domestic demands of primary copper, ranging up to 60,000 tons, were greatly over-estimated, and consumption has not yet exceeded 43,000 tons. Unless there is a great expansion in development projects in the next few years, consumption will continue in the 40-50,000 tons range. Relatively small imports will continue to be required.

Tin. Production of refined tin in 1953 declined to 1,443 tons, lower than the previous nadir in 1951. The reduction was due mainly to Tableland Tin dredge being out of production until November whilst being moved to the new dredging site. There was also a small loss in production by low-grade high-cost producers closing down after prices fell in mid-year.

When the London Metal Exchange price of tin declined from £stg.950-960 to around £stg.700 early in the year, control of the price of tin in Australia, which had been maintained at £A.1100 a ton to producers in the previous 12 months, was lifted. Domestic producers were paid on the basis of Singapore prices less smelting and other charges, which gave them a net return lower than Malayan producers were receiving. Small producers who had taken up low grade properties during the period of abnormal prices were unable to continue production, and the industry applied for tariff protection. The report of the Tariff Board enquiry is awaited.

Although prices have since recovered somewhat, world over-production will lead to widely fluctuating prices unless the International Tin Agreement drawn up at the end of 1953, is ratified. The chances of its signature by the closing date, 30th June, 1954, by the minimum of 9 consuming countries, despite probable acceptance by sufficient producing countries, are not bright.

Production of tin in Australia during 1954 is likely to be of the order of 2,000 tons, and consumption which had fallen to below 2,000 tons in 1953, is likely to recover to its normal level of around 2,300 tons, requiring small imports.

Tungsten. Australian production of wolfram and scheelite in 1953 increased above the previous year's record to 2,101 tons of 65 per cent. WO concentrates.

When the British Ministry of Supply withdrew its ore-buying prices early in 1953, several small Australian mines which had been opened up during the period of high prices were unable to continue operations at the greatly reduced price. The open market price declined from above stg.300/- a unit at the beginning of the year to stg.165/- at the close. It declined further to 100/- early in 1954, but has since recovered. The greatly expanding use of machine tools in industry should remove much of the former pessimism of reasonable-cost tungsten producers in peacetime.

Production of the larger producers in Australia, who hold contracts with the U.K. and U.S. Governments will not be seriously affected by these reduced prices until their contracts run out in 2-4 years.

Aluminium. Although construction of the Bell Bay aluminium smelter neared completion, commencement of operations was further delayed by unexpected difficulties in the Trevallyn hydro-electric scheme, particularly in the tunnel. Production of alumina is now expected to commence in January, 1955, and of metal some months later. Initial output will be 10,000 tons of metal per annum, rising to 13,000 tons at such time as the necessary further power becomes available.

The world output of aluminium rose to 2.5 million tons in 1953, of which the U.S.A. produced 1.1 million tons and Canada 0.5 million tons. The Aluminium Company of Canada has announced that its Kitimat project will commence in mid-1954 with an initial production rate of 82,500 tons annually; the ultimate potential is expected to be 500,000 tons.

U.K. prices remained fairly stationary in 1953. The price was raised to £stg.156 per ton on 1st January, 1954, after dropping from £stg.161 per ton to £stg.150 on the resumption of private trading.

The Australian price is governed by the Canadian price and remained at £210 per ton for the greater part of the year.

Rutile and Zircon. Production of these two minerals at 39,000 tons and 29,800 tons respectively was similar to that of 1952, but prices on offer for both commodities slumped sharply. Sales of rutile were recorded down to £30 per ton f.o.b. Brisbane, whilst zircon was sold down to £8 per ton. Notwithstanding this sharp decline in prices several producers selling on a contract basis received in the vicinity of £40 per ton and £10 per ton respectively.

At these reduced prices, brought about by the disposal of excess consumer stocks built up in previous years, demand has remained firm and the early months of 1954 saw signs of a recovery, and rutile was sought at £38-40.

In recent months considerable concern has been shown, particularly in the United States, at the comparatively slow progress made in titanium metal production; in 1953 metal production in the U.S. was only 2,000 tons. Metal production will be greatly expanded in the next few years and the U.S. Government has authorised contracts for 37,500 short tons in 1956. Precise information is lacking whether Australian rutile is being used for production of titanium metal, but recent enquiries seem to confirm this. Whilst production of titanium metal is based on rutile the demand for Australian concentrates seems assured. Research being carried out on the use of ilmenite and of titanium slag as the basic raw materials could alter the picture.

Iron and Steel. In 1953 output of steel increased by nearly 25 per cent. to 2,049,237 tons. Until the new rolling mills at Port Kembla are in operation, steel ingot production capacity is well ahead of local requirements, so that for the time being exports of iron and steel will continue. In 1953, exports of pig iron were 211,216 tons, and of steel 161,678 tons. Amongst mineral and metal exports, the value of iron and steel exports rose to fourth place, next to lead, gold and zinc.

Coal. Australian black coal production fell by 1 million tons to 18.4 million tons in 1953, but output was still in excess of the annual domestic consumption. Black coal is meeting steadily increasing competition from oil fuels and brown coal; it is estimated that these fuels displace one million tons of black coal annually. While coal costs have risen in recent years, oil fuels costs have fallen and railway economics now favour the use of oil fuels in preference to black coal or pulverised brown coal.

Exports of coal from Australia rose from 177,000 tons in 1952 to 377,000 tons in 1953, an increase of 113 per cent. Approximately 172,000 tons were exported to New Caledonia and 116,000 tons to Korea. Imports fell from 272,000 tons in 1952 to 22,000 tons in 1953.

The output of brown coal in Victoria rose by 153,500 tons to 8,257,300 tons in 1953. The output from the main S.E.C. open cut rose by 27,200 tons to the record figure of 6,474,900 tons and a record output of 1,242,418 tons was achieved at the Yallourn North open cut. Five private companies operated brown coal mines during the year; their output of 539,981 tons was much the same as in 1952. Brown coal from these operations is largely used for industrial purposes, although the new Geelong and Ballarat power stations are being operated by brown coal from Wensley Bray and Bacchus Marsh respectively.

J. A. DUNN,
7/5/1954.

PRELIMINARY MINERAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS, 1953.

	Unit of Measure.	1952 Quantity.	1952 Value. £A.	1953 Quantity.	1953 Value. £A.
Alunite	ton	314	2,158	—	—
Antimony	,,	483*	63,413*	214	(e)17,500
Arsenic (As_2O_3) (e)	,,	120	7,200	—	—
Asbestos	,,	4,059	637,821	4,969	(e)762,000
Barite	,,	4,944	34,985	5,475	(e)64,500
Bauxite	,,	7,235	13,632	4,126	(e)8,000
Bentonite	,,	826	4,156	218	740
Beryllium ore	,,	87	14,961	125	22,223
Bismuth in cons.	cwt.	28	3,278	3	(e)350
Building Stones and Road Materials (i)	ton	13,793,347*	4,811,130*	n.a.	
Cadmium (a)	,,	286	602,000	296	507,000
Cement	,,	1,335,700	n.a.	1,572,800	n.a.
Chromite	,,	1,398	13,286	1,968	29,717
Clays (i)	,,	3,203,856*	1,267,627*	3,378,950	1,275,000
Coal—black	,,	19,405,098*	53,328,141*	18,440,867	(e)51,375,000
brown	,,	8,103,764	3,476,627	8,257,299	3,636,668
Cobalt oxide	cwt.	326	18,249	340	(e)18,500
Copper (a) (b)	ton	17,900	6,289,000	35,900	11,994,000
Copper ore for fertilizers	,,	2,047	54,640	1,959	21,732
Damourite	,,	461	2,517	n.a.	
Diamond (Industrial)	carat	49	118	716	(e)1,700
Diatomite	ton	6,366	25,820	2,837	(e)12,000
Dolomite	,,	96,464	85,916	92,813	(e)66,000
Felspar	,,	13,589	47,578	6,775	(e)27,000
Flint pebbles	,,	513	4,495	n.a.	
Fluorspar	,,	86	857	303	3,373
Fuller's Earth	,,	110	284	31	154
Glauconite	,,	230	7,305	319	11,183
Gold	fine oz.	980,435	15,188,408	1,075,080	16,654,817
Graphite	ton	75	974	2	180
Gypsum	,,	351,678	289,255	327,204	(e)258,500
Ilmenite (d)	,,	46	146	10	325
Iron ore	,,	2,907,754	3,317,300	3,298,718	(e)3,690,000
Iron oxide	,,	18,712	58,073	9,083	(e)21,000
Lead (a) (c)	,,	219,100	33,694 000	258,200	26,601,000
Limestone and lime (i)	,,	2,720,050	1,715 868	3 020,584	(e)1,754,500
Magnesite	,,	42,137	133,204	45,335	(e)144,500
Manganese ore	ton	7,069	51,768	18,782	(e)173,500
Mica—block	lb.	71,929	91,725	72,227	102,243
Mineral pigments	ton	703	5,269	591	(e)3,800
Molybdenite cons.	cwt.	3	33	12	267
Monazite (d)	ton	115	9,022	196	(e)23,000
Oil shale	,,	21,661	50,902	—	—
Opal	—	—	64,146	—	(i)76,460
Osmiridium	oz.	51	2,548	59	2,941
Phosphate rock	ton	5,544	3,592	n.a.	
Pyrite cons.	,,	198,713	786,408	165,401	(e)808,500
Quartz crystals	lb.	14	29	—	—
Rutile cons.	ton	38,014	1,537,894	(e)39,000	(e)1,888,000
Salt (e)	,,	277,000	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Sapphire	—	—	990	—	n.a.
Serpentine	ton	175	131	395	(e)300
Sillimanite	,,	1,333	7,243	3,557	20,909
Silver (a)	oz.	11,278,374	2,564,000	12,248,896	2,504,000
Talc	ton	7,605	56,064	9,892	(e)66,500
Tantalite cons.	lb.	16,108	10,175	18,124	20,200
Tin	ton	1,609	1,755,568	1,494	(e)1,259,000
Vermiculite	,,	62	744	29	348
Tungsten—					
Scheelite	,,	927	1,631,423	1,121	(e)1,773,500
Wolfram	,,	1,045	1,912,413	980	(e)1,317,500
Zinc (a) (g)	,,	165,000	23,485,000	200,800	13,917,000
Zircon cons.	,,	29,691	272,913	(e)29,800	(e)238,500

PRELIMINARY MINERAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS, 1953—(Continued).

(a) Valuation based on f.o.b. value of refined metal, concentrates, etc., exported, and average domestic market value of refined metal consumed locally.
(b) Estimated recoverable copper of all ores and concentrates produced.
(c) Estimated recoverable lead of ores and concentrates produced, including that of silver-lead concentrates.
(d) Sales.
(f) Recalculated to 65% WO_3.
(g) Estimated recoverable zinc of all ores and concentrates produced.
(i) Incomplete.

