



CRU Price Assessment Methodology

Nickel

Independent *expert* intelligence

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Price Methodology

Scope

This Methodology and Definitions Guide covers prices for physically traded Nickel in all geographical markets and should be read in conjunction with the CRU Group Compliance Framework and Methodology Guide (Group Compliance Framework). It details commodity-specific methodologies which have precedence, with all other aspects covered by the Group Compliance Framework.

Methodology

Rationale

This methodology was developed in consultation with the industry (including through our annual Underlying Market Conditions Review), allowing CRU to capture market liquidity and establish prices that are reliable and representative of the market. Specification definitions such as price assessment frequency, incoterms, currencies, size/volumes, units and others are aligned with the relevant market requirements and industry conventions.

The methodology blends strict adherence to methodological rules with limited but necessary application of expert judgement, detailed below, in order to produce a price that benefits from rigour, Price Assessor expertise and discretion.

Liquidity is enhanced by a normalisation process which allows for the submission of data which can be standardised to CRU's strict definition but is sourced from a wider array of data.

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Transaction data is prioritised as an input to these prices to help ensure they reflect the actual spot market. Inclusion of other price types detailed in the Group Compliance Framework is permissible where this does not compromise accuracy but enhances liquidity.

Final published prices are either a single point value or a range because according to the established industry requirement for the price or group of prices. Prices that are single point values tend to be monthly prices where a single point defines reference as a basis for negotiations and for use in long-term contracts. Prices that are a range tend to be more widely distributed, and a range is therefore better suited to reflect the spread of data. These prices are often displayed as a point monthly average for use in contracts.

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Transaction data is prioritised as an input to these prices to help ensure they reflect the actual spot market. Inclusion of other price types detailed in the Group Compliance Framework is permissible where this does not compromise accuracy but enhances liquidity.

Final published prices are a range as prices in these markets tend to be more widely distributed and a range better reflects the spread of data as a basis for negotiations or use in contracts.

Data Providers

CRU price assessments are based on regular contact with a wide network of market participants situated at critical nodes in the supply chain. This network is constantly reviewed to seek a balance of buyers and sellers that are representative of the market. Our network of market participants providing regular indications and data are defined as 'data providers'.

Data providers must have access to data relating to actual spot market transactions (a purchase or a sale), or if permitted by the methodology, bid/offer information or be able to provide a credible opinion on such prices in the absence of any other data over the relevant time period. They are therefore typically employed in sales or marketing functions on the sell side and purchasing functions on the buy side, or act in a trading function. Data Providers may also include individuals in finance functions if they can provide the same price information.

Each data provider is required to meet the criteria stipulated in Section 2.4 of the CRU Group Compliance Framework and Methodology Guide and must exist on a list of approved data providers before their data can be considered for admission into published prices.

Data Submitted and Submission Processes

Data providers can submit prices to CRU by telephone, email, private one-to-one instant messenger services, other private means of communication or where applicable, proprietary CRU system.

Admissible price data are concluded and reported transactions, confirmed bids and offers, indicative bids and offers and opinion. The type of price data submitted should be indicated to CRU. Transaction data is prioritised as an input and to that extent the hierarchy of acceptable price types follows that described in Section 3.1 of the CRU Group Compliance Framework and Methodology Guide. Where transaction data is submitted, CRU seeks to verify each deal with both parties but where this is not possible, a third or fourth party may be consulted.

For each product, Data Providers provide CRU with a single price figure or a range of prices relating to spot business, except where indicated in the price Definition (e.g. if a contract price).

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Data providers are to provide CRU with admissible price data relating to market activity within the following windows:

Bi-weekly Prices

- 16:00 Tuesday and 16:00 Thursday in the appropriate regional time zone.

Monthly Prices

- 16:00 one calendar month prior to publication and 11:00 on the day of publication in the appropriate regional time zone. However, data will usually be collected in a period nearer to the day of publication to ensure accuracy and timeliness of the final assessment.

Information must be submitted to CRU by window close times if it is to be eligible for admission to the subsequent price assessment.

Nickel (MHP)

Data providers are to provide CRU with admissible price data relating to market activity within the following windows:

- 14:00 China Standard Time on Friday of the week prior to publication and 14:00 China Standard Time on the first Thursday of the month of publication.

Information must be submitted to CRU by window close times if it is to be eligible for admission to the subsequent price assessment.

Data Submission Dependency and Minimum Threshold

CRU seeks to receive market information from a broad range of active data sources and seeks to increase the number of companies willing to submit market data. If a limited number of market participants are active in the market, and the market data received constitutes a significant proportion of the total data on which the assessment is based, CRU will use expert judgement on whether to exclude, include or defer the indication received until more information is received. This expert judgement would be based on observation of the previous price, short term historical price trends, other quantitative market data including prices in other related active markets, producer price change announcements, qualitative information such as that received from interactions with market participants or other CRU Price Assessors, and other sources of information relevant to the market.

