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USSR: NATURAL GAS BEHIND PLAN

After a good start in 1971 the USSR is failing to meet plans for natural gas output. In 1973, production of natural gas was 236 billion cubic meters (8.33 trillion cubic feet), about 14 billion cubic meters below original plan. This year the shortfall could reach 25 billion cubic meters; in 1975, 45 billion.

Billion Cubic Meters

	Original Plan	Revised Plan	Actual Output	Expected Output	Shortfall from Original Plan
1971	211	....	212	....	(-1)
1972	229	....	221	....	8
1973	250	238	236	....	14
1974	280	257	....	255	25
1975	320	N.A.	....	275	45

The poor performance results from nagging shortages of production and transport equipment; insufficient quantities of large-diameter pipe, valves, and compressors; and a cumbersome supply system. In 1973, only

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about 3,350 miles of gas pipeline were built compared with a plan of some 5,300 miles. The plan also called for construction of 55 compressor stations; only 31 were completed. Similarly, only 15 gas treatment plants were put into operation, compared with plans for 22. (~~CONFIDENTIAL~~)