PRELIMINARY IMPORT STATISTICS, 1953.

	Unit of Measure.	1952 Quantity.	1952 Value. £A.	1953 Quantity.	1953 Value. £A.
Aluminium—					
ore (Bauxite)	ton	—	—	†	4
pig, Ingot	,,	7,899	1,518,628	7,520	1,553,746
Antimony—					
cons.	,,	510	99,146	599	64,803
metal	,,	14	4,513	15	4,433
Arsenic—					
white As_2O_3	,,	2,609	210,746	2,146	125,189
pentoxide	,,	—	—	—	—
Asbestos (all types)	,,	27,726	1,910,838	26,466	1,738,068
Barite—ground	,,	49	1,081	18	489
Bentonite		2,874	34,767	2,446	32,464
Bismuth—					
metal	lb.	33,052	45,130	36,509	38,801
carbonate	lb.	4,961	10,490	5,712	8,500
Chromium—Ore	ton	6,243	74,531	4,080	61,379
Clays—all types	,,	4,149	48,315	1,532	28,972
Coal	,,	272,352	900,491	22,200	91,973
Cobalt salts	,,	45	29,904	25	16,652
Copper—					
ore & cons.	,,	16	574	19	364
Pig, ingot and refinery shapes	,,	26,379*	8,213,930*	2,494	866,496
Diamonds, industrial	carat	240,698	527,063	156,530	330,749
Diatomite	ton	835	24,525	2,179	62,030
Felspar	,,	333	3,804	150	1,945
Fluorspar	,,	855	16,650	869	23,161
French Chalk & Steatite preparations	,,	72	2,282	164	3,848
Fuller's Earth	,,	7	163	96	1,129
Gold—					
ores & cons.	lb.	3,472	18	—	—
bar, dust, ingot	fine oz.	286,257	4,487,411	158,366	2,501,857
Graphite—all types	ton	1,098	77,458	707	34,222
Gypsum	,,	10	158	7	109
Iron and Steel—					
ore	,,	2,835	3,106	1	122
pig	,,	6,232	236,922	—	—
ingot, bloom	,,	1,533	225,234	228	35,775
Magnesium powder	lb.	24,640	6,018	1,008	58
Magnesite	ton	772	10,451	401	12,435
Manganese ore—all types	,,	36*	540*	1,231	20,102
Mercury	lb.	46,192	59,355	45,777	50,375
Mica—all types	,,	200,383	46,287	202,048	29,004
Mineral oil	gal.	1,547,204,859	77,373,584	1487,384,060	73,253,532
Nickel—					
pig	ton	613	345,353	632	377,459
bar, rod	,,	10*	9,766	20	20,997
Platinum group metals	oz.	179	1,894	1,067	11,402
Platinum—rods, bars	,,	439	15,885	246	7,973
Phosphate rock	ton	1,095,127	2,284,602	1,181,709	2,319,309
Salt—all types	,,	6,634	124,219	8,885	122,425
Sillimanite	,,	70	2,416	1	63
Silver—bar, ingot	oz.	123,240	46,209	63,224	23,432
Sulphur	ton	111,404	2,115,157	146,281	2,111,736
Tin—ingot	,,	180	213,925	623	555,540
Tinplate (incl, terneplate)	,,	162,594	15,668,039	82,914	8,266,895

PRELIMINARY EXPORT STATISTICS, 1953.

	Unit of Measure.	1952 Quantity.	1952 Value. £A.	1953 Quantity.	1953 Value. £A.
Aluminium—Ore (Bauxite)	ton	—	—	51	793
Pig, ingot	,,	489	81,796	659	109,396
Antimony—ore	,,	36	1,813	139	8,917
Arsenic—White	,,	—	—	—	—
Asbestos—all types	,,	1,170	190,440	2,303	388,450
Barite—ground	,,	1,209	25,293	877	17,546
Bismuth—cons.	,,	5	2,591	5	1,995
Cadmium—metal	,,	97	214,960	222	380,859
Clays—all types	,,	494	16,138	1,537	19,126
Coal	,,	176,828	827,025	376,779	1,581,507
Copper—					
ores and cons.	,,	4,553	507,747	(e)4,000(i)	(e)40,000
ingot and refinery shapes	,,	649	315,461	9,979	2,994,344
Diamonds—industrial	carat	30,211	45,437	63,656	82,592
Diatomite	ton	90	3,591	152	5,097
Felspar	,,	983	7,728	158	3,469
French chalk & Steatite preparations	,,	1	37	4	78
Gold—					
ores and cons.	lb.	251,021	18,193	121,638	5,187
bar, dust, ingot	fine oz.	824,874	13,506,231	1,204,518	19,527,028
Graphite—all types	ton	41	3,208	9	721
Gypsum	,,	32,523	49,786	27,838	51,157
Iron and Steel—					
pig	,,	64,700	1,306,537	211,216	3,881,223
ingot, bloom	,,	5,831	169,580	161,678	4,741,042
Lead—					
cons.	,,	38,134	3,148,073	64,528	3,571,262
pig	,,	141,431	22,276,856	148,433	15,866,276
bullion	,,	31,414	5,720,197	42,338	5,819,581
Magnesite	,,	91	4,894	98	5,816
Manganese—all types	,,	110	2,228	14,152	242,509
Mercury	lb.	779	1,247	884	1,295
Mica—all types	,,	10,205	472	14,382	1,387
Mineral oil	gal.	9,651,026	1,212,946	4,616,291	611,010
Molybdenite cons.	ton	÷	140	—	—
Nickel	,,	÷	137	36	6,125
Opal	—	—	94,669	—	117,120
Platinum Group metals	oz.	629	25,859	506	19,960
Rutile cons.	ton	37,654	1,601,005	36,076	1,818,088
Salt	,,	22,278	127,200	16,075	114,642
Sillimanite (kaolinised)	,,	101	831	—	—
Silver—					
bar, ingot	oz.	5,954,090	2,276,516	5,162,656	1,960,255
Sulphur	ton	÷	52	1	80
Tantalum and Columbium cons.	cwt.	49	3,407	1,170	65,542
Tin—					
ores & cons.	,,	679	25,413	396	14,229
ingot	ton	631	725,774	81	84,948
tinplate (incl. terneplate)	,,	121	21,126	9	865
Tungsten—					
Scheelite cons.	,,	1,020	1,729,869	987	1,481,686
Wolfram cons.	,,	968	1,704,564	1,250	1,640,857
Tungsten ores & cons.	,,	21	38,617	134	195,020
Zinc—					
cons.	,,	226,597	11,836,839	233,309	5,311,983
slabs, blocks	,,	44,741	8,450,158	36,938	3,715,968
Zircon cons.	,,	26,083	308,559	31,173	298,132

(i) Including Copper-lead concentrates.

SMELTER AND REFINERY PRODUCTION OF METALS IN AUSTRALIA.

Yearly totals.	Gold, Mint Issue, fine oz.	Silver (a), fine oz.	Copper (b) tons.	Pig Iron, tons.	Ingot Steel, tons.
1951	754,519	6,878,832	13,543	1,325,145	1,462,751
1952	882,892	6,772,624	19,623	1,542,063	1,638,417
1953	986,712	6,672,479	14,679	1,836,854	2,049,237
Monthly totals—1953.					
January	56,056	75,047	493	134,341	157,116
February	80,847	288,943	1,520	133,874	145,132
March	80,318	522,334	1,179	164,923	164,749
April	65,268	561,084	1,793	158,235	158,810
May	80,910	783,943	830	146,076	172,375
June	97,160	576,640	2,466	151,935	171,714
July	107,872	605,136	237	156,340	184,808
August	88,727	649,347	239	158,254	186,907
September	80,720	568,293	729	151,469	171,014
October	80,979	822,832	1,766	162,460	187,818
November	66,171	492,602	2,489	157,267	181,684
December	101,684	726,278	938	161,680	167,110
1954—					
January	57,846	846,682	3,449	158,806	180,363
February	73,037	775,502	2,824	135,523	151,868
March	102,829	810,564	2,365	144,193	178,584
April	50,218				
Source	A.M.	C.B.C.S.	A.M.M.	C.B.C.S.	C.B.C.S.

Yearly totals.	Lead (c) tons.	Lead Bullion (99.3% Pb.) tons.	Tin, tons.	Zinc. tons.
1951	165,758	32,155(d)	1,459	77,010
1952	156,639	37,975(f)	1,700	87,438
1953	172,468	34,290(g)	1,443	90,178
Monthly totals—1953.				
January	—	3,225	126	7,368
February	5,205	2,900	117	6,714
March	16,404	3,190	119	7,424
April	15,948	3,060	99	7,110
May	16,369	1,970	74	7,285
June	15,717	3,485	126	6,754
July	19,151	2,785	168	7,070
August	17,617	2,765	117	7,445
September	17,290	2,960	117	7,404
October	18,816	2,780	117	8,393
November	13,995	2,650	130	8,404
December	18,952	2,520	133	8,807
1954—				
January	19,131	3,080	123	8,593
February	15,949	2,400	143	7,883
March	15,396	2,595	213	8,921
April		4,170	112	8,677
Source:	A.M.M.			A.M.M.

(a) Yearly totals neglect small recovery of secondary silver from scrap, etc., included in monthly totals.

(b) From domestic ores and concentrates only.

(c) Yearly totals exclude lead recovered from scrap included in monthly totals.

(d) Containing 31,872 tons lead.

(f) Containing 37,709 tons lead.

(g) Containing 34,049 tons lead.

ALUMINIUM.

The Australian Aluminium Commission now expects its alumina plant to be in operation by January, 1955. Metal production will commence some months later. Initial output will be 10,000 tons per annum, rising to 13,000 tons when additional power becomes available.

The apparent consumption of primary aluminium products in 1953 was 10,450 tons, 2,188 tons below the 1952 consumption. The fall in apparent consumption was principally due to lower imports of rods, bars, plates and sheets. Imports of aluminium ingots were unduly high in 1951 and it is probable that excess stocks held by fabricators are still being reduced.

Prices. Australia—1-20k ingots, £210 per ton, c.i.f. main Australian ports. The 1-20k ingot is an ingot in one piece weighing 20 kilogrammes. The metal is 99.5% minimum aluminium.

U.K.: £stg.156 per ton.

