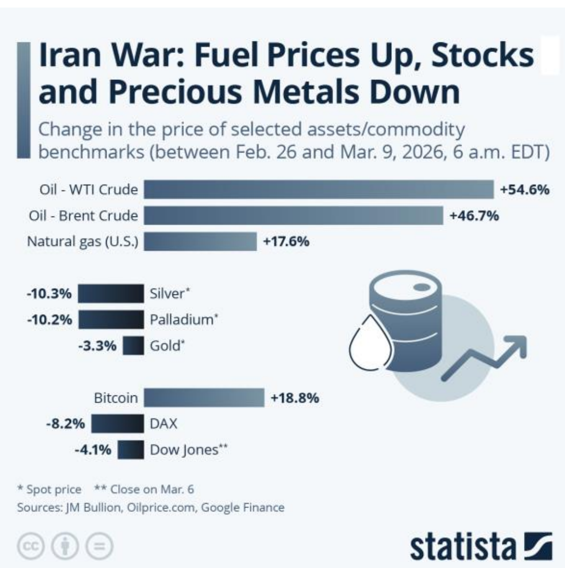
13 March 2026

WEEKLY COMMENTARY

HARTLAND

SHIPPING SERVICES

CONTENTS



Source : Statista

^ Mojtaba himself is said to be "likely disfigured" due to recent attacks, according to US Defense Secretary Pete Hesgeth. Some Iranian outlets have since claimed that his mother may still be alive.

* The Houthis, unlike other major Iran-aligned proxies have been quiet. Today Reuters cited possible reasons for this today in *"Why haven't the Houthis, Iran's allies in Yemen, stepped into the war?"*, and a suggestion that they may be biding their time until a moment of maximum pressure.

^^ UK Defense Secretary John Healey on Thursday told Bloomberg "The reports have become clearer…the Iranians may have started mining the Strait."

** Lloyd's List 11th Mar: "*Naval escorts would cap tanker transits at under 10% of normal volumes*"

^^^ The Iranians claimed market manipulation.

*** On Friday evening Reuters reported that 2 Indian flagged LPG carriers exited through the Strait. Italy and France have asked for similar, dream on.

IF Iran were to allow all Indian flagged ships via Hormuz, there are 10 Indian VLCCs in the world. China has 22 flagged VLCCs, Hong Kong another 93. If this tonnage were officially allowed to safely lift and transport KSA/UAE/Iraqi etc volumes from inside the Gulf regularly, it would with other measures ease much of the pressure on global oil prices. Perhaps they may allow just a small trickle of non-enemy tonnage or "humanitarian" exits of ships already inside.

POINTS OF VIEW

No plan survives contact with the enemy, so the saying goes. This assumes there is even a plan at all. The White House's plan for war on Iran is being exposed for what everyone feared it would be, half-baked. By one narrow definition, there was a successful military plan for the early days. The Ayatollah and top commanders were killed, rocket launchers were hit, the rate of Iranian missile salvos fell each day, and its navy sunk. Maybe Trump thought this would be enough, claim another beautiful victory and move on. The wider strategic plan for week 2 and beyond is missing, beyond hoping for regime change. Hubris after quick wins in the 12-day war on Iran last year and then Venezuela, has seen him bite off more than he can chew. Capturing Maduro, parking the legal merits, was a success. He was removed and the US got access to Venezuela's oil, a simpler operation with a plan for what came next. As the FT noted in *Trump's Venezuela strategy has failed in Iran,* the US had already spoken to VP Delcy Rodriguez and lined her up as Maduro's successor.

Meanwhile, succeeding the dead Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is his son, Mojtaba Khamenei. Is the new Ayatollah, a religious fundamentalist and a hard-liner, really going to beg for peace, after you have just martyred his father, his mother, and maybe his wife?^ The US seems ill-prepared for the closure of Hormuz. It does not take the benefit of hindsight to point out Iran's chokehold over the Strait. The risks of decentralised asymmetric warfare; cheap drones, mines and unmanned speed boats were well known, the Houthis offered a clear warning over the last two years.* Iran's strategy was scorched earth, market meltdown ($200/bbl is their motto) and wait for Trump to blink. The inevitable surge in oil, fuel and gas prices followed, as exports dried up with shipowners trying to keep their crew out of harms way. Was there a plan for keeping the Strait safe? A (flawed) plan for marine insurance (one week in) was the wrong answer to the wrong question, suggesting they never considered the consequences of their actions, and still do not fully grasp the situation. Insurance was still available, just expensive and reflecting a risk that most ship-owners are not prepared to put their crews into, not a lack of guts. On Tuesday (day 11), the US reported that it had destroyed Iranian mine-laying vessels. Why not do so on day 1? Trump has since denied reports that Iran has mined the Strait, others are less sure.^^

