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EDITOR'S WORD

Fixing activity ramps up for larger crude sizes while Mediterranean cargoes are still set to head through the Red Sea despite the recent Houthi attacks.

HEADLINES

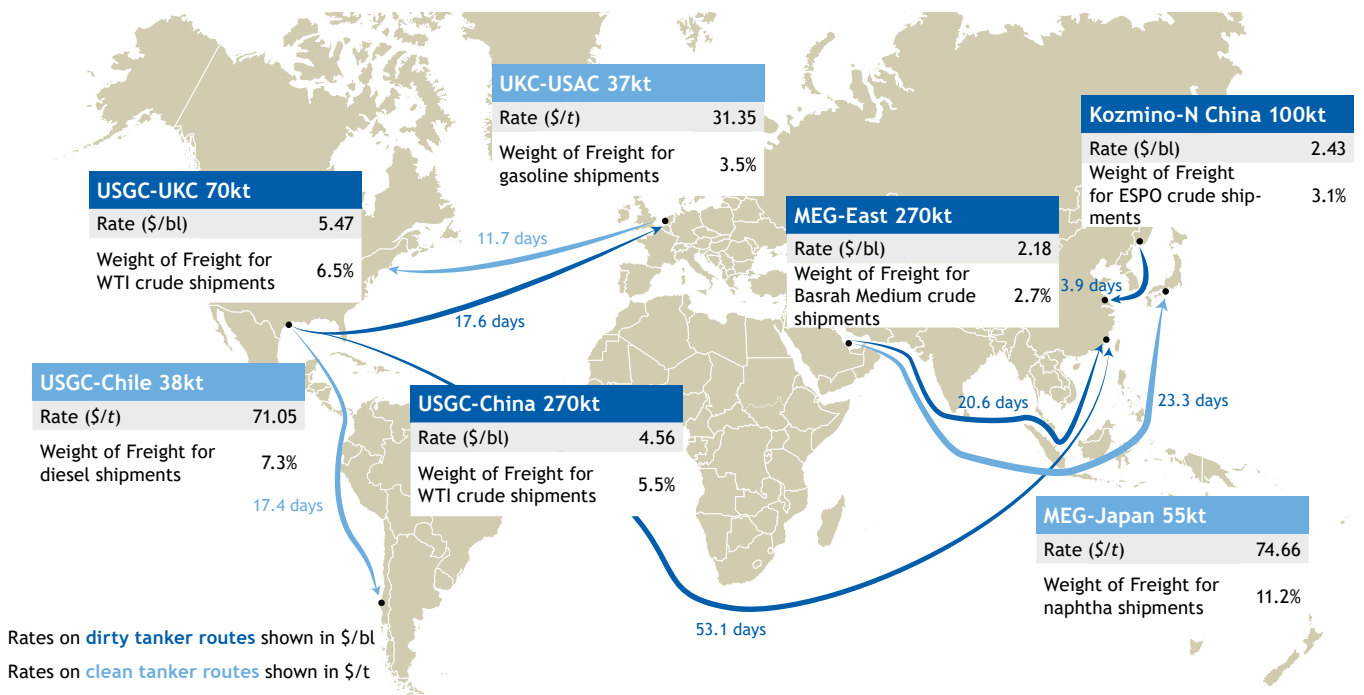
- Med crudes still head east via the Red Sea
- Aframax rates face support from SE Asian crude tenders
- US Gulf VLCC bookings at nine-month low in February

KEY PRICES

Tanker rates						
Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t	TCE (non-scrubber) \$/day	
Very large crude carriers (VLCCs)						
Mideast Gulf-East	270	66.00	+1.00	15.51	37,700	
West Africa-China	260	67.00	+2.00	23.95	37,608	
USGC-China	270	9,500,000	+400,000	35.19	39,729	
Suezmax						
Mideast Gulf-China	130	-	-	29.68	41,565	
West Africa-India	130	4,175,000	nc	32.12	-	
Aframax						
Kozmino-N China	100	1,800,000	nc	18.00	96,563	
Primorsk-WC India*	100	8,350,000	-300,000	83.50	-	
USGC-UKC	70	200.00	+10.00	42.20	36,598	
Long range (LR) tankers						
Mideast Gulf-Japan	75	275.00	nc	67.32	68,142	
Mideast Gulf-S Korea	55	310.00	-20.00	70.65	-	
USGC-N Brazil	60	-	-	41.85	-	
Medium range (MR) tankers						
UKC-USAC	37	190.00	+15.00	31.35	17,455	
USGC-Pozos	38	685,000	+10,000	18.03	13,596	
USGC-Chile	38	2,700,000	+50,000	71.05	24,552	
South Korea-Singapore	35	1,530,000	-20,000	43.71	64,049	

* assessed weekly

WEIGHT OF FREIGHT



DIRTY TANKERS - EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

New bookings support eastbound rates

Fixing activity ramped up on Thursday as charterers looked to conclude deals before the lunar new year celebrations, which drove Mideast Gulf and west African rates up again while Mediterranean Aframax rates continued to fall.

VLCC rates from Mideast Gulf and west Africa rise

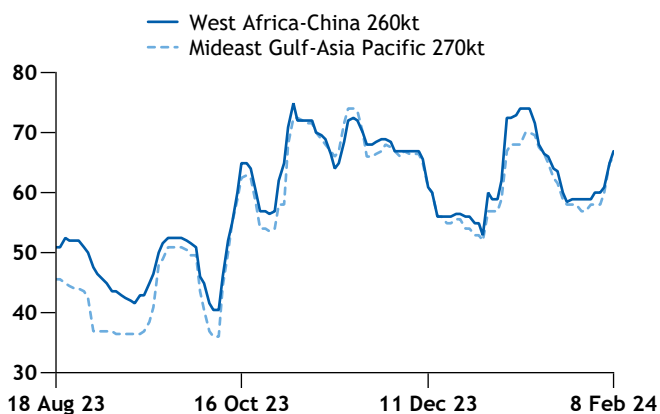
Rates for eastbound shipments from the Mideast Gulf continued to climb as lower ship numbers dictated charting activity. Freight for 270,000t shipments from the Mideast Gulf to east Asia ticked WS1 higher to to WS66.

Charterers made new cargoes available and had to compete for a small number of vessels available, pushing freight rates higher. Chinese state-controlled trading firm Uniproc sought a vessel from the Mideast Gulf to China loading from 26-28 February as charterers look to move quickly in attempts to conclude activity ahead of lunar new year celebrations. South Korea's HOB placed New Andros on subjects for a shipment from the Mideast Gulf to South Korea at WS54.75 and \$52,000/d demurrage loading from 29 February to 2 March. Ship numbers were restricted in the Mideast Gulf, with fewer than 30 modern vessels available, according to market participants. The absence of market participants for the upcoming lunar new year celebrations next week could soften rates as the limited activity might prompt shipowners to fix available vessels at lower levels. Though poor weather around China and South Korea is causing apprehension for those heading eastbound promptly and vessel numbers could remain low as the number of eastbound shipments of Caspian CPC Blend crude around the Cape of Good Hope bypassing the Suez Canal and Red Sea appear to be on the rise – adding about a month to journeys.

Eastbound shipments from west Africa also increased on Thursday as west Africa to China VLCC rates rose by WS2 to WS67. Indian state-controlled refiner IOC continued its flurry of activity by booking Front Nieden from Angola to Vadinar,

VLCC rates

WS



Dirty tanker rates - Europe, Middle East, Africa				
Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
Middle East				
Mideast Gulf-UKC/Med	280	51.50	+1.50	15.30
Mideast Gulf-USGC	280	48.00	+1.50	18.21
Mideast Gulf-USWC	280	46.00	+1.50	18.95
Mideast Gulf-East	270	66.00	+1.00	15.51
Mideast Gulf-Singapore	270	67.00	+1.00	10.42
Mideast Gulf-west coast India	270	74.00	+1.50	5.96
Mideast Gulf-Med	140	125.00	-5.00	23.45
Mideast Gulf-China	130	-	-	29.68
Mideast Gulf-east Asia	130	120.00	nc	-
Mideast Gulf-Singapore	130	-	-	18.52
Mideast Gulf-west coast India	130	140.00	nc	10.79
Mideast Gulf-east Asia, fuel oil	80	200.00	+2.50	30.16
Mideast Gulf-west coast India	80	207.50	+2.50	16.89
Red Sea-China	80	235.00	+27.50	60.04
Northern Europe				
North Sea-northeast Asia*	270	7,800,000	nc	28.89
Baltic-Med	100	150.00	-2.50	29.09
Baltic-UKC	100	140.00	-2.50	14.66
Cross UKC	80	155.00	-5.00	11.18
UKC-Med	80	137.50	-5.00	22.25
UKC-US Atlantic coast	80	100.00	-5.00	17.28
UKC-USGC fuel oil	55	175.00	nc	37.61
ARA-Azores fuel oil	30	335.00	nc	30.55
Baltic-Med fuel oil	30	-	-	-
Baltic-UKC fuel oil	30	-	-	-
Black Sea and Mediterranean				
Black Sea-Med	140	122.95	nc	11.48
Black Sea-east Asia*	135	8,500,000	nc	62.96
Black Sea-Med	135	127.50	nc	13.55
Black Sea-Singapore*	135	7,900,000	nc	58.52
Black Sea-west coast India*	135	7,500,000	nc	55.56
Cross Med	135	115.00	nc	8.00
Med/Black Sea-east Asia*	135	7,500,000	nc	55.56
Med-east Asia*	135	6,500,000	nc	48.15
Med-Singapore*	135	6,000,000	nc	44.44
Med-USGC	135	85.00	nc	19.12
Black Sea-Med	80	195.00	-5.00	20.73
Black Sea-UKC	80	185.00	-5.00	32.08
Cross Med	80	160.00	-10.00	12.62
Med-UKC	80	160.00	-5.00	21.28
Med-USGC	80	85.00	nc	19.61
Med-USGC fuel oil	55	175.00	nc	41.91
Black Sea -Med fuel oil	30	-	-	-
Cross Med fuel oil	30	315.00	+10.00	23.25
Med to Madeira	30	315.00	+10.00	33.45
West Africa				
West Africa-China	260	67.00	+2.00	23.95
West Africa-east coast India*	260	4,900,000	+200,000	18.85
West Africa-Singapore	260	68.00	+2.00	19.24
West Africa-USGC	260	67.00	nc	14.81
West Africa-west coast India*	260	4,600,000	+200,000	17.69
West Africa-east coast India*	130	4,250,000	nc	32.69
West Africa-India*	130	4,175,000	nc	32.12
West Africa-UKC/Med	130	105.00	+2.50	18.31
West Africa-USGC	130	100.00	+2.50	22.11
West Africa-west coast India*	130	4,100,000	nc	31.54
Delays				
Turkish Straits NB		9.0	nc	-
Turkish Straits SB		10.0	nc	-

* \$ lumpsum

DIRTY TANKERS - EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

west coast India at a lumpsum of \$4.45mn loading from 9-10 March.

TotalEnergies' shipping arm, CSSA placed Alter ego on subjects from west Africa to UKCM at WS77.5 loading from 1-4 March. Chevron also made a new eastbound cargo available from west Africa loading from 6-8 March.

Mideast Gulf Aframax rates higher

Eastbound Aframax shipments rates rose on the back of limited tonnage availability.

Freight rates for Aframax shipments from the Mideast Gulf to east Asia and from the Red Sea to China rose by WS2.5 and WS27.5 to WS200 and WS235 respectively. Rates from the Red Sea to east Asia surged on [continued hostilities as another vessel was attacked off Yemen's Hodiedah port on 6 February](#). Trading firm Vitol booked the Monterey at WS235 for its 80,000t shipment from Marsa Bashayer, Sudan to east Asia, loading from 21 February. On cargoes, trading firm Epdesa sought a vessel for its 80,000t shipment from Marsa Bashayer to Fujairah, loading from 24 February. Saudi Arabia's state-controlled Aramco Trading ATC sought a vessel for its 80,000t fuel oil shipment from the Mideast Gulf to east Asia, loading from 12 February.

Argus estimated TCE spread for Aframaxes in the Mideast Gulf widened against the Suezmaxes to about \$4,429/d, before Singapore's market close, from \$3,538/d on 7 February.

Freight rates for Suezmax shipments from the Mideast Gulf to east Asia and to the west coast of India held at WS120 and WS140 respectively. But rates could rise in the short-term on the back of higher VLCC rates and improved westbound chartering activity, a shipbroker said.

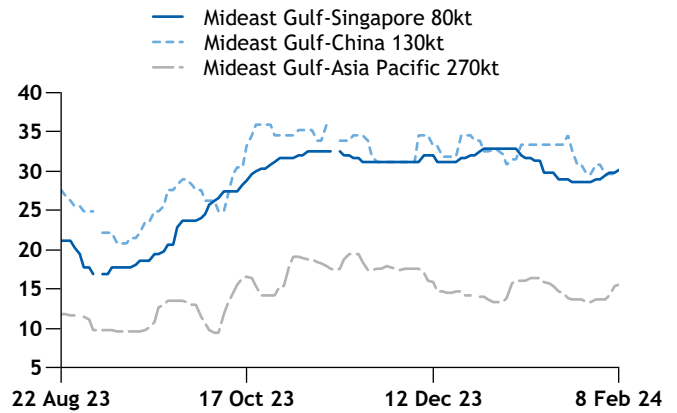
West African Suezmax activity picks up

Increased chartering activity for Suezmax shipments from west Africa into UKCM pushed up freight rates WS2.5 to WS105 on Thursday. Refiner Valero booked the Seaways Montauk from Angola to UKCM at WS100 loading from 26-28 February and trader Mercuria booked Orpheus from west Africa to UKCM for between WS97.5-102.5 loading from 26-27 February. Rates pushed up throughout the day though as Spain's Cepsa placed the Leni P on subjects from Nigeria to UKCM at WS105 loading from 28 February.

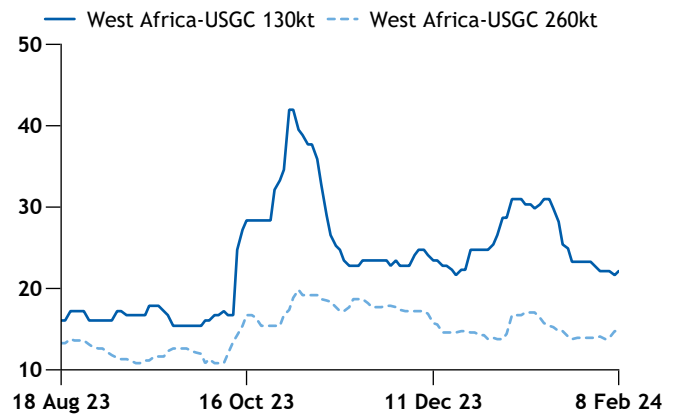
The rate for a cross-Mediterranean Suezmax shipment held flat at WS115 on Thursday because of minimal activity with just one cargo from Petrogal loading from Algeria to Portugal on 16 February.

High Aframax vessel numbers in the Mediterranean again pushed rates down on Thursday as cross-Mediterranean Afra-

Mideast Gulf to Asia-Pacific dirty tanker rates \$/t



West Africa-US dirty tanker rates \$/t



max freight fell WS10 to WS160. Heritage booked Alyarmouk from Ceyhan to various Mediterranean options at WS162.5 but later in the day Italy's Eni placed the S Trust on subjects from Algeria to Portugal at WS160 and \$35,000/d demurrage loading from 16 February.

Supply from the North Sea could be disrupted as dozens of workers described as "essential to the operations of the terminal" at the UK's Sullom Voe oil terminal have voted to go on strike in a dispute over pay and working condition. The terminal, operated by UK oil and gas producer Enquest, has oil processing facilities and 16 crude storage tanks each with a capacity of 500,000 bl.

DIRTY TANKERS - AMERICAS

Midsize rates rise again, VLCC demand steady

Suezmax and Aframax rates in the Americas trended higher again on Thursday as persistent European demand for Americas crude thinned out available tonnage, while VLCC rates inched higher as Asia-Pacific demand rose ahead of the lunar new year next week.

Aframaxes, Suezmaxes add to gains

European demand for crude from the US, Mexico and Guyana pushed Suezmax and Aframax rates higher. The US Gulf coast-UKC Aframax rate climbed by WS10 to WS200, equivalent to \$4.26/bl for 90,000t cargoes of WTI, after PetroChina put the Pacific Coral on subjects at that level for a voyage loading from 17 February.

The shrinking tonnage lifted the east coast Mexico-USGC 70,000t rate as well, which rose to by WS7.5 to WS212.5 after Chevron provisionally booked an Aframax at that level for a voyage loading from 18-20 February.

European refiners also booked several Suezmaxes, tightening tonnage in the segment and boosting rates. Phillips 66 put the Pacific on subjects for a USGC-Europe voyage loading from 20-22 February at WS92.5, raising the rate by WS2.5 to that level, or \$2.60/bl for WTI. Repsol put the Sea Garnet on subjects for an adjacent east coast Mexico-Europe voyage loading from 22-23 February also at WS92.5.

Unipac sought a Suezmax for a Guyana-Europe voyage loading from 2-3 March.

Asia-Pacific demand boosts VLCCs

Cargo demand to Asia-Pacific remained elevated ahead of the lunar new year holidays, bolstering VLCCs in the Atlantic basin.

Petrobras provisionally booked the Front Gaula for a Brazil-China voyage loading from 4 March at WS64.75. That rate climbed by WS2 to WS65, or \$3.67/bl for Tupi.

The rate to ship 270,000t of crude from USGC to China and South Korea increased by \$400,000 to \$9.5mn lumpsum, including \$250,000 Corpus Christi load-port fees, after Equinor put the Agios Sostis I on subjects for a voyage to South Korea at that level loading from 18-22 March.