U.S.: 21.5 cents per lb.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Bauxite	894		4,126	
Exports.				
Bauxite	—	—	51	793
Aluminium pigs, ingots, etc. (a)	—	—	659	109,396
Other shapes	25	7,984	76	27,154
Total	25	7,984	735	136,550
(a) Mostly remelted scrap.				
Scrap aluminium	249	39,719	680	103,155
Imports.				
Bauxite	—	—	†	4
Aluminium Ingots				
Canada	579	123,126	3,757	759,830
Norway	997	210,239	3,513	738,777
Others	112	25,262	250	55,134
Total	1,688	358,627	7,520	1,553,746
Other forms of Aluminium.				
U.K.	735	341,919	2,828	1,202,328
U.S.A.	20	11,161	80	34,729
Other Countries	12	12,079	96	55,517
Total	767	365,159	3,044	1,292,574

Principal Producer Bauxite: Sulphates Pty. Ltd., 395 Collins Street, Melbourne, C.1.

ANTIMONY.

There has been little change in the domestic antimony position during the last three months. Victorian Antimony Mines Ltd. have not overcome their initial plant difficulties and New England Antimony Mines N.L. are still in the stages of mine preparation and plant erection. The access road to Point Lookout, New South Wales, was extensively damaged by heavy rain in early February, 1954. The financial resources of the Blue Spec Mining Co., Western Australia, have been found to be inadequate to carry out alterations and additions to the plant and it is proposed to reconstruct the company to raise additional capital.

Consumption in the United Kingdom increased from 3,170 tons in 1952 to 4,360 in 1953, the increase was due almost entirely to the storage battery industry (370 tons) and for white pigments (730 tons).

Prices. There has been no alteration in the domestic prices during the last three months. Ore-buying is on the basis of 30/- per unit of antimony in a 60% concentrate delivered smelter, Sydney. The price of antimony metal remains unchanged at £325 per ton in 5 ton lots delivered capital cities.

The price of antimony metal in the United Kingdom remains unchanged at £stg.210 per ton.

There has been no change in either the ore or metal prices in the United States.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Mine Production.				
Metal content of ores	142(a)		214(a)	
Smelter Production.				
Refined antimony	n.a.		n.a.	
Exports.				
Ores & Cons.				
U.K.	—	—	87	4,891
Belgian	23	1,776	52	4,026
Total	23	1,776	139	8,917
Imports.				
Ores & Cons.				
South Africa	103	12,059	529	57,729
Other Countries	—	—	70	7,074
Total	103	12,059	599	64,803
Antimony metal.				
U.K.	6	1,776	15	4,433

(a) Does not include antimony contained in lead concentrates smelted in Australia or exported.

Principal Producers.
Blue Spec Mining Co. N.L., Nullagine, Western Australia.
Point Lookout Antimony Mines Pty. Ltd., Point Lookout, N.S.W.
Victorian Antimony Mines Ltd., Costerfield, Vic.

Smelters.
O. T. Lempriere & Co. Ltd., Sydney, New South Wales.

ASBESTOS.

Preliminary figures for total production of asbestos indicates that a record high level was reached in 1953. An additional mine is to be opened at Wittenoom during 1954 and it is expected that this will increase the output by about 1,000 tons over the 1953 figure, and possibly lead to a reduction in costs.

Marketing difficulties mentioned in the previous issue of this Review have not been overcome and producers' stocks have risen steadily in the past year. On the application of the major producer the Minister of Trade and Customs has referred to the Tariff Board the question whether assistance should be afforded the production in Australia of asbestos fibre and, if so found, the nature and extent of such assistance. The Tariff Board enquiry will be held in Sydney and Melbourne in June.

Overseas reports on the market in 1953 indicate a slight overall recession of about 3% in the demand for asbestos fibre in the U.S.A. Demand for group 7 (Canadian grading) showed a considerable increase, but demand for all other groups are lower than in 1952. Forecasts are that there will be no marked change in demand in 1954. Asbestos-cement production in Australia is being maintained at the 1953 rate.

Current Australian prices for crocidolite are:—

1st grade—£170 per short ton (£190/8/- per long ton) f.o.b. Fremantle.
2nd grade—£150 per short ton (£168 per long ton) f.o.b. Fremantle.
3rd grade—£135 per short ton (£151/4/- per long ton), f.o.b. Fremantle.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Crocidolite	890		3,795	
Chrysotile	299		1,174	
Exports.				
Belgium	37	6,000	243	58,890
U.S.A.	917	150,750	1,649	278,681
Other Countries	171	28,904	411	50,879
Total	1,125	185,654	2,303	388,450
Imports—				
Crocidolite.				
South Africa	201	27,215	545	67,154
Other Countries	2	277	8	1,120
Total	203	27,492	553	68,274
Chrysotile.				
Canada	5,273	408,067	15,767	1,106,382
South Africa	504	40,997	1,667	145,188
Southern Rhodesia	210	18,341	356	33,221
Other Countries	15	1,143	78	8,025
Total	6,002	468,548	17,868	1,292,816
Amosite.				
Canada	—	—	309	26,928
South Africa	1,481	71,125	7,460	326,060
Other Countries	1	268	70	8,813
Total	1,482	71,393	7,839	361,801
Unspecified.				
Canada	—	—	110	6,194
South Africa	—	—	8	998
Other Countries	12	740	88	7,985
Total	12	740	206	15,177

Producers.

Asbestos Mines Pty. Ltd., Box 474, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W. (Chrysotile deposit at Baryulgil, via Copmanhurst, N.S.W.)

Australian Blue Asbestos Ltd., c/- Box 483, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W. (Crocidolite deposits at Wittenoom Gorge, W.A.)

L. G. Hancock, Nunyerri, W.A. (Chrysotile).

BARITE.

Considerable concern has been shown by local producers at the decreasing market for barite in Australia. The increased activity in the paint industry, the principal consumer, has not resulted in a corresponding increased demand for barite — the commodity being increasingly displaced by titanium white.

As yet it is too early to predict any future requirements of oil prospecting groups. Should a market develop in this field the specifications laid down by consumers may render it difficult for local barite producers to compete with top quality imported material.

Price. McLeod & Co. advise that the selling price of 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade barytes in March, 1954, has remained unchanged at £40, £30 and £12/10/- per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	1,686		5,475	
Exports—				
Ground.				
New Zealand	208	4,248	717	15,066
Others	150	2,250	160	2,480
Total	358	6,498	877	17,546
Imports—Ground	†	17	18	489

Producers.

South Australian Barytes Ltd. (mine location—Oraparinna, S.A.).

L. G. Abbott Co. Ltd., Box 366D, G.P.O., Adelaide (mine location—Noarlunga, S.A.).

Mitchell & Kleeman, Cranbrook, W.A.

Wm. Stephens, Upper Burragorang, N.S.W.

W. T. Harris and J. Bean, Rockley, N.S.W. (mine location—Kempfield, N.S.W.).

BENTONITE.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production (a)	113		218	
Imports.				
U.K.	22	341	84	1,289
U.S.A.	598	8,123	2,362	31,171
Others	—	—	†	4
Total	620	8,464	2,446	32,464

(a) Excluding bentonitic clay from N.S.W.

Producers.

W. G. Fennell, Marchagee, W.A.

E. J. Noonan, Marchagee, W.A.

G. C. Margrie, Yarraman, Queensland.

BERYLLIUM.

In 1953 the world supply of beryl ore exceeded the demand and ample supplies of basic materials were available to fabricators and producers of end-use products. Although the U.S. domestic mine shipments of beryl exceeded those of 1952, they made up less than 10 per cent. of the U.S. total new supply.

In Australia there has been no difficulty in selling beryl production. The entire output of 125 tons in 1953 were produced in Western Australia. North West Tantalum N.L., a company floated in Melbourne late in 1953, proposed to mine beryl-bearing pegmatites in the Pilbara district of Western Australia. Operations are expected to commence this year.

Prices. Australia: £15 per long ton unit of BeO in a minimum 9.5% BeO ore in bags at Australian ports. The U.K. Government purchases all beryl ore produced in Australia through O. T. Lempriere & Co. Ltd., of Melbourne.

U.S.: Domestic ore, 9-9.9% BeO ore, $45 per short ton unit f.o.b. mine.

Imported ore: $45-47 per short ton unit of BeO in a 10-12% BeO ore, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	Units BeO.	Tons.	Units BeO.
Production.				
Beryllium Ore	33	380	125	1,497

Principal Producers.

The Australian beryllium ore output comes from the activities of individuals or small groups operating more or less on a prospecting basis.

BISMUTH.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	lb.	£.	lb.	£.
Production.				
Metal in cons.	174		321	
Exports.				
Ores & Cons. (in cwt.)				
U.K.	79	1,542	98	1,995
Imports.				
Metal				
U.K.	8,976	9,249	36,504	38,786
Others	—	—	5	15
Total	8,976	9,249	36,509	38,801
Carbonate.				
U.K.	3,266	4,622	5,712	8,500

CADMIUM.

Price. The domestic price of cadmium has remained unchanged at 16/- per lb. since May, 1953. Early in February, 1954, the cadmium price in the U.S.A. was reduced from $2.00 to $1.70 per lb., whilst in the U.K. it was reduced to stg.13/- per lb.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Refined metal	87		296	
Exports.				
Bars, rods, etc.	57	100,355	222	380,859
Ingots, blocks, etc.	28	49,440	61	104,836

Principal Producers.

Broken Hill Associated Smelters, Port Pirie, South Australia.
Electrolytic Zinc Co. of Australasia Ltd., Risdon, Tasmania.

CARBIDE.

In 1953 the Australian production of carbide was 8,558 tons, the highest since 1950. Capacity of the plant at Snug, near Hobart, is now 14,000 tons per annum.

Prices: The ex-store price of Tasmanian carbide was £81/15/- per ton and £79/15/- per ton in one and two cwt. drums respectively

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	2,311		8,558	
Exports.				
India	—	—	100	7,060
Aust. Territories	3	264	14	1,256
Fiji	20	1,143	26	1,665
Others	2	149	20	1,477
Total	25	1,556	160	11,458
Imports—				
U.K.	†	46	1	133
South Africa	1,496	44,441	1,792	53,705
Italy	—	—	492	25,042
Other Countries	345	11,445	344	11,451
Total	1,841	55,932	2,629	90,331

Producers.

Australian Commonwealth Carbide Co. Ltd., Hobart, Tasmania.

CEMENT.

