

Gold. The most significant event for the gold industry in 1972 was the sharp increase in the price of gold on the open market, caused partly by reduced supplies from the Republic of South Africa on world markets. The price of gold opened in 1972 at US\$43.725 an ounce troy and by August 2 had increased to a high of US\$70. The price then dropped slightly, and for the last three months of the year gold was traded at about US\$61-\$65 an ounce troy. On November 15 the Winnipeg Commodities Market opened trading on gold futures, the first trading of gold on a futures commodity market.

Gold production in 1972 was 2,078,567 oz t valued at \$119.7 million compared to 2,260,730 oz t valued at \$79.9 million (Table 12.14).

No gold mines opened or closed in 1972. At the end of the year 21 lode gold mines were in operation. Three properties were scheduled to close, but the increased price of gold enabled them to continue.

All the gold produced in 1972 was sold on the open market and therefore no mines were eligible for assistance under the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act. This Act provides a guaranteed floor price of about \$48 an ounce troy to those mines eligible for maximum assistance payments.

All gold produced in the Atlantic Provinces in 1972 was recovered as a by-product of base-metal mining. Gold production totalled 17,316 oz t compared with 11,577 in 1971. Production from the new Ming orebody of Consolidated Rambler Mines Limited was responsible for most of the increase in gold production.

Gold production in Quebec in 1972 amounted to 539,669 oz t compared with 646,839 oz t in 1971, a decrease of 16.6%. Both the lode gold mines and by-product base-metal mines recorded a decrease in production. Agnico-Eagle Mines Limited proceeded with mill construction and the installation of machinery at its property in Joutel Township in northwestern Quebec; production began toward the end of 1973.

Gold production in Ontario was 1,019,303 oz t compared with 1,133,987 in 1971. Gold produced from lode mines, which accounted for 92.1% of the provincial total, decreased by 10.1% from 1971.

Virtually all gold produced in the Prairie Provinces was recovered as a by-product from the mining of base-metal ores. Production in 1972 was 68,562 oz t compared with 56,102 in 1971. The settlement of a strike at the Flin Flon and Snow Lake plants of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Co., Limited in Manitoba was responsible for most of the increase.

With the exception of a small amount of gold recovered from placer deposits in the central part of the province and in the Atlin district, all gold produced in British Columbia in 1972 was recovered as a by-product of base-metal mines, mainly from the treatment of copper ores. Total by-product gold production was 122,159 oz t compared with 65,760 in 1971. Copper producers coming into production in the latter part of 1971 and in 1972 were responsible for the increase in gold production.

The Yukon reported a sharp decrease in gold production in 1972, dropping to 4,079 oz t in 1972 compared with 14,473 oz t in 1971. Whitehorse Copper Mines Ltd. completed an underground development program and resumed operations in December. This property has been a substantial producer of by-product gold in the past.

In the Northwest Territories, production of gold decreased to 307,479 oz t from 308,339 the previous year. Five gold mines, all near Yellowknife, were in production in 1972.

Lode gold mines accounted for 76.5% of the total gold produced in Canada compared with 79% in 1971. Gold recovered as a by-product from base-metal mining accounted for 23.3% and placer mining 0.2%. Ontario continued to be the largest gold-producing province, accounting for 49.0% of the total, followed by Quebec with 25.9% and the Northwest Territories with 14.8%. Canada ranked third in world production of gold in 1972 behind the Republic of South Africa and the Soviet Union.

Silver. Canadian production of silver in 1972 was 44,792,209 oz t, a decrease of 2.3% from 1971 (Table 12.15). Canada ranked as the world's leading producer of silver.

Silver was refined at six locations in Canada. Canadian Copper Refiners Limited at Montreal East, Quebec, was again Canada's largest producer of refined silver recovered from the treatment of anode and blister copper. The silver refinery of Cominco Ltd. at Trail, BC, was the second-largest producer, recovering by-product silver in the processing of lead and zinc ores and concentrates. Other producers of refined silver were The International Nickel