

Aluminium P1020A CIF Quarterly MJP – Main Japanese Ports



Methodology and price
specifications – September 2021

Mission statement

Fastmarkets Metals and Mining is the leading global provider of pricing intelligence for the non-ferrous metal, steel, steelmaking raw materials, industrial minerals, ferrous and non-ferrous scrap markets, producing price assessments with Fastmarkets MB and Fastmarkets AMM since 1913 and 1882 respectively. Fastmarkets Forest Products meanwhile is the leading global provider of pricing intelligence for the global forest products industry, incorporating Fastmarkets RISI, Fastmarkets FOEX and Random Lengths.

Our mission is to meet the market's data requirements honestly and independently, acting with integrity and care to ensure that the trust and confidence placed in the reliability of our pricing methodologies is maintained. We do not have a vested interest in the markets on which we report.

Introduction

Fastmarkets' reporters are required to abide by a **code of conduct** and clear pricing procedures during their market reporting and pricing activities. Fastmarkets is completely independent and has no vested commercial interest in any of the markets it prices.

We are the world's largest dedicated price reporting teams for both metals and forest products. We have offices in London, New York, Boston, San Francisco, Eugene, Charlottesville, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Melbourne, Sao Paolo, Mumbai, Brussels, Helsinki, Dnipro and Istanbul. The aim of this document is to provide a clear overview of Fastmarkets' methodology and specifications for the prices it assesses. If you have any questions, please contact Fastmarkets Editorial Director Alex Harrison at aharrison@fastmarkets.com for metals, or Fastmarkets Forest Products' Senior VP of Indices, Matt Graves, at mgraves@fastmarkets.com for forest products.

Price discovery and methodology

Methodology rationale

Fastmarkets produces independent, fair and representative price assessments and indices of metals and forest products prices on a daily, bi-weekly, weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. Fastmarkets' rationale for adopting the price-discovery process described in this methodology document is to produce consistent and representative indicators of value for the Aluminium P1020A cif quarterly MJP (main Japanese ports) quarterly premium benchmark.

The quarterly Main Japanese Port (MJP) aluminium premium benchmark is negotiated each quarter between Japanese buyers (consumers and traders) and major overseas producers. Negotiations for a said quarter typically start at the end of the second month of the prior quarter, and typically conclude by the end of the prior quarter.

The quarterly benchmark can be a single figure or a range, and serves as reference for supply contracts across Asia for both primary aluminium ingots and products.

The main overseas producers involved in the quarterly negotiations are Rio Tinto, Alcoa, South32 and Rusal, while other suppliers typically follow the benchmark once agreed. The main Japanese consumers include UACJ, Lixil, Nippon Light Metal, Showa Denko, Kobelco and Sumitomo Chemicals. Major Sogo Shosha (trading houses) are also heavily involved in the quarterly negotiations.

Data contribution

Fastmarkets reporters aim to collect data from a broad sample of market participants specifically involved in the physical Aluminium P1020A cif quarterly MJP (main Japanese ports) market.

Data is collected from industry participants directly involved in the market primarily by telephone but also by email, digital messaging, face-to-face interaction or by direct submission. All data supplied to Fastmarkets is kept confidential and stored in our secure online pricing database system MInD (Market Information Database). Fastmarkets may sign a Data Submitter Agreement (DSA) with any data provider, if requested to do so, to maximize the number of data points collected for inclusion in the assessment process. Any data received subject to a DSA will be used in the pricing assessment but will not be commented on.

Market participants may contribute data following a review by Fastmarkets of their activities. The aim is to ensure that submitters have sufficient visibility and understanding of the market in question to be able to provide reliable price data. We expect that data submitters taking part in the pricing process are authorized to report market data on behalf of their organizations. Fastmarkets encourages organizations to submit all their pricing data, especially all the concluded transactions. Price reporters generally speak to, and collect data from, front office staff directly involved in the commercial activity of buying and selling of aluminium. Fastmarkets also welcomes organizations to submit transaction data from authorized back-office functions. Fastmarkets' Data Submitter Policy provides guidelines to ensure the high level of data quality and integrity we expect from contributing organizations providing pricing data. The policy can be found on Fastmarkets' website, or is available on request.

Notes on acceptable data

For this price, Fastmarkets will only accept transactions for the P1020A aluminium market and will exclude any data received for value-added products such as billet or foundry. Fastmarkets will only accept main Japanese port transactions and exclude any deals based on minor Japanese ports.

Price specifications and reference units

Fastmarkets has clear specifications for all the price points that it covers. All the reference units, such as currency and volume, are in line with the trading conventions used in the recognized metals and forest products markets.

Fastmarkets has defined clear specifications for its Aluminium P1020A cif quarterly MJP (main Japanese ports) benchmark, as outlined below, to match the industry standard. These specifications have been determined in consultation with market participants and are regularly reviewed. All the reference units, such as currencies and volumes used in the assessments, are in line with recognized aluminium market conventions and trading practices.