The pattern of the Australian cement industry changed considerably in 1953. The domestic output rose to 1,572,800 tons (1,335,700 tons in 1952), imports fell to 90,805 tons (151,678 tons) and exports rose to 13,316 tons (10,718 tons). The apparent consumption was thus 1,650,289 tons compared with 1,476,659 tons in 1952. Any shortage of cement in Victoria is now disappearing and the annual production is approaching the annual consumption. The estimated production capacity in Australia is over two million tons, far in excess of the demand.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	415,000		1,572,800	
Exports.				
New Zealand	—	—	5,770	65,558
Papua/New Guinea	351	3,609	3,120	33,164
Fiji	61	769	2,142	22,678
Others	749	9,065	2,284	26,616
Total	1,161	13,443	13,316	148,016
Imports.				
United Kingdom	11,679	77,365	65,064	412,021
Japan	2,550	21,547	16,076	141,388
India	—	—	6,202	41,471
Others	794	8,669	3,463	30,249
Total	15,023	107,581	90,805	625,129

Producers.

Adelaide Cement Co. Ltd., Birkenhead, S.A.
Australian Portland Cement Pty. Ltd., Fyansford, via Geelong, Vic.
Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd., Portland, N.S.W.
Goliath Portland Cement Co. Ltd., Railton, Tasmania.
Australian Portland Cement Pty. Ltd., Kandos, N.S.W.
Metropolitan Portland Cement Ltd., Maldon, N.S.W.
Queensland Cement and Lime Co. Ltd., Darra, Queensland.
Southern Portland Cement Ltd., Berrima, N.S.W.
Standard Portland Cement Ltd., Charbon, N.S.W.
Sulphide Corporation Pty. Ltd., Cockle Creek, N.S.W.
Swan Portland Cement Ltd., Rivervale, W.A.
South Australian Portland Cement Co. Ltd., Brighton and Angaston, S.A.

CHROMIUM.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production				
Ore	—		1,968	
Imports.				
Chrome Ore.				
New Caledonia	—	—	2,583	43,897
Southern Rhodesia	—	—	1,495	17,401
Other Countries	†	4	2	81
Total	†	4	4,080	61,379
Ferro-Chrome	66	9,123	1,154	275,732

CLAYS.

The retail selling prices of 1st grade kaolin and ball clay quoted by McLeod & Co. in March, 1954, were £22 and £15 per ton respectively, f.o.b. Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Kaolin	3,272(i)		16,680(i)	
Brick Clay & Shale (c) ..	821,275		2,957,600	
Other	84,030(i)		404,691(i)	
Exports.				
White clays	461	4,260		
Fire clay	12	199	1,537	19,126
Clays n.e.i.	99	2,159		
Total	572	6,618	1,537	19,126
Imports.				
White clays (incl. China Clay, Kaolin, etc.)				
U.K.	6	256	69	1,317
Other Countries	†	—	60	1,084
Total	6	256	129	2,401
Fire Clay.				
U.K.	151	2,236	579	10,643
Other Countries	8	455	8	455
Total	159	2,691	587	11,098
Ball Clay.				
U.K.	59	585	194	1,635
Other Countries	9	360	35	680
Total	68	945	229	2,315
Clay n.e.i.				
U.K.	23	923	93	2,505
U.S.A.	95	1,858	393	6,516
Other Countries	51	1,540	101	4,137
Total	169	4,321	587	13,158

COAL — BLACK.

Black coal in Australia is now meeting increased competition from oil fuels in all States of the Commonwealth and from brown coal in Victoria. Consumers have stated that they obtain a more constant grade and better continuity of supplies of the latter fuels. New oil refineries are being erected in several Australian States; they will increase the availability of oil fuels in the Commonwealth.

Exports of coal reached 376,779 tons in 1953 compared with 176,828 tons in 1952. Australian coal producing companies have secured contracts to supply coal to the U.S. Army in Korea and also to Japanese interests. Other Asian markets are being investigated.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Queensland	625,363		2,533,434	
New South Wales	3,638,652		14,186,360	
Victoria	39,078		151,907	
Tasmania	55,778		233,629	
South Australia	121,446		449,355	
Western Australia	251,943		886,182	
Total	4 732,260		18,440,867	
Exports.				
New Caledonia	46,136	199,668	171,879	792,250
Japan	—	—	56,027	238,658
Fiji	7,917	31,247	20,036	83,613
Korea	47,116	168,863	116,173	417,017
Others	29	200	12,664	49,969
Total	101,198	399,978	376,779	1,581,507
Imports.				
India	—	—	17,013	56,409
Others	2,009	8,973	5,187	35,564
Total	2,009	8,973	22,200	91,973

Principal Producers.

Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., Newcastle, N.S.W.
Australian Iron and Steel Ltd., Port Kembla, N.S.W.
J. and A. Brown and Abermain and Seaham Collieries Ltd., Cessnock, N.S.W.
State Coal Mine, Lithgow, N.S.W.
Aberdare Collieries Ltd., Ipswich, Queensland.
Blair Athol Open Cut Collieries Ltd., Blair Athol, Queensland.
Theiss Bros., Callide, Queensland.
State Coal Mines, Wonthaggi, Victoria.
Cornwall Coal Co., St. Mary's, Tasmania.
State Mine, Leigh Creek, South Australia.
Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd., Collie, Western Australia.
Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd., Collie, Western Australia.
Western Collieries Ltd., Collie, Western Australia.

COAL — BROWN.

The Victorian brown coal output reached the record figure of 8,257,299 tons in 1953, 153,535 tons above the 1952 output. The State Electricity Commission produced 7,717,318 tons, 6,474,900 tons coming from the main Yallourn open cut and 1,242,418 tons (1,087,623 tons in 1952) from the Yallourn North open cut. The output from the Maddingley Brown Coal mine rose to 326,000 tons, an increase of 47,000 tons. This Company is now supplying brown coal to the new S.E.C. power station at Ballarat. Winchelsea Coal Pty. Ltd. is supplying coal to the S.E.C. Geelong power station from its Wensley Bray open cut.

The demand for brown coal for industrial purposes in Victoria is expected to continue to rise in 1954.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.	Year ended 31/12/1953.
	Tons.	Tons.
Production	2,108,773	8,257,299

Producers.

State Electricity Commission, 22 William Street, Melbourne (mines at Yallourn).
Maddingley Brown Coal Pty. Ltd., 411 Collins Street, Melbourne (mine at Bacchus Marsh).
Moolamoona Brown Coal Mine, Post Office, Thorpdale, Victoria.
Star Collieries, 22 Mt. Alexander Road, Flemington, Vic. (mine at Bacchus Marsh).
Winchelsea Coal Pty. Ltd., 22 Dynon Road, South Kensington (mine at Wensley Bray via Winchelsea).

COBALT.

Price. Recent alterations in the price of cobalt were: U.S., $2.42 to $2.62 per lb., in 100 lb. parcels; U.K., 20/- to 21/- stg. per lb.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.	Year ended 31/12/1953.
	Tons.	Tons.
Production.		
Cobalt oxide	3.96	16.65
Cobalt content	2.56	10.54

Imports of cobalt-bearing materials are not recorded separately.

Principal Producers.

Electrolytic Zinc Co. of Australasia Ltd., Risdon, Tasmania.

COPPER.

At the direction of the Minister for Trade and Customs, the Tariff Board inquiry into

(a) the nature and extent of assistance which should be afforded to the production in Australia of copper in the forms mentioned under Tariff Item 140; and

(b) if any alteration be recommended to Tariff Item 140, the consequential alterations which should be made to the duties under Tariff Item 139

commenced in Melbourne on 3rd March, 1954.

Evidence given at the inquiry on behalf of producers requested that they should, by means of a sliding scale tariff, be guaranteed a minimum price of £320 a ton. In addition the Mt. Lyell Mining & Railway Co. Ltd. requested additional assistance to meet higher costs until their present expansion programme is completed.

Production of blister copper at Mt. Isa temporarily ceased from 28th January to 22nd February, 1954, due to damage to the turbo-blower on the converter plant and production for the two months was only 1,249 tons. During the shut-down period concentrates were accumulated and production of blister in March was 2,010 tons.

Prices. The domestic price of copper remains under control of the Prices Ministers and has not been subject to any alteration since August, 1953, when it was fixed at £300 per ton to consumers. At present producers are receiving an additional £20 per ton from copper pool funds; the three major producers

have agreed to their receipts from this fund being pooled and subdivided among themselves on an agreed basis.

On March 25th, 1954, it was announced that the U.S. Government had entered an agreement to purchase 100,000 short tons of copper from the Chilean stockpile at the market price; this copper will be credited against the U.S. strategic stockpile. The announcement brought little reaction in the U.S. and U.K. copper markets although it is predicted in some quarters that the advent of current Chilean production on the open market will cause a decline from the present price of approximately £stg.245 per ton.

The United States prices continue comparatively constant at 29.5-30.0 cents per pound.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Copper in cons.	10,015		37,364	
Smelter production.				
Blister copper	9,387		35,293	
Refined copper	5,193		14,679	
Exports.				
Ores and cons	72	3,349	126	5,899
Blister copper. U.S.A.	749	305,000		
Pigs, ingots, etc. British countries	—	—		
Fed. Rep. Germany	—	—	9,979	2,994,344
Italy	—	—		
Other Foreign Countries	—	—		
Total	—	—		
Rolled, drawn and extruded shapes	228	63,766	1,330	398,398
Scrap copper	158	36,499	749	175,130
Imports.				
Ores & Cons.	—	—	19	364
Blister copper	—	—	1,666	574,523
Pigs, ingots, etc.	90	27,406		
Rods, bars, etc.	75	23,372	828	291,973
Plates, sheets, etc.	277	107,576	861	351,197
Pipes, tubes etc.	4	2,304	73	57,049
Scrap copper	4	366	6	683

Principal Producers.

Mt. Isa Mines Ltd., Mt. Isa, Queensland.
Mt. Lyell Mining and Railway Co. Ltd., Queenstown, Tasmania.
Mt. Morgan Ltd., Mt. Morgan, Queensland.
Copper in dross, speiss, etc., from the smelting of lead concentrate:—
Broken Hill Associated Smelters, Port Pirie, South Australia.
Mt. Isa Mines Ltd., Mt. Isa, Queensland.

Smelters.

Mt. Isa Mines Ltd., Mt. Isa, Queensland.
Mt. Lyell Mining and Railway Co. Ltd.
Mt. Morgan Ltd.
Electrolytic Refining and Smelting Co., Port Kembla, N.S.W.

Refiners.

Mt. Lyell Mining and Railway Co. Ltd.
Electrolytic Refining and Smelting Co.

DAMOURITE.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.	Year ended 31/12/1953.
	Tons.	Tons.
Production	n.a.	406(a)

(a) Company figure.

Producer.

Australian Industrial Minerals N.L., 35 Grenfell Street, Adelaide (lease at Mt. Crawford, S.A.).

DIATOMITE.

Price. Retail price quoted by McLeod & Co. in March, 1954, was £37/10/- per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	612		2,837	
Exports.				
New Zealand	67	2,461	98	4,138
Others	2	134	54	959
Total	69	2,595	152	5,097
Imports.				
U.K.	5	197	39	1,297
U.S.A.	302	9,834	2,076	57,404
Others	15	576	64	3,329
Total	322	10,607	2,179	62,030

Producers.

