



Release of the 2005 edition of ICSG Directory of Copper and Copper Alloy Fabricators

The International Copper Study Group released its second edition of the "Directory of Copper and Copper Alloy Fabricators – First Use". This directory provides a systematic global overview of companies and plants involved in the "first use" of copper - the use of unwrought copper materials (refined copper, alloy ingots, direct melt scrap, etc.) as feed to the production of semi-fabricated products (copper wire rod; copper and copper alloy, sheet, strip, bar, rod, tube, etc.). The Directory covers wire-rod plants, brass mills, and electrodeposited copper foil mills. It also covers ingot makers and master alloy plants as suppliers to foundries and brass mills. Excluded from the directory are powder and chemical plants; foundries; "second users" that exclusively redraw or reroll the semifabricates; and wire manufacturing plants and other direct consumers of the first use semifabricates.

The 2005 Edition of the ICSG Directory includes data through the end of 2004, with anticipated changes to July 2005, for more than 1200 existing, developing and planned first use plants located in more than 75 countries. Plant-by-plant data include: location, ownership, plant type, operating status, start-up date, major product types, and a specified size range based on estimated output capacity. Capacity reflects a plant's annual production capability of copper and copper alloy products. First-use capacities are also aggregated on a country/regional basis. For brass and alloy wire mills, capacity reflects the overall metal content of copper-base materials (copper, brass, bronze and other copper alloys) produced. It should be noted that in addition to engineering parameters, capacity may be influenced by various factors, including economic and regulatory conditions and changes in feed material. Actual production levels can vary substantively - at, below, and for short periods, above the sustained capacity level.

THE YEAR 2004 IN REVIEW

Over the course of the last year, a notable shake-up of company/plant ownership occurred in Western Europe. While aiming at maintaining or improving their competitive positions, companies pursued a broad range of strategies that included: withdrawal from first use production; downstream integration; and capacity consolidation. Stagnation to modest recovery occurred in North America. In Japan, the trend towards cooperation of fabricators to reduce capacity in over-supplied market segments continued, a trend that mainly focused on brass rod, copper tube and wire and cable products. Significant capacity increases are mainly attributable to many brownfield expansions and greenfield projects in China, and to a lesser extent, in Italy, Vietnam, and the Middle East. The identified global operational capacity amounts to around 32.8 Million tonnes of first use shapes, an increase of 3% from that reported in the 2004 directory.

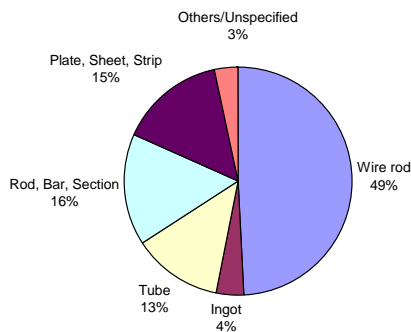


Figure 1: Breakdown of identified worldwide first use capacities by shape in 2004

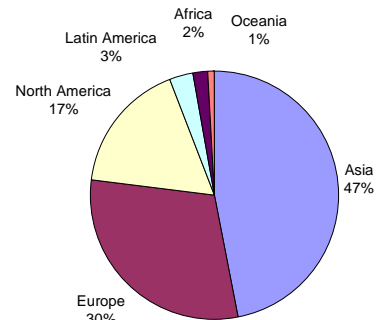


Figure 2: Breakdown of identified worldwide first use capacities by continental regions in 2004

Approximately one half of the identified first use capacity is associated with plants producing copper wire rod for wire and cable production. Brass mill product capacity is almost equally distributed among flat-rolled products (plate, sheet, strip), extruded products (rod, bar, section) and other extruded and drawn products (tubes, pipes, mechanical/brass wire) with each brass mill group accounting for roughly 15% of the total first use capacity in 2004. The remaining capacity would be attributable to the production of alloy ingots for castings, master alloys and electrodeposited copper foil.

Regarding the geographic distribution of the identified first use capacity, Asia is by far the region with the largest first use capacity accounting for almost half of world-wide capacity (See Figure 2). Europe (including among others the EU 25 countries, the Balkan countries, and the former European CIS countries) accounts for around 30% of global first use capacity.

The Directory is updated to reflect recent announcements and operational changes. The updated issues are published on an annual basis and available for sale. To illustrate scope and content of the Directory, a free sample sheet for South Korea is available on request. Contact the ICSG Secretariat for further information and/or purchasing details (mail@icsg.org).