EXECUTIVE MARKET BRIEF

Tanker Market Intelligence

Commercial freight, vessel supply, trade demand and risk - distilled into one weekly view

MARKET CALL	FREIGHT	RISK	MOMENTUM	HORIZON
FIRM	VERY STRONG	EXTREME	FALLING	MEDIUM-TERM

OWNER-SUPPORTIVE

Crude: Firm

Products: Provisional

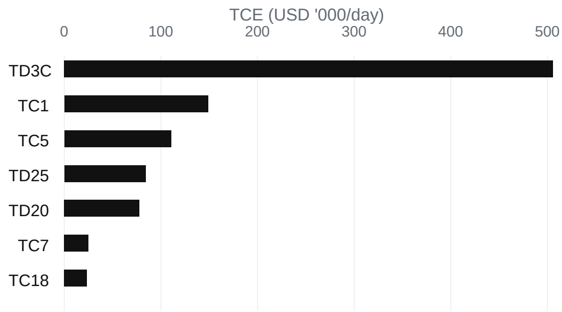
Updated 13 Aug 2026

EXECUTIVE READ

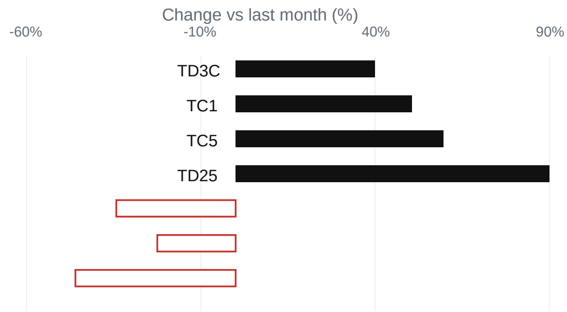
Freight remains very strong across core tanker routes, but the market is increasingly two-speed. TD20 have corrected from recent highs, cargo fundamentals remain weak, and visible ballast supply has rebuilt even as Middle East / Indian Ocean and Panama Canal keeps disruption risk extreme.

EARNINGS & MOMENTUM DASHBOARD

CURRENT ROUTE TCE



CHANGE VS LAST MONTH



MARKET DRIVERS

Driver	Read	Why it matters
Freight strength	Very Strong	Core route TCEs remain the primary owner-economics signal.
Cargo fundamentals	Weak	Processing, export and demand signals are kept separate from the freight tape.
Tonnage supply	Balanced	Utilisation is read together with visible ballast supply.
Tonne-mile demand	Unknown	Class-level long-haul demand can diverge materially.
Disruption / risk	Extreme	Material routing and security risk can reduce effective vessel supply.
Market momentum	Falling	Momentum shows whether expensive freight is accelerating or cooling.

WEEKLY TAKEAWAYS

OWNER ECONOMICS

Earnings remain highly supportive on the strongest routes, led by VLCC and LR economics.

DEMAND

Underlying cargo and tonne-mile signals remain mixed and do not validate every freight move.

RISK

Security and routing disruption remain a major source of effective-supply tightness.

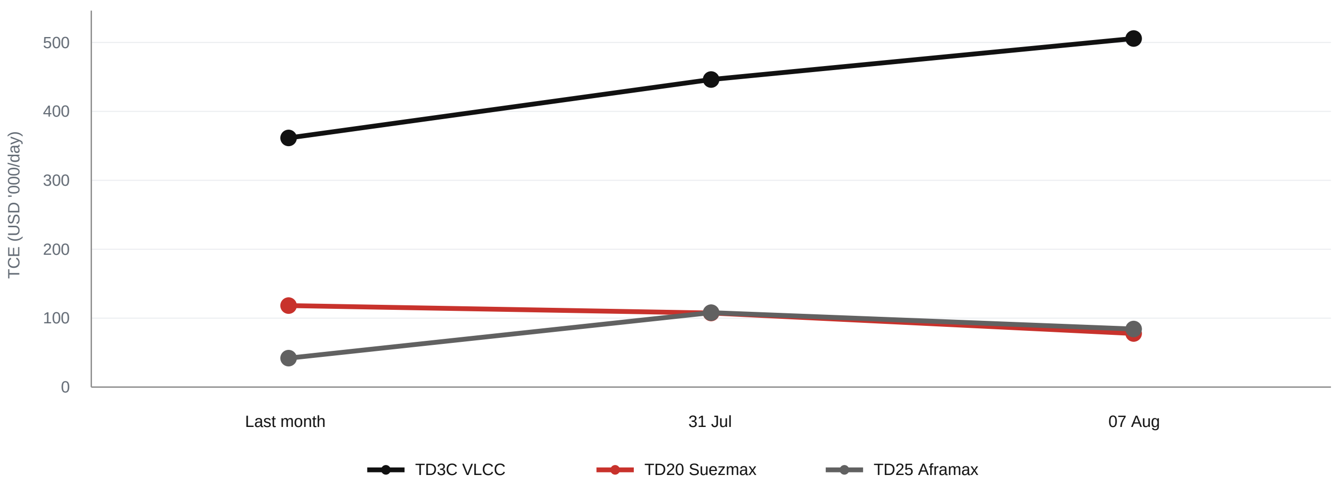
CRUDE TANKER DEEP DIVE

Crude Tankers

Freight regime, vessel availability and bargaining power

Crude economics are highly differentiated by route. TD3C remains the strongest absolute earnings signal, while TD20 have corrected from recent highs. Supply is also mixed: utilisation is elevated, but visible ballast supply has rebuilt, tempering a single scarcity signal.

