

Section 2 – UK Solid Fuels and Derived Gases January to March 2019

Key results show:

Overall coal production in the first quarter of 2019 fell to 592 thousand tonnes, down 8.9 per cent compared with the first quarter of 2018. Surface mining production fell to 578 thousand tonnes due to falling demand for coal for electricity generation and mine closures. **(Chart 2.1)**

Coal imports fell 19 per cent on levels shown in the first quarter of 2019. **(Charts 2.1 and 2.2)**

The demand for coal by electricity generators in the first quarter of 2019 was 63 per cent lower than demand in the first quarter of 2018 due to milder weather in February and March 2019 (relative to 2018's 'Beast from the East'). The increase in generation from renewables and the closure of Eggborough power station in September 2018 also contributed to lower coal-fired generation. **(Chart 2.3)**

Total stock levels were up 41 per cent to 5.8 million tonnes compared to a year earlier. **(Chart 2.4)**

Relevant tables

[2.1: Supply and consumption of coal](#)

[2.2: Supply and consumption of coke oven coke, coke breeze and other manufactured solid fuels](#)

[2.3: Supply and consumption of coke oven gas, blast furnace gas, benzole and tars](#)

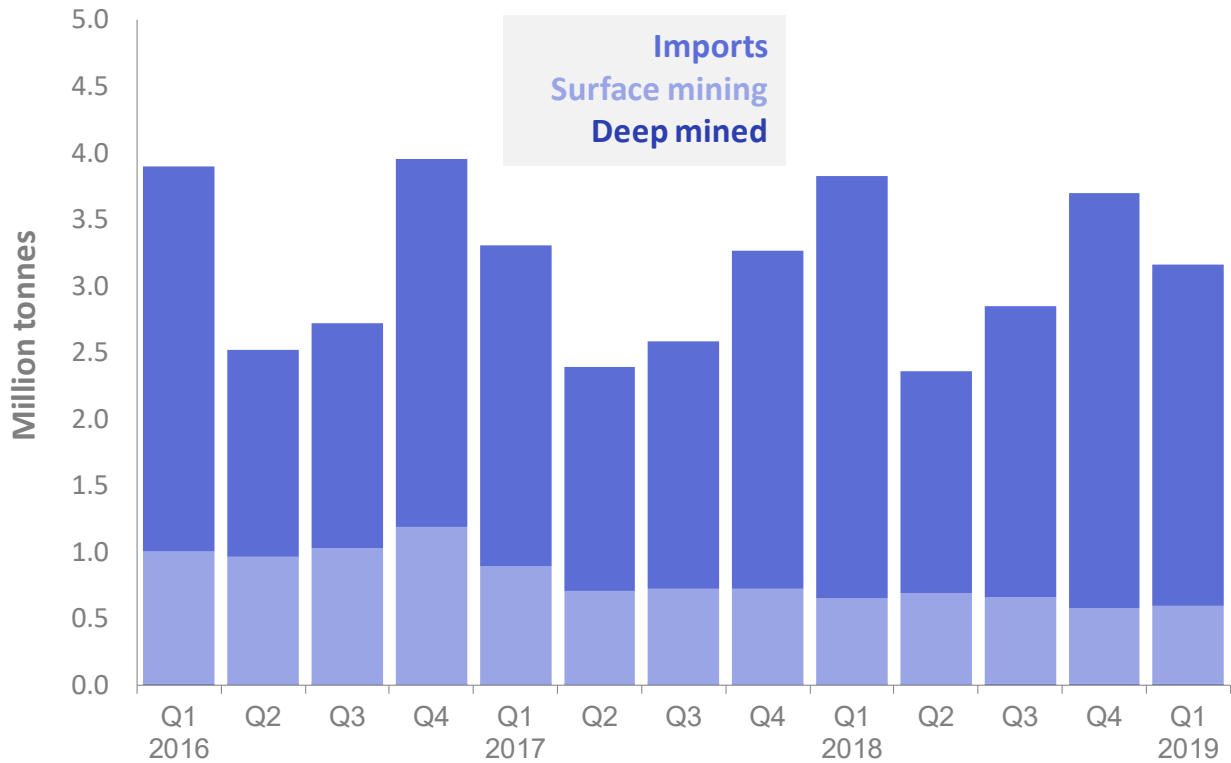
Contact for further information:

