STRAIT OF HORMUZ MONITOR

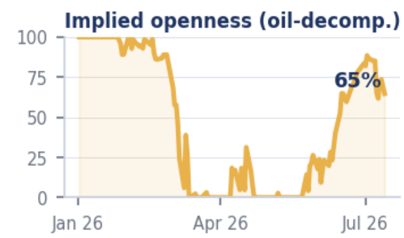
How open · how fast

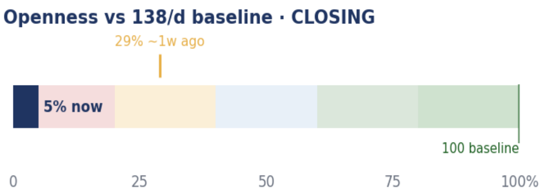
The headline question: how open is Hormuz, and how fast is it reopening? We lead with what we can OBSERVE; dark-share hides the rest.