CRU does not outline minimum data thresholds to determine price assessments covered in this methodology document to avoid establishing non-representative assessments that may be deemed unrepeatable. Periods of liquidity differ across markets and data thresholds could result in price assessments that do not accurately reflect the market. Price Assessors, instead, aim to source data from a wide range of industry participants to establish premium assessments, in line with the individual premium market data specifications, such as size, timing, loading locations, outlined in this methodology.

When no admissible data is received, Price Assessors follow the processes set out in the “Price determination in an illiquid market” section and expert judgement would be used to determine the final price value. Further details can be found under Section 2.1 of the CRU Group Compliance Framework and Methodology Guide.

Final Price Assessment

Expert Judgement

Expert judgement may apply to decisions on what type of price data is submitted; if the deal is executed at arms-length; if normalisation of price data submitted is required; the means of any normalisation, and the inclusion of a data point in the calculation of the final price (exclusion of outliers).

Expert judgement may also be used to determine the final price value in illiquid market conditions.

A Price Assessor will consult with one or more colleagues before any application of expert judgement if in any doubt, or where collective input would improve the quality of a judgement.

Consistency in the application of expert judgement is achieved through a combination of selection, formal and informal training and review, supervision and control processes as detailed in section 4.5 of the CRU Group Compliance Framework and Methodology Guide.

Normalisation

Data which meets the precise price specification is eligible for admission without any adjustments. Data which does not fit the specification may still be eligible as an input to the price, but would be subject to a normalisation process.

Normalisation is an essential price adjustment process used to align reported market information with a pricing methodology. Decisions to normalise a price and/or choice of values used in the normalisation process are forms of expert judgement.

Exclusion of Outliers

A Price Assessor may use expert judgement in the exclusion of a data point as an input to the calculation of the final price. In doing so they would consider the range and distribution of data collected in the same timeframe from other data providers; previous data received from the same data provider; non-price information received from the data provider; market state and direction information from any other source. Inclusion or exclusion of input data in the final price is explicit and recorded.

Price Determination in an Illiquid Market

In the cases of zero submissions or where all submissions were deemed inadmissible, expert judgement would be used to determine the final price value. This choice would be based on: observation of the previous week's prices; short term historical price trends; other quantitative market data including prices in other related active markets, producer price change announcements; qualitative information such as that received from interactions with market participants or other CRU Price Assessors, and; other sources of information relevant to the spot market.

The Price Assessor will use their judgement to evaluate the volume, quality and coherence of any such market information they may possess. If one or more of these factors in combination does not provide a sufficiently clear indication of the direction and extent of market movement to allow the Price Assessor to confidently change the price from the previous value, the prior value would be rolled over to form the current period value.

Price Verification

Information from data providers and the final price assessments are captured and established in the CRU Prices System (CPS), or for SMU prices the SMU survey and SMU's pricing workbooks. The final prices are approved by another Price Assessor or the editor.

Deactivated Prices

A price assessment will remain active as long as there are sufficient buyers, sellers and/or traders for the Price Assessor to make an accurate assessment. If the quotation suffers from limited transparency or if business dynamics change, it may be deactivated following market consultation. Its history will still be available, but no further information will be collected for that assessment from the time it is deactivated.

Final Benchmark Publication

Prices are published in the CRU service/s below via CRU Online; DataLab (CRU's data delivery platform), data feeds including APIs and in some cases may be distributed via channel partners. Price publication dates may be varied around public holidays, in which case customers will be notified in advance.

Prices published in: Nickel Service

Bi-weekly (twice-weekly) prices are first published on CRU Online at 22:00 UK Tuesday and Thursday. Monthly prices are first published on CRU Online at 14:05 UK on the first Thursday of each month.

Price Detail

Nickel

China

Nickel, Briquette, Spot premium China, CIF USD/t

Price Series Name	Nickel, Briquette, Spot premium; China, CIF
Currency	USD
Weight Units	t
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	CIF
Quality	Briquette, 99.8% min Ni
Terms	2t to 10t (small lots and partial truckloads). Cash against document, Letter of credit, telegraphic transfer, and other terms normalized.
Duties & Tariffs	Duty free
Delivery	Within 8 weeks
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: China
Assessment Notes	Monthly assessment. Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Nickel, Cathode, Full-plate, Spot premium China, CIF USD/t