Chris Michaels

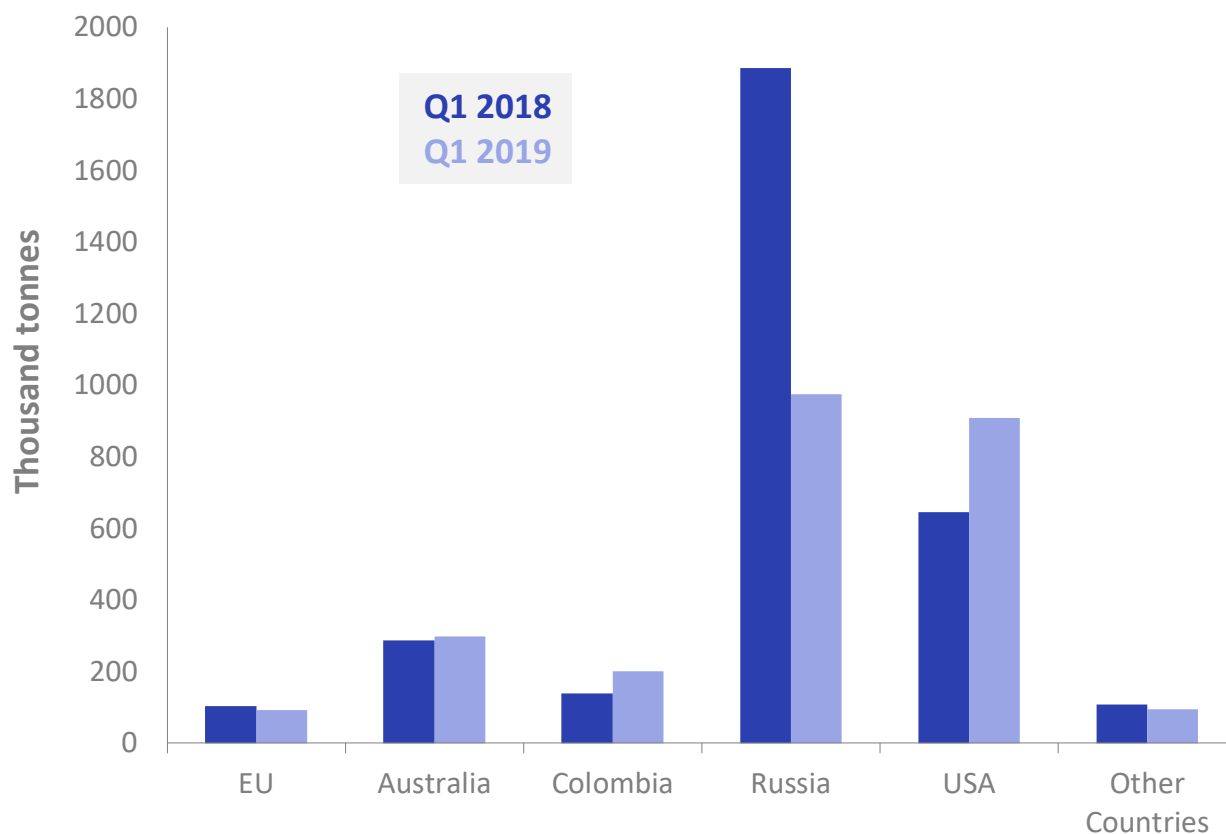
Coal statistics

Tel: 0300 068 5050

E-mail: coalstatistics@beis.gov.uk

Chart 2.1 Coal supply ([Table 2.1](#))

Coal production in the first quarter of 2019 was 0.6 million tonnes, 8.9 per cent down compared to the first quarter of 2018. The bulk of this decrease came from the contraction in surface mine output as deep mine production is only 2 per cent of production with only seven small deep mines remaining. The falls were due to decreased demand, particularly for electricity generation, but also because some mines are working towards closure whilst other mines are under 'care and maintenance' and 'not producing currently'.