Data analysis and producing the price

Fastmarkets' MJP quarterly premium is a deal-based reported price benchmark. It is not an assessed price and it follows a slightly different methodology to the bulk of Fastmarkets' prices and indices.

Each quarter, during the price discovery process, the reporter's goal is to discover at what level and volume quarterly transactions have been concluded in bilateral negotiations between overseas producers and Japanese buyers.

To publish the quarterly MJP benchmark, Fastmarkets requires the following conditions to be met:

- A minimum total quarterly transaction volume of 30,000 tonnes reported to Fastmarkets*
- Confirmed deals from multiple market participants which include at least one producer, one consumer and one trader.

* Fastmarkets tries to ensure both the buy and sell side of deals are reported to us and matched. However, the minimum threshold of 30,000 tonnes of transactions represents the total tonnage of deals reported to us and may include some duplicated business.

Exceptions

Should the MJP benchmark fail to be concluded by the 15th of the first month of the said quarter, Fastmarkets will publish an assessed benchmark on that day based on the following principle:

- If less than 30,000 tonnes of transacted volumes have been reported, Fastmarkets will publish an assessed benchmark based on deals reported as well as bids and offers, giving a weighted preference to reported transactions.

On occasions where the 15th of the first month of the quarter falls on a weekend or England and Wales public holiday, Fastmarkets will publish the assessed benchmark on the next working day.

Force Majeure

In case of a *force majeure* declaration by one or more of the producers that results in that/those producer(s) not taking part in the quarterly MJP negotiations, Fastmarkets reserves the right to lower the minimum requirement of confirmed deals with three producers to a minimum of two producers. If a major consumer

declares *force majeure* and sits out of the negotiations, Fastmarkets may use confirmed deals reported by traders instead.

Criteria for discarding pricing data and the removal of outliers

Fastmarkets price assessments are intended to reflect the 'open and competitive' market level. Reporters therefore may apply expert judgment to exclude data deemed unrepresentative, questionable or unreliable prior to consideration in the final assessment. Data that falls outside of the respective assessment specifications, or which cannot be normalized to a base specification with sufficient confidence, is also discarded. Decisions to discard data points are recorded in the form of a written rationale in our internal pricing database, where they are reviewed and approved under the two-tier peer review process.

Data may be discarded as outliers based on the identification of external factors that may be distorting the price. Price-affecting side terms, inconsistencies in information reported, or suspected motivation to unfairly influence the price discovery process would typically be grounds for removal of data, as would activity not considered to have taken place at 'arm's length'. Outliers will be investigated; more detail, such as contracts and paperwork, may be requested to determine possible reasons behind an anomalous price, and efforts will be made to identify the counterparty to cross-verify information. Suspected attempts to influence the assessment unfairly may result in the data provider being warned or excluded. Fastmarkets reserves the right to see contracts and signed paperwork before inclusion of the data in the assessment. If this is refused, the data supplied may be excluded from the assessment process.

Data publication

Peer review process

All Fastmarkets' price assessments are set by a first reporter who covers that specific market, peer reviewed by a second reporter, and always signed-off by a senior reporter or editor prior to publication. This peer review process, which takes place in Fastmarkets' MInD system and is fully auditable, is in place to make sure that pricing procedures and methodologies are correctly and consistently applied and to ensure integrity and quality of the published prices. Relevant information, including all price inputs and editorial judgements, are securely retained in MInD for at least five years to maintain a full audit trail. Price reporters are formally trained in the price discovery process and must abide by a written Code of Conduct and Pricing Procedures.

For certain prices Fastmarkets also publishes pricing rationales to explain the assessment, describing why a particular price or range was determined based on the market information collected. These notes explain for instance whether any data has been excluded and why, information on the data collected and whether fallback procedures have been applied.

Publication

At the end of the peer review process, Fastmarkets MB and AMM publish their price assessments via MInD and on the Fastmarkets Dashboard and on product-specific websites and in the Price Book. Fastmarkets RISI, FOEX and Random Lengths publish their price assessments on the Intelligence Center, mobile app and in dedicated newsletters.

The quarterly Main Japanese Port (MJP) aluminium premium benchmark is reported as a range or single figure by the 15th of the first month of each quarter (see exceptions earlier in document).

Please refer to the pricing holiday schedule for this year's public holidays.

Corrections and delays

If an assessment is published incorrectly, it will be rectified and republished as soon as possible. A pricing notice explaining the reasons for the correction will also be published promptly.

Fastmarkets uses several procedures and measures to avoid delays in the publication of its assessments. In the event of a delay, however, Fastmarkets will inform subscribers as soon as possible.

In the event of late publication, only data that has been received within the correct standard timeframe will be included in the assessment. No assessment will be amended due to the emergence of new data or market activity after the initial publication. Retrospective changes to the published values will only be made in cases of technical, administrative or interpretation error in line with Fastmarkets' Correction Policy.