S. N. Rodda Pty. Ltd., Box 16, P.O., Port Melbourne, Vic. (deposit at Kilmore, Vic.).
G. A. Thomson Pty. Ltd., Newham, Victoria.
Campbell Bros. Limited, Bowen Hills, Brisbane (deposit at Black Duck, via Gatton).
Brisbane and Wunderlich, Lake Gnangara, W.A.
Minerals Pty. Ltd., 318 Botany Road, Alexandria, N.S.W. (deposit at Coonabarabran).

DOLOMITE.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.	Year ended 31/12/1953.
	Tons.	Tons.
Production	21,481	92,813

Principal Producers.

The Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd., Box 86A G.P.O., Melbourne (quarry at Ardrossan, S.A.).
Metropolitan Lime and Cement Co., Commerce House, Adelaide Street, Brisbane (lease at Ipswich).
C. A. Kruger & Sons Pty. Ltd., Bundamba, Queensland (lease at Ipswich).
Non Metallics Ltd., 74 Pitt Street, Sydney (deposit at Rylestone, N.S.W.).
Duck River Co. Pty. Ltd., Smithton, Tasmania.

FELSPAR.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	1,844		6,775	
Exports.				
New Zealand	113	1,964	158	3,469

Imports.				
United Kingdom	--	—	9	211
Norway	74	719	127	1,544
Others	12	154	14	190
Total	86	873	150	1,945

Principal Producers.

Australian Glass Manufacturers Co. Pty. Ltd., 420 Spencer Street, Melbourne (leases at Londonderry, W.A.).
Australian Window Glass Pty. Ltd., P.O. Box 18, Alexandria, N.S.W. (lease at Brewongle, N.S.W.).
Broken Hill Felspar Development Co., P.O. Box 396, Broke Hill, N.S.W.

FLUORSPAR.

There has been no recent change in the position regarding Australian fluorspar production or demand. No production in North Queensland was recorded during the fourth quarter 1953, although some men are reported to be engaged in mining operations. Output for 1953 was nearer the level of 1948-51, suggesting that some recovery has been made from the abnormally low production of 1952.

An enquiry for Australian fluorspar has been received from the U.S.A., and there is little doubt of a ready market for any surplus production of high grade fluorspar which might be available if a treatment plant is installed here, provided that costs of production are not excessive. At the present time Australia imports about 60% of total requirements, and the demand is expected to rise within the next few years without any corresponding rise in local production. Buying prices have remained steady since April, 1952, and selling prices have not advanced since February, 1953.

Buying.
90% CaF_2—£11/2/6 per ton f.o.r. Mungana, Q.
85% CaF_2— £9/17/6 per ton f.o.r. Mungana, Q.
In each case plus 2/6 per unit above 85% or 90%.
Selling.
90% CaF_2—£24/7/6 per ton delivered Sydney.
85% CaF_2—£22/17/6 per ton delivered Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	—		303	
Imports.				
U.K.	301	6,878	869	23,156
South Africa	—	—	†	5
Total	301	6,878	869	23,161

Producers.

Prospectors and Syndicates in the Mungana-Chillagoe district, Queensland.
Minerals (Vic.) Pty. Ltd., Inglis Street, Port Melbourne, Victoria. (Pine Mountain deposit).

FULLER'S EARTH.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	—		31	
Exports.				
New Guinea	—	—	3	95
Imports.				
United Kingdom	70	848	96	1,129

Principal Producers.

D. J. and T. I. Read, Marchagee, W.A.
E. B. Cornish, "Scoble," Whylandra, Dubbo, N.S.W.

GLASS SAND.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.
Production.		
Western Australia	1,804	6,906
Other States	n.a.	n.a.

Principal Producers.

Australian Glass Manufacturers Co. Pty. Ltd., 420 Spencer Street, Melbourne (leases at Rosebery, N.S.W., Lake Gnangara, W.A., supplies also obtained in S.A. and Vic.).
South Australian Silicates Co. Pty. Ltd., Longwood, S.A.
W. M. and R. J. Leach, Lake Gnangara, W.A.

GLAUCONITE.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.
Production	80	319

Producers.

G. E. Brook, Gin Gin, W.A.

GOLD.

The domestic gold production in 1953 was 1,075,100 fine ounces, the output in Western Australia being nearly 100,000 ounces greater than the previous year.

The London gold market reopened on 22nd March, 1954, after a break of 15 years. Buying of gold on the market is restricted to people and countries outside the sterling area; all payments must be made in sterling. Any person inside or outside the sterling area may sell gold through the market. It is not expected that there will be any significant departure from the present gold price.

From 1st May, 1954, the Commonwealth Bank increased the price of gold to £15/12/6 per ounce; the reason for this increase is not available but it may be on account of a re-casting of the estimated cost of shipping gold to New York.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Fine oz.	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. £.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Fine oz.	Year ended 31/12/1953. £.
Mine Production.				
Queensland	24,981		91,477	
New South Wales	6,924		26,240	
Victoria	15,210		64,178	
Tasmania	4,549		16,988	
South Australia	54		443	
Western Australia	221,970		823,331	
Northern Territory	14,423		52,423	
Total	288,111		1,075,080	
Territory of New Guinea	22,680		120,848	
Exports.				
Ore & cons. (in lbs.)				
U.S.A.	—	—	121,638	5,187

Refined or standard sheet	—	—		
Refined ingot or bar.				
U.K.	91,636	1,459,795		
France	25,154	400,422		
Switzerland	—	—		
Others	14,514	231,729		
Total	131,304	2,091,946	1,204,518	19,527,028
Imports.				
Unrefined gold.				
Papua and New Guinea	7,953	133,283	83,370	1,290,951
New Zealand	1,855	29,492	17,143	270,388
Fiji	9,323	149,338	57,853	940,518
Total	19,131	302,113	158,366	2,501,857

GRAPHITE.

No production was recorded at the Collinsville mine, Queensland, during 1953, but new foundations had been put in for heavier pumping equipment and the mine was dewatered in November.

The only production recorded from Australian sources in 1953 was a trial parcel of graphitic ore from the Munglinup deposits, W.A. No results of this trial have come to hand.

Price. McLeod & Co. quote a retail price of £82 per ton for first grade imported amorphous graphite, f.o.b. Sydney (March, 1954).

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. £.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	Year ended 31/12/1953. £.
Production	—		2	
Exports.				
New Zealand	2	83	9	721
Imports.				
Flake.				
U.K.	†	13	24	3,123
Other Countries	2	194	70	2,927
Total	2	207	94	6,050
Crystalline.				
U.K.	1	111	12	1,888
Ceylon	54	1,805	56	1,866
Madagascar	—	—	49	2,041
Other Countries	—	—	13	607
Total	55	1,916	130	6,402
Amorphous.				
U.K.	66	1,402	109	4,533
Ceylon	79	2,712	240	9,672
Other Countries	49	3,108	134	7,565
Total	194	7,222	483	21,770

Producers.

Zentner & Sanson, Collinsville Graphite Mines, P.O. Box 60, Collinsville, Q.
F. R. Drummond, Munglinup, W.A.

GYPSUM.

The Australian production of gypsum was 327,204 tons in 1953, well below the 1952 output of 351,678 tons. Output fell in all States with the exception of South Australia. The drop in output is most probably due to a reduced production of plaster caused by the slight recession in the building industry. Production of plaster sheets fell from 15.908 million square yards in 1952 to 15,729 million square yards in 1953.

Prices. Bulk gypsum, 38/- per ton, f.o.r. Conoble, N.S.W.

The selling price quoted by McLeod & Co., of Sydney, for ground first grade gypsum is £27 per ton, f.o.b. Sydney, since April, 1953.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	78,196		327,204	
Exports.				
New Zealand	10,830	17,350	22,258	31,846
Other Countries	3,162	9,650	5,580	19,311
Total	13,992	27,000	27,838	51,157
Imports	3	40	7	109

Principal Producers.

Australian Plaster Industries Pty. Ltd., Lorimer Street, South Melbourne, Vic. (leases at Bronzewing, Vic., and Conoble, N.S.W.).
Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Ltd., Box 483, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W. (leases at Conoble and Darnick, N.S.W., Lake MacDonnell, S.A.).
Waratah Gypsum Pty. Ltd. (leases at Stenhouse Bay, Lake MacDonnell and elsewhere, S.A.).
Griffith Gypsum Mines (Griffith, N.S.W.).
Brunswick Plaster Mills Pty. Ltd. (leases at Nowingi West, Vic.).
Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., Box 86A, G.P.O., Melbourne (leases at Moonabie, S.A.).
Perth Modelling Works Ltd., 120-130 Claisebrook Road, Perth, W.A. (leases at Baandee and Yellowdine).

IRON AND STEEL.

There is little to report on the iron and steel position. The monthly rate of output of pig iron and ingot steel during the first two months of 1954 was similar to the monthly rate of the last quarter of 1953.

The quantity of iron and steel products exported in 1953 was considerable as shown by the accompanying Table; corresponding data for 1952 were: pig iron, 64,700 tons; steel, 47,082 tons. About 75% of the exports of steel products went to the United Kingdom. The U.S.A. was the principal importer of the pig iron, taking 148,400 tons.

The U.S. consumers have recently been reducing their stocks of iron and steel products and the iron and steel output has been reduced considerably. In these circumstances imports from Australia might be expected to fall.

Prices. Pig iron: Australia, £18/7/6 per ton; U.K., £stg.13/11/3 per ton; U.S., $56-58 per ton (long).

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Iron Ore.				
S.A.	622,948		2,591,335	
W.A.	131,299		707,383	
Total	754,247		3,298,718	

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Iron Oxide.				
N.S.W.	953		4,256	
Tasmania	1,577		4,827	
Total	2,530		9,083	
Pig Iron	481,407		1,836,854	
Ingot steel	536,612		2,049,237	
Exports.				
Pig Iron	51,869	900,578	211,216	3,881,223
Ferro Alloys (1)	2	224	70	8,740
Steel (2)	32,236	1,347,137	219,886	7,736,719
Imports.				
Iron Ore	†	22	1	122
Pig Iron	—	—	—	—
Ferro Alloys (1)	88	9,369	381	86,527
Steel (2)	12,108	1,395,487	61,832	6,463,802
Tin and Terne Plate	15,524	1,132,374	82,914	8,266,895

Principal Producers.

Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., Newcastle, N.S.W.
Australian Iron and Steel Ltd., Port Kembla, N.S.W.
The Wood-Distillation, Charcoal-Iron and Steel Industry, Wundowie, Western Australia.