BP and Trafigura each sought a VLCC for USGC-east Asia voyages loading from mid-March.

Dirty tanker rates - Americas

Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
Caribbean-China*	270	9,250,000	+400,000	34.26
Caribbean-Singapore*	270	8,250,000	+400,000	30.56
Caribbean-WC India*	270	8,050,000	+400,000	29.81
USGC-China*	270	9,500,000	+400,000	35.19
USGC-China (STS)*	270	9,250,000	+400,000	34.26
USGC-Rotterdam*	270	4,350,000	+50,000	16.11
USGC-Singapore*	270	8,500,000	+400,000	31.48
USGC-South Korea/Japan*	270	9,500,000	+400,000	35.19
USGC-WC India*	270	8,350,000	+450,000	30.93
West coast Panama-China	270	5,300,000	+150,000	19.63
Brazil-China	260	65.00	+2.00	26.27
Brazil-USWC	260	67.50	+2.00	21.05
Brazil-UKC	260	70.00	+2.00	13.22
Caribbean-UK continent	150	96.50	+4.50	17.82
USGC-Europe	145	92.50	+5.00	20.06
Brazil-UKC	130	100.00	+2.50	19.19
Caribbean-Panama	130	120.00	+7.50	5.57
Caribbean-USGC	130	105.00	+7.50	10.09
Guyana-Panama	130	120.00	+7.50	9.22
Panama-USWC	130	135.00	nc	16.74
USGC/Caribs-Singapore*	130	6,000,000	nc	46.15
USGC-China*	130	6,500,000	nc	50.00
Esmeraldas-Los Angeles	100	-	-	19.61
USGC-UK continent	90	-	-	32.82
USGC-Med	90	-	-	40.69
Vancouver-USWC	80	195.00	nc	17.41
Vancouver-Panama	80	195.00	nc	33.87
Vancouver-China via 270kt Panama STS	80	-	-	55.38
Caribbean-UK continent	70	205.00	+10.00	38.68
Caribbean-USGC	70	202.50	+7.50	22.03
East coast Mexico-USGC	70	212.50	+7.50	12.79
USGC-east coast Canada	70	205.00	+10.00	31.71
USGC-UK continent	70	200.00	+10.00	42.20
USGC-Med	70	200.00	+10.00	52.32
Argentina-USWC	65	-	-	93.94
Argentina-USAC	65	-	-	80.90
Argentina-USWC	50	350.00	+25.00	-
Argentina-USAC	50	350.00	+25.00	-
Caribbean-USGC	50	365.00	+37.50	39.71
East coast Mexico-USGC	50	365.00	+37.50	19.42
Ecuador-USWC	50	425.00	nc	63.16
Esmeraldas-Houston	50	-	-	38.01
USGC Aframax reverse lightering*		530,000	+25,000	-

* \$ lumpsum

Dirty tanker rates - Jones Act (weekly)

Route	Size '000bl	\$/bl	±
Corpus Christi-Delaware Bay	260-330	5.04	+0.02
Corpus Christi-St. James	260-330	2.58	+0.01
Corpus Christi-St. James	140-260	3.43	+0.01

ANNOUNCEMENT

All data change announcements can be viewed online at www.argusmedia.com/announcements. Alternatively, to be added to the email distribution list for all announcements, please email: datahelp@argusmedia.com.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The holiday calendar showing which Argus reports are not published on which days is now available online <https://www.argusmedia.com/en/methodology/publishing-schedule>

DIRTY TANKERS - ASIA-PACIFIC

Southeast Asian Aframax rates hold

Aframax rates from the southeast Asia region held but were poised to move lower if chartering activity remained tepid.

Southeast Asian Aframax rates to east coast Australia, and from Indonesia to Japan held at WS155 and WS160 respectively. Market expectations remained subdued as most participants expect demand to fall because of the lunar new year holidays, a shipbroker said. ExxonMobil booked the Megan Glory for its 80,000t shipment from Bintulu, Malaysia to Singapore, loading from 20 February. But the fixture's rate had yet to emerge at Singapore's market close. On cargoes, Thailand's PTT sought a vessel for a similar-sized shipment from Malaysia and Vietnam, to Thailand, loading from 21 February. Saudi Aramco's trading arm ATS remained in the market for its 80,000t fuel-oil shipment from Singapore to China, loading from 17 February. Trading firm Thai Integrated Services (TIS) also remained in the market for its 80,000t shipment from Dumai, Indonesia to Thailand, loading from 24 February.

But regional rates could be supported in the short-term as Argus TCE spread for Aframaxes in the Mideast Gulf widened against the southeast Asia region to about \$10,141/d, before Singapore's market close, from \$9,250/d, on limited vessel supply in the Mideast Gulf. This could encourage shipowners to ballast their vessels from the southeast Asia region, thinning regional tonnage availability.

In the Australian region, Shell sought a vessel for its 80,000t shipment from Dampier to South Korea, loading from 26 February. Trader Quantum Global sought a vessel for a similar-sized shipment from Marsden Point to Indonesia, loading from 27 February. Chevron sought a vessel for its 80,000t shipment from Kumul to east Asia, loading from 23 February.

Dirty tanker rates - Asia-Pacific

Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
Indonesia to Japan	80	160.00	nc	22.98
SE Asia to EC Australia	80	155.00	nc	28.23
Kozmino to Yeosu*	100	1,450,000	nc	14.50
Kozmino to Chiba*	100	1,800,000	nc	18.00
Kozmino to north China*	100	1,800,000	nc	18.00
Kozmino to Singapore*	100	2,325,000	nc	23.25
Kozmino to Sikka*	100	3,150,000	nc	31.50
Kozmino-Paradip*	100	2,700,000	nc	27.00
Yeosu STS to Paradip*	100	2,725,000	nc	27.25
Yeosu STS to Mundra*	100	2,730,000	nc	27.30
De-Kastri to Yeosu*	100	2,370,000	nc	23.70
De-Kastri to Yeosu STS*	100	2,350,000	nc	23.50
De-Kastri to Kiire*	100	2,520,000	nc	25.20
De-Kastri to Qingdao*	100	2,590,000	nc	25.90
De-Kastri to Yantai*	100	2,640,000	nc	26.40
De-Kastri to Dongjiakou*	100	2,610,000	nc	26.10
De-Kastri to Zhoushan*	100	2,610,000	nc	26.10
De-Kastri to Batangas*	100	2,970,000	nc	29.70
De-Kastri to Sriracha*	100	3,310,000	nc	33.10
De-Kastri to Singapore*	100	3,350,000	+10,000	33.50
De-Kastri to Paradip*	100	3,760,000	nc	37.60
De-Kastri to Sikka*	100	4,300,000	+10,000	43.00

* \$ lumpsum

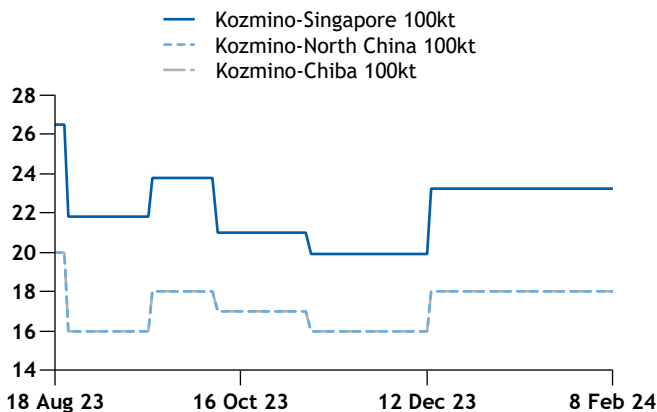
Workspaces:

- Russian-origin Crude + Freight - Global
- WTI Arbitrages + Freight - Global
- Crude Imports + Freight - China
- Crude + Freight - Atlantic Basin
- Crude Exports + Freight - US
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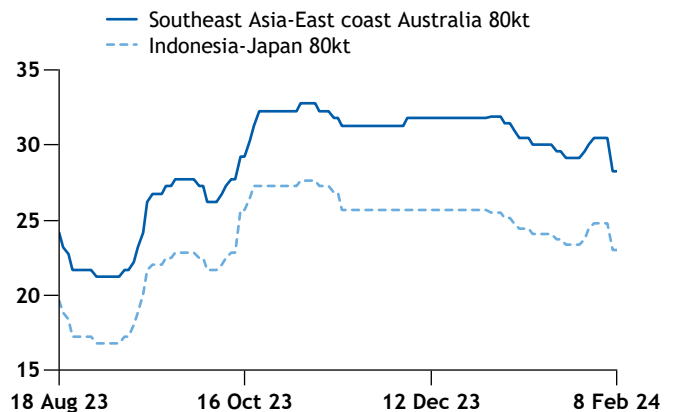
Kozmino dirty tanker rates

\$/t



Southeast Asia dirty tanker rates

\$/t



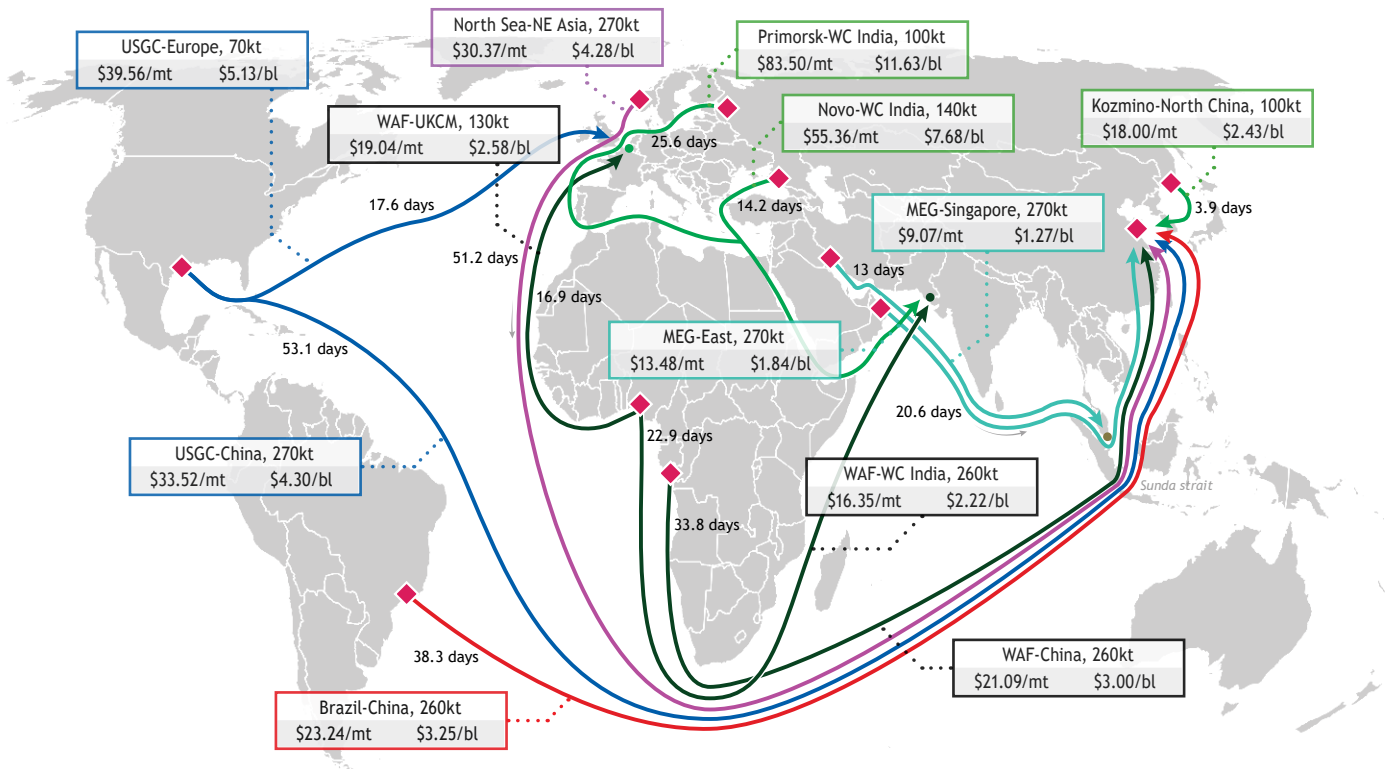
CRUDE TRADE ROUTES Weekly price updates

Published date: Thursday 8 February 2024

Period: 5

The prices used are mid-week (Tue-Wed-Thu) averages for the previous assessment week, providing a broad snapshot of key seaborne trade routes for crude around the globe.

- ◆ Key benchmark locations
- Freight prices for trade routes and vessel size



Crude trade routes						
Crude	Origin	FOB Price \$/bl	Destination	Freight		Delivered price \$/bl
				\$/bl	\$/t	
WTI	US Gulf	78.04	Rotterdam	5.13	39.56	85.90
WTI	US Gulf	78.04	China	4.30	33.52	83.73
Tupi	Brazil	81.07	Shandong	3.25	23.24	84.32
Johan Sverdrup	Norway	81.34	Shandong	4.28	30.37	85.62
Bonny Light	Nigeria	85.67	Rotterdam	2.58	19.04	88.25
Bonny Light	Nigeria	85.67	India	2.22	16.35	87.89
Djeno	Rep. Congo	81.33	Shandong	3.00	21.09	84.37
Urals, Baltic	Primorsk	65.62	WC India	11.63	83.50	79.57
Urals, Black Sea	Novorossiysk	65.80	WC India	7.68	55.36	79.57
Basrah Medium	Iraq	80.82	Singapore	1.27	9.07	82.10
ESPO Blend	Kozmino	77.84	Shandong	2.43	18.00	80.77
Oman	Oman	80.87	Shandong	1.84	13.48	76.89

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CLEAN TANKERS - EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

Mideast Gulf clean MRs up, LRs drop

Clean tanker rates for LR tankers in the Mideast Gulf slid further on Thursday while MR rates trended higher as east African demand resumed.

Africa-bound clean MR rates higher

Clean MR tanker rates from the Mideast Gulf to east Africa adjusted higher on the back of some chartering activity amid reduced tonnage supply.

MR rates for 35,000t shipments from the Mideast Gulf to east Africa rose by WS7.5 to WS415. Trading firm Trafigura booked the STI Battery at WS415 for its MR shipment from Ruwais, UAE to east Africa, loading from 10 February, with an option to discharge in South Africa at WS405. Indian private-sector refiner Reliance booked the Maersk Tokyo at WS420 for a similar-sized shipment from Ruwais, UAE to east Africa, loading from 18 February, with an option to discharge in South Africa at WS410. But the fixture was concluded at a premium to prevailing market levels because it was a replacement fixture. On cargoes, Abu Dhabi Marine International Chartering (Admic) sought a vessel for its MR shipment from the Mideast Gulf to East Africa, loading from 22 February, with an option to discharge in South Africa.

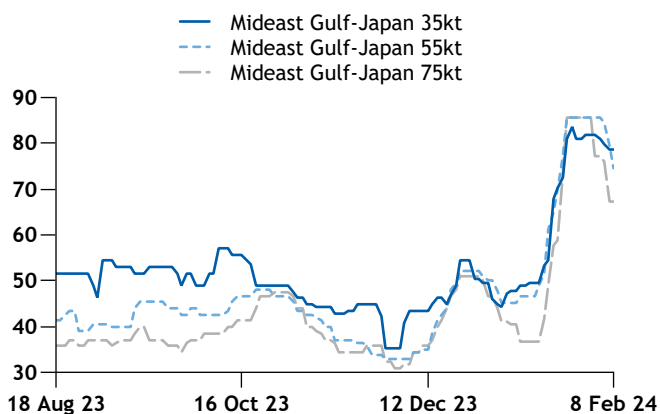
LR1 rates for 55,000t shipments from the Mideast Gulf to Japan fell by WS20 to WS305 as vessel supply outpaced demand. State-controlled Saudi Aramco's trading arm ATS booked the Chemtrans Baltic at WS310 for its LR1 shipment from the Mideast Gulf to Japan, loading from 16 February. But the fixture was concluded at a premium to prevailing market levels because of prompt loading dates. On cargoes, Oman's OQ trading sought a vessel for its LR1 shipment from Duqm, Oman to Japan, loading from 19 February.

