SAUDI TRADE · 2023–2025 / INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

24 November 2026

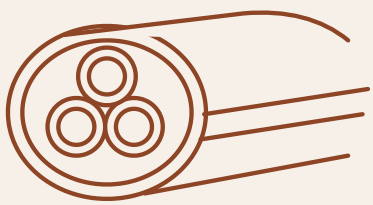
Saudi Arabia’s trade in power cables: what the two-way flow tells buyers

Higher-voltage cable moved both ways.

Saudi Arabia bought and sold substantial amounts of cable above 1 kV. For a buyer, that opens a sourcing question: which mill can meet the specified conductor, test duty and delivery date?

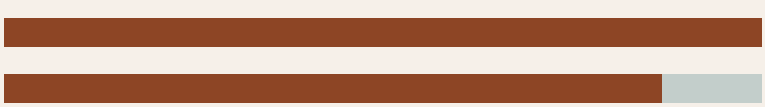
$257.7m

Saudi exports of insulated electric conductors above 1 kV in 2025.



Saudi trade in conductors above 1 kV

HS 854460 · 2025 · USD million



Source · UN Comtrade Plus · Saudi Arabia, World, imports and exports

EXHIBIT 02 / TWO-WAY TRADE

The above-1 kV trade deficit narrowed in 2025

In = imports, Out = exports. † UN Comtrade flags the annual net weight as estimated.

HS	Year	Flow	USD m	Million kg	USD/kg
854449	2023	In	216.1	19.5†	11.06†
854449	2023	Out	33.9	3.3†	10.41†
854449	2024	In	342.6	40.5†	8.47†
854449	2024	Out	60.2	8.5	7.10
854449	2025	In	292.7	28.6†	10.22†
854449	2025	Out	142.8	21.0	6.80
854460	2023	In	133.6	13.3†	10.03†
854460	2023	Out	227.7	22.8†	9.97†
854460	2024	In	351.9	51.9	6.78
854460	2024	Out	150.6	24.3	6.20
854460	2025	In	296.5	38.5	7.70
854460	2025	Out	257.7	35.8	7.19

Exports recovered as imports eased

For conductors above 1 kV, the import surplus fell from USD 201.2m in 2024 to USD 38.8m in 2025. Imports fell and exports rose. In 2023 Saudi Arabia was a net exporter.

The price per kilogram needs a specification

A kilogram of insulated cable contains conductor, insulation and, in some designs, armour. Differences in metal, size and construction can move the average even when a mill’s conversion charge stays flat.

REGIONAL DEMAND SCREEN / HS 854460

Kuwait’s cable imports justify a closer look at its tenders

Gross imports from the world · USD million · HS 854460

Reporting market	2023	2024	2025
Saudi Arabia	133.6	351.9	296.5
Oman	41.5	77.3	60.1
Qatar	42.6	21.1	not available
Kuwait	154.3	190.5	303.0
Bahrain	32.6	84.6	not available
UAE	239.5	not available	not available

“not available” means the annual primary-reporter query returned no observation for that market and code at retrieval. No mirror values or zeros have been substituted.

What to investigate next

Match Kuwait’s utility and EPC tender schedules to cable voltage, metal, conductor size and installation method. The 2025 import value is close to Saudi Arabia’s. Project mix and shipment timing can explain the difference.

Where Saudi suppliers already ship

The destination table on page 7 identifies reported outbound markets for each code. Pair it with bid invitations and buyer-approved mill lists before allocating sales effort.

BUYERS, SUPPLIERS AND QUALIFICATION

Give the mill the same conductor, test duty and delivery basis

Route	What the buyer compares	Evidence to request
Utility tender	Rated voltage, conductor material and resistance, installation duty and approved source.	Utility specification, approved factory and cable family, type-test coverage, drum and test schedules.
EPC package	Cable schedule, terminations, installation interfaces, delivery sequence and warranty.	Cable data sheets, interface drawings, drum lengths, witnessed-test plan and priced exclusions.
Distributor	Stock availability, traceability, conformity documents, delivery and replacement terms.	Manufacturer and batch identity, drum certificates, documentation tied to the offered stock.

STANDARDS AND CONFORMITY

IEC 60502-2 addresses extruded-insulation cables rated 6–30 kV. IEC 60228 addresses conductors. For a Saudi import, check the product's applicable Saber route and obtain the required conformity and shipment documents.

Give copper and aluminium separate price lines

Obtain the metal index, averaging window, currency and factor in kg/m. Ask the mill to show conversion, freight, accessories and installation separately. An aluminium alternative requires an engineering check before financial comparison.