(1) Excludes Ferro-Chrome and Ferro-Manganese.
(2) Includes ingots and billets, bar rods, angles and tees, hoop, strips and plates.

LEAD.

The lead content of concentrates produced during 1953, was 269,296 tons, an advance of 41,100 tons compared with 1952, primarily due to increased production from the Broken Hill Mines.

Price. The domestic price of refined lead is based on the f.o.b. equivalent of the L.M.E. quotation.

Following on the announcement of the U.S. Government on the 26th March to increase its stockpiling activities both the U.K. and U.S. price have firmed. At the end of March lead at 13.5 cents per pound reached its highest level since September, 1953. Early in April the L.M.E. price advanced to £stg.97/5/- per ton, the highest point since October, 1953.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Mine production.				
Lead in cons.	65,587		269,296	
Smelter production.				
Refined lead	51,763		172,468	
Lead in bullion	7,894		34,049	
Exports—Lead ores & cons.				
Belgium	13,807	697,730	27,275	1,361,883
U.S.A.	7,873	498,316	31,176	1,851,186
Others	—	—	—	—
Total	27,556	1,548,091	64,528	3,571,262
Lead Bullion.				
U.K.	9,007	1,155,882	42,337	5,819,504
Others	—	—	1	77
Total	9,007	1,155,882	42,338	5,819,581
Refined Lead.				
U.K.	29,642	3,238,452	88,373	9,511,722
U.S.A.	5,998	691,802	51,763	5,356,649
Others	2,229	253,707	8,297	997,905
Total	37,869	4,183,961	148,433	15,866,276
Scrap lead	3,646	246,334	12,146	769,571

Principal Producers.

Mines.

North Broken Hill Ltd.
Broken Hill South Ltd.
Consolidated Zinc Corporation Ltd.
New Broken Hill Consolidated Ltd.,
all of Broken Hill, New South Wales.
Electrolytic Zinc Co. of Australasia Ltd., Rosebery, Tasmania.
Mt. Isa Mines Ltd., Mt. Isa, Queensland.
Lake George Mines Ltd., Captains Flat, New South Wales.

Smelters.

Mt. Isa Mines Ltd.

Smelters and Refiners.

Broken Hill Associated Smelters, Port Pirie, South Australia.

LIMESTONE.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.
Production	821,106	3,020,584

Principal Producers.

Australian Portland Cement Pty. Ltd., 422 Collins Street, Melbourne (quarries at Fyansford, via Geelong, Vic., and Kandos, N.S.W.).
David Mitchell Estate, Olivers Lane, Melbourne (quarry at Lilydale, Vic.).
Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., Box 86A, G.P.O., Melbourne (quarry at Rapid Bay, S.A.).
I.C.I. Alkali (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., 380 Collins Street, Melbourne (quarry at Penrice, S.A.).
The Commonwealth Portland Cement Co. Ltd., Portland, N.S.W.
The Standard Portland Cement Co. Ltd., Charbon, N.S.W.
Queensland Cement and Lime Co. Ltd., Darra, Queensland (deposit at Mud Island, Moreton Bay).
A.C.F. and Shirley's Fertilisers Ltd., Brisbane Road, Gympie, Queensland (deposit at Tamaree, via Gympie).
Goliath Portland Cement Co., Railton, Tasmania.
Melrose Agricultural Lime, H. E. Hallet, Quoiba, Tasmania (lease at Melrose).

MAGNESITE.

Price. Retail price of raw magnesite was quoted by McLeod & Co. in March, 1954, at £20 per ton f.o.b. Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Production	9,454		45,335	
Exports.				
New Zealand	14	586	47	2,200
Others	42	2,386	51	3,616
Total	56	2,972	98	5,816
Imports.				
U.K.	256	7,125	368	10,907
India	—	—	22	1,193
Others	3	77	11	335
Total	259	7,202	401	12,435

Producers.

Scahill and Gibbons, Coolgardie, W.A.
Fifield Magnesite and Refractories Pty. Ltd., Camellia Works, Granville, N.S.W. (lease at Fifield).
Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., Box 86A, G.P.O., Melbourne (leases at Fifield, N.S.W., and Bulong, W.A.).
R. F. and C. V. Hughes, P.O. Box 30, Young, N.S.W. (lease at Thuddungra, N.S.W.).

MANGANESE.

The last shipment to United States from Western Australia was made in March, 1954, of a total of 18,000 tons for which an export license had been granted. The grade of one shipment of 4,700 tons from Ragged Range was high, the agreed assay for payment being 53.84% Mn. No further exports will be permitted.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Production.				
Metallurgical ore	8,858		17,339	
Dioxide ore	365		1,443	
Total	9,223		18,782	
Exports.				
Manganese Ore	14,152	242,509	14,152	242,509
Ferromanganese	1	113	41	3,004
Imports.				
Manganese Ore.				
Metallurgical ore	50	829	114	1,788
Dioxide ore	25	301	1,117	18,314
Ferromanganese.				
U.K.	11	3,307	66	14,537
Norway	—	—	5	593
Others	40	7,276	40	7,276
Total	51	10,583	111	22,406

Principal Producers.

Westralian Ores Pty. Ltd., Peak Hill, Western Australia.
Northern Minerals Syndicate, Gregory Range, Western Australia.

Principal Buyers.

Metallurgical Ore—The Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., Newcastle, N.S.W.
Dioxide Ore—Metals & Ores Pty. Ltd., Alexandria, N.S.W.

MICA.

The Australian demand for mica continues to strengthen and sales by the Mica Pool are still improving. A small quantity of mica from Pool stocks has also been sold in the U.S.A., and stocks of some grades are being steadily reduced to a more satisfactory level.

The Department of Supply has arranged for a representative of mica interests in the U.K. to visit Australia in May to advise the Department on the marketing of mica.

Prices per lb. approved by the Commonwealth Prices Commissioner for purchases and sales by the Mica Pool are as follows (buying prices are at Alice Springs; selling prices are ex Mica Store, Melbourne):

	CLEAR.		COMMERCIAL CLEAR.		STAINED.	
	Buying.	Selling.	Buying.	Selling.	Buying.	Selling.
Over extra special	225/-	258/9	156/-	179/6	82/-	94/3
Extra special	202/6	233/-	140/-	161/-	69/9	79/3
Special	175/-	201/3	121/-	139/3	56/-	64/6
A1	150/-	172/6	94/-	108/-	50/6	57/6
1	125/-	143/9	75/-	86/3	44/-	46/-
2	100/-	115/-	63/-	72/6	35/-	38/6
3	87/6	100/9	56/-	64/6	25/-	28/-
4	69/-	79/3	44/-	50/6	19/-	21/-
5	44/-	50/6	32/-	36/-	8/-	10/-
6	19/-	21/9	12/9	14/6	4/-	6/-

Purchases. Total 1953, 73,035 lbs., valued at £102,918. April sales, 1954, 20,782 lbs.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. lbs.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. lbs.	£.
Exports.				
Block	24	70	89	228
Scrap	—	—	4,480	65
Ground	—	—	9,813	1,094
Imports.				
Block	10,024	8,288	37,981	21,481
Condenser films (not cut to shape)	—	—	(a)	
Splittings not cut to shape	20,470	1,907	68,248	9,278
Cut to shape	854	392	(a)	
Ground	3,470	112	7,594	199

(a) Not recorded separately prior to 1/7/1953.

Producers.

Mining syndicates in the Harts Range and Plenty River districts, N.T.

Mica Pool.

The Commonwealth Mica Pool buys and sells all Australian-produced mica; the buyer visits Alice Springs in April, August and December. The Mica Store has now moved from Warburton Lane, Melbourne, to Supply Department Stores, Albert Road, Albert Park, and the postal address is Box 118, Post Office, South Melbourne.

MINERAL PIGMENTS.

Price. Retail prices quoted by McLeod & Co. in March, 1954, were:—

Yellow ochre—£25 per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.
Red ochre—£20 per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.
Burnt umber—£38 per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.
Raw umber—£19 per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Production.				
Red and Yellow	190		565	
Umber	—		26	
Exports.				
Red ochre and oxide	29	439	252	16,537
Imports.				
Red ochre and oxide	692	29,896		
Yellow ochre and sienna	128	10,745		
Umber	6	138	2,079	100,675

Producers.

Red ochre—

Murchison Minerals (1951), Cnr. Austin and Robinson Streets, Cue, W.A. (leases at Weld Range, W.A.).

J. E. Cassidy, Weld Range, W.A.

A. Pearson, Spalford, Tasmania.

R. J. Smith, Opthalmia Range, W.A.

Yellow ochre—

Zadow & Ball, Mindoolah, W.A.

Murchison Minerals (1951), Cnr. Austin and Robinson Streets, Cue, W.A. (leases at Weld Range, W.A.).

Production in New South Wales is from the Glen Innes, Dubbo and Mudgee districts.

MOLYBDENUM.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons	£,	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons	£,
Production.				
Molybdenite cons.	0.45		0.60	
Imports.				
Ferro-molybdenum	1	902	51	53,719

NICKEL.

World supplies of nickel have eased considerably in recent months. World output is increasing rapidly (172,000 tons in 1953) and more nickel should become available for civilian consumers.

Prices. Australia, £633 per ton, c.i.f.; U.K., £stg.483 per ton; U.S., 60 cents per lb.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Imports.				
Pigs, ingots, bars, etc.				
U.K.	152	93,422	623	380,850
Canada	12	7,125	29	17,581
Others	—	—	†	25
Total	164	100,547	652	398,456

PERLITE.

No information is available concerning the development of the perlite deposits of north-east New South Wales and south-east Queensland. Production of "popped" perlite commenced during 1953 but the extent of operations has not been disclosed.

PLATINUM AND PLATINUM GROUP METALS.

Russian platinum group metals have appeared on the European market in recent months, and the availability of these supplies has tended to cause prices to fall both in the U.K. and U.S.

Prices. U.K.: Platinum £stg.30-31 per oz.; Palladium £stg.7½ per oz.; Iridium £stg.55 per oz.; Osmium £stg.65-70 per oz.; Osmiridium £stg.40 nom.; Rhodium, £stg.42½ per oz.; Ruthenium £stg.25 per oz.

U.S.: Platinum $84-87 per oz.; Palladium $21 per oz.; Iridium $150 (nom.) per oz.; Osmium $140-150 per oz.; Rhodium $118-125 per oz.; Ruthenium $70 per oz.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. oz.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. oz.	£.
Platinum.				
Production.				
Concentrates	—		—	
Imports.	25	809	246	7,973
Osmiridium.				
Production.				
Osmiridium Cons.	12		59	
Platinum and Platinum Group Metals.				
Exports.				
U.K.	200	8,120	506	19,960
Platinum Group Metals.				
Imports	405	5,154	1,067	11,402

POTASH.