What happens next? Democrat senators said classified briefings on Tuesday night left them concerned there is no clear end game. On Thursday US Energy Secretary Chris Wright said that naval convoys may be possible by the end of the month. Lloyd's List report that military experts fear this will only allow 5-10 ships per day through the Strait, down from the pre-war ~70.** Wright's official X account falsely posted on Tuesday that the US navy had escorted a tanker through Hormuz. Shortly afterwards, oil prices tumbled. The post was later deleted.^^^ Brent is currently ~$100/bbl. This is high, but it reflects a market base case of weeks not months of disruption. It feels like something has got to give soon though; either more ships go through Hormuz or oil prices rise much higher. $100/bbl is not high enough to cause serious demand destruction, which is the only way to offset the current supply collapse. It seems out of sync with the mayhem in Asian product markets; surging prices and fears of shortages across the grades; gasoline, jet, diesel and even marine fuel oil. No tankers arriving from the Gulf, and China banning product exports is a perfect storm. Meanwhile some bulkers, the backbone of global trade, can not fix as they do not know if they will be able to source the necessary bunkers.

The rest of the world can mop up some of the mess. Saudi is getting 4mbpd out of Yanbu thanks to the East-West pipeline, useful but not the 7mbpd the Kingdom exported pre-war. IEA members are releasing 400mb from reserves, but reportedly these can only be released at 2-3mbpd. Add in the UAE's Fujairah pipeline and relaxing sanctions on Russia, this may bridge 9mbpd of the pre-war 20mbpd going via Hormuz, but no LNG or fertiliser. Iran's 2mbpd still sails. Reuters report that India is negotiating with Iran to allow Indian-flagged tonnage safe transit, surely China will do the same. A crucial distinction is whether this is just to let stranded ships out of Hormuz, or enabling substantial non-Iran cargoes to flow to India and China. The latter seems debateable for now, as it would reduce Iranian leverage over the world economy and oil markets, which have not quite buckled yet.*** Today's prices are painful, but not scary enough to force Trump to TACO again and end the war. Can "Teflon Don" still declare victory after being forced to eat the humblest of pies, as he did after Liberation Day? Even then, will Israel play ball or will they keep attacking Iran? If so, would Iran keep targetting ships in the area? The Gulf may become like the Red Sea, safe for the rest but not the west. We must hope that the White House is not considering an even worse option than a fudged peace. A ban on US oil and product exports would briefly help at home but send global prices stratospheric. It would be the ultimate act of America First protectionism. This administration has the form.

WEEKLY COMMENTARY

13 March 2026

HARTLAND SHIPPING SERVICES

Dry Cargo Chartering

The **BDI** ended the week at **2,028** up 18 since last week. The market faced an unprecedented week, as the ripple effects of war in the Middle East began to take hold. Rising tonnage availability, a thin prompt cargo book, and eye-watering bunker prices combined to place sustained pressure on sentiment and willingness to trade. Even vessels that would typically secure prompt employment were left waiting in position as the bid/offer gap widened and many charterers chose to remain on the sidelines, adopting a cautious wait-and-see approach amid future uncertainty. Reports of tightening physical fuel supply at several ports worldwide added further concern and weighed on overall market confidence in a damaging way. In the Far East, in particular, bunker supply was rumoured to be thinning very quickly, which can be illustrated by the difference in VLSFO price between the two basins. By Friday, VLSFO in the Atlantic (Rotterdam / Houston) was $700-800/t, whereas in the Pacific (HK / Singapore / Long beach) it was $1100/t. Reflecting this, Asian activity was subdued, with charterers taking a stubborn stance as everybody waits to see how things transpire. Hopefully things settle down and become clearer in the next few days, allowing trades to resume, once markets (bunkers especially) adjust to new realities.

