



Conflict Minerals Statement

14th March 2023

Definition:

Conflict minerals are natural resources extracted in a conflict zone and sold to perpetuate fighting. There is clear evidence that continuing mining precious metals can prolong conflicts. The current most prominent example is the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where various armies and rebel groups etc have profited from mining while contributing to violence and exploitation during wars in the region.

Procurement:

None of the “3TG” metals – Tantalum (Ta), Tin (Sn), Tungsten (W), Gold (Au) – should be present as alloying elements in standard austenitic grades of stainless steel. The metals in question are not mentioned in any of the recognised standards, such as the AISI 304 group (EN 1.4301), and the AISI 316 group (EN 1.4401).

Our suppliers of stainless steel plate and sheet are required to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, that conflict minerals are not present in any of the materials supplied.

Supply:

As none of the standard steel grades are intended to contain any of the 3TG metals in question, there is very low risk of conflict minerals being contained within them. However, tiny trace amounts of the elements may be present. This is due to almost 70% of all stainless steel made in Europe being made from recycled scrap stainless steel. We source all our stainless steel from Western Europe. If part of the scrap contains a small amount of any of any of the 3TG metals, traces may be found in the steel.

Niobium (Nb) may also occur in some ferritic stainless steel grades, but none of the common austenitic grades. If traces of Niobium are present, the concentration of any of the metals will be very low, and not intentional. Therefore the risk of any trace of Niobium originating from a conflict zone is negligible.

Mr Danny McKinley
Commercial Director