Price. The net cash price of fertilizer grade potash, quoted by Commonwealth Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. in January, 1954, was £34/3/6 per ton, ex works, Yarraville.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£	Tons.	£.
Imports—Fertilizer Grade.				
Chloride.				
France	2,135	35,396	7,741	143,020
Fed. Rep. Germany	2,347	41,056	7,264	143,157
Others	401	7,147	2,698	54,247
Total	4,883	83,599	17,703	340,424
Sulphate	825	17,648	2,685	59,847
Chemical Grade	309	29,079	909	98,435

QUARTZITE.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.	Year ended 31/12/1953.
	Tons.	Tons.
Production.	1,918(i)	9,318(i)

Producers.

Newbold General Refractories, P.O. Box 41, Mayfield, N.S.W. (leases at Rock Flat, Lithgow and Nowra).

Minerals Pty. Ltd., 318 Botany Road, Alexandria, N.S.W. (leases at Lithgow).

The Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd., P.O. Box 86A, G.P.O., Melbourne (lease in Whyalla district, South Australia).

ROCK PHOSPHATE.

Rock phosphate imports from the Pacific Islands during 1953, 1,181,709 tons, were the highest recorded since 1950. The expanding production of superphosphate will necessarily mean a further expansion in consumption and imports of rock phosphate.

Price. On the 1st July, 1953, the selling price of high grade rock phosphate (Nauru, Ocean and Christmas Islands) was reduced from 125/- to 111/- per ton, c.i.f. and e., Australian ports.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	n.a.		n.a.	
Imports.				
Nauru	190,617	351,438	744,394	1,263,656
Christmas Is.	65,191	196,095	249,989	729,350
Gilbert & Ellice Is.	36,703	67,105	184,370	321,082
Others	2,953	5,168	2,956	5,221
Total	295,464	619,806	1,181,709	2,319,309

SALT

Complete production figures for salt have never been available, as some companies are not obliged to disclose details, but indications are that production during 1953 was lower than in the two previous years. It is believed that stocks in some industries are fairly substantial and consumption has not been affected by the reduced output. The market was buoyant throughout 1953.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production	n.a.		n.a.	
Exports.				
Rock Salt.	(b)			
Compressed salt blocks ..	—		62	679
Table Salt.				
New Guinea and Papua ..	65	1,162	199	3,260
New Zealand	5,118	35,573	11,065	72,261
Fiji	229	1,729	526	5,008
Other Countries	70	752	195	2,361
Total	5,482	39,216	11,985	82,890
Salt n.e.i.	(b)			
Dairy salt	—	—	4,658	31,073
Imports.				
Rock Salt.				
U.K.	900	5,690	5,415	33,897
Table salt.				
U.K.	871	40,784	1,646	72,581
U.S.A.	—	—	†	10
Total	871	40,784	1,646	72,591
Dairy salt.				
U.K.	540	4,111	815	6,972
Compressed salt blocks.				
U.K.	101	1,888	113	2,469
Salt n.e.i.	(b)		896	6,496

(a) Not recorded separately prior to 1/7/1953.
(b) Not a separate item as from 1/7/1953.

Principal Producers.

Bowen Salt Ltd., P.O. Box 62, Bowen, Queensland.

Cheetham Salt Pty. Ltd., Box 272, Geelong, Vic. (evaporating pans at Geelong and Laverton).

Australian Salt Co. Ltd. (Lake Bumbunga, Lake Fowler, Lake MacDonnell and Kangaroo Island, S.A.).

I.C.I. Alkali (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., 380 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic. (pans at Price, S.A., salt lakes in N.W. Victoria).

SILLIMANITE.

Selling Prices. Mt. Crawford massive sillimanite £10/4/- per ton, f.o.b. Port Adelaide. Thackaringa sillimanite £6/5/- per ton, f.o.r. Broken Hill, N.S.W.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production				
Massive sillimanite	1,427		3,557	
Imports				
Massive sillimanite	—	—	†	63

Producers.

Australian Industrial Minerals N.L., 55 Grenfell Street, Adelaide (quarry at Mt. Crawford, S.A.).

Thackaringa Syndicate, c/o. Zinc Corporation, Broken Hill, N.S.W.

SILVER.

Prices. Australia, 7/6 per fine ounce. U.K., 6/1 per fine ounce. U.S., 85.25 cents per fine ounce.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. fine oz.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. fine oz.	£.
Production.				
Mine	3,064,646		12,248,896	
Refined silver	2,041,712		6,672,479	
Exports.				
Refined ingot or bar.				
U.K.	1,381,170	525,573	5,160,616	1,959,643
Other Countries	—	—	2,040	612
Total	1,381,170	525,573	5,162,656	1,960,255
Imports.				
Unrefined silver.				
New Guinea	3,864	1,423		
Fiji	3,028	1,154		
Others	211	68		
Total	7,103	2,645	63,224	23,432
Refined silver.				
U.K.	101	52		

Principal Producers.

Lead-zinc mines: Broken Hill, New South Wales; Captain's Flat, New South Wales; Mt. Isa, Queensland; Rosebery, Tasmania.

Smelters and Refiners.

Royal Mints, Melbourne and Perth.
Broken Hill Associated Smelters, Port Pirie, South Australia.
Electrolytic Refining and Smelting Co., Port Kembla, New South Wales.

SULPHUR.

Sulphuric acid production during 1953, 671,323 tons, was some 43,000 tons in advance of that for 1952. Of the acid produced 56 per cent. was from brimstone, 28 per cent. from pyrite, 14 per cent. from zinc concentrates, and the balance from spent oxide. Production in 1954 is expected to be considerably increased — the immediate increase will be primarily due to expanded use of brimstone rather than indigenous materials.

Under direction of the Minister for Trade and Customs a Tariff Board inquiry will be held in Melbourne on 27th April, 1954, and Sydney 11th May, 1954, to inquire into—

(a) the necessity for the payment of a bounty on sulphur produced, and the sulphur equivalent of sulphuric acid produced, in Australia from materials of Australian origin and, if found, necessary, at what rate, and

(b) under what conditions should any such bounty be paid.

The result of this inquiry will determine, to a large extent the policy of acid producers in the current conversion programme.

Price. Sulphur is imported by the British Phosphate Commissioners on behalf of a Pool, from which consumers draw their supplies. The price to the consumers who share in the pool is determined by the cost of sulphur from various sources. The Pool price since the 1st July, 1953, has been £20/10/- per ton.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Production.				
Pyrite Cons.	45,275		149,926	
Pyrite Ore	4,119		15,475	
Total	49,394		165,401	
Zinc cons (a)	38,986		140,061	

	Quarter ended Tons.	£.	Year ended Tons.	£.
Imports.				
Sulphur.				
United States	29,870	399,385	127,720	1,619,027
Japan	11,505	204,501	16,989	448,958
Others	28	2,382	1,572	43,751
Total	41,403	606,268	146,281	2,111,736

(a) Refers to zinc concentrates roasted locally and from which the sulphur content is utilised in the manufacture of sulphuric acid.

Producers.

Sulphur. There is no production of elemental sulphur in Australia; import of sulphur is through the sole agency o the British Phosphate Commissioners, Phosphate House, 515 Collins Street, Melbourne.

Pyrite. Norseman Gold Mines N.L., Norseman, W.A.
Lake George Mines Pty. Ltd., Captain's Flat, N.S.W.
Mount Morgan Mines Ltd., Mt. Morgan, Queensland.
Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Co. Ltd., Queenstown, Tasmania.

Zinc concentrate. See "Lead."

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

Production of superphosphate in 1953 reached a record figure of 1,661,954 tons. It is expected that with the expansion of sulphuric acid production during 1954 the output of superphosphate will continue to increase.

The net cash prices of superphosphate as from the 1st February, 1954, are:—

Queensland—253/9 per ton, ex works, in new jute bags.
New South Wales—233/6 per ton, ex works, in new jute bags (pool price).
Victoria—234/- per ton, ex works, in new jute bags.
Tasmania—235/- per ton, user's nearest railway siding, in paper bags.
South Australia—241/- per ton, ex works, in new jute bags.
Western Australia—273/- per ton, ex works, in new jute bags.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Production	409,720		1,661,954	
Exports.				
New Guinea and Aust. Territories	—	—	165	2,567
Other British Countries	—	—	1,156	15,216
Others	—	—	2	32
Total	—	—	1,323	17,815

TALC.

The Australian production of talc and pyrophyllite totalled 9,892 tons in 1953, 2,572 tons more than in 1952. South Australia was again the leading producer with an output of 6,652 tons.

The prices of first grade white and commercial grade talc quoted by McLeod & Co., of Sydney, remained at £38 and £18 per ton, f.o.b. Sydney.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.	Year ended 31/12/1953. Tons.	£.
Production.				
Talc and Soapstone	3,100		9,892	
Exports.				
French Chalk and Steatite Preparations.				
New Zealand	2	31	3	52
Papua	1	26	1	26
Total	3	57	4	78

Imports.

French Chalk and Steatite Preparations.				
United Kingdom	67	1,250	127	2,343
India	1	304	5	471
Italy	5	149	26	898
Others	2	58	6	136
Total	75	1,761	164	3,848

Producers.

A. Bean, Mt. Monger, W.A.
Universal Milling Co. Ltd., Three Springs, W.A.
Mabey & Pearce, Bridgetown, W.A. (Soapstone).
John Dunstan & Son (W.A.) Ltd., Box J.685, G.P.O., Perth, W.A. (leases at Mt. Fitton and Gumeracha, S.A.).
Other producing centres are at Tumby Bay and Lobethal, S.A., and Wallendbeen, South Gundagai, Mudgee, Cobargo, N.S.W.

TANTALUM AND COLUMBIUM.

Increased supplies of columbium-tantalum ores and decreases in defence orders have lead to a relaxation of U.S. Government controls on the use of these metals. The U.S. is the chief consumer of tantalum and columbium and any changes in demand could have world-wide influences. The U.S. is still purchasing tantalum and columbium ores under a Government-backed buying scheme which will continue until 1956, or until 7,500 short tons of concentrates have been purchased. It is considered in many quarters that the prices being offered under this scheme are unduly high and are not a true indication of the state of the tantalum-columbium market.

Prices. U.K.: Tantalite ore, 60% Ta_2O_5, £stg.62 per unit of contained Ta_2O_5, c.i.f.

Columbite ore, 65% combined pentoxides, £stg.32 per unit of contained combined pentoxides, c.i.f.

U.S.: Tantalite ore, base price $3 per pound of contained Ta_2O_5 in a 30% Ta_2O_5 ore, plus a bonus of 100% of this base price.

