Rare Earth Metal and Alloy Capability Outside of China in September 2026

written by Jack Lifton | September 21, 2026

“The rare earth supply chain outside China is much thinner than the headline numbers suggest. Announced capacity is not production, and neither a mine, an oxide refinery nor a magnet plant proves that rare earth metal is actually being made.” – Jack Lifton, Co-Chair, Critical Minerals Institute (CMI)

I asked myself: What is the current production capability and capacity for rare earth metals and alloys outside China? And exactly where are the production facilities?

As of **September 2026**, the list is much shorter if “production facility” means a site that actually makes a **rare earth metal or alloy**, rather than one that only mines ore, separates oxides, or manufactures finished magnets. Below, *operating* means the metal/alloy step has been demonstrated or is in production; *announced* capacity is not actual output. Public disclosures are uneven, so this is a documented inventory, not a guaranteed census of every small or captive plant.

Japan

Facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
Santoku, Kobe-area operations (plants in Kobe, Akashi, Miki and Tsuruga)	Operating	A longstanding producer of rare earth metals, NdFeB magnet alloys, samarium cobalt alloys and hydrogen storage alloys. Santoku says it commercialized molten salt electrolysis for rare earth metals and mass production of strip cast magnet alloys. Its public material does **not** give a reliable plant-by-plant tonnage breakdown. Santoku became part of Proterial Magnetics in 2026.
Shin-Etsu Chemical, Takefu, Fukui Prefecture	Operating integrated materials/magnet site	Shin-Etsu lists rare earth metals among its products and describes Takefu as handling raw material refining and magnet material production. The public sources I found do not isolate its current metal or alloy making capacity from finished magnet capacity.
Shin-Etsu, additional Fukui plant	Announced	In June 2026, Shin-Etsu confirmed a new domestic rare earth refinery intended to secure supply for its rare earth products and magnets. Its precise metal/alloy process, capacity and opening date were not disclosed, so I would **not yet count its tonnage** as new metal capacity.

Japan also has major magnet manufacturers such as TDK and Proterial. Making a magnet necessarily involves magnetic material, but I have not counted each magnet factory as a separate, publicly verified **oxide-to-metal or merchant alloy** facility.

South Korea

Facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
Korean Metals Plant (KMP), Ochang, Cheongju	Operating; expanding	Built by Australian Strategic Materials Ltd. (ASM) and now owned through ASM by Energy Fuels Inc. (NYSE American: UUUU | TSX: EFR), following its August 2026 acquisition. It makes **NdPr metal** and **NdFeB strip-cast alloy**; it has also made initial commercial sales of dysprosium and terbium metals. Energy Fuels states **1,300 tonnes/year of existing NdFeB alloy capacity**, with expansion to **3,600 tonnes/year** targeted for commissioning as early as late 2026. ASM reported about **45 tonnes of NdFeB alloy and NdPr metal dispatched in Q2 2026**—a useful reminder that nameplate capacity is not output.

A naming trap: **KSMM/KSM Metals and the Ochang Korean Metals Plant refer to the ASM project's Korean operating structure**, not a second independent plant.

Rest of the world

Country and facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
United Kingdom — Less Common Metals (LCM), Cheshire	Operating	Converts oxides and recycled inputs into rare earth metals, master alloys and strip-cast products, including NdPr, Dy, Tb and Sm-related products. USA Rare Earth, Inc. (Nasdaq: USAR), its owner, reports roughly **2,500 tonnes/year of total rare earth and critical mineral metal/alloy capacity**—not all necessarily magnet rare earths. It reported a first commercial yttrium metal pour in April 2026.

Country and facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
United States — MP Materials “Independence,” Fort Worth, Texas	Operating; ramping	Integrated **metal making, NdFeB alloy flake production and magnet manufacturing**. Commercial metal production began in 2024; first alloy flake on commercial equipment followed in 2025. MP Materials Corp. (NYSE: MP) has also selected nearby **Northlake, Texas**, for its announced “10X” expansion; published magnet targets should not be mistaken for a separately disclosed metal tonnage figure.
Thailand — Neo Magnequench, Korat	Operating alloy powder producer	Makes rapidly solidified **NdFeB magnetic alloy powder** for bonded magnets. This is alloy/powder production, **not oxide-to-metal refining**; its dependence on supplied metal feedstock matters when judging supply chain independence.