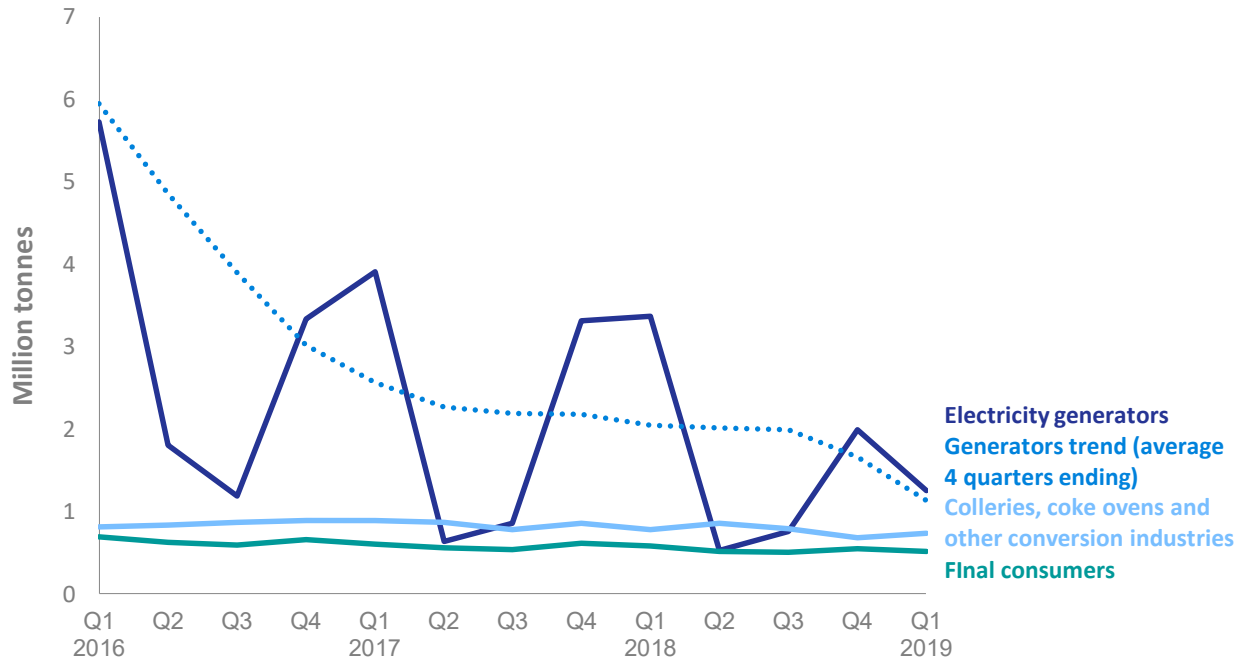
Chart 2.2 Total coal imports [\(Table 2.4\)](#)

Imports of coal in the first quarter of 2019 were 19 per cent lower than in the first quarter of 2018 at 2.6 million tonnes. Imports accounted for 81 per cent of supply in the first quarter of 2019.

Russia (38 per cent) and the USA (35 per cent) accounted for 73 per cent of total coal imports in the first quarter of 2019. Steam coal imports in the first quarter of 2019 fell by 23 per cent to 1.8 million tonnes. Steam coal imports accounted for 71 per cent of total coal imports. Coking coal imports in the first quarter of 2019 fell by 4.7 per cent to 0.7 million tonnes and accounted for 28 per cent of total coal imports.