European clean rates climb

European clean MR rates stepped up for the third consecutive day on Thursday as charterers pushed to secure ships

Mideast Gulf clean rates

\$/t



Clean tanker rates - Europe, Middle East, Africa

Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
Middle East				
Mideast Gulf-UKC*	90	7,500,000	nc	83.33
Red Sea-Med*	90	4,700,000	nc	52.22
Red Sea-UKC*	90	4,800,000	nc	53.33
Mideast Gulf-Japan	75	275.00	nc	67.32
Mideast Gulf-South Korea	75	280.00	nc	63.81
Mideast Gulf-UKC*	65	6,500,000	nc	100.00
Red Sea-Med*	65	3,950,000	nc	60.77
Red Sea-UKC*	65	4,050,000	nc	62.31
Mideast Gulf-Brazil*	40	4,300,000	-250,000	107.50
Mideast Gulf-Japan	55	305.00	-20.00	74.66
Mideast Gulf-Singapore	55	320.00	-20.00	46.46
Mideast Gulf-South Korea	55	310.00	-20.00	70.65
Mideast Gulf-Durban	35	-	-	61.34
Mideast Gulf-Durban**	35	-	-	65.89
Mideast Gulf-east Africa	35	380.00	+7.50	45.98
Mideast Gulf-east Africa**	35	415.00	+7.50	50.22
Mideast Gulf-east coast India	35	370.00	nc	-
Mideast Gulf-east coast India*	35	1,783,300	nc	50.95
Mideast Gulf-Japan	35	325.00	nc	78.62
Mideast Gulf-Singapore	35	365.00	nc	55.04
Mideast Gulf-UKC*	40	4,200,000	-200,000	105.00
Mideast Gulf-Walvis Bay	35	-	-	81.51
Mideast Gulf-Walvis Bay**	35	-	-	89.02
Mideast Gulf-west coast India	35	370.00	nc	-
Mideast Gulf-west coast India*	35	1,051,600	nc	30.05
Northern Europe				
UKC-west Africa	60	237.50	-2.50	43.63
ARA-Durban	37	-	-	55.67
ARA-Walvis Bay	37	-	-	46.49
UKC-east coast Mexico	37	175.00	+15.00	36.51
UKC-South America	37	215.00	+15.00	41.88
UKC-US Atlantic coast	37	190.00	+15.00	31.35
UKC-west Africa	37	210.00	+15.00	38.58
Baltic-UKC	30	220.00	nc	22.09
Cross UKC	30	205.00	nc	13.18
Cross UKC	22	280.00	nc	18.00
Black Sea and Mediterranean				
Med-Japan*	80	5,900,000	nc	73.75
Med-Japan*	60	5,300,000	nc	88.33
Med-US Atlantic coast	37	210.00	nc	38.07
Black Sea-Med	30	280.00	+15.00	34.24
Cross Med	30	270.00	+15.00	20.66
Cross Med gasoline	30	270.00	+15.00	20.66
Cross Med jet	30	270.00	+15.00	20.66
Cross Med naphtha	30	270.00	+15.00	20.66
Med gasoline premium	30	+0.00	nc	-
Med jet premium	30	+0.00	nc	-
Med naphtha premium	30	+0.00	nc	-
Med-UKC	30	280.00	+15.00	38.25
Med-UKC gasoline	30	280.00	+15.00	35.87
Med-UKC jet	30	280.00	+15.00	35.87
Med-UKC naphtha	30	280.00	+15.00	38.58
Med-Walvis Bay	35	396.00	+8.00	84.79

* \$ lumpsum **inclusive of anti-piracy fees

CLEAN TANKERS - EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

for the first crop of February cargoes before the end of the week.

The UK Continent to US Atlantic coast MR market rose by WS15 to WS190 while the UK Continent to west Africa rate rose by WS15 to WS210.

Gasoline demand in the US may be ramping up as the latest US inventory data revealed a drop in nationwide gasoline stocks, driven by a relatively sharp draw on US Gulf coast inventories. Total stocks fell by 1.2pc to 251mn bl in the week to 2 February according to the EIA. Gasoline inventories on the Gulf coast fell by 5.7pc to 84.66mn bl, marking a six-week low. Utilisation rates in the region dropped to their lowest since September 2021 at 77.1pc, possibly indicating that the region has struggled to restart units impacted by cold weather in January.

In the Handysize market, the cost of cross-Mediterranean freight rose by WS15 to WS270. A slowdown in south European refinery output is spurring an increase in product imports, pushing freight rates higher. In the north of Europe, trading activity remained slow with few cargoes available and the cost of cross-UK Continent freight held at WS205. But the increase in the south of Europe could pull vessels southwards and leave northern charterers with fewer options, potentially pushing rates higher next week.

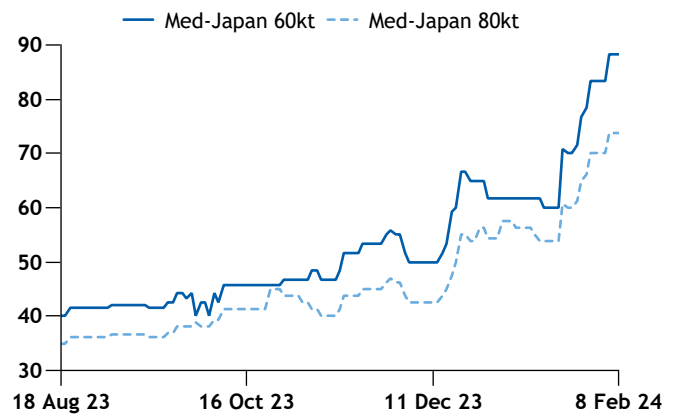
Workspaces:

- Russian-origin Products + Freight - Global
- Products + Freight - Europe
- Products + Freight - US Gulf coast

- These Workspaces are templates, curated by the Freight editorial team
- To find out more about Workspaces, visit [this link](#)

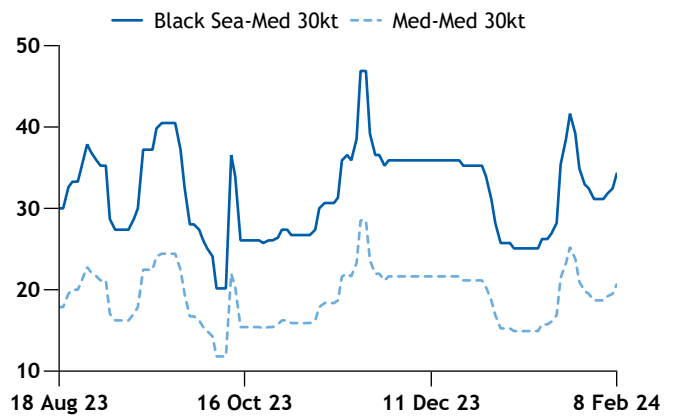
Med-Japan LR rates

\$/t



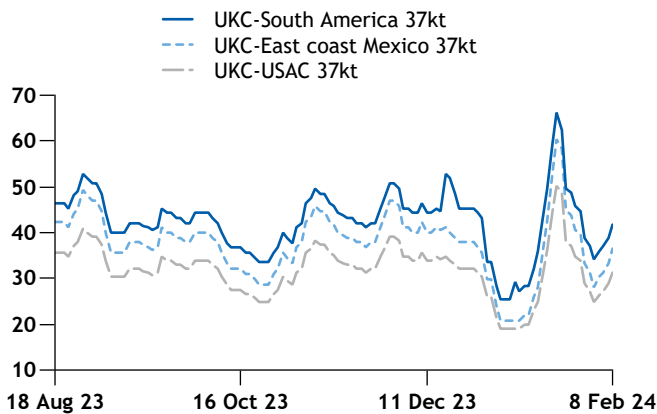
Black Sea/Mediterranean clean tanker rates

\$/t



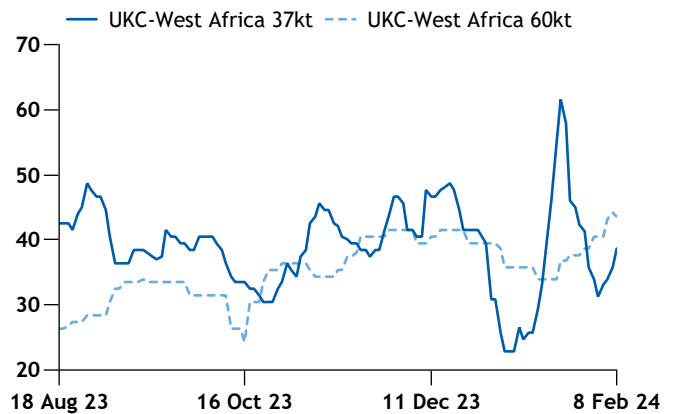
UKC-Americas clean tanker rates

\$/t



UKC-west Africa clean tanker rates

\$/t



CLEAN TANKERS - AMERICAS

MR rates trend higher

Charterers continued to quietly fix MRs on Thursday, eating into available tonnage and pressuring rates higher in the Americas, with additional upward pressure from weather delays in the Caribbean preventing tonnage from discharging and becoming available, a market participant said.

Rates tick higher in USGC

ExxonMobil put the Elka Elefsis on subjects for a voyage loading from the US Gulf coast with options to discharge its cargo in Europe at WS167.5, holding that rate steady at that level, or in the Caribbean at \$685,000 lumpsum, raising that rate by \$10,000 to that level.

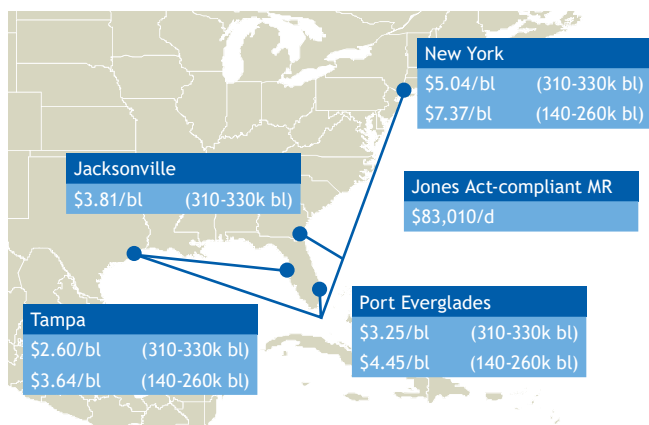
A charterer put the Spring Street on subjects for a voyage loading on the USGC from 12 February.

Trafigura sought an MR for a US Atlantic coast-UKC loading from 12-14 February, but no vessel was heard to have been hired by 5:30pm ET.

The steady chartering activity this week and limited vessel supply in the near term lifted the USGC-Chile rate by \$50,000 to \$2.7mn.

Clean tanker rates - Americas				
Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
Worldscale				
USGC-Brazil	60	245.00	-10.00	-
USGC-north Brazil	60	-	-	41.85
USGC-south Brazil	60	-	-	53.31
USGC-UKC	60	205.00	-5.00	44.61
Caribbean-USAC	38	215.00	nc	25.00
USAC-UKC	38	157.50	nc	26.35
USGC/Caribbean-UKCM	38	167.50	nc	31.59
USGC-Argentina/Uruguay	38	-	-	61.36
USGC-east coast Canada	38	230.00	nc	33.37
USGC-east coast South America	38	235.00	nc	-
USGC-north Brazil	38	-	-	40.14
USGC-south Brazil	38	-	-	52.55
Lumpsum				
USGC-Japan	60	4,000,000	nc	66.67
EC Canada - USAC	38	687,500	nc	18.09
USGC-Chile (not south of Coronel)	38	2,700,000	+50,000	71.05
Calbuco diff	38	+100,000	nc	+2.63
Caldera diff	38	-100,000	nc	-2.63
Mejillones/Antofagasta diff	38	-125,000	nc	-3.29
Quintero diff	38	-50,000	nc	-1.32
USGC-Dominican Republic	38	635,000	+10,000	16.71
USGC-east coast Mexico	38	475,000	+50,000	12.50
USGC-Ecuador	38	2,100,000	+50,000	55.26
USGC-Japan	38	2,600,000	+100,000	68.42
USGC-Las Minas	38	635,000	+10,000	16.71
USGC-Lazaro Cardenas	38	2,500,000	+50,000	65.79
USGC-Peru	38	2,400,000	+50,000	63.16
Callao/Conchan diff	38	-100,000	nc	-2.63
USGC-Pozos	38	685,000	+10,000	18.03
Barranquilla diff	38	-45,000	nc	-1.18
Bolivar diff	38	-45,000	nc	-1.18
Cartagena diff	38	-30,000	nc	-0.79
USGC-Rosarito	38	2,650,000	+50,000	69.74
USWC-Chile (not south of Coronel)	38	2,600,000	nc	68.42
Calbuco diff	38	+100,000	nc	+2.63
Caldera diff	38	-100,000	nc	-2.63
Mejillones/Antofagasta diff	38	-125,000	nc	-3.29
Quintero diff	38	-50,000	nc	-1.32
USWC-Lazaro Cardenas	38	1,250,000	nc	32.89
USWC-Rosarito	38	887,500	nc	23.36
USWC-Topolobampo	19	-	-	26.51
USGC-Guaymas	12	-	-	70.79
USWC-Guaymas	12	-	-	31.69

Clean tanker rates - Jones Act



Panama Canal auction prices (weekly)		\$
Transit slot type		Price
Neopanamax		282,500.00
Panamax		545,250.00

Delays		
Location	Days	±
Panama Canal Neopanamax locks NB	2	nc
Panama Canal Neopanamax locks SB	5	+1
Panama Canal Panamax locks NB	6	+1
Panama Canal Panamax locks SB	2	nc

Clean tanker rates - Jones Act (weekly)				\$/bl
Route	Size '000bl	Rate	±	
Houston-Tampa	310-330	2.60	+0.01	
Houston-Tampa	140-260	3.64	+0.01	
Houston-Port Everglades	310-330	3.25	+0.01	
Houston-Port Everglades	140-260	4.45	+0.01	
Houston-Jacksonville	310-330	3.81	+0.01	
Houston-New York	310-330	5.04	+0.02	
Houston-New York	140-260	7.37	+0.03	
US-US \$/d	310-330	83,010		+25

CLEAN TANKERS - ASIA-PACIFIC

Northeast Asia clean MR rates fall

Clean MR tanker rates from the northeast Asia continued to fall on lower chartering activity, and as some freight participants took extra time off to leave major cities to return to their hometowns ahead of the lunar new year rush.

MR lumpsum rates for 35,000t shipments from South Korea to Singapore and the USWC fell by \$20,000 each to \$1.53mn and \$3.3mn respectively. South Korean trading firm SK Energy booked the Chang Hang Fa Xian at \$1.53mn for its MR shipment from South Korea to Singapore, loading from 22 February. Houston-based trader Musket Energy booked the Hafnia Leopard at \$3.45mn for its MR shipment from Yosu, South Korea to the USWC, loading from 15 February. But the fixture was concluded at a premium to prevailing market levels because of prompt loading dates.

Freight rates for 35,000t shipment from South Korea to Australia fell by WS5 to WS390. Trading firm Vitol booked the Garnet Express at WS390 for a similar-sized shipment from Japan to Australia, loading from 17 February. Worldscale rates from Japan typically trade at a similar level to shipments from South Korea to Australia. Gunvor's shipping arm Clearlake allocated its own vessel for its MR shipment from Qingdao, China to Australia, loading from 18 February. But details for the vessel had yet to emerge as of Singapore's market close.

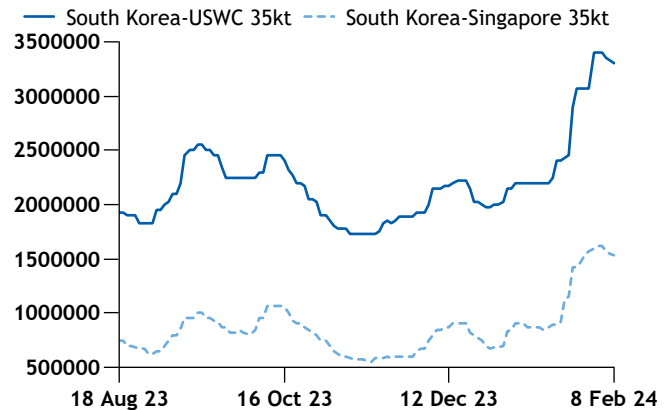
Clean tanker rates - Asia-Pacific

Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
West coast India-south Brazil*	90	7,200,000	nc	80.00
West coast India-UKC*	90	7,400,000	nc	82.22
West coast India-south Brazil*	65	6,300,000	-50,000	96.92
West coast India-UKC*	65	6,400,000	nc	98.46
West coast India-south Brazil*	40	4,100,000	-200,000	102.50
SE Asia-EC Australia	35	345.00	-5.00	58.89
South Korea-Australia/New Zealand	35	390.00	-5.00	-
South Korea-Chile*	35	4,215,000	-25,000	120.43
South Korea-east coast Australia	35	-	-	67.59
South Korea-New Zealand	35	-	-	80.57
South Korea-Singapore*	35	1,530,000	-20,000	43.71
South Korea-USWC*	35	3,300,000	-25,000	94.29
North China-east coast Australia	35	390.00	-5.00	76.05
North China-west coast Australia	35	390.00	-5.00	66.89
Dalian-Singapore*	35	1,635,000	-22,000	46.71
SE Asia-EC Australia	30	402.50	-6.00	68.71
Singapore-Japan	30	325.00	-5.00	40.07
SE Asia-Walvis Bay	35	419.50	+7.00	97.15