Country and facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
Germany — Remloy, Bitterfeld	Developed recycling/alloy plant; commercial scale-up to verify	Remelts end-of-life magnets into **NdFeB alloy powders** for bonded and hot-deformed magnets. Mkango Resources Ltd. (TSXV: MKA) cited **500 tonnes/year of plant capacity** in its 2026 acquisition materials. This is a recycled alloy route, not primary oxide-to-metal conversion.
Vietnam — Shin-Etsu Magnetic Materials, Hai Phong	Operating integrated magnet site	Shin-Etsu describes an integrated route from rare-earth refining/recycling through magnet production. Public disclosures establish the integrated site but do not cleanly quantify a stand-alone metal/alloy stage, so I would not add its **magnet** tonnage to metal/alloy totals.

Country and facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
Canada — Saskatchewan Research Council, Saskatoon	Near commissioning	An integrated processing facility with a **metal-smelting stage**, intended to produce magnet-grade **NdPr metal** as well as Dy and Tb **oxides**. SRC says commissioning is planned for December 2026 and operation after ramp-up in 2027. The heavy rare earth oxides are **not yet heavy rare earth metals**.
United States — REalloys, Euclid, Ohio	Limited existing downstream activity; larger heavy-metal project announced	REalloys Inc. (NASDAQ: ALOY) describes current specialty heavy rare earth metal/alloy and component operations. Its proposed larger **Dy/Tb oxide-to-metal facility**, in partnership with SRC, is a distinct scale-up: equipment is to be built and initially tested in Saskatchewan, then moved to Ohio. I would not treat the announced large-scale capacity as operating.

Country and facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
France – LCM Europe, Lacq	Announced	USA Rare Earth, Inc. (Nasdaq: USAR) plans a **3,750-tonnes/year metal-and-alloy plant** alongside Carester's separate oxide-processing project. The oxide plant's planned commissioning does **not** mean the LCM metal plant is operating.
United States – USA Rare Earth, Blacksburg, South Carolina	Announced	Planned integrated refined-metal, strip-cast alloy and magnet operation. The company targets **5,000 tonnes/year of strip-cast, metal and alloy** and commissioning beginning in **2028**; that figure groups products rather than specifying tonnes of rare earth metal alone.
United States – Energy Fuels' proposed American Metals Plant	Planning	Intended to replicate capabilities developed at Ochang. An ASM planning presentation described an initial **2,000 tonnes/year of alloy**, expandable to 4,000, but site, funding, construction and ultimate capacity remain project decisions—not production.

Country and facility	Status	Metal/alloy activity
Vietnam — LS Eco Energy/Lynas project	Announced	A planned plant to convert Lynas-supplied rare earth oxides into **metals** for magnet supply chains. The partners had announced investment and cooperation by March 2026; I did not find a verified operating output figure.
India — government-backed integrated magnet scheme	Program announced, individual facilities not yet established	India's government explicitly identifies industrial-scale **oxide-to-metal and metal-to-alloy capacity as a domestic gap**. Its incentive program seeks **6,000 tonnes/year of integrated finished NdFeB magnet capacity** across selected projects—not 6,000 tonnes of metal capacity.

The central takeaway is that **Japan's established producers, Ochang, LCM in Britain, MP Materials in Texas, and Thailand's alloy-powder operation are the clearest sizeable operating nodes** in this inventory. Many of the larger numbers now circulating—France, South Carolina, the Ochang expansion and the proposed American plant—are **future nameplate capacities**. And neither an oxide refinery such as Estonia's Silmet nor a finished magnet plant, on its own, proves that rare earth *metal* is being made at that site. The IEA likewise identifies metals and alloys as a particularly constrained link in the non-Chinese supply chain.