Methodology and price specification review process

Methodology review and pricing notices

Fastmarkets aims to continually develop and periodically review its methodologies in consultation with industry participants, with the objective to adopt product specifications, trading terms and conditions that reflect and are representative of typical working practices in the industries it serves.

Fastmarkets carries out a formal review and approval of its methodology and price specifications on an annual basis. The process is initiated by Fastmarkets publishing on its website an open consultation at least one month (or around 20 working days) before the annual methodology review is due, inviting market feedback over the duration of that period. The timeframe for the consultation and method of submission are both clearly stated.

Following a review of market participants' feedback, comments and suggestions, Fastmarkets concludes the consultation by publishing a notice stating whether or not any methodology changes are proposed. If suggested, changes are classified either as 'material' or 'immaterial'. Material changes are those that, once implemented, may result in fundamental changes to the published price. These include specification changes or structural changes to assessments. Immaterial changes are those that will not result in a different price level once they are implemented.

If a material change to the methodology is required, Fastmarkets includes in its pricing notice: the outline of the proposed change; the rationale or motivation for proposing such a change; and a proposed timetable for the date on which, if the change goes ahead, it would be implemented. If received feedback is considered insufficient to support a material change, Fastmarkets publishes a new notice extending the consultation and inviting comments on the new proposal.

A record of the methodology review is sent to the Risk & Compliance team. All comments received from the market are assumed to be confidential and are treated as such unless stated otherwise.

When Fastmarkets proposes a change to the methodology, it should be understood that no decision has yet been made and that the proposal to make a change should not automatically be understood as confirmation that the change will happen.

For prices subject to EU Benchmark Regulation (BMR), any change to the methodology requires approval from the Managing Director of our benchmark administrator, Fastmarkets Benchmark Administration Oy.

Outside of the formal methodology review process, editors may from time to time suggest changes or additions to reflect market developments. As with the formal review, changes to the existing methodology will either be classed as 'material' or 'immaterial'. The process for implementing the change will be the same as outlined above for formal reviews. The minimum duration of one month (or around 20 working days) for the consultation process normally provides market participants sufficient opportunity to analyze and comment on the impact of the proposed change.

For more details on the formal review of the methodology and the consultation process to propose changes to the methodology, refer to Fastmarkets' [Methodology Review and Change Consultation Process](#) available on the Fastmarkets website.

The evolution of pricing

Fastmarkets develops and adjusts its pricing mechanisms in response to changing market conditions. The evolution of long-term contracts to index-linked pricing often occurs as industry players seek to link their pricing to market fundamentals and spot market activity. This trend has been seen clearly in the aluminium market. While Fastmarkets does not seek to drive the direction of the markets it covers, it aims to identify opportunities where spot market activity can be captured, and greater transparency provided through new price assessments.

The development of a pricing mechanism is a process, and as liquidity increases, the sophistication of the pricing methodology can be increased.

Queries and complaints

Fastmarkets encourages engagement from the market on its pricing principles and methodology. The company promotes understanding of its pricing procedures and is committed to responding to requests for further information and clarification on a timely basis.

There are multiple channels for interaction with the pricing team including email, telephone and instant messenger services.

If a subscriber has an issue with the published prices, then they may contact the pricing team. In the event that the response is not satisfactory the issue may be escalated to the internal compliance department. For more details refer to Fastmarkets' [Complaint Handling Policy](#) available on Fastmarkets' website.

Fastmarkets takes all queries and complaints seriously and will seek to provide an explanation of the prices wherever possible. It is important to note, however, that input data remain confidential and cannot be provided to third parties.

Become a contributor to the price discovery process

Fastmarkets continually seeks to increase the number of market sources willing to take part in the price discovery process. The main condition Fastmarkets requires from contributors is for them to be active participants in the relevant market being priced.

Fastmarkets' Data Submitter Policy provides guidelines defining the high level of data quality and integrity that Fastmarkets expects from contributing organizations providing pricing data. Market participants that wish to provide pricing data and be part of the price discovery process should first read the Data Submitter Policy available on the Fastmarkets website. The Policy is communicated to all data submitters at least on an annual basis.

All data sources are subject to review before their data submitted is fully taken into account in the pricing

process. Our Contributor Approval Policy (CAP) requires this review or probation period to last no more than three months. The aim is to make sure that submitters are trustworthy and have sufficient visibility and understanding of the market to be able to provide viable price data.

Specification

JAPAN

MB-AL-0001	Aluminium P1020A (MJP) quarterly premium, cif Japan, \$/tonne
Quality:	P1020A or 99.7 % Minimum Al purity (Si 0.10% max, Fe 0.20% max). Ingot, T-bar, sow
Quantity:	500 tonnes
Location:	cif main Japanese ports (Yokohama, Nagoya and Osaka), premium on top of LME cash prices
Timing:	Within the quarter
Unit:	USD/tonne
Payment terms:	Cash against documents (2 days after Bill of lading date)
Publication:	Quarterly

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Your investment actions should be solely based upon your own decisions and research and appropriate independent advice should be obtained from a suitably qualified independent adviser before any such decision is made.