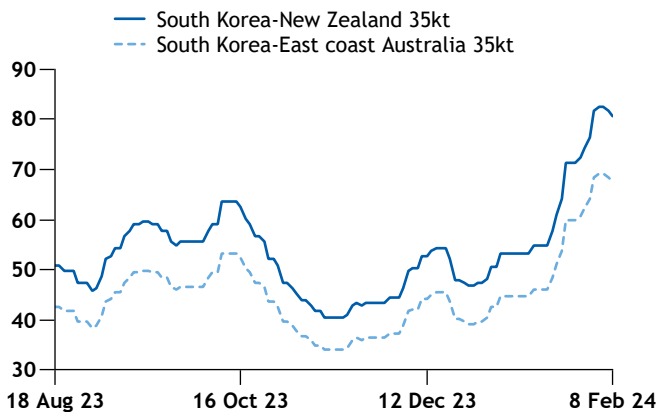
* \$ lumpsum

South Korea clean tanker lumpsum rates

\$

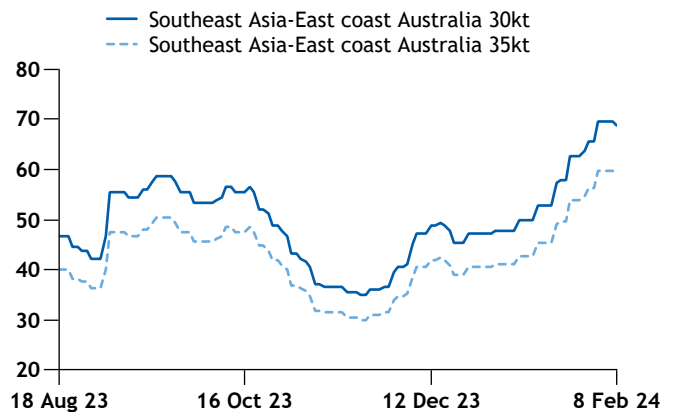


South Korea-Australia/New Zealand clean tanker rates \$/t



Southeast Asia-Australia clean tanker rates

\$/t



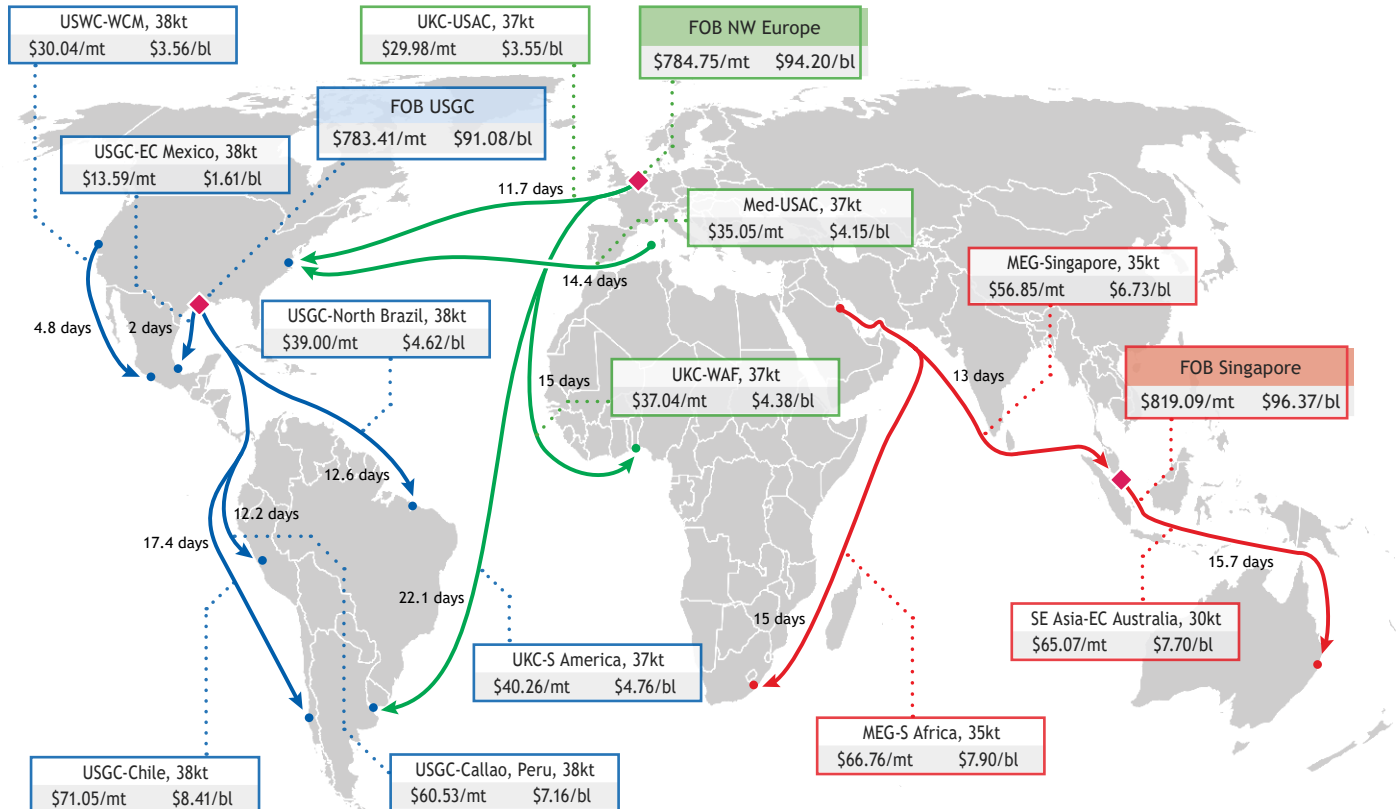
GASOLINE TRADE ROUTES Weekly price updates

Published date: Thursday 8 February 2024

Period: 5

The prices used are mid-week (Tue-Wed-Thu) averages for the previous assessment week, providing a broad snapshot of key seaborne trade routes for gasoline around the globe.

- ◆ Key benchmark locations
- Freight prices for trade routes and vessel size



Americas Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hubs	\$/mt	\$/bl
Gasoline 87 conv USGC WB ex RVO	783.41	91.08
to East Coast Mexico	797.00	92.69
to Peru	843.94	98.24
to Chile	854.46	99.49
to Brazil	822.41	95.70
Gasoline reg CARBOB SF WB fob ex RVO	779.15	92.74
to West Coast Mexico	809.19	96.30

Europe Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hub	\$/mt	\$/bl
Eurobob Oxy barges to USAC	784.75	94.20
to Argentina (Gasoline Eurobob oxy NWE del Buenos Aires)	840.88	100.94
to West Africa (Gasoline Eurobob delivered west Africa)	821.79	98.64
Gasoline 95r 10ppm W Med fob to USAC	805.75	96.72
	840.80	100.87

Asia Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hubs	\$/mt	\$/bl
Gasoline 92r Singapore	819.09	96.37
to Australia	884.16	104.07
Gasoline 92r Mideast Gulf	762.75	90.27
to South Africa (Gasoline 95r c+f Durban)	869.23	102.87

To learn more about Argus' daily price assessments, market-moving news and in-depth analysis, please visit:

Argus Road Fuels: argusmedia.com/en/oil-products/road-fuels

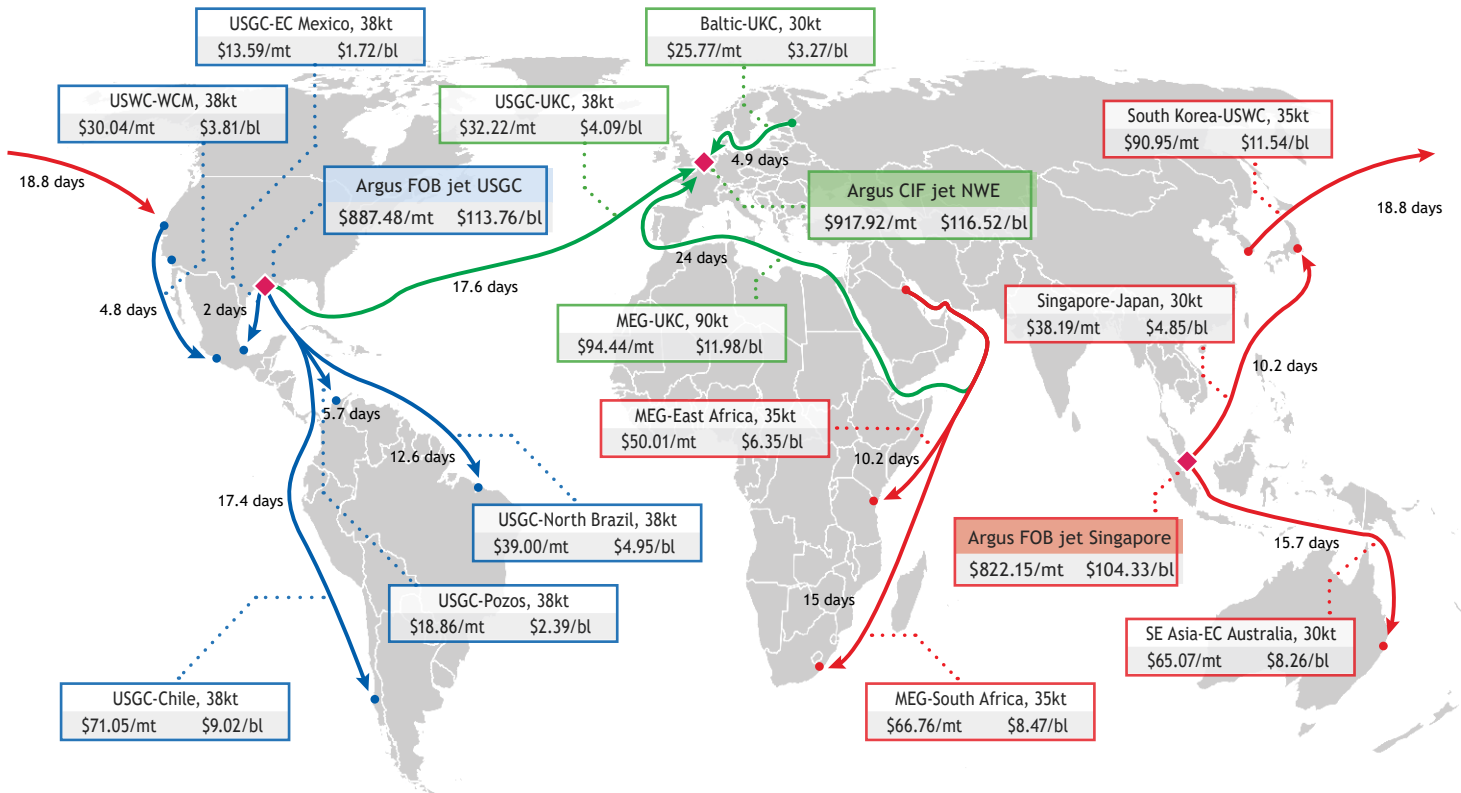
KEY JET FUEL TRADE ROUTES Weekly price updates

Published date: Thursday 8 February 2024

Period: 5

The prices used are mid-week (Tue-Wed-Thu) averages for the previous assessment week, providing a broad snapshot of key seaborne trade routes for jet fuel around the globe.

- ◆ Key benchmark locations
- Freight prices for trade routes and vessel size



Americas Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hubs	\$/mt	\$/bl
Argus FOB jet USGC	887.48	113.76
to East Coast Mexico	901.07	115.48
to Pozos/Caribbean	906.34	116.15
to Chile	958.53	122.78
to Brazil	930.08	119.22
Argus FOB jet USWC	995.47	127.61
to West Coast Mexico	953.27	122.20

Asia Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hubs	\$/mt	\$/bl
Argus FOB jet Singapore	822.15	104.33
to Australia	887.22	112.59
to Japan	860.15	109.18
Argus FOB jet MEG	765.80	97.18
to South Africa	832.37	105.66
to East Africa	815.81	103.53
Argus FOB jet South Korea	796.20	101.07
to USWC	995.47	127.61

Europe Trade Routes		
Imports to regional hub	\$/mt	\$/bl
Argus CIF jet NWE	917.92	116.52
ex MEG	765.80	97.18
ex USGC	887.48	113.76
ex Baltic	892.15	113.25

To learn more about Argus' daily price assessments, market-moving news and in-depth analysis, please visit:
 Argus Oil Products: argusmedia.com/en/oil-products

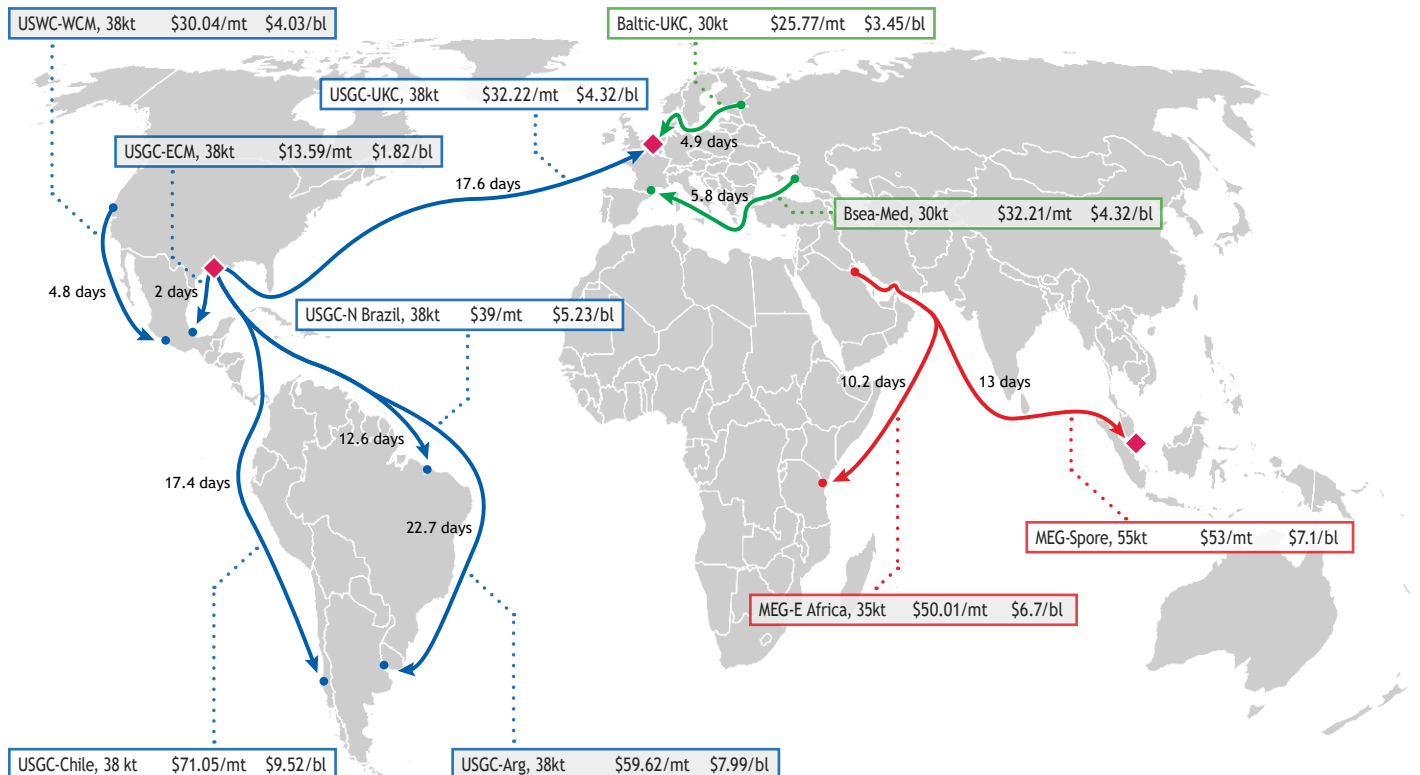
KEY DISTILLATES TRADE ROUTES Weekly price updates

Published date: Thursday 8 February 2024

Period: 5

The prices used are mid-week (Tue-Wed-Thu) averages for the previous assessment week, providing a broad snapshot of key seaborne trade routes for distillates around the globe.

- ◆ Key benchmark locations
- Freight prices for trade routes and vessel size



Americas Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hubs:	\$/mt	\$/bl
FOB USGC	789.17	109.93
del EC Mexico	802.76	111.75
del Chile	860.22	119.45
del N Brazil	848.79	117.92
del Argentina	913.14	126.88
del NW Europe	864.08	116.08
FOB USWC	807.23	111.63
del WC Mexico	837.27	115.66

Europe Trade Routes		
Imports to regional hubs:	\$/mt	\$/bl
Argus Diesel French 10 ppm NWE cif		
ex Baltic	864.08	116.08
Argus Gasoil Diesel French 10 ppm W Med cif		
ex Black Sea	870.42	116.94

Asia Trade Routes		
Exports from regional hub:	\$/mt	\$/bl
Argus Gasoil 10 ppm MEG	748.74	100.37
to Singapore	801.74	107.47
to East Africa	798.75	107.07

To learn more about Argus' daily price assessments, market-moving news and in-depth analysis, please visit:

