



JOINT PLANT COMMITTEE – A PROFILE

Joint Plant Committee (JPC) is the only institution in the country, officially empowered by the Ministry of Steel, Government of India to collect data on the Indian iron and steel industry and over the last significant 50 years of its operation, it has embellished its position in the creation and maintenance of a complete and non-partisan databank on this industry.

Constituted in 1964 by the Government of India for formulating guidelines for production, allocation, pricing and distribution of iron and steel materials, JPC underwent a major transformation in 1992, when following the de-regulation of Indian steel industry, it moulded itself into a facilitator for industry, focusing on giving form to a comprehensive and non-partisan databank – the first of its kind in the country – on the Indian iron and steel industry.

Its vast experience in different fields of data related work and accumulated knowledge on industry – structure, operation, dynamics – has helped reap rich dividends with the result that today, the JPC database is a much sought-after source of authentic and reliable information on Indian steel industry, used extensively in the formulation of key economic parameters like the WPI, IIP, GDP of the Government of India, among others.

JPC is headquartered at Kolkata with regional offices in New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai, engaged in data collection and industry liaison and an extension centre in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, in a bid to consolidate and further sharpen the accuracy of its data and data collection system at the regional level. The Economic Research Unit (ERU) at New Delhi serves as a wing of JPC to carry out techno-economic studies and policy analysis. JPC is headed by Joint Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Steel as its Chairman and has representatives from government and representatives from steel industry as its esteemed Members.

A Look at the Database

The database includes a rich repertoire of significant data elements and includes:

- ❑ Capacity data of all steel producing units
- ❑ Production data of iron and steel
- ❑ Stock data of all steel producing units - category-wise/month-wise
- ❑ Domestic Indicative Market Prices of major categories of iron and steel
- ❑ Import data of pig iron, sponge iron, finished steel, scrap
- ❑ Export data of pig iron, sponge iron, finished steel, scrap
- ❑ Consumption data features in the database as a derived item
- ❑ FOB, CIF Prices & landed cost of select steel items
- ❑ Production, export, import data of raw materials for steel – iron ore, coal & coke, refractory,
- ❑ Reserves, production, prices of raw materials for steel – iron ore, coal & coke
- ❑ Item-wise, state-wise despatch of finished steel
- ❑ Accidents in steel plants

Managing and Maintaining the Database

A slew of activities performed round the year by the Regional Offices of JPC in sync with the JPC Headquarters at Kolkata ensure that the database remains updated and of use to all stakeholders. The range of activities includes:

Liaison with units on a regular basis is a continuous activity pursued by JPC in order to collect production data and maintain the database – a tremendous task, considering the innumerable units



in the small and medium scale sectors, in segments like induction furnace, re-rolling mills, sponge iron and cold rolling. The interaction is also necessary to update the state-wise listing of units in the various segments and document the changes therein.

Regular interaction is also undertaken with dealers and producers for market prices and with custom authorities for export and import data – the former on a daily basis and the latter on a monthly basis.

Segment-specific surveys form a major database maintenance activity. Undertaken annually, they not only help update the population frame but also aid policy decisions at the government level. As on date, JPC has to its credit, records of completion of surveys on key segments like sponge iron, pellet, blast furnace, induction furnace/electric arc furnace, re-rolling, refractory. Last year, JPC had completed field work on surveys of leading segments like IF, re-rolling. In the current year, surveys on sinter and pellet are on the cards.

Review of data and data reporting (receipt status, reporting formats) are periodically done by JPC. In a move much appreciated by industry and its wide ranging clientele, JPC had earlier resolved long-standing data problems of under-reporting and double counting. Further work on this areas had led to reporting on category-wise double counting for example.

Adding Value to Data: Recently, JPC has been granted special access to the database of the Excise Department, Government of India Such an access is of considerable significance as it is expected to lead to considerable value addition to the existing JPC database by plugging in potential gaps, help generate new reports and understand industry dynamics better.