Sources · IEC 60502-2 · IEC 60228 · SASO shipment conformity through Saber

COMMERCIAL SENSITIVITY / ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

Two cable offers change rank at a copper price of USD 8/kg

Hypothetical quotations for the same approved specification and delivery terms. The metal factor is a contractual pricing factor. Both bidders must meet the same physical requirements.

Offer	Copper factor	Fixed conversion	Quoted USD/m
A	8.0 kg/m	USD 12/m	8.0 × P + 12
B	7.5 kg/m	USD 16/m	7.5 × P + 16

BREAK-EVEN COPPER PRICE

Set the two quotes equal. P = (16 − 12) ÷ (8.0 − 7.5) = USD 8/kg. Both bids then cost USD 76/m.

Hypothetical copper price P	Offer A	Offer B	Lower quote
USD 6/kg	USD 60/m	USD 61/m	A by USD 1/m
USD 10/kg	USD 92/m	USD 91/m	B by USD 1/m

Which risk the buyer retains

Offer A has the lower fixed charge and greater exposure to copper. If one mill fixes metal at order and the other at dispatch, request a common fixing period or cost the open exposure separately.

DECISION AND DILIGENCE / COMPARABLE BIDS

Lock the metal-pricing period before choosing a mill

01 Engineering | sign off a common cable schedule

Agree material, cross-section, voltage, resistance, screens, armour, insulation and test requirements. Identify which alternative constructions the asset owner will accept.

02 Procurement | obtain itemised offers

Request price per metre, metal factor, index and currency, conversion, accessories, freight, drum return terms and delivery slots. Ask who owns the risk between quotation and metal fixing.

03 Commercial | reconstruct the delivered price

Reprice every compliant offer at the same index observation and exchange rate. Run the approved high and low metal cases, then compare payment terms and any open metal position.

WHAT WOULD CHANGE THE CONCLUSION

A different allowed conductor, a firm metal lock, a changed installation route or a missed delivery window can reverse the choice. Obtain revised prices on the same basis.

OPERATING IMPLICATIONS / TRADE PARTNERS

Use the trade lanes to find mills and buyers worth qualifying

Top three declared partners by value · shares of Saudi World imports or exports for the code and year.

HS	Year	Flow	Partner and share
854449	2023	Origins	China 22.8% · United States 10.1% · UAE 9.1%
854449	2023	Destinations	UAE 41.0% · Jordan 15.7% · Egypt 10.3%
854449	2024	Origins	China 28.8% · India 9.1% · United States 7.2%
854449	2024	Destinations	Iraq 49.5% · UAE 21.9% · Jordan 8.1%
854449	2025	Origins	China 37.2% · Italy 10.2% · Hungary 7.0%
854449	2025	Destinations	UAE 26.3% · Iraq 25.6% · Yemen 23.7%
854460	2023	Origins	China 46.1% · Oman 16.3% · United States 8.1%
854460	2023	Destinations	Iraq 33.8% · Kuwait 30.2% · UAE 13.9%
854460	2024	Origins	Italy 24.7% · Norway 16.2% · India 13.1%
854460	2024	Destinations	UAE 23.7% · Iraq 21.0% · Kuwait 19.1%
854460	2025	Origins	China 56.0% · Norway 18.1% · Egypt 5.5%
854460	2025	Destinations	Iraq 27.0% · Jordan 17.1% · Kuwait 14.6%

Start with a named mill and buyer

China led Saudi imports in both headings in 2025. Iraq led Saudi exports above 1 kV, while the UAE led exports of conductors without connectors at or below 1 kV. Ask buyers which cable families they bought before treating a lane as a sales prospect.

The source register and verification file provide bilateral value and net weight wherever the reporter supplied them.

OPERATING IMPLICATIONS / RESEARCH NOTES

Rank approved cable bids on one metal-price basis

DECISION

Compare technically compliant cable offers per delivered metre after fixing the same metal index, period, currency and scope.

Method

We used Saudi-reported annual World values and net kilograms for both flows. USD/kg divides value by net mass within each code and flow. Estimated mass is marked. Partner shares divide each partner's value by the corresponding World value.

Scope of the evidence

HS 854449 covers other insulated conductors rated at or below 1,000 V without connectors. HS 854460 covers insulated conductors above 1,000 V. Neither code separates copper from aluminium or identifies a plant. Export records can include re-exports. Import and export valuations can differ in freight and insurance.

Source documents

Sources are linked below. Open Source-list.txt in the PDF attachments for the full queries and retrieval dates.

Sources · UN Comtrade Plus · IEC 60502-2 · IEC 60228 · SASO shipment conformity through Saber · UN Comtrade HS 2022 headings