Paraguay's January Flat Steel Imports Plunge 40%

Paraguay imported 6,084 mt of its three dominant flat-rolled steel products in January, down 40.6% from the 10,254 mt imported in the same month of 2015, data from the country's central bank showed.

The three products most demanded were hot-rolled coil, cold-rolled coil and plate, the same as in January 2015.

Imports of HRC were the most prevalent in the country in January, totaling 3,049 mt worth $1.3 million FOB ($433/mt), 20.8% lower than the 3,850 mt worth $2.5 million FOB ($655/mt) imported in the same period in 2015. Argentina was the main supplier, accounting for 2,550 mt.

Month on month, HRC imports dropped 52.3% from 6,397 mt ($2.7 million FOB, or $432/mt) in December.

Imports of CRC in Paraguay dropped

50.1% year on year to 1,907 mt ($970,891 FOB, or $508/mt), of which 1,402 mt were supplied by Argentina. In January 2015, the imported CRC volume totaled 3,824 mt ($2.5 million FOB, or $667/mt).

Compared with December, CRC imports plunged 40% from 3,183 mt ($1.6 million FOB, or $502/mt).

Purchases of plate reached 1,128 mt ($580,335 FOB, or $514/mt) in January, 56.3% less than the 2,580 mt ($1.6 million FOB, or $632/mt) imported in January 2015. Brazil sold 600 mt of the total, followed by Argentina with 491 mt.

Month on month, plate imports decreased 32.3% from 1,666 mt ($791.978 FOB, or $474/mt).

Zincalume imports in January showed the highest decline, with 509 mt ($329.900 FOB, or $646/mt), compared with 2,145 mt in the year-ago month ($1.8 million FOB, or $881/mt), a 76.3% difference. South Korea exported 412 mt of this total.

Compared with December, zincalume imports represented a 90.8% decrease from 5,555 mt ($3.69 million FOB, or $664/mt).

Regarding long products, Paraguay imported 2,063 mt of rebar ($1.4 million FOB, or $608/mt) in January, down 13.1% from 2,375 mt ($1.7 million FOB, or $717/mt) in January 2015. Brazil remained the main supplier, accounting for 1,197 mt.

Month on month, rebar imports decreased 56% from 4,697 mt ($3.1 million FOB, or $664/mt).

Tata Steel India to Restructure & Reduce Costs

Imported steel from China and poor demand are the chief reasons behind Tata's decision to restructure the business and it will take place across all sectors and business functions including human resources, production, transportation and marketing.

Companies such as EY, KPMG, PwC and Deloitte are likely to be involved in Tata's restructuring, it is claimed. In India Tata Steel has the capacity to produce 10Mt of steel annually. It has a workforce of 36,957. Arch rival JSW Steel produces 14.3Mt/yr and employs just 12,271. Whether Tata's plans include job losses is not certain. It is believed that the company will be looking at increasing the productivity of its assets.

The Indian steel industry is being badly hit by cheap imports, not just from China but from Japan and South Korea. While profitability is being hit across the board, Tata's position is a little worse as the company's UK business is already loss-making despite 'continuous restructuring'.

Christopher Pyne Says Industry 'Injured' by Cheap Chinese Steel

Asian steelmakers have accused the Turnbull government of singling them out by launching a sixth inquiry targeting Asian steel dumping.

The move comes as local producers Arrium and Bluescope struggle with competition from cheap imports.

Dumping occurs when foreign producers land imported products at below the usual cost in their domestic market, and anti-dumping inquiries can lead to special tariffs that raise the price of imports.

Dan Moulis, a lawyer for several Asian steelmakers, said the move was apolitical.

"It's a global overcapacity issue and a global downturn in the industries that use those products. Singling out Asia is not helpful," Mr. Moulis said.

Industry innovation and science minister Christopher Pyne said he had directed the Anti-Dumping Commissioner Dale Seymour to inquire into dumping of Asian steel alongside an inquiry already under way into dumping of imported Asian aluminium products.

The move could provide additional help for Arrium and Bluescope, although many of their products are already covered by anti-dumping duties. But it could also raise the cost of steel for fabrication and construction and create a new bone of contention with China. A similar announcement by the European Commission aroused Beijing's ire.

The move comes as the future of steelmaker Arrium's Whyalla works and aluminium giant Alcoa's Portland smelter are both under a cloud with a combined 4500 jobs at risk from cheap imports and rising energy costs.