Policy on Segment Surveys and Market Studies: Both the structure and mode of operation of the Indian iron and steel industry are changing fast and to capture such changes field-level market/segment surveys and market studies are periodically undertaken by JPC. However, in order to lend an element of structure and method in conducting such exercises and act as a roadmap for future activities, JPC has prepared a policy on segment surveys and market studies to be undertaken by it during the period, 2014-15 to 2018-19, which has been approved by the Ministry of Steel, making it one of the major milestone developments in the evolution of the organization. JPC has been strictly adhering to this calendar of events.

Uses of the Database

Apart from the regular use by researchers/academicians, marketing/business strategies of entrepreneurs, financial analysis by the FIs and banks or even the fresher interested to know about the Indian steel industry, the key uses of the JPC database in the realm of policy-making include:

- Duty formulation : customs, excise, export
- Formulation of GDP, Industrial Production Index, WPI
- Formulation of Five Year Plans, Economic Surveys and Union Budgets
- Policy Issues: Understanding of price trends, matters dealing with trade cases/disputes
- Examination of DPRs of new steel projects
- State-wise flow of materials and logistics
- Establishing Global ranking of Indian Steeland many other specific reports for policy research of the Government of India

Dissemination of Information

A range of publications and data reports, on monthly and annual basis ensure the spread of information and data to all stakeholders of industry. Leading JPC Publications include:



- *JPC Bulletin on Iron & Steel (English, Hindi)*: provides a monthly trend scenario of the Indian steel industry in a global perspective
- *Monthly Performance Report*: Provides an overall statistical presentation of the current status of Indian steel industry
- *Monthly MIS Report*: Provides a detailed statistical presentation of the current status of Indian steel industry
- *Performance Review-Iron & Steel*: Encapsulates an exhaustive account of the developments in different aspects of the Indian iron and steel industry in the fiscal gone by
- *Annual Statistics*: provides a statistical profile of five-year's database on different areas of Indian steel industry
- *Survey Reports*: include reports of various surveys conducted by JPC

Dissemination of information has always been a key activity of JPC and the need to evolve and be in sync with changing times has led JPC to explore the online forum to its fullest. Accordingly, the JPC website www.jpcindiansteel.nic.in has been re-designed making it more user-friendly, aesthetically appealing and adding new features including providing a basic set of data report and analytical reports as free downloads. More significantly, individual user accounts have been created for all users which enables them to access data in real time.

Studies: Conducted under the aegis of the Ministry of Steel, Government of India, JPC from time to time, has undertaken studies in emerging markets/segments to understand the pattern and nature of growth as also the prospects for the same in association with industry. Currently, JPC, under the aegis of the Ministry of Steel, Government of India is pursuing a study to *assess the potential of steel consumption in modern-day rural India*. The study aims to assess the level of awareness/perception and attitude towards steel/steel use besides estimating both short term and long term demand of steel in the rural market. The field data collection is over and the draft report is expected by year-end. During the current year, JPC has also taken up a study to *assess the end-use wise domestic steel demand* in the economy which is expected to bring to light first-time official statistics on the pattern, level and nature of steel consumed in the various prominent end-use segments of iron and steel in modern-day India.

Research support and examination of policy matters/techno-economic studies are provided by the New Delhi based **Economic Research Unit** of JPC. The ERU also functions as the Secretariat to the prestigious Prime Minister's Trophy and the Steel Minister's Trophy.

Support Services

In its role as a facilitator, JPC extends myriad support services with the objective to provide varied support to steel industry / Ministry of Steel on different issues related to development of industry like the Steel Consumers' Council meetings of Ministry of Steel, the 'Steel Pavilion' of Ministry of Steel in the annually-held 'India International Trade Fair' (IITF), New Delhi among others.

Towards Newer Horizons

Rich in information and expertise gained over the last eventful 50 years of its operation and association with the Indian steel industry, JPC is currently contemplating further extension of its database, developing new reports / formats of reporting and further upgrade its website to offer new features, thereby offering value-added services to different stakeholders of industry.