Price Series Name	Nickel, Cathode, Full-plate, Spot premium; China, CIF
Currency	USD
Weight Units	t
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	CIF
Quality	Full plate, 99.8% min Ni
Terms	2t to 10t (small lots and partial truckloads). Cash against document, Letter of credit, telegraphic transfer, and other terms normalized
Duties & Tariffs	VAT Included
Delivery	Within 6 weeks
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: China
Assessment Notes	Monthly assessment. Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Nickel, Mixed Hydroxide Precipitate (30-40% Ni, 1-6% Co), Spot premium China, CIF /%

LME Ni

Price Series Name	Nickel, Mixed Hydroxide Precipitate (30-40% Ni, 1-6% Co), Spot premium; China, CIF
Currency	% LME Ni
Weight Units	Truckloads
Attributes	CIF
Quality	30-40% Ni, 1-6% Co
Terms	Min. lot size 100t Ni metal. Bank acceptance (other payment normalized)
Duties & Tariffs	VAT included, any other duties excluded
Delivery	No more than 4 weeks forward
Counterparties	Loading location: Producer plant. Main Consumer Markets: China.
Assessment Notes	Monthly assessment. Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Rotterdam

Nickel, Briquette, Spot premium Netherlands, Rotterdam, EXW USD/t

Price Series Name	Nickel, Briquette, Spot premium; Netherlands, Rotterdam, EXW
Currency	USD

Weight Units	t
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	EXW
Quality	99.8% min Ni
Terms	2t to 10t (small lots and partial truckloads). Cash/Net 30 days
Duties & Tariffs	Duty paid
Delivery	No more than 8 weeks forward
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: Europe terminals/locations. Loading location: Major Europe ports/warehouse.
Assessment Notes	Twice weekly assessment. Every Tuesday and Thursday; Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Nickel, Cathode, Cut, Spot premium Netherlands, Rotterdam, EXW USD/t

Price Series Name	Nickel, Cathode, Cut, Spot premium; Netherlands, Rotterdam, EXW
Currency	USD
Weight Units	t
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	EXW
Quality	4x4 cut cathode, 99.8% min Ni
Terms	2t to 10t (small lots and partial truckloads). Cash/Net 30 days
Duties & Tariffs	Duty paid
Delivery	No more than 8 weeks forward
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: Europe terminals/locations. Loading location: Major Europe ports/warehouse.
Assessment Notes	Monthly assessment. Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Nickel, Cathode, Full-plate, Spot premium Netherlands, Rotterdam, EXW USD/t

Price Series Name	Nickel, Cathode, Full-plate, Spot premium; Netherlands, Rotterdam, EXW
Currency	USD
Weight Units	t
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	EXW
Quality	99.8% min Ni
Terms	2t to 10t (small lots and partial truckloads). Cash/Net 30 days
Duties & Tariffs	Duty paid
Delivery	No more than 8 weeks forward
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: Europe terminals/locations. Loading location: Major Europe ports/warehouse.
Assessment Notes	Monthly assessment. Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

USA

Nickel, Briquette, Spot premium USA, DDP USDc/lb

Price Series Name	Nickel, Briquette, Spot premium; USA, DDP
Currency	USDc
Weight Units	lb
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	DDP
Quality	99.8% min Ni
Terms	10t to 20t partial and full truckloads. Cash/Net 30 days
Duties & Tariffs	Duty paid
Delivery	No more than 8 weeks forward
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: US terminals/locations. Loading location: Major US ports/warehouse.
Assessment Notes	Twice weekly assessment. Every Tuesday and Thursday; Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Nickel, Cathode, Cut, Spot premium USA, DDP USDc/lb

Price Series Name	Nickel, Cathode, Cut, Spot premium; USA, DDP
Currency	USDC
Weight Units	lb
Attributes	Truckloads
Price Basis	DDP
Quality	4x4 cut cathode, 99.8% min Ni
Terms	10t to 20t partial and full truckloads. Cash/Net 30 days
Duties & Tariffs	Duty paid
Delivery	No more than 8 weeks forward
Counterparties	Main Consumer Markets: US terminals/locations. Loading location: Major US ports/warehouse.
Assessment Notes	Monthly assessment. Business reported by sellers to buyers – no inter-trade activity

Glossary of Terms

INCO TERM RULES FOR ANY MODE OR MODES OF TRANSPORT:

EXW – Ex-Works FCA – Free Carrier
CPT – Carriage Paid To
CIP – Carriage and Insurance Paid To
DAT – Delivered at Terminal
DAP – Delivered at Place
DDP – Delivered Duty Paid

INCO TERM RULES FOR SEA AND INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT:

FAS – Free Alongside Ship
FOB – Free On Board
CFR – Cost and Freight
CIF – Cost Insurance and Freight

COUNTRY ABBREVIATIONS USED:

We use ISO 3166 alpha-2 standard country codes



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