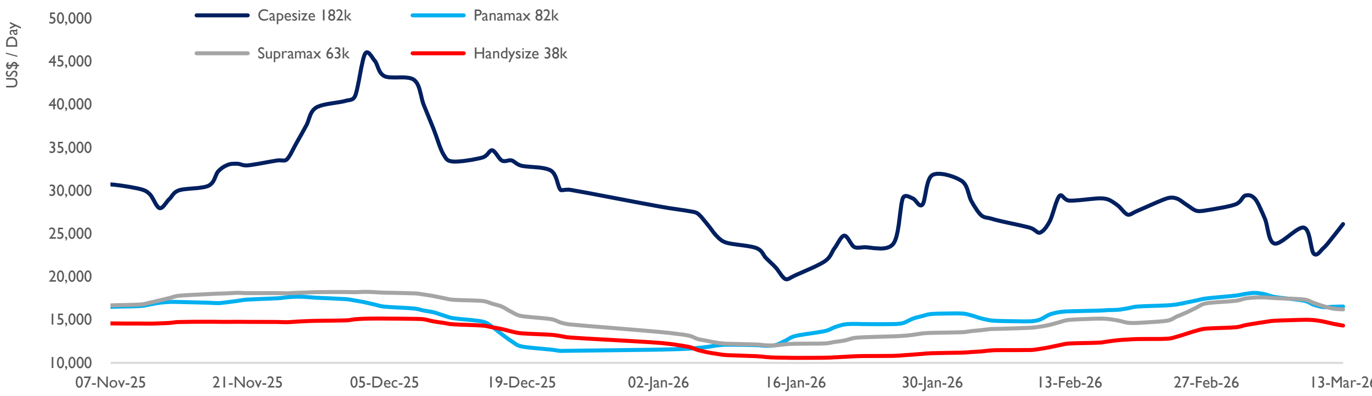
The BCI ended the week at $26,124 up $2,266 since last week. Despite the volatility in the **Capesize** market, there were healthy volumes of cargo in the Pacific which saw sentiment improve towards Friday. The Brazil and West Africa - China market gradually showed a stronger tone.

The BPI closed this week at $16,546 down $1,110 since last week. The **Panamax** market saw little activity across both basins. In the Pacific there was demand for coal trades (unsurprising with lost LNG from the Gulf) but owners have been sitting on their hands due to volatile bunker prices. In the Atlantic there continues to be thin cargo volumes but bids improved towards the end of the week allowing the P1A to recover a tad.

The BSI closed this week at $16,213 down $1,312 since last week. In the Continent and Mediterranean, **Supramax** fundamentals remained fairly balanced, supported by steady but unspectacular demand. Further west, however, the picture was more challenging, as the US Gulf and South Atlantic came under increased pressure from a growing list of open ships and a limited flow of fresh cargo, with several spot ships unable to secure employment. In Asia, activity remained slow with charterers adopting a cautious approach amid bunker price volatility and limited fresh demand.

The BHSI closed this week at $14,330 down $563 since last week. With limited activity emerging, it was a week of watching and waiting in the **Handysize** market. In the Continent and the Mediterranean, conditions remained largely unchanged, although indicated rates were slightly firmer compared to previous levels. Conversely, the South Atlantic and the US Gulf continued to soften, as a growing tonnage list combined with a thinning cargo book added downward pressure basis delivery Arrival Pilot Station rates. Period sentiment took a short-term knock, although we expect operators with large cargo books to reengage again. It was reported, *Apollon Trader* (40,552-dwt, 2024) fixed delivery Bejaia for abt 4/6 months, redel worldwide at $16,500 with Norden.

Baltic Earnings



Representative Dry Cargo Market Fixtures

Vessel	DWT	Built	Delivery	Date	Redelivery	Rate ($)	Charterers	Comment
CL Beijing	81,700	2013	EC South America	22 Mar	Skaw-Gibraltar	$26,000	Olam	-
Ikan Belanak	81,609	2020	Cebu	12/13 Mar	South China	$23,000	Joint Vision	Via EC Australia
Blue Ionian	76,596	2007	Phu My	15/18 Mar	India	$18,000	Avenir	Via Indonesia
Great Rich	75,524	2012	Otake	20 Mar	Japan	$16,000	Norden	Via Australia
Good Luck	75,031	2011	Lumut	15 Mar	Philippines	$19,500	Cnr	Via Indonesia
Kiran Anatolia	63,756	2013	Port Elizabeth	Ppt	Sri Lanka	$19,000	Oldendorff	$190,000 ballast bonus
Glory Sea	56,623	2011	Gresik	Ppt	Philippines	$17,000	Lighthouse	Via Indonesia
FLC Fortune	53,456	2010	Singapore	13 Mar	China	$13,500	Cnr	Via Indonesia
Nordloire	37,212	2013	Recalada	Ppt	Mediterranean	$21,500	Enesel	-
Seastar Trojan	30,425	2010	Recalada	Ppt	North Brazil	$15,500	Norden	-

Exchange Rates		This week	Last week
	1 USD	159.43 JPY	157.65 JPY
	1 USD	0.8734 EUR	0.8618 EUR
Brent Oil Price		**This week**	**Last week**
	USD per barrel	101.53	94.25

Bunker Prices (US$/tonne)	This week	Last week
Singapore HSFO	896.0	630.0
VLSFO	1085.5	699.0
Rotterdam HSFO	733.5	562.0
VLSFO	775.5	592.0

Dry Bulk S&P

Last week we speculated that values may stabilise after being in the ascendency over the last few weeks, however there seems to be no sign of slowing down basis the pricing in this week's report.