Table 2A Coal imports by origin

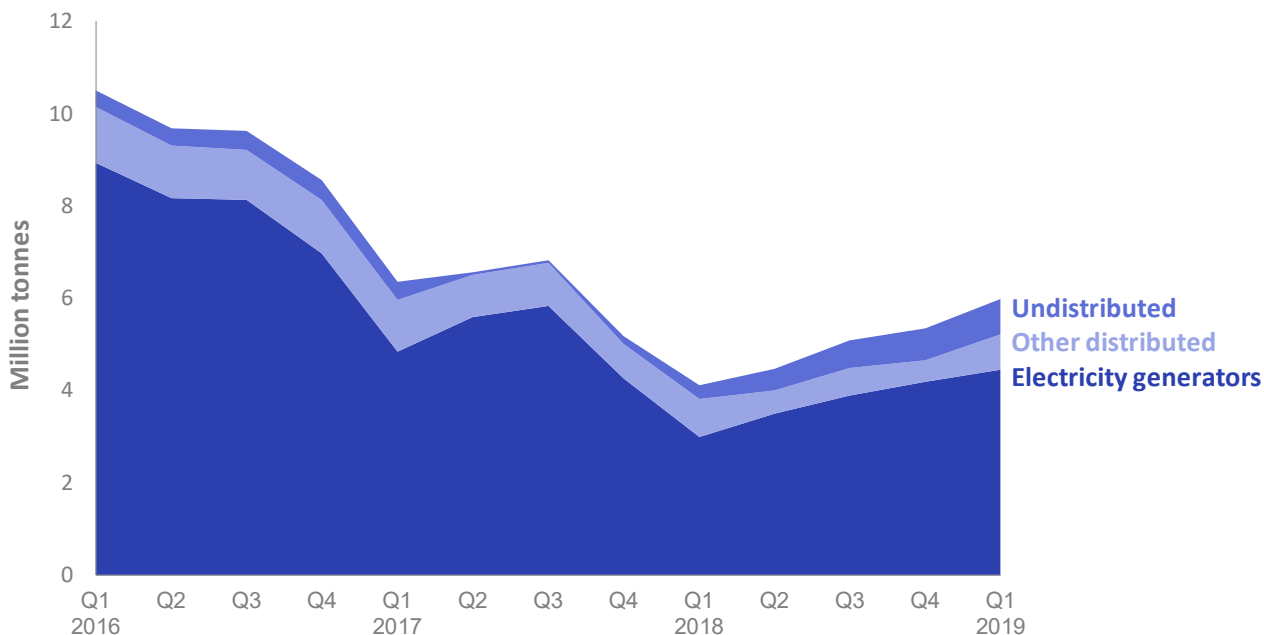
	Thousand Tonnes			
	2017	2018p	2018 Q1	2019 Q1p
European Union	356	344	103	93
Russia	3,883	4,695	1,886	975
Colombia	731	635	140	201
USA	2,352	3,573	645	908
Australia	749	630	288	299
Other Countries	427	268	108	95
Total Imports	8,498	10,144	3,172	2,571

Chart 2.3 Coal consumption [\(Table 2.1\)](#)

Total demand for coal in the first quarter of 2019, at 2.5 million tonnes, was 47 per cent lower than in the first quarter of 2018 with 50 per cent relating to electricity generation. Consumption by electricity generators was down by 63 per cent to 1.3 million tonnes in the first quarter of 2019 due to milder weather in February and March 2019 (relative to 2018's 'Beast from the East'). The increase in generation from renewables and the closure of Eggborough power station in September 2018 also contributed to lower consumption of coal by electricity generators.

In the first quarter of 2019, the provisional data shows that sales to industrial users fell by 16 per cent to 0.3 million tonnes whilst sales to other final consumers (including domestic) decreased by 2.1 per cent to 0.2 million tonnes. Coal used in blast furnaces was down 12 per cent compared to the first quarter of 2019, to 0.3 million tonnes.

Chart 2.4 Coal stocks [\(Table 2.1\)](#)



Coal stocks rose seasonally by 0.5 million tonnes during the first quarter of 2019 and at the end of March stood at 5.8 million tonnes. This was 1.7 million tonnes higher than at the end of March 2018.

The level of coal stocks at power stations at the end of the first quarter of 2019 was 4.5 million tonnes, 1.5 million tonnes higher than at the end of March 2018.

Stocks held by coke ovens were 0.5 million tonnes at the end of the first quarter of 2019, this was 29 thousand tonnes lower than stock levels at the end of March 2018.

Stocks held by producers (undistributed stocks) at the end of the first quarter of 2019 were 0.8 million tonnes, 0.5 million tonnes higher than at the end of March 2018.