Argus Oil Products: argusmedia.com/en/oil-products

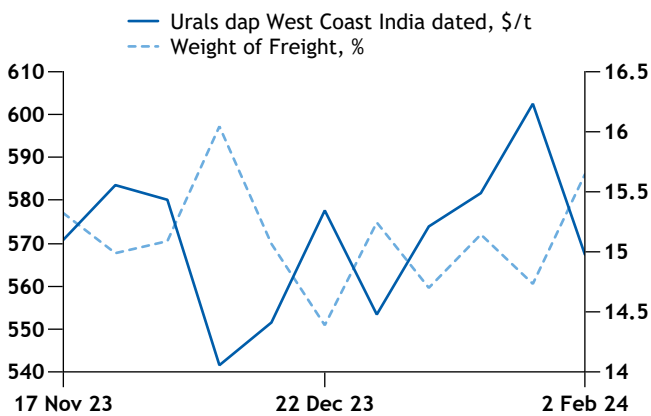
TANKER TCE RATES

Dirty tanker time charter equivalent rates						
Route	WS/LS	TCE (non-scrubber) USD/day	±	TCE (scrubber) USD/day	±	
Dirty Tankers - VLCC						
EMEA						
Basrah-Los Angeles	46.00	21,088	+1,561	31,049	+1,135	
Bonny-Ningbo	67.00	37,608	+2,024	46,959	+2,088	
Ras Tanura-LOOP	48.00	29,865	+2,118	38,756	+2,179	
Ras Tanura-Ningbo	66.00	37,700	+807	46,497	+867	
Ras Tanura-Rotterdam	51.50	29,189	+2,141	37,669	+2,199	
Americas						
Corpus Christi-Ningbo	9,500,000	39,729	+2,998	49,136	+3,062	
Dirty Tankers - Suezmax						
EMEA						
Basrah-Trieste	125.00	30,293	-3,375	36,911	-3,330	
Bonny-Rotterdam	105.00	22,597	+1,274	26,489	+1,323	
Novorossiysk-Ningbo	8,500,000	80,912	-267	87,985	-219	
Ras Tanura-Qingdao	120.00	41,565	-271	48,699	-222	
Ras Tanura-Singapore	120.00	39,186	-305	45,818	-260	
Americas						
Houston-Rotterdam	92.50	28,382	+2,386	32,967	+1,555	
Dirty Tankers - Aframax						
EMEA						
Arzew-Trieste	160.00	32,120	-4,452	-	-	
Fujairah to Singapore	200.00	43,655	+625	-	-	
Americas						
Dos Bocas-Houston	212.50	38,460	+1,158	-	-	
Houston-Rotterdam	200.00	36,598	+2,392	-	-	
Asia-Pacific						
Bukit Tua-Kikuma	160.00	34,046	-255	-	-	
Kimanis-Geelong	155.00	33,026	-231	-	-	
Kozmino-Longkou	1,800,000	96,563	-62	-	-	
Clean tanker time charter equivalent rates						
Route	WS/LS	TCE (non-scrubber) USD/day	±			
Clean Tankers-Long Range 2						
EMEA						
Arzew-Oita	5,900,000	42,168	-210			
Ras Tanura-Chiba	275.00	68,142	-215			
Ras Tanura-Rotterdam	7,500,000	97,472	-156			
Yanbu-Rotterdam	4,800,000	87,085	-179			
Asia-Pacific						
Sikka-Rotterdam	7,400,000	97,901	-158			
Clean Tankers-Long Range 1						
EMEA						
Arzew-Oita	5,300,000	40,772	-163			
Ras Tanura-Chiba	305.00	55,822	-5,124			
Ras Tanura-Singapore	320.00	57,608	-4,993			
Ras Tanura-Rotterdam	6,500,000	85,929	-120			
Yanbu-Rotterdam	4,050,000	71,811	-136			
Asia-Pacific						
Sikka-Rotterdam	6,400,000	86,383	-122			
Clean Tankers-Medium Range						
EMEA						
Ras Tanura-Chiba	325.00	47,716	-140			
Ras Tanura-Singapore	365.00	40,443	-145			
Ras Tanura-Dar es Salaam	415.00	49,220	+972			
Rotterdam-New York	190.00	17,455	+2,639			
Americas						
Houston-Coronel	2,700,000	24,552	+764			
Houston-Pozos	685,000	13,596	-146			
Asia-Pacific						
Daesan-Port Botany	390.00	47,048	-636			
Singapore-Port Botany	345.00	40,189	-962			
Yeosu-Los Angeles	3,300,000	57,621	-355			
Yeosu-Singapore	1,530,000	64,049	-1,225			
Clean Tankers-Handysize						
Arzew-Trieste	270.00	24,347	+2,324			
Brofjordan-Rotterdam	205.00	13,062	-198			

RUSSIAN-ORIGIN FREIGHT

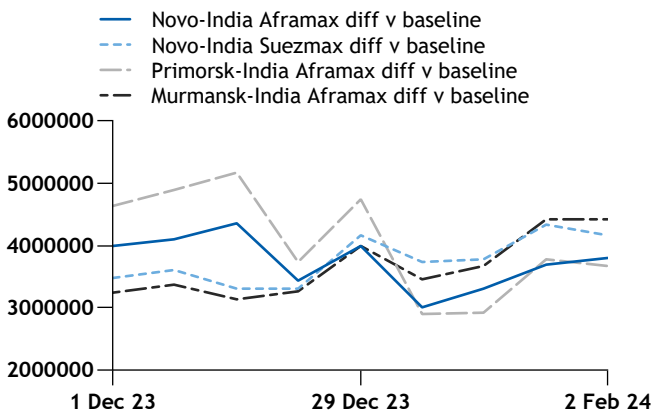
Russian-origin freight assessments						
Route	Size '000t	Low	High	Midpoint	+/-	\$/t
Black Sea						
Novorossiysk-west coast India	80	6,500,000	7,700,000	7,100,000	nc	88.75
Novorossiysk-north China	80	8,000,000	9,300,000	8,650,000	-100,000	108.13
Novorossiysk-west coast India	140	7,000,000	8,500,000	7,750,000	-250,000	55.36
Novorossiysk-north China	140	9,000,000	11,000,000	10,000,000	-50,000	71.43
Baltic Sea						
Primorsk-west coast India	100	7,500,000	9,200,000	8,350,000	-300,000	83.50
Primorsk-north China	100	9,500,000	11,200,000	10,350,000	-400,000	103.50
Barents Sea						
Murmansk-west coast India	140	8,700,000	10,000,000	9,350,000	-150,000	66.79
Murmansk-north China	140	10,500,000	12,000,000	11,250,000	-50,000	80.36

Weight of Freight for Urals del India (% of del price) \$/mn/t



Russian-origin Baseline				
Route	Size '000t	Rate	+/-	\$/t
Black Sea				
Novorossiysk-west coast India	80	2,709,474	-115,390	33.87
Novorossiysk-north China	80	3,971,416	-165,370	49.64
Novorossiysk-west coast India	140	3,426,105	-10,086	24.47
Novorossiysk-north China	140	4,922,337	+2,512	35.16
Baltic Sea				
Primorsk-west coast India	100	3,774,358	-170,667	37.74
Primorsk-north China	100	5,067,187	-212,153	50.67
Barents Sea				
Murmansk-west coast India	140	4,709,478	-6,277	33.64
Murmansk-north China	140	6,254,885	+2,967	44.68

Russian-origin freight to India vs baseline

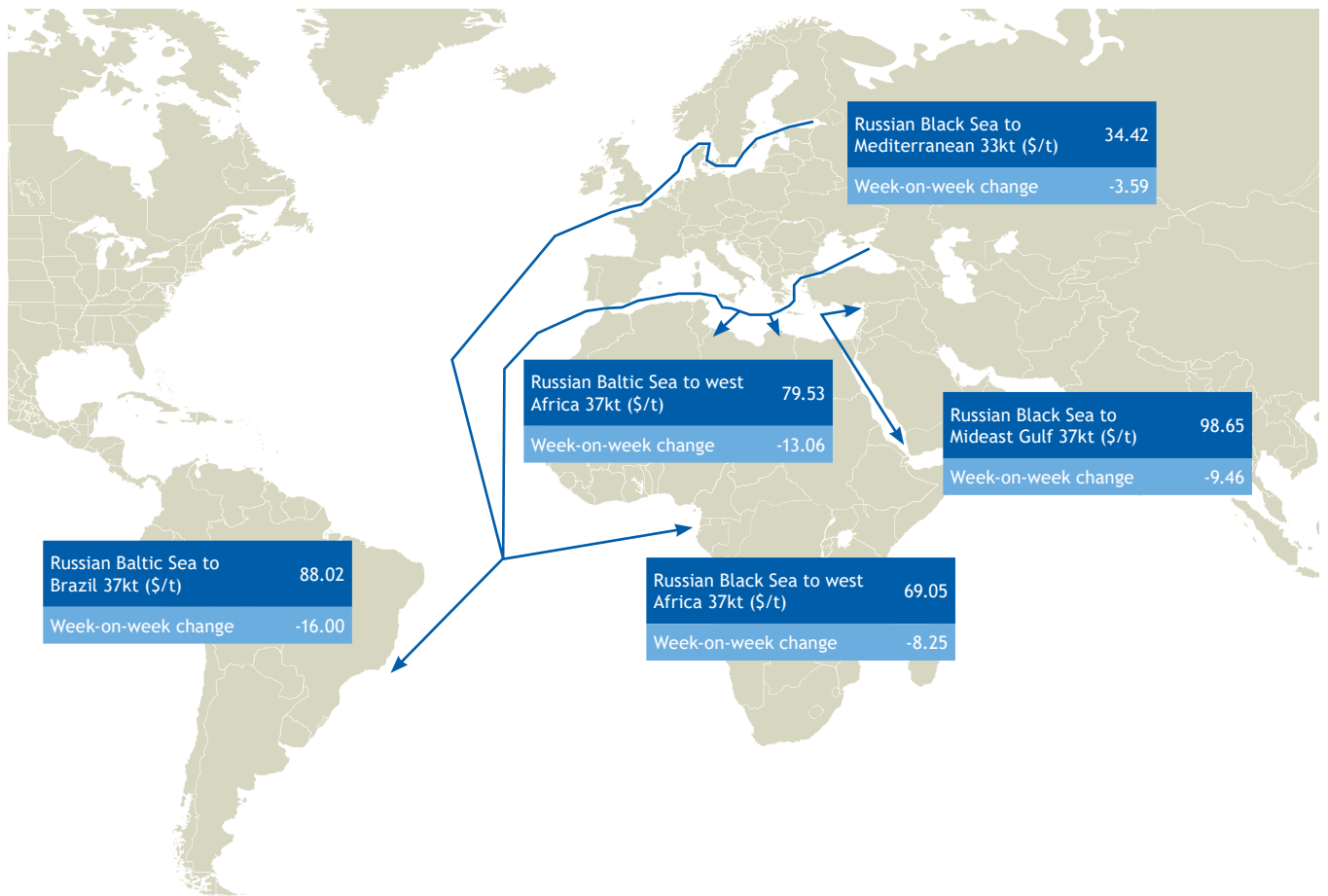


Additional War Risk Premium					
Region	Low	High	Midpoint	+/-	\$/t
Aframax					
Black Sea	605,150	907,725	756,438	+17,375	9.46
Baltic Sea	60,515	151,288	105,901	+2,433	1.06
Suezmax					
Black Sea	677,750	1,016,625	847,188	+14,375	6.05
Barents Sea	67,775	169,438	118,606	+2,013	0.85

RUSSIAN-ORIGIN FREIGHT

Russian-origin clean freight assessments						
Route	Size '000t	Low	High	Midpoint	+/-	\$/t
Black Sea						
Russian Black Sea-Mediterranean	33	340.00	380.00	360.00	-37.50	34.42
Russian Black Sea-west Africa	37	310.00	360.00	335.00	-40.00	69.05
Russian Black Sea-Mideast Gulf	37	3,000,000	4,300,000	3,650,000	-350,000	98.65
Baltic Sea						
Russian Baltic Sea-Mediterranean	37	310.00	350.00	330.00	-50.00	57.99
Russian Baltic Sea-west Africa	37	320.00	350.00	335.00	-55.00	79.53
Russian Baltic Sea-Brazil	37	310.00	350.00	330.00	-60.00	88.02
Russian Baltic Sea-Mideast Gulf	37	3,750,000	5,000,000	4,375,000	-125,000	118.25
Russian Baltic Sea-Singapore	37	4,500,000	5,600,000	5,050,000	-550,000	136.49
Russian Baltic Sea-west coast India	37	3,800,000	5,100,000	4,450,000	-250,000	120.27

Russian-origin clean products



FORWARD FREIGHT, CCF, DEMURRAGE AND SPECIALISED TANKERS

Forward Freight Agreement assessments				
Route	Size '000t	Rate	±	\$/t
Dirty tankers - EMEA				
Mideast Gulf-East	270	66.00	+1.00	15.51
Feb 24	270	66.00	+1.00	15.51
Mar 24	270	70.00	+3.50	16.45
Apr 24	270	66.00	+1.50	15.51
West Africa-UKCM	130	105.00	+2.50	18.31
Feb 24	130	110.50	+5.00	19.27
Mar 24	130	113.50	+4.50	19.79
Apr 24	130	106.00	+1.50	18.49
Dirty tankers - Americas				
USGC-China (STS)	270	9,250,000	+400,000	34.26
Feb 24	270	8,600,000	nc	31.85
Mar 24	270	8,550,000	nc	31.67
Apr 24	270	8,150,000	nc	30.19
USGC-UKC	90	-	-	32.82
Feb 24	90	-	-	32.41
Mar 24	90	-	-	34.30
Apr 24	90	-	-	34.30
USGC-UKC	70	200.00	+10.00	42.20
Feb 24	70	197.50	+4.50	41.67
Mar 24	70	209.00	+9.00	44.10
Apr 24	70	190.00	+3.50	40.09
Clean tankers - EMEA				
Mideast Gulf-Japan	55	305.00	-20.00	74.66
Feb 24	55	278.50	nc	68.18
Mar 24	55	229.50	+8.50	56.18
Apr 24	55	215.00	+5.00	52.63
UKC-US Atlantic coast	37	190.00	+15.00	31.35
Feb 24	37	218.50	-0.50	36.05
Mar 24	37	248.50	+11.00	41.00
Apr 24	37	227.50	+5.50	37.54
Cross Med	30	270.00	+15.00	20.66
Feb 24	30	275.00	nc	21.04
Mar 24	30	265.00	+5.00	20.27
Apr 24	30	242.50	+5.00	18.55
Clean tankers - Americas				
USGC/Caribbean-UKCM	38	167.50	nc	31.59
Feb 24	38	175.50	nc	33.10
Mar 24	38	194.50	+7.00	36.68
Apr 24	38	182.50	+5.00	34.42

Demurrage				
Route	Segment	\$/day	±	
Atlantic basin-Asia	VLCC	72,500	nc	
Mideast Gulf-East	VLCC	60,000	nc	
Mideast Gulf-East	Suezmax	65,000	nc	
Black Sea-Med	Suezmax	60,000	nc	
Black Sea-Med	Aframax	60,000	nc	
Kozmino-north China	Aframax	60,000	nc	
De-Kastri-north China	Aframax	60,000	nc	
De-Kastri-South Korea	Aframax	60,000	nc	
De-Kastri-India	Aframax	60,000	nc	
USGC-Europe	Aframax	80,000	+12,500	
Atlantic coast Americas	MR	37,500	+1,000	

Specialised tanker rates (weekly)				
Route	Cargo	Size '000t	\$/t	±
UKC-USGC	Biodiesel	10	49.90	-0.35
USGC-Itaqui	Ethanol	10-20	91.35	-1.15
South Brazil-UKC	Ethanol	10	104.15	-0.35
South Brazil-Ulsan	Ethanol	10	117.75	+0.10
USGC-east coast Mexico	Ethanol	5-10	27.65	-0.35
USGC-UKC	Ethanol	5	98.15	+1.90
USGC-UKC	Methanol	10	88.50	+0.75
USGC-Ulsan	Methanol	10	117.90	-0.35
Argentina+S Brazil (2p)-China (2p)	Vegetable oils	40	88.65	-0.35
Argentina+S Brazil (2p)-WC India (2p)	Vegetable oils	40	78.10	-0.15
Argentina-WC India (2p)	Vegetable oils	30	77.35	-0.65

Clean tanker rates - Ukraine					
Route	Size '000t	Low	High	Midpoint	\$/t
East Med -Ukraine	5-6	53.00	62.00	57.50	-2.50

CCF (Carbon cost of freight) indexes							
Route	Size '000 t	Lump sum \$		\$/t		\$/bl	
		One-way	Round-trip	One-way	Round-trip	One-way	Round-trip
Dirty							
Ras Tanura-Rotterdam (Arab Light)	280	72,489	117,152	0.26	0.42	0.04	0.06
Bonny-Rotterdam (Bonny Light)	130	38,071	63,101	0.29	0.49	0.04	0.07
Houston-Rotterdam (WTI)	70	34,109	58,893	0.49	0.84	0.06	0.11
Clean							
Ras Tanura-Rotterdam	65	33,431	59,998	0.51	0.92	-	-
Houston-Rotterdam	38	21,470	37,507	0.57	0.99	-	-
Rotterdam-New York	37	14,963	25,523	0.40	0.69	-	-