Columbite ore, base price, $1.40 per pound of contained pentoxide in a 35% combined pentoxide ore, plus a bonus of 100% of this base price.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	lb.	$Ta_2O_5+Nb_2O_5$ content. lb.	lb.	$Ta_2O_5+Nb_2O_5$ content. lb.
Production.				
W.A. (a)	—	—	6,917	4,843
(b)	1,150	879	11,207	8,461
Total	1,150	879	18,124	13,304

(a) Concentrates separated from tin-tantalite-columbite concentrates produced at Greenbushes.
(b) Tantalite-columbite concentrates.

Exports.	Tons	£.	Tons	£.
U.K.	36*	18,587	38*	25,472
U.S.A.	—	—	20	40,070
Total	36*	18,587	58*	65,542

* Includes 20 tons, value £812, containing 4.9% Ta_2O_5 and 2.8% Nb_2O_5.

TIN.

The prospects of a considerable increase in the domestic output of tin during 1954 are bright, with higher production by Aberfoyle Tin N.L. and resumed dredging by Tableland Tin N.L. The rate of output of the latter company is now of the order of 600 tons of tin in concentrate per year.

The recent increase in the price of tin on the London Metal Exchange will encourage the small medium-cost producer to maintain production. The Singapore price, on which the domestic buying price is based, has recently ranged from £stg.40-50 per ton lower than the L.M.E. daily quotation. From 1st December, 1953, to mid-February, 1954, the difference between these two daily quotations ranged from £stg.20 to £stg.40 per ton with an average of £stg.30 per ton over the period.

The United States has announced that she will not take part in the proposed International Tin Agreement but will adopt an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards it. By the beginning of April, countries accounting for 42% of the world's consumption, excluding U.S.A., and 70% of the production had signed the Agreement.

The Australian producer should receive about 170/- per unit for tin in concentrates on present smelting tariffs if the L.M.E. price can be held about the centre of the range £stg.720-800 per ton of tin, under the Agreement.

The Tariff Board Enquiry on Tin was held during March, 1954, in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Evidence was given by the Department of National Development, The Australian Tin Producers, the smelting companies and others. The Producers' Association asked the Board for a duty on a sliding scale that would allow £1000 per ton of tin in concentrates to the producer, £115 per ton of tin metal to the smelter, a total of £1115 to the consumer. Alternatively, they suggested a duty on a sliding scale that would make the price of tin £1015 to the consumer, allowing £115 to the smelter and £900 per ton of tin in concentrates to the producer. In the alternative proposal, the Association asked that an amount equal to the duty collected be paid into a pool which would be distributed to producers in proportion to their output. The report of the Tariff Board is awaited.

Agreement has not yet been reached on the distribution of the money remaining in the pool when the price of tin was decontrolled in April, 1953.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Mine Production.				
Tin in cons.	421		1,494	
Smelter Production	380		1,443	
Exports.				
Tin, ores and cons.				
Malaya	—	—	18	13,216
Others	†	203	2	1,113
Total	†	203	20	14,229
Tin metal.				
U.K.	—	—	56	64,228
Others	15	12,644	25	20,720
Total	15	12,644	81	84,948
Imports.				
Tin ingots.				
Malaya	235	177,850	616	549,691
U.K.	7	5,849	7	5,849
Total	242	183,699	623	555,540

Principal Producers.

Mine.
Aberfoyle Tin N.L., Rossarden, Tasmania.

Smelters.
Sydney Smelting Co., Sydney, N.S.W.
O. T. Lempriere & Co. Ltd., Sydney, N.S.W.

TITANIUM.

The world rutile industry showed signs of a recovery from the depressed condition it had reached early in 1953. Prices of rutile concentrates rose in all countries, although there has been no great increase in demand. It is probable that surplus stocks have now been worked off and consumers are buying again.

The Australian output of rutile concentrates in 1953 was estimated to be 39,000 tons. The Queensland output rose to 16,640 tons, an increase of over 20 per cent.; the New South Wales production was about 2 per cent. lower. Severe storms caused widespread damage along the Queensland and New South Wales coast in February, 1954, and will result in a reduced output in the first quarter of 1954.

The world commercial output of titanium metal in 1953 was 2,070 tons of which the U.S. produced 2,001 tons and Japan about 70 tons. Research on the production of titanium metal from ilmenite and Sorel slag continued during the year; the development of such a process would mean the loss of an expanding market for Australian rutile for this purpose.

Prices. Australia: Rutile £35-40 per ton, f.o.b. Brisbane.

U.K.: Rutile £stg.38-39 per ton, c.i.f.; Ilmenite (Malayan) £stg.8-9 per ton, c.i.f.

U.S.: Rutile $120 per short ton, f.o.b. Florida; Ilmenite, $18-20 per long ton, f.o.b. Atlantic ports.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Rutile Cons.	(e)7,600		(e)39,000	
Exports.				
Rutile Cons.	8,411	392,527	36,076	1,818,088

Principal Producers.
Zircon Rutile Ltd., Byron Bay, New South Wales.
N.S.W. Rutile Mining Co., Tweed Heads, New South Wales.
Mineral Deposits Syndicate, Southport, Queensland.
Titanium and Zirconium Industries, Stradbroke Island, Queensland.
National Minerals, Wickham, New South Wales.

TUNGSTEN.

The world tungsten supply position improved considerably over the last two months. The ore price, after reaching as low as stg.100/- per unit rose rapidly in late March and mid-April to stg.185/- per unit. By May it had fallen back to stg.170/- per unit, after touching stg.245/-.

The Australian domestic production of tungsten concentrates was 2,101 tons, well above the output of 1,972 tons in 1952. The output was affected by a strike lasting three months at the King Island Scheelite mine. Lower outputs due solely to the fall in prices, were recorded from Queensland and New South Wales.

The U.K. Ministry of Materials restored private trading in tungsten ores and concentrates on 1st April, 1954. Private imports of ore from all sources except dollar areas are now permitted, but arrangements have been made that consumers will continue to meet a substantial part of their requirements by purchases from Ministry stock. The Ministry of Materials ceased buying tungsten ores in February, 1953.

Prices. Australia 180/- per unit; U.K. stg.170/- per unit; U S., $26-27 per s. ton unit.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Scheelite Cons. (65%)	263		1,121	
Wolfram Cons. (65%)	210		980	
Total	473		2,101	
Units WO_3	30,700		136,600	
Metal Content, tons	243		1,083	
Exports.				
Scheelite Cons.				
U.K.	50	87,925	262	444,054
U.S.A.	190	284,919	717	1,027,332
Other Countries	÷	431	8	10,300
Total	240	373,275	987	1,481,686
Wolfram Cons.				
U.K.	100	130,500	411	558,360
U.S.A.	180	185,342	641	873,390
Other Countries	87	85,514	198	209,107
Total	367	401,356	1,250	1,640,857
Undesignated.				
U.K.	(a)		27	32,474
Other Countries			107	162,546
Total			134	195,020

(a) Not a separate item as from 1/7/1953.

Principal Producers.

King Island Scheelite (1947) Ltd., King Island, Tasmania.
Aberfoyle Tin N.L., Rossarden, Tasmania.

Principal Buyers.

Derby & Co., Adelaide.
O. T. Lempriere & Co., Sydney.
British Metal Corporation, Sydney.
Jack Hilton (Metals) Pty. Ltd., Sydney.
Dickson Primer and Metal Traders London (Pty.) Ltd., Sydney.

ZINC.

Production of zinc in zinc concentrates in 1953 was 239,069 tons, an increase of 42,700 tons compared with 1952. Improved availability of power at Risdon, Tasmania, permitted increased production of refined zinc. Provided this plant is not subject to power cuts in 1954 production should show a further increase.

Price. Domestic consumers are supplied with zinc at the f.o.b. equivalent of the L.M.E. quotation. The L.M.E. quotation is for g.o.b. grade foreign zinc; the electrolytic grade produced by the Electrolytic Zinc Co. of Australasia Ltd. carries a premium of £stg.9 a ton, and there is an additional £stg.1½ per ton payable on all metal produced within the British Commonwealth. The average price in March was £94/2/6 — by mid-April this had advanced to £104/7/6.

L.M.E. zinc quotations have shown a decided firmer tendency in the first quarter of 1954 and in April, at £81/2/6 stg. per ton, reached the highest point for over twelve months. In the U.S. the price has moved up to 10.25 cents per lb.

The improvement in the overseas market has been due to a keener consumer demand coupled with announcement of 26th March of increased stockpiling activity in the U.S. Although no details of this latter programme have been announced it has been assumed that zinc will be one commodity involved. Until the basis on which the U.S. Government will buy zinc is revealed it is uncertain whether the recent gains in price will be maintained should consumption be curtailed.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Mine production.				
Zinc in cons.	60,167		239,069	
Smelter production.				
Slab zinc	25,604		90,178	
Exports.				
Zinc ores and cons.				
U.K.	32,781	334,716	141,530	3,266,029
Belgium	41,562	500,649	77,440	1,885,440
Other Countries	4,750	52,735	14,339	160,414
Total	79,093	888,100	233,309	5,311,983
Slab zinc, etc.				
U.K.	1,250	115,021	15,321	1,674,305
India	4,456	415,330	15,080	1,426,631
Other Countries	1,296	135,870	6,537	615,032
Total	7,002	666,221	36,938	3,715,968

Principal Producers.

See "Lead."

Smelters and Refiner.

Electrolytic Zinc Co. of Australasia Ltd., Risdon, Tasmania.

ZIRCONIUM.

Signs of some increased activity in the zircon industry became evident in early 1954. The U.K. price rose from £stg.12-13 per ton, c.i.f. to £stg.13-15, while the U.S. price increased from $42-43 per long ton, c.i.f. to $45-46 per long ton. The Australian price is now about £10 per ton, f.o.b. Brisbane.

The future of the Australian zircon industry is closely tied to that of rutile; any recession in the world demand for rutile would affect the Australian zircon industry.

	Quarter ended 31/12/1953.		Year ended 31/12/1953.	
	Tons.	£.	Tons.	£.
Production.				
Zircon cons.	(e)6,660		(e)29,800	
Export.				
Zircon cons.	10,478	91,967	31,173	298,132

(a) Includes 4,406 tons despatched from N.S.W. Production figures from that State being unavailable.

Principal Producers.

Zircon Rutile Ltd., Byron Bay, New South Wales.
N.S.W. Rutile Mining Co., Tweed Heads, New South Wales.
Mineral Deposits Syndicate, Southport, Queensland.
Titanium and Zirconium Industries, Stradbroke Island, Queensland.
National Minerals, Wickham, New South Wales.