The headline deal of the week is in the Ultramax sector, *Ability* (64,253-dwt, 2021 Shin Kurushima) has been sold to Astrobulk for $37m. It is understood that the buyers will take delivery with her surveys freshly passed. This is a step up on last week's en bloc sale of *Casda* & *Gemma* (64k-dwt, 2017/19 Tsuenishi affiliates) at $30.75m each.

The most recent sale by Chinese online auction is *CCS Orchid* (81,966-dwt, 2017 YZJ) which has been picked up by Bright Navigation at $27.24m. This is a strong number when compared with the conventional sale of *Aquavita Sea* (81,479-dwt, 2020 Hantong) at the end of February for $30.5m.

Moving down to the Supramaxes, just one ship comes out of the oven this week, *Papa John* (56,543-dwt, 2010 Qingshan) has achieved $13.2m. It is unconfirmed which buyers have a grabbed a slice of the action, but they are likely Chinese. Last month we reported the two years younger *Lima Trader* (56,729-dwt, 2012 Qingshan) at the same price.

To end this week's sales, vintage capes continue to be sold out. *Aliado* (177,022-dwt, 2005 Namura) is the latest at $19.1m.

Reported Dry Bulk Sales

Vessel	DWT	Built	Yard	Gear	Buyer	Price	Comment
Aliado	177,022	2005	Namura	-		$19.10m	
CCS Orchid	81,966	2017	Jiangsu Newyangzi	-	Bright Navigation	$27.24m	Via Chinese online auction GSE
Ability	64,253	2021	Shin Kurushima	C 4x31T	Astrobulk	$37.00m	Delivery surveys passed
Papa John	56,543	2010	Qingshan	C 4x35T	Chinese	$13.20m	

WEEKLY COMMENTARY

13 March 2026

HARTLAND SHIPPING SERVICES

Tanker Commentary

As the crisis in the Middle East continues with no clear end in sight, markets are seeing eye watering freight rates, but struggling to find a footing or any consensus on longer-term outcomes of the conflict. The lack of clarity spills into the sales table with only a handful of sales to discuss in the tanker report this week and a very volatile equities market.

News of Sinokor picking up another VLCC has come to light. The vessel in question is *Kiho* (300,866-dwt, 2006 IHI) which is reportedly sold at a reported price of $51m which we understand has been fixed on a lucrative storage contract.

In the MR2 sector, chemical notation *Fjellanger* (46,287-dwt, 2010 HMD) and *Finnanger* (46,251-dwt, 2009 HMD) have been sold enbloc for a healthy $48m - both units have capacity to carry 22 grades and are fitted with scrubbers. For reference, the phenolic epoxy coated *Rui Fu Xing* (47,162-dwt, 2010 HMD) was sold for $22m last week.

Reported Tanker Sales

Vessel	DWT	Built	Yard	Buyer	Price	Comment
Kiho	300,866	2006	IHI	Sinokor	$51.0m	Wartsila M/E
S Fontvieille	49,990	2013	HMD	Greek	$32.50m	Very prompt delivery (10 days)
Fjellanger	46,287	2010	HMD		$24.0m	22 grades, Scrubber fitted – en-bloc for $48m
Finnanger	46,251	2009			$24.0m	
Asia Evergreen	14,000	2012	Fujian Shenglong		$9.20m	

Should you have any queries about the content of this report or require any services of Hartland Shipping Services, please contact:

Hartland Shipping Services Ltd, London
Tel: +44 20 3077 1600
Email: chartuk@hartlandshipping.com
Email: snpuk@hartlandshipping.com
Email: consult@hartlandshipping.com

Hartland Shipping Services Ltd, Shanghai
Tel: +86 21 2028 0618
Email: newbuild@hartlandshipping.com

Hartland Shipping Services Pte. Ltd, Singapore
Tel: +65 8223 4371
Email: chartops.sg@hartlandshipping.com