CRUDE-SPECIFIC FREIGHT

North America			Middle East			Middle East (continued)		
Delivery to	Size	\$/bl	Delivery to	Size	\$/bl	Delivery to	Size	\$/bl
Cold Lake			Arab Heavy			Murban		
West coast Panama	80kt	4.96	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.18	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.03
China via 270kt Panama STS	80kt	8.11	China	130kt	4.17	Asia-Pacific futures (Feb 24)	270kt	2.03
US west coast	80kt	2.55	Europe	280kt	2.15	Asia-Pacific futures (Mar 24)	270kt	2.15
Mars			Mediterranean	140kt	3.29	Asia-Pacific futures (Apr 24)	270kt	2.03
China	270kt	4.93	Singapore	270kt	1.46	China	130kt	3.88
China (STS)	270kt	4.80	Singapore	130kt	2.60	Europe	280kt	2.00
China (STS) futures (Feb 24)	270kt	4.46	Singapore	80kt	4.24	Mediterranean	140kt	3.07
China (STS) futures (Mar 24)	270kt	4.44	US Gulf coast	280kt	2.56	Singapore	270kt	1.36
China (STS) futures (Apr 24)	270kt	4.23	west coast India	270kt	0.84	Singapore	130kt	2.42
China	130kt	7.00	west coast India	130kt	1.52	US Gulf coast	280kt	2.38
east coast Canada	70kt	4.44	west coast India	80kt	2.37	west coast India	270kt	0.78
Europe	145kt	2.81	Arab Light			west coast India	130kt	1.41
Med	70kt	7.33	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.11	west coast India	80kt	2.21
Rotterdam	270kt	2.26	China	130kt	4.03	Oman		
Singapore	270kt	4.41	Europe	280kt	2.08	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.12
South Korea/Japan	270kt	4.93	Mediterranean	140kt	3.19	China	130kt	4.05
UKC	70kt	5.91	Singapore	270kt	1.42	Europe	280kt	2.09
UKC futures (Feb 24)	70kt	5.84	Singapore	130kt	2.52	Mediterranean	140kt	3.20
UKC futures (Mar 24)	70kt	6.18	USGC coast	280kt	2.48	Singapore	270kt	1.42
UKC futures (Apr 24)	70kt	5.62	west coast India	270kt	0.81	Singapore	130kt	2.53
west coast India	270kt	4.33	west coast India	130kt	1.47	US Gulf coast	280kt	2.49
WCS			west coast India	80kt	2.30	west coast India	270kt	0.81
China	270kt	5.22	Arab Medium			west coast India	130kt	1.47
China (STS)	270kt	5.08	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.14	west coast India	80kt	2.31
China (STS) futures (Feb 24)	270kt	4.73	China	130kt	4.09	West Africa		
China (STS) futures (Mar 24)	270kt	4.70	Europe	280kt	2.11	Bonny Light		
China (STS) futures (Apr 24)	270kt	4.48	Mediterranean	140kt	3.23	China	260kt	3.25
China	130kt	7.42	Singapore	270kt	1.44	east coast India	260kt	2.55
Europe	145kt	2.98	Singapore	130kt	2.55	east coast India	130kt	4.43
Med	70kt	7.76	US Gulf coast	280kt	2.51	UKCM	130kt	2.48
Rotterdam	270kt	2.39	west coast India	270kt	0.82	UKCM futures (Feb 24)	130kt	2.61
Singapore	270kt	4.67	west coast India	130kt	1.49	UKCM futures (Mar 24)	130kt	2.68
South Korea/Japan	270kt	5.22	west coast India	80kt	2.33	UKCM futures (Apr 24)	130kt	2.51
UKC	70kt	6.26	Basrah Heavy			west coast India	260kt	2.40
UKC futures (Feb 24)	70kt	6.18	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.24	west coast India	130kt	4.27
UKC futures (Mar 24)	70kt	6.54	China	130kt	4.30	Cabinda		
UKC futures (Apr 24)	70kt	5.95	Europe	280kt	2.21	China	260kt	3.29
west coast India	270kt	4.59	Mediterranean	140kt	3.39	east coast India	260kt	2.59
WTI			Singapore	270kt	1.51	east coast India	130kt	4.48
China	270kt	4.56	Singapore	130kt	2.68	UKCM	130kt	2.51
China (STS)	270kt	4.44	US Gulf coast	280kt	2.64	west coast India	260kt	2.43
China (STS) futures (Feb 24)	270kt	4.13	west coast India	270kt	0.86	west coast India	130kt	4.33
China (STS) futures (Mar 24)	270kt	4.11	west coast India	130kt	1.56	Dalia		
China (STS) futures (Apr 24)	270kt	3.92	west coast India	80kt	2.44	China	260kt	3.47
China	130kt	6.49	Basrah Medium			east coast India	260kt	2.73
east coast Canada	70kt	4.11	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.18	east coast India	130kt	4.74
Europe	145kt	2.60	Asia-Pacific futures (Feb 24)	270kt	2.18	UKCM	130kt	2.65
Med	90kt	5.28	Asia-Pacific futures (Mar 24)	270kt	2.31	US Gulf coast	260kt	2.15
Med	70kt	6.79	Asia-Pacific futures (Apr 24)	270kt	2.18	US Gulf coast	130kt	3.20
Rotterdam	270kt	2.09	China	130kt	4.16	west coast India	260kt	2.56
Singapore	270kt	4.08	Europe	280kt	2.15	west coast India	130kt	4.57
South Korea/Japan	270kt	4.56	Mediterranean	140kt	3.29	Djeno		
UKC	90kt	4.26	Singapore	270kt	1.46	China	260kt	3.41
UKC futures (Feb 24)	90kt	4.20	Singapore	130kt	2.60	east coast India	260kt	2.68
UKC futures (Mar 24)	90kt	4.45	US Gulf coast	280kt	2.55	east coast India	130kt	4.65
UKC futures (Apr 24)	90kt	4.04	west coast India	270kt	0.84	UKCM	130kt	2.60
UKC	70kt	5.47	west coast India	130kt	1.51	west coast India	260kt	2.52
UKC futures (Feb 24)	70kt	5.40	west coast India	80kt	2.37	west coast India	130kt	4.49
UKC futures (Mar 24)	70kt	5.72	Kuwait					
UKC futures (Apr 24)	70kt	5.20	Asia-Pacific	270kt	2.13			
west coast India	270kt	4.01	China	130kt	4.08			
			Europe	280kt	2.10			
			Mediterranean	140kt	3.23			
			Singapore	270kt	1.43			
			Singapore	130kt	2.55			
			US Gulf coast	280kt	2.50			
			west coast India	270kt	0.82			
			west coast India	130kt	1.48			
			west coast India	80kt	2.32			

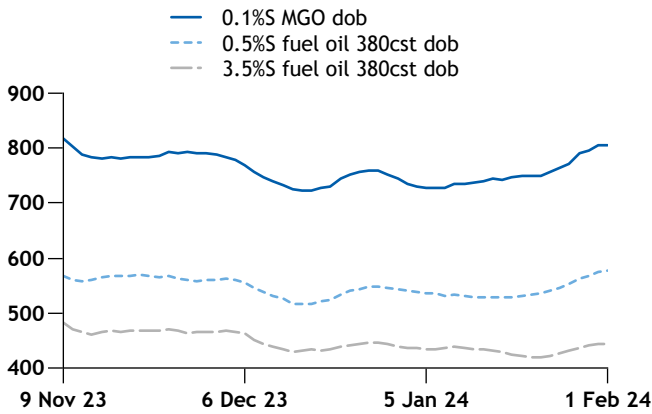
CRUDE-SPECIFIC FREIGHT

West Africa (continued)			Latin America (continued)			Mediterranean		
Delivery to	Size	\$/bl	Delivery to	Size	\$/bl	Delivery to	Size	\$/bl
Egina			Napo			Arab Light (Sidi K)		
China	260kt	3.39	Houston	50kt	5.76	Mediterranean	80kt	1.72
east coast India	260kt	2.67	Los Angeles	100kt	2.97	UKC	80kt	2.89
east coast India	130kt	4.63	Oriente			BTC		
UKCM	130kt	2.59	Houston	50kt	5.53	east Asia	130kt	7.36
west coast India	260kt	2.51	Los Angeles	100kt	2.86	Mediterranean	130kt	1.06
west coast India	130kt	4.47	US west coast	50kt	9.20	Mediterranean	80kt	1.67
Escravos			Tupi			UKC		
China	260kt	3.26	China	260kt	3.67	UKC	80kt	2.82
east coast India	260kt	2.56	UKC	260kt	1.85	Es Sider		
east coast India	130kt	4.44	UKC	130kt	2.68	east Asia	130kt	7.45
UKCM	130kt	2.49	US west coast	260kt	2.94	Mediterranean	80kt	1.69
west coast India	260kt	2.40	Vasconia			UKC	80kt	2.85
west coast India	130kt	4.29	Panama	130kt	0.80	US Gulf coast	130kt	2.56
Forcados			US west coast			US Gulf coast	80kt	2.63
China	260kt	3.34	North Sea, Baltic, Barrents			Saharan		
east coast India	260kt	2.63	Delivery to			Size		
east coast India	130kt	4.55	\$/bl			east Asia		
UKCM	130kt	2.55	Ekofisk			Mediterranean		
west coast India	260kt	2.46	east Asia			130kt		
west coast India	130kt	4.39	Mediterranean			80kt		
Girassol			UKC			80kt		
China	260kt	3.32	US Atlantic coast			80kt		
east coast India	260kt	2.61	Forties			US Gulf coast		
east coast India	130kt	4.53	east Asia			130kt		
UKCM	130kt	2.53	Mediterranean			80kt		
west coast India	260kt	2.45	UKC			80kt		
west coast India	130kt	4.37	US Atlantic coast			80kt		
Qua Iboe			US Atlantic coast			80kt		
China	260kt	3.21	Johan Sverdrup			Azeri Light (Supsa)		
east coast India	260kt	2.52	east Asia			Mediterranean		
east coast India	130kt	4.37	Mediterranean			80kt		
UKCM	130kt	2.45	UKC			80kt		
US Gulf coast	260kt	1.98	US Atlantic coast			80kt		
US Gulf coast	130kt	2.96	Urals			CPC		
west coast India	260kt	2.37	West coast India			130kt		
west coast India	130kt	4.22	North China			130kt		
Latin America			Mediterranean			80kt		
Delivery to			UKC			80kt		
Size			-			Kebco		
\$/bl			-			Mediterranean		
Castilla			Urals (Baseline)			140kt		
China	270kt	4.58	West coast India			140kt		
Panama	130kt	0.75	North China			140kt		
US Gulf coast	130kt	1.35	Varandey			130kt		
US Gulf coast	70kt	2.95	West coast India			140kt		
US Gulf coast	50kt	5.31	North China			80kt		
west coast India	270kt	3.99	North China			80kt		
Isthmus			Varandey (Baseline)			US Gulf coast		
US Gulf coast	70kt	1.74	West coast India			130kt		
US Gulf coast	50kt	2.64	North China			-		
Maya			Asia-Pacific			Urals (Baseline)		
US Gulf coast	70kt	1.87	Delivery to			West coast India		
US Gulf coast	50kt	2.85	Size			80kt		
Medanito			\$/bl			North China		
US west coast	65kt	12.22	ESPO			80kt		
US Atlantic coast	65kt	10.52	Chiba			140kt		
			north China			80kt		
			Singapore			140kt		
			Yeosu			140kt		

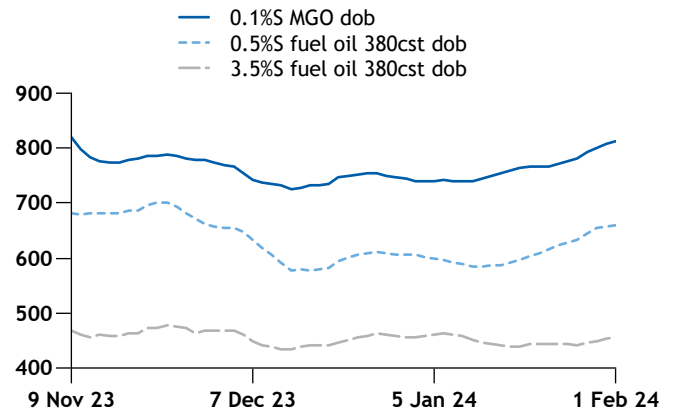
BUNKERS

Conventional

Rotterdam bunker prices (0.5%S, 3.5%S, MGO) \$/t

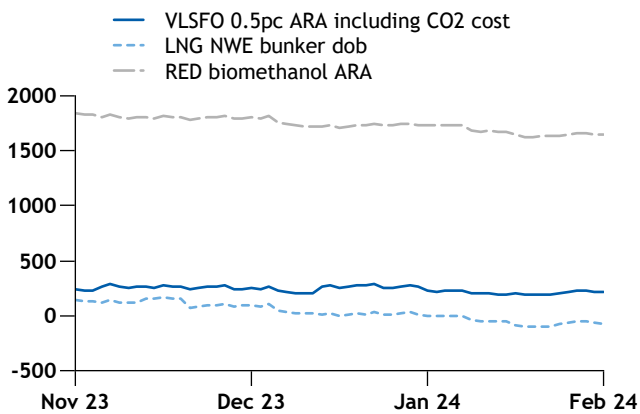


Singapore bunker prices (0.5%S, 3.5%S, MGO) \$/t

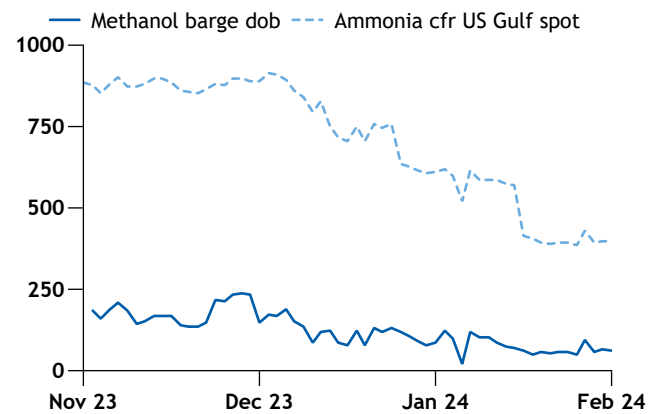


Alternative

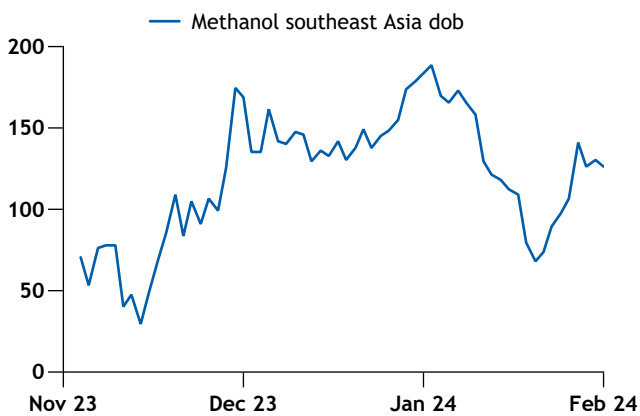
Rotterdam - LNG, others as premiums to VLSFO \$/t



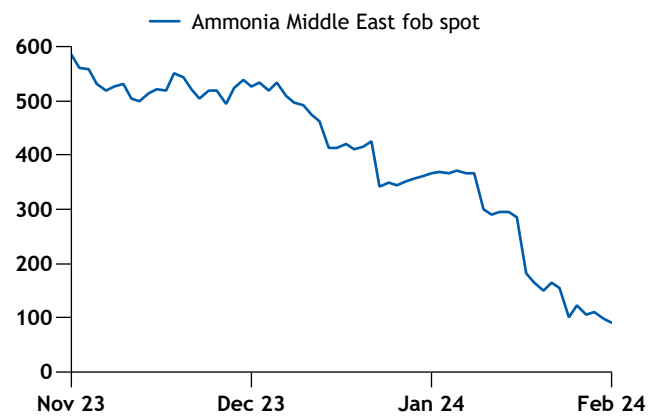
USGC - Methanol, ammonia as premiums to VLSFO \$/t



Singapore - Methanol premium to VLSFO \$/t



Middle East - Ammonia premium to VLSFO \$/t



NEWS

SE Asian crude tenders may lift Aframaxes

Freight rates for southeast Asian Aframaxes face short-term support from a potential rise in short-haul crude shipments.

Aframax rates on the southeast Asia-Australia route fell to WS155 on 7 February from WS167.5 on 6 February as the market's focus has now moved to the two-week natural fixing window. Regional tonnage availability is set to rise sharply for the second half of February, according to an Argus survey, as vessels currently on charter for regional voyages will be free from 20 February.

But freight rates could be supported because February tenders from several crude exporters such as Shell, Malaysia's state-owned Petronas and state-owned PetroBrunei have yet to be concluded for the March-loading window.

Spot movements from Vietnam have also increased. State-owned PVOil had sold at least 2.6mn bl of March-loading Vietnamese crude through spot tenders in January, up from 1.75mn bl for February loading. PVOil likely offered more supplies last month because of scheduled maintenance at the 145,000 b/d Dung Quat refinery, which processes mainly domestic crude. The maintenance was expected to last until the end of May, which could prompt PVOil to continue offering more Vietnamese cargoes in the spot market this month.

PVOil also issued a tender to sell 900,000 bl of Sutu Den crude for April loading. It is seeking buyers for three separate 300,000 bl cargoes, loading over 1-5 April, 17-21 April and 25-28 April. The cargoes will have a tolerance of about +/- 5pc from the issued tender quantity subject to acceptance by the Sutu Den terminal. The tender opens for submission on 15 February 9am Vietnam time (02:00 GMT) and closes on 16 February at 9am. The offers made need to remain valid until 6pm on 19 February.

By Hamren Hamid

US Gulf VLCC bookings at nine-month low in Feb

The number of very large crude carriers (VLCCs) booked to load oil on the US Gulf coast fell to a nine-month low in February, following three consecutive months of waning Asia-Pacific demand for WTI.

Just 30 VLCCs were hired to lift US crude in February, the lowest level since May 2023 and below the monthly average of 34.75 fixtures per month last year, according to shipbroker Charles R. Weber. The drop comes after Asia-Pacific demand fell to 1.1mn b/d in January, down from about 1.5mn b/d in December and 1.75mn b/d in November, according to Kpler.

The US Gulf coast-China VLCC trade supported rates and powered demand for 2mn bl tankers in 2023, with tonne-mile demand for VLCCs on the US Gulf up by 32pc from 2022,

according to Vortexa. But that began to shift at the end of the year, when more competitively priced Murban began to entice refiners in the Asia-Pacific region away from WTI.

More Murban became available at the start of an almost two-month long turnaround at ADNOC's 817,000 b/d Ruwais refinery in mid-January. The refinery primarily runs light-sour Murban, leaving the Abu-Dhabi state-controlled company with more of the grade for export.

Asia-Pacific refiners will also start extensive spring maintenance in April, when February loading cargoes carrying US crude will arrive in the region, lowering the base demand for crude there.

Further undermining the availability of WTI, severe winter weather knocked 1mn b/d of production offline the week ended 19 January, according to US Energy Information Administration data. Spot assessments for WTI fob had held steady against April Ice Brent during the February trade month at about a \$2.80/bl discount, but rose to a three-month high of a \$1.63/bl discount on 22 January following the outages.

VLCC freight costs in the US Gulf coast declined through January, when most February-loading VLCCs were hired. The rate to ship 2mn bl of WTI from the US Gulf coast to China, the bellwether VLCC rate for the US, dropped by 16pc to \$4.25/bl between 11 January and 6 February. The US Gulf-Europe VLCC rate slipped in that span to \$2.04/bl from \$2.76/bl.

Pre-lunar new year rush adds to March cargoes

Demand for March-loading VLCCs has rebounded in early February as WTI has become more competitive versus Murban, with additional support from Asia-bound demand ahead of the lunar new year holiday from 10-18 February. From 1-7 February, nine VLCCs were either booked or provisionally booked to haul US crude loading in March.

Three other charterers sought a VLCC for US Gulf coast-east Asia voyages loading in mid-March as of 8 February.

By Calder Jett and Tray Swanson

US targets UAE-based shippers over price cap

US sanctions enforcers today announced penalties against three UAE-based shippers for allegedly violating price cap rules affecting Russian crude shipments.

The US Treasury Department has sanctioned Zeenit Supply and Trading, Talassa Shipping and Oil Tankers SCF Mgmt – all of them tied to the *NS Leader* tanker that in November allegedly carried Russian crude priced at over \$80/bl. Treasury also imposed sanctions against Liberia-based NS Leader Shipping, which is the registered owner of the *NS Leader*.

The G7 countries and Australia allow trading firms, brokers and providers of maritime insurance and financial

NEWS

services in their countries to facilitate Russian sales to third countries, as long as the loaded price is at or below \$60/bl for crude. There are no penalties or price caps for Russian sales shipped or facilitated by companies outside the G7. In the case of the *NS Leader*, the Russian cargo priced above the price cap relied on a western service company, according to Treasury.

Treasury's announcement today also shows how quickly the exporters of Russian crude have adjusted to the western sanctions pressure. Oil Tankers SCF Mgmt, which Treasury says is owned by major Russian shipper Somcovflot, took over management of the *NS Leader* from SUN Ship Management D in September 2023, after the latter became a target of US sanctions. Oil Tankers SCF Mgmt also operates the *Ligovsky Prospect*, the *Kazan*, the *NS Century*, the *NS Champion* and the *Viktor Bakaev*, all of which were placed on the US sanctions list late last year over Russia price cap violations.

Russian medium sour Urals cargoes shipped from Baltic ports have held above the \$60/bl since 9 January. The US overall continues to consider the price cap scheme to be successful. "Russia's own top energy official admits that the coalition's price cap and our sanctions have led to widening discounts on Russian oil, limiting the revenue the Kremlin relies on for its illegal war" in Ukraine, Treasury under secretary Brian Nelson said today.

But western sanctions enforcers have vowed to focus more closely on trying to make it costlier for Russia to export its crude, and by extension, pressuring sales prices and the government's tax receipts.

The cost of operating Russia's shadow fleet reached an estimated £2.25bn (\$2.84bn) in 2023, UK Treasury's sanctions office OFSI head of oil price enforcement Olga Dimitrescu said this week in a podcast hosted by P&I company North Standard. "This further diminishes Russia's profits from oil exports, even if indirectly," Dimitrescu said.

The US, UK and the EU are also introducing [new attestation rules](#) for shippers involved in Russian oil trade beginning on 19 February. The new rules require shippers to make attestations on the price of the cargo every time they load Russian oil, to counter sanctions evasion. Those transporting Russian oil will also have to share itemized information across the supply chain on their ancillary costs, such as insurance and freight.

The new rules aim to make the underlying price for Russian crude more transparent to crack down on evasion, while preserving the intent to keep Russian oil in global markets, Dimitrescu said. "These changes have been designed to ensure a balance between enforceability and maintaining incentives to continue trading."

Stricter enforcement measures already have had some

effects, including by hastening the exodus of Greek shipowners from the Urals trade. The cost of shipping Russian crude through the Suez Canal to India's west coast and to China rose sharply late last month. Discounts for Urals have widened in recent months because of difficulties in processing payments and organizing shipments.

By Haik Gugrats

North Sea oil terminal workers vote to strike

Dozens of workers at the UK's Sullom Voe oil terminal have voted to go on strike in a dispute over pay and working conditions.

The UK's Unite trade union said around 40 of its members employed at Sullom Voe by energy services firm Worley have unanimously backed industrial action, although it did not disclose any planned strike dates. The workers include technicians, electricians, pipefitters and riggers, described by Unite as "essential to the operations of the terminal".

The Sullom Voe terminal on the Shetlands Islands off the east coast of Scotland is one of the largest in Europe, acting as a buffer between more than 30 offshore oil fields and tankers waiting to ship crude to refineries.

The terminal, operated by UK oil and gas producer Enquest, has oil processing facilities and 16 crude storage tanks each with a capacity of 500,000 bl. It receives oil and gas through the Brent, Ninian, Sheltand Gas Plant and Clair pipeline systems in the North Sea and west of Shetlands.

Two crude grades load at Sullom Voe – benchmark light sweet Brent and heavy sweet Clair. Combined exports of these were below 100,000 b/d last year, tracking data show. The first February cargo of Brent was scheduled for 10-12 February, but was probably deferred for later in the month. The second Brent shipment was delayed to early March. Exports of Clair are usually three or four cargoes a month.

Among Unite's demands are the establishment of a trade union recognition agreement with Worley at the oil terminal which would allow the union to formally bargain on jobs, pay and conditions. The union already has recognition agreements covering offshore workers in the UK with Norway's Equinor, Spanish from Repsol, TotalEnergies and China's CNOOC.

By James Keates

Green refiner Helleniq increases crude imports

Greece's Helleniq Energy increased crude imports to its three refineries last month.

Argus tracking shows the Pachi terminal – which serves Helleniq's 100,000 b/d Elefsis and 146,500 b/d Aspropyrgos refineries – received 230,000 b/d of crude in January, up from 200,000 b/d in December 2023, while imports to

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Helleniq's 66,500 b/d Thessaloniki refinery rose to 105,000 b/d from 85,000 b/d over the same period. The company also imported 7,000 b/d of Egyptian Qarun crude directly to Aspropyrgos in January.

Deliveries to Pachi averaged over 180,000 b/d last year, up from 165,000 b/d in 2022 when Elefsis had downtime. December's imports to Pachi comprised 100,000 b/d of Caspian CPC Blend, 55,000 b/d of Libyan Es Sider, plus 20,000 b/d each of Saudi Arabian Arab Light and Azeri BTC Blend. The terminal also received over 30,000 b/d of Guyanese Liza. Helleniq had to try new crude grades last year due to the absence of sanctioned Russian Urals and disruption to exports of Iraqi medium sour Kirkuk.

Pachi [first took a cargo of 32°API grade Liza in November 2022](#). The grade, which is produced by ExxonMobil offshore Guyana, is marginally lighter than Urals and is becoming [increasingly popular among Mediterranean refiners](#). Helleniq started to take receipt of regular deliveries of Liza in September last year. The January cargo was the sixth in five months.

To replace Kirkuk, Helleniq boosted supplies of heavy sour Iraqi Basrah Medium to Pachi to 20,000 b/d last year from 3,000 b/d in 2022. No Basrah Medium arrived at Pachi in January, but a 1mn bl shipment is on route and slated to arrive 25 February.

Argus assessed Pachi's January deliveries at a weighted average 39°API and 0.6pc sulphur content, compared with 39.1°API and 0.5pc sulphur in December. Despite the change in slate, imports averaged an estimated 36.7°API and 0.9pc sulphur over the whole of 2023, very close to 36.8°API and 1pc sulphur in 2022. In addition to the cargo of Basrah Medium, two other shipments are on route to Pachi, a 1mn bl parcel of CPC Blend and 600,000 bl of Arab Light.

Meanwhile, crude imports to the Thessaloniki refinery were particularly high in January, comprising 70,000 b/d of CPC Blend and 35,000 b/d of Basrah Medium. Receipts averaged over 75,000 b/d last year, compared with 65,000 b/d in 2022. Thessaloniki's slate is essentially split between CPC Blend and Basrah Medium. Out of 33 deliveries last year, only two were not its staple duo.

Argus assessed Thessaloniki's January deliveries at 38.6°API and 1.4pc sulphur content, compared with 38.2°API and 1.5pc sulphur in December. Deliveries last year averaged 36.6°API and 1.6pc sulphur, compared with 37.3°API and 1.5pc in 2022.

By Adam Porter

Med crudes still head east via the Red Sea

The majority of Mediterranean and Caspian crude cargoes destined for Asia-Pacific are still heading through the Red Sea despite the increased risk, because the route offers

faster delivery compared with sailing around South Africa.

Argus tracking data show that four January-loading Libyan crude tankers were destined for Asia-Pacific. Two out of three tankers that travelled through the Suez Canal and Red Sea have already reached their destinations, while the third is expected to by the end of next week, according to ship tracking data from Kpler and Vortexa. Although there is the risk of possible attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels, the route allows for faster delivery even if it comes at higher insurance premiums.

One tanker went around the Cape of Good Hope, but this means higher freight costs and a longer journey. The *Caspian Sea* loaded an Aframax sized cargo from Libya's Zueitina terminal on 18 January, but will only arrive at Brisbane in Australia on 11 March.

Two January-loading cargoes of Algerian Saharan Blend were destined for Asia-Pacific. The *Aegean Unity* for India that went via the Red Sea has already discharged, but the *Chrysanthemum* that South Korean refiner S-Oil specifically booked for delivery around the Cape is only due to arrive at Onsan on 2 March.

Argus data show that eastbound flows from Libya increased by 31pc on the month in January, while Asia-bound shipments of Algerian crude more than doubled last month compared with December, despite tensions in the Red Sea. Libya is located next to Egypt and so has a short journey to reach the Suez Canal and Red Sea, while Algeria is close to the Strait of Gibraltar making it well placed for Cape journeys.

Vortexa data suggest that flows of Caspian crudes CPC Blend and BTC Blend to Asia-Pacific declined by 60pc and 15pc in January, respectively, on the month. CPC Blend needs to travel from near Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiysk and at this time of year often faces weather-related delays at its loading port and through the Turkish straits. These delays on top of the higher costs needed for delivery in the current climate could be making CPC Blend less attractive to Asia-Pacific refiners. BTC Blend differentials averaged a \$5.20/bl premium to the Dated benchmark in December, when the majority of January-loading cargoes traded, compared with a \$4.76/bl premium a month earlier. The higher prices may have made long-haul shipments to Asia-Pacific unattractive when freight and insurance costs have also increased.

Of the five tankers that loaded CPC Blend crude for Asia-Pacific last month, one went through the Suez canal, while another is sailing around the Cape. The other three tankers have not crossed the Turkish straits, so it was not yet clear which route they would take. But more tankers could go around the Cape, with [4mn bl of CPC Blend](#) already booked to sail that route in March.

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A total of four tankers of Azeri BTC Blend headed for Asia-Pacific in January, with the three that sailed through the Red Sea already discharged or due to by the end of this week. But the *Tilos I* took the Cape route and is only expected at the Thai port of Sriracha on 12 March.

By *Kuganiga Kuganeswaran*

More CPC Blend crude to head east via Cape

Eastbound shipments of Caspian CPC Blend crude round the Cape of Good Hope bypassing the Suez Canal and Red Sea appear to be on the rise. This includes possible deliveries on very large crude carriers (VLCCs).

Refiners in Asia-Pacific will take around 4mn bl of March-loading CPC Blend shipped around the Cape of Good Hope, according to market participants. They say that a South Korean refiner and a Chinese refiner bought cargoes at around a \$1/bl premium to the North Sea Dated benchmark on a delivered basis.

At that price, which takes into account higher freight and insurance costs, CPC Blend still looks competitive compared to light sour crude options such as Murban from the UAE and sour crude from Saudi Arabia. South Korean buyers often take naphtha-rich CPC Blend for the petrochemical sector.

Shipping CPC Blend to Asia-Pacific around the Cape could take two months, compared with around a month for delivery through the Suez Canal and Red Sea. But the route has become attractive because of attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels on shipping in and around the Red Sea, which led to [a big increase in supplies of CPC Blend to European destinations last month](#). The *Violando* loaded a CPC Blend cargo on 6 January is now heading to Onsan in South Korea via the Cape. Of four other cargoes loaded last month for Asia-Pacific, one took the Suez Canal route and three others have not yet passed through the Turkish straits. Just one of nine tankers loaded with CPC Blend for Asia-Pacific in December took the Cape route.

Traders say that the 4mn bl expected to head east next month could be loaded onto two separate VLCCs, offering improved freight economics. This would require ship-to-ship (STS) transfers, probably in the Mediterranean, as the CPC terminal on Russia's Black Sea coast only loads Aframax and Suezmax tankers – 4mn bl is equivalent to four Suezmax cargoes – and VLCCs cannot pass through the Turkish straits. A VLCC carrying CPC Blend moved east to Asia-Pacific after STS transfer off Malta in 2016.

The 4mn bl booked for Asia-Pacific next month is equivalent to around 138,000 b/d. This is below the 394,000 b/d of CPC Blend that was shipped to Asia-Pacific last year, according to Vortexa, but it suggests the grade still has a market in Asia-Pacific at the right price.

By *John Corder and Calder Jett*

Judge orders former Petroecuador CEO arrest

Ecuador ordered the arrest of state-owned Petroecuador's former chief executive Ramon Correa and four other former company officials for alleged embezzlement.

The national prosecutors' office accused the former executives of harming the company when they awarded an insurance policy to cover the company's assets in August. The policy was awarded to the La Union firm – the only bidder – for \$100mn.

According to the accusation, the bidding process for the policy did not define a referential budget of the insurance policy and lacked a technical assessment of Petroecuador's asset values, which are estimated at around \$10bn.

The arrests are meant as a preventive measure to keep the defendants from fleeing ahead of trial. The judge also prohibited the defendants from selling their own assets.

Correa – who was Petroecuador's chief executive from April-October 2023 – and the four other officials are yet to be detained, the prosecutor general's office told

Argus.

Petroecuador produced 386,550 b/d of oil last year, about 81pc of Ecuador's total output, and owns the country's three main refineries which process around 150,000 b/d, and most of Ecuador's main and secondary pipelines.

By *Alberto Araujo*

PIS issues spot MR gasoline freight tender

Indonesia's Pertamina International Shipping (PIS) has issued a spot Medium Range (MR) vessel freight tender to move 200,000 bl of gasoline for mid-February loading.

PIS – a wholly-owned subsidiary of Indonesian state-owned refiner Pertamina – is seeking a MR vessel for the shipment, with loading either from Singapore, or Malaysia's Tanjung Bin, Tanjung Langsat or Pengerang to Indonesia's Semarang, with a 12-14 February laycan. The tender closed at 5pm Jakarta time (10:00 GMT) on 8 February.

The shipment can have a maximum unavoidable transportation loss of up to 0.07pc, according to the tender.

Indonesia, the largest gasoline buyer in Asia-Pacific, has [increased its gasoline imports in the first quarter](#) because of higher domestic demand. The increase is likely because of the presidential election in Indonesia in February and increased driving activity during the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, which will run from early March for a month, an Indonesia-based gasoline trader said.

By *Sean Zhuang*

US oil output growth to slow: ConocoPhillips

US oil output growth is set to slow this year after hitting a record in 2023, according to the chief executive of ConocoPhillips.

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A slight “deceleration” is expected in 2024, chief executive Ryan Lance said after posting fourth-quarter results. “We still see some growth coming from the US shale, the lower 48, primarily driven out of the Permian, but more modest relative to last year’s growth,” he added.

ConocoPhillips reported an 8pc increase in fourth-quarter production even as profit slipped slightly on lower prices.

Output rose to 1.9mn b/d of oil equivalent (boe/d) in the fourth quarter, up from 1.76mn boe/d a year earlier.

Profit of \$3bn in the final three months of 2023 was down from \$3.2bn in the year-earlier quarter.

The company recorded an 18pc decline in average realized prices in the quarter.

Production last year came in at a record 1.8mn boe/d, up by 88,000 (boe/d) from 2022.

Last year, ConocoPhillips acquired the remaining 50pc stake in the 150,000 b/d Surmont oil sands project in Canada from TotalEnergies for \$3bn.

“We achieved record production, reached several key milestones across our global operations and returned \$11 billion to shareholders,” Lance said.

The company anticipates capital spending in the range of \$11bn-\$11.5bn this year.

By Stephen Cunningham

Canadian refinery runs rise by 3pc: CER

Canadian refinery throughputs increased in the latest week, with gains in Ontario, eastern Canada and Quebec, according to the Canada Energy Regulator (CER)

National throughputs in the week ended 30 January rose by 3pc to 1.62mn b/d from 1.57mn b/d in the prior week. They are little changed from a year earlier.

The weekly gain was led by Ontario, where throughput increased by 9.2pc from the prior week to 393,100 b/d and was up 3pc from a year prior. Refinery utilization was up by 6.7 percentage points at 94.1pc.

In Quebec and eastern Canada, throughputs climbed by 3.2pc on the week to 642,300 b/d and were down 2pc from a year earlier. Refinery utilization rose to 91.6pc, up 2.8 percentage points from the week prior.

Throughputs in western Canada fell by 1pc from the prior week to 584,100 b/d. They are down 1pc from a year earlier. Refinery utilization rates in the region were down 1.1 percentage points to 84.6pc.

Nationwide, refinery utilization increased by 2.2 percentage points to 89.5pc. Compared with a year earlier, utilization was little changed.

Throughputs in western Canada are expected to remain depressed as Parkland’s 55,000 b/d Burnaby refinery plans to [return to normal operations near the end of February](#).

By Kyle Tsang

Marine Atlantic gets battery-powered vessel

Canadian ferry operator Marine Atlantic will take delivery of its first battery-powered vessel, which will also be able to burn LNG once it becomes readily available.

The ship, *The Ala’suinu*, will also burn diesel in its dual-fuel engine and connect passengers from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland in northeast Canada. “Multi-fuel engines and battery hybrid technology further contribute to minimizing Marine Atlantic’s environmental impact,” said Murray Hupman, chief executive of Marine Atlantic. “In this vessel, another dimension of sustainability has been added to minimize underwater noise for the benefit of marine life off Canada’s coasts.”

The Ala’suinu is the first ship in Marine Atlantic’s fleet that will use battery power and be equipped with LNG technology. It will not use LNG in its initial operations because there is no local LNG source in northeast Canada and importing it would not result in net offset emissions, Marine Atlantic said.

But having the LNG capability onboard will allow it to quickly transition to this fuel once a local source becomes available, the company said.

Marine Atlantic will take delivery of the vessel in April and it will likely begin full operations in June.

By Luis Gronda

US seeks 3mn bl of crude for SPR in July

President Joe Biden’s administration is requesting bids to buy another 3mn bl of sour crude for July delivery to the US Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) as part of a plan to partly refill the emergency oil stockpile.

The US Department of Energy (DOE) said the upcoming purchase was a continuation of its strategy to buy 3mn bl/month so long as purchases offered a “good deal for taxpayers,” which the agency has defined as a price of no more than \$79/bl. DOE since last year has already bought more than 20mn bl of crude at an average price of \$76.12/bl, and the agency said it plans to continue issuing new solicitations when warranted.

“DOE will continue to monitor market conditions, issuing solicitations for any available capacity that will deliver a good deal for taxpayers,” the agency said.

Bids for the July crude purchase are due on 21 February at 12 pm ET. The firm, fixed-price solicitation requests domestically produced sour crude that will be delivered to the SPR’s Big Hill storage facility in Texas.

DOE separately closed bids earlier today on a solicitation to purchase 3mn bl of crude for delivery in June. The agency has been announcing contract awards for its monthly SPR crude purchases about a week after the deadline for bids.

The SPR held 358mn bl of crude as of last week, but the

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reserve is on track to hold at least 385mn bl by the end this year, according to [Argus estimates](#) that do not account for the potential crude purchases scheduled for June and July.
By Chris Knight

US airline traffic rises to November record

US airline passenger traffic in November reached a record high for the month, Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) data shows.

US airlines carried 82.1mn passengers in November, up by 8.1pc from a year earlier, according to BTS' seasonally adjusted estimates. November's total was the highest for any November since at least 2003, when BTS began tracking such data.

Seasonally adjusted passenger traffic was 6.3pc higher than in November 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, which held the previous November record for airline traffic.

Seasonal adjustments are employed by the BTS to reduce the variance introduced by differences in the number of weekends from month to month as well as holidays and seasonal activity.

Seasonally unadjusted passenger traffic reached 77.7mn passengers in November. International flights accounted for 9.3mn passengers, up by 13pc from a year earlier, and domestic flights carried 68.4mn passengers, up by 7.4pc from November 2022.

As air traffic and fuel consumption expanded in November, falling fuel prices kept airlines' total fuel below year-earlier levels. US airlines consumed 1.50bn USG of jet fuel in November, a 7.1pc year-over-year increase, while total fuel expenditures fell 2.4pc over the same period to \$4.53bn, according to a separate BTS report. The price of jet fuel fell to \$3.01/USG in November, down by 9.4pc from a year earlier.
By Hannah Borai

California gasoline output falls to 2-month low

California CARBOB production fell to the lowest level in two months as CARB diesel output dropped to the lowest in seven months, according to the California Energy Commission.

California CARBOB production decreased by 11.4pc for the week ended 2 February to 735,000 b/d, down from 829,000 bl the previous week, said CEC. This marked the second week of decreases and the lowest volumes since the week ended 1 December 2023. Inventories of the in-state gasoline declined to 6.48mn bl, down from 6.85mn in the previous week. Total California gasoline production fell by 9.8pc to 945,000 b/d over the same period.

California jet fuel production decreased by 9.5pc to 277,000 b/d, according to CEC data. For the week ended 2

February, jet fuel stockpiles were down by 0.7pc to 3.61mn bl.

California in-state CARB diesel production declined by 27.9pc to 101,000 b/d in the latest week, the lowest since the week ended 7 July 2023. CARB diesel inventories fell for a third week to 2.04mn bl, a decrease of 5.2pc.

Production of other diesel fuels in California – including export-grade EPA ultra-low sulphur diesel (ULSD) and renewable diesel – tripled in the latest week to 115,000 b/d, the highest volumes since the week ended 1 December 2023. Other diesel fuel inventories fell by 2.8pc to 1.3mn bl.

California crude throughputs declined for a third week, falling by 2pc to 1.24mn b/d on the week. California crude stockpiles fell by 0.5pc to 12.72mn bl.

The Energy Information Administration (EIA) showed overall US west coast jet fuel imports increased for the week ended 2 February by 15pc to 92,000 b/d, up from 80,000 b/d the week prior.

By Carrie Carter

Venezuela renews threats against Guyana

Venezuela is threatening to use force against US major ExxonMobil over planned offshore Guyana drilling, violating an agreement reached in December to not make such threats.

ExxonMobil announced plans this week to drill two exploratory wells west of its existing Liza and Payara production operations in the Stabroek block. A decades-long disagreement over Guyana's Essequibo province has prevented the two countries from agreeing on a maritime border, which puts Stabroek in the middle of the dispute.

ExxonMobil's plan drew a strong response from Venezuela's defense minister Vladimir Padrino this week.

"If ExxonMobil operates in the maritime space that by right belongs to Venezuela, supported by its private security company represented by the US Southern Command, it will receive a proportional, forceful and legal response," Padrino warned on 7 February.

Such threats were supposed to be off limits [following a meeting in December between Guyana and Venezuela](#) of officials to cool tensions Essequibo province.

ExxonMobil Guyana president Alistair Routledge said the company believes local and international law supports its rights to move forward with the drilling plan, but Venezuelan vice president Delcy Rodriguez characterized Exxon's statements as "threatening," saying the company was protecting its "illicit operations... under the warmongering mantle of the US in complicity with Guyana."

The foreign ministers of both countries have met since December's summit to continue discussions on the border dispute and to prepare for another meeting of the presi-

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dents, with the most recent occurring two weeks ago.

Earlier this week US national security advisor Jon Finer traveled to Guyana to meet with President Irfaan Ali to reaffirm the US' "...unwavering support for Guyana's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and defense capabilities," according to the White House.

Guyana has asked the UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ) to determine the merits of Venezuela's claim to Essequibo but Venezuela has rejected the ICJ's role. It is seeking direct bilateral talks on the dispute, which Guyana refuses.

By Canute James

Mexican inflation accelerates to 4.9pc in Jan

Mexico's inflation quickened to an annual 4.88pc in January, hit by volatile food prices and upticks in certain fuels, even as core inflation eased.

The consumer price index (CPI) rose from an annual 4.66pc in December, Mexico's statistics agency INEGI reported today. It was the third consecutive month of accelerating inflation since it hit a cycle low of 4.26pc in October. On a monthly basis, CPI rose by 0.89pc in January from 0.71pc in December.

Core inflation, which excludes volatile energy and some food costs, made another solid decline, easing to an annual 4.76pc in January from 5.09pc in December and falling below the headline rate for the first time in 16 months. On a monthly basis, core inflation rose by 0.40pc following a 0.44pc gain in December.

Energy prices rose by an annual 0.2pc in January, up from 0.1pc in December, with year-on-year increases for low-grade gasoline and electricity prices at 2.3pc and 3.5pc, respectively.

Domestic natural gas prices fell by an annual 19pc in January, the largest annual shift for any energy subcomponent, followed by a 7.6pc decline in LPG prices.

On a monthly basis, energy prices rose 0.5pc over December levels, led by a 2.4pc month-on-month increase in LPG, as well as an 0.8pc rise in domestic natural gas and 0.2pc increases for both low-grade gasoline prices and electricity in January, Inegi reported.

Banorte in a note said both LPG and low-grade gasoline prices were under pressure from international reference prices last month.

The results came in slightly above consensus median estimates in Citibanamex's 6 February survey of 30 bank analysts, which resulted in a median forecast for January's monthly CPI to rise by 0.86pc and for monthly core to hit 0.36pc, compared to the actual results of 0.89pc and 0.40pc.

By James Young

March BTC Blend crude exports flat

Loadings of BTC Blend crude from the Turkish port of Ceyhan are scheduled at 549,000 b/d for March, just 1,000 b/d higher than this month. The February programme marked an 11-month low.

Azerbaijan's state-owned Socar is due to export 377,000 b/d of BTC Blend next month, around 13pc lower than this month. Shipments by Kazakh state-controlled Kazmunaigaz are scheduled steady on the month at 23,000 b/d. BP, operator of Azerbaijan's offshore Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli (ACG) complex, is scheduled to load 66,000 b/d in March, 40pc higher than this month.

Of the other ACG partners, Turkish upstream firm TPAO is set to load 20,000 b/d next month, marginally lower than the 23,000 b/d scheduled for this month, while Hungary's Mol will load no BTC Blend cargoes in March, compared with 21,000 b/d in February.

Japanese firm Itochu will not load any cargoes in March either, the same as February. Norway's state-controlled Equinor is due to export 23,000 b/d in March, while Exxon-Mobil is scheduled to export 19,000 b/d. Both Equinor and ExxonMobil are absent from the February programme.

Market participants said offers for February-loading BTC blend were coming in at premiums of \$5.50-6.75/bl to the North Sea Dated benchmark. But no deals have been concluded at this level, with previous assessments for the medium sweet grade \$5.20/bl above the benchmark.

By John Corder

Pemex delays Zama development one year

Mexican state-owned Pemex pushed back development of its giant shallow water Zama field by a year to concentrate on engineering development, oil regulator CNH said.

"Everything has been pushed back by a year and that will have enormous implications for the production timeline," CNH commissioner Hector Moreira said today.

Pemex had planned to invest \$1.43bn this year in the construction of offshore infrastructure – production platforms, three pipelines and a separation battery. Instead it will spend just \$69mn on engineering and design for the projects and push back construction to next year, according to the modified work plan.

While commissioners expressed concern at the delay, the modified program was unanimously approved.

"It is better to spend more time planning than rush into production and suffer delays," CNH said today. "This is a major strategic project and we are giving the operator the flexibility to slow down or speed up, depending on conditions."

Production was originally forecast to launch in 2025 but

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will likely be delayed for at least a year, CNH said. The peak production forecast of 180,000 b/d of crude (24-27° API) and 70mn cf/d of natural gas remains unchanged.

Pemex, together with its unitization partners Talos Energy, Wintershall Dea and Harbour Energy, expect to produce 675mn bl of crude and 262 Bcf of natural gas in the field by 2045, according to the original production plan approved in June last year.

The delay is a blow to Mexico's rapidly declining crude output as the field, forecast to be the country's fifth largest liquids producer, was expected to provide an important boost.

Pemex produced 1.54mn b/d of crude in December, 1.3pc lower than in December 2022 and down by 0.6pc from November, according to the latest Pemex statistics.

By Rebecca Conan

Nigerian gasoline price rise not imminent: NNPC

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) said that an increase in the cost of gasoline is not imminent in the country, as outright Eurobob non-oxy gasoline barge prices rose to two-month highs and pressured a de facto cap on local gasoline prices.

The NNPC would not raise the cost of gasoline, known locally as premium motor spirit (PMS), at its retail stations as it pointed to rumours of an "upward review of the PMS price".

There was a very slight increase in queues outside retail stations across the country today, according to one market participant.

As the largest downstream fuel retailer marketing a quarter of PMS volumes in January, according to one source, the NNPC introduced a de facto cap on PMS prices at around 620 naira/litre (44¢/l) in July following the end of a gasoline subsidy, which was in effect between 2017 and May 2023. The NNPC is thought to subsidise gasoline prices at below-market levels in fierce competition with over 30 other downstream fuel marketers.

But an increase in Eurobob non-oxy barge values since late November has probably added cost pressures which the NNPC may be unable to bear and may be considering passing onto its clients, according to one source. Barges hit \$793/t on 29 January – a two-month high – and have since rebounded to \$788.75/t on 7 February.

In a sign of a widening disconnect between local PMS and local diesel – automotive gasoil (AGO) – prices, ex-Apapa hub AGO premiums to PMS hit 598 naira/litre on 29 January, according to Major Energies Marketers Association of Nigeria (MEMAN) data. This level surpassed all AGO premiums against PMS in 2023, even when gasoline prices were heavily subsidised against diesel.

Nevertheless, market participants in the region are mixed on whether any rise in PMS prices will come soon.

By George Maher-Bonnett

Chevron El Segundo refinery unit shuts down

Chevron reported a unit shutdown and flaring today at its 269,000 b/d El Segundo, California, refinery.

Unplanned flaring was first detected Thursday at 3am ET, according to a filing with local environmental regulators. The affected unit was not disclosed.

A crude storage-tank leak was also reported at the refinery beginning at 9:30am ET today, according to a regulatory filing. It is unclear if the two incidents were related.

Several Los Angeles-area refineries experienced operational issues this week after the region was hit by heavy rains and floods.

By Gordon Pollock

Maintenance at Mongstad refinery in 2Q

State-controlled Norwegian oil firm Equinor will implement a shutdown at its 203,000 b/d Mongstad refinery from the start of April until mid-May to carry out scheduled maintenance, a company spokesperson told *Argus* today.

The maintenance programme at Norway's sole refinery will see work carried out on crude, petcoke and gasoil plants and at one of the refinery's reformers. There will be reduced production from these plants during this period, the spokesperson said.

The Mongstad refinery previously had maintenance carried out on its fluid catalytic cracker between September-November 2023, and was briefly shut following a lightning strike in July of that year.

The site supplies heavy naphtha for gasoline blending, which is in high demand following the implementation of EU sanctions against Russian naphtha imports. Mongstad heavy naphtha loadings are often priced at a premium to other heavy naphtha cargoes in the region, because of its preferable specifications.

By George Maher-Bonnett

Norwegian Okea's oil, gas output rise in 4Q

Norwegian independent Okea's oil and gas production hit an all-time high in the fourth quarter of 2023, supported by increased output reliability and the start-up of the Hasselmu gas well in the Norwegian Sea.

The firm said net oil and gas production was around 30,100 b/d of oil equivalent (boe/d) in the quarter, up by 51pc from the same period a year earlier and a record high. The firm's output for 2023 was above guidance at 24,600 boe/d. Okea has raised its guidance to 35,000-40,000 boe/d for 2024, compared with 23,000-24,000 boe/d for 2023.

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Production at Draugen in the Norwegian Sea rose by 28pc on the year to 8,700 boe/d in the fourth quarter, as a result of the start-up of the Hasselmus tie-back. Gas production at Hasselmus started in October last year and reached 4,800 boe/d in October-December, amounting to around 2,150 boe/d net to Okea.

Okea expects Hasselmus to add 10.4mn boe of natural gas, and it has enabled it to restart exports of associated gas and NGL from Draugen. Okea operates Draugen with a 45pc interest. An investment decision on a potential tie-back of the Brasse field to Brage will be taken in the first quarter, Okea said.

Net output from the Brage field in the North Sea rose to 8,000 boe/d, from 1,500 boe/d in the fourth quarter of 2022, supported by Talisker East production and the start-up of Cook and Fensfjord. Production from the Yme field rose to around 3,440 boe/d, from 1,700 boe/d a year earlier, following works on a well.

On top of the Draugen turnaround completed in January, Okea said three weeks of maintenance are scheduled for Statfjord in the second quarter and three weeks also for Brage and Ivar Aasen in the third quarter.

Okea reported a loss of 1.3bn Norwegian kroner (\$119mn) in the fourth quarter, compared with a Nkr324mn profit a year earlier, because of impairments of Nkr1.6bn related to Yme and Statfjord. Okea had already taken two impairment charges last year related to [issues at Yme](#). The Statfjord impairment is mainly the result of a reduction in production and reserves estimates for the field, the firm said.


Okea acquired a 28pc stake in the Statfjord licence from Norwegian state-controlled Equinor at the end of December, although it had [postponed the completion of the deal at the start of December](#) after reductions in reserves estimates for the field. Equinor's 2024 reserves estimate for the licence indicated a 10-15pc reduction in proven and probable reserves over the field's lifetime, compared with the 2023 estimate.

Okea chief executive Svein Liknes said closing the deal was not an easy decision, but the company still believed in the field's potential.

By Caroline Varin

Marathon LA refinery flaring continues

Flaring was reported at both plants of Marathon's 363,000 b/d Los Angeles, California, refinery after potentially weather-related operational issues earlier this week.




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The Wilmington side of the refinery began emergency flaring at 6:04pm ET Wednesday, according to a filing with local environmental regulators. The facility previously reported a [power outage on Monday](#) that caused flaring through at least Tuesday.

The Carson side of the refinery reported planned flaring beginning Wednesday afternoon, citing an "essential operational need." Flaring was expected to last until 11 February. Affected units were not disclosed.

Severe rains and flooding hit southern California earlier this week, with much of Los Angeles County remaining under a National Weather Service flash flood warning Wednesday. Several refiners in the area reported operational issues this week, including Phillips 66's 139,000 b/d Los Angeles refinery and Chevron's 269,000 b/d El Segundo plant.

By Gordon Pollock

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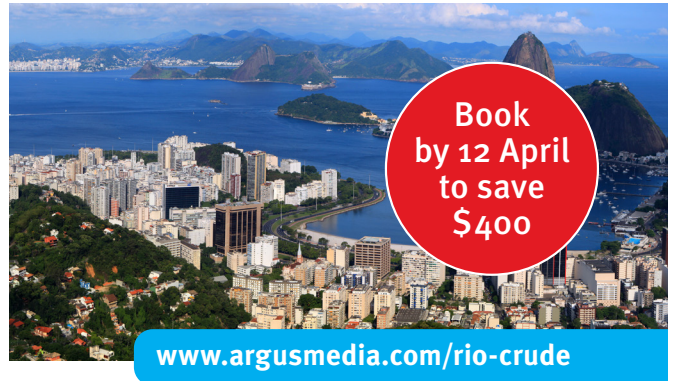


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