CRUDE EARNINGS EVOLUTION



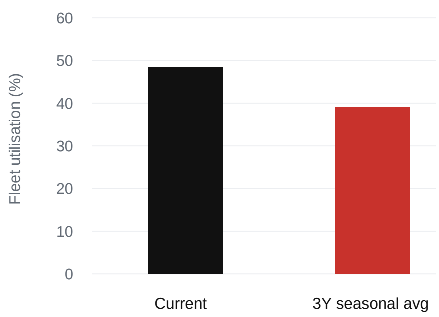
ROUTE ECONOMICS

Route	07 Aug	31 Jul	Last month
TD3C VLCC	$505.8k	$446.3k	$361.5k
TD20 Suezmax	$77.8k	$107.5k	$118.3k
TD25 Aframax	$84.3k	$108.0k	$42.0k

COMMERCIAL READ

Absolute earnings still favour owners on the strongest routes, but the widening spread between Arabian Gulf VLCC economics and softer Atlantic benchmarks argues for a route-selective rather than universally bullish view.

VLCC UTILISATION



SUPPLY POSITIONING

Indicator	Latest	Interpretation
VLCC fleet utilisation	48.4% vs 39.0% 3Y avg	Utilisation remains elevated when availability stays tight.
East-of-Suez ballast / laden	1.5 vs ~1.0 prior	Visible availability rebuild tempers the tightness signal.
Routing risk premium	Extreme	Security disruption can lift freight and reduce effective supply.
WAF Suezmax benchmark	TD20 $77.8k/day	Atlantic earnings can diverge sharply from Arabian Gulf routes.

DESK VIEW

The crude market is still expensive, but it is no longer one trade. Geography, security exposure and vessel positioning matter more than the headline average. Near-term upside requires disruption to persist without a further rebuild in workable tonnage.

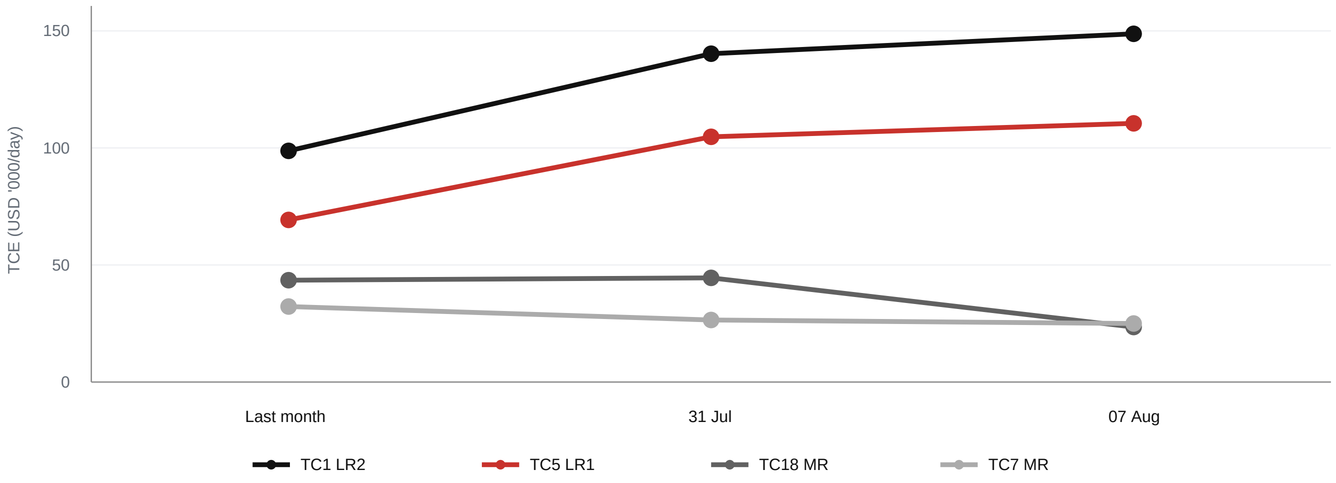
PRODUCT TANKERS & TRADE DEMAND

Products & Tonne-mile

Clean tanker economics and the latest long-haul demand signal

Product tanker conditions are less uniform than crude. Arabian Gulf LR2/LR1 routes remain firm while MR benchmarks have weakened. Tonne-mile data are mixed, so clean tanker economics need to be read by class and basin.

PRODUCT EARNINGS EVOLUTION



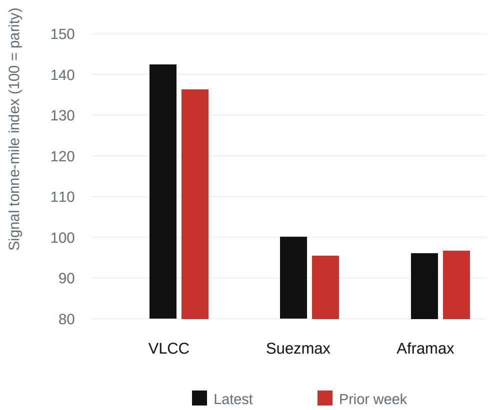
PRODUCT ROUTE TABLE

Route	07 Aug	31 Jul	Last month
TC1 LR2	$148.8k	$140.3k	$98.8k
TC5 LR1	$110.5k	$104.8k	$69.3k
TC18 MR	$23.5k	$44.5k	$43.5k
TC7 MR	$25.0k	$26.5k	$32.3k

CLEAN MARKET READ

LR2/LR1 strength is concentrated in the stronger long-haul routes, while MR weakness shows that the clean market is not uniformly owner-favourable.

TONNE-MILE DEMAND



Signal class index | 100 = parity

LATEST TONNE-MILE READINGS

Class	Latest	Prior week	Change	Interpretation
VLCC	142.4	136.3	+6.1 pts	Long-haul pull remains materially above parity.
Suezmax	100.1	95.5	+4.6 pts	Recovered to around the historical norm.
Aframax	96.1	96.7	-0.6 pts	Broadly stable, slightly below parity.

DESK VIEW

The long-haul demand picture is most useful at class level. VLCC, Suezmax and Aframax tonne-mile readings are therefore kept separate and dated whenever the latest observation is older than the live freight data.

RISK & FORWARD VIEW

Risk, Routing & 7-Day Outlook

Where disruption is supporting freight - and what could change the call

RISK & ROUTING MATRIX

Severity	Area	Market transmission	Commercial implication
Elevated	Middle East / Indian Ocean	UKTMO attack map. (Source: UKTMO) UKMTO Reports Incident Involving Container Ship and Military Forces in Gulf of...	
High	Panama Canal	A-33-2018 Suspension of the Modification in the Duration of the Second Booking Period	Changes to draft, slots, booking rules, lock availability or tolls can alter transit capacity, wa...
High	Global	Cuba-related Designations; Issuance of Cuba-related Frequently Asked Question | Office of Foreign Assets Control...	Official sanctions action can alter vessel employability, ownership/compliance risk, cargo routin...

FORWARD WATCH

WHAT TO WATCH

- Next Gibson/Signal freight update and whether the strongest route regime holds.
- East-of-Suez VLCC ballast-to-laden ratio and any further rebuild in visible supply.
- VLCC utilisation versus the published seasonal average.
- China crude-processing and import follow-through.
- Any material Hormuz, Black Sea/CPC or Red Sea routing disruption.

SCENARIO FRAME

BULL Disruption deepens while utilisation stays high and visible supply fails to rebuild.

BASE Freight stays firm but route-level volatility and corrections continue.

BEAR Cargo demand weakens further while workable tonnage rebuilds quickly.

7-DAY BASE CASE | FIRM / OWNER-SUPPORTIVE

Strong route earnings and disruption risk remain owner-supportive, but the market is no longer a one-direction freight story. The main downside risk is a continued rebuild in visible tonnage alongside soft cargo fundamentals; the main upside risk is renewed disruption that keeps effective supply constrained.

CATALYST GRID

UPSIDE TO OWNER EARNINGS	DOWNSIDE TO OWNER EARNINGS	MONITOR / NEUTRAL
Renewed routing disruption; persistent high utilisation; delayed tonnage replenishment.	Further cargo-demand weakening; faster ballast rebuild; sharp fall in war-risk premia.	China processing recovery; routing normalisation; broader product-MR demand breadth.

SOURCES & METHODOLOGY

This report combines direct commercial freight data from Gibson Weekly Tanker Market Report and The Signal Group Weekly Tanker Market Monitor; cargo fundamentals from OPEC MOMR, JODI Oil, EIA and China NBS; routing/activity context from IMF PortWatch; security/navigation intelligence from UKMTO / MSCIO and authority notices. Every chart and table refreshes from the latest collected observations each week. Stale observations remain explicitly dated and are not treated as live.

Data cut: commercial market sources through 07 Aug 2026 | tonne-mile observation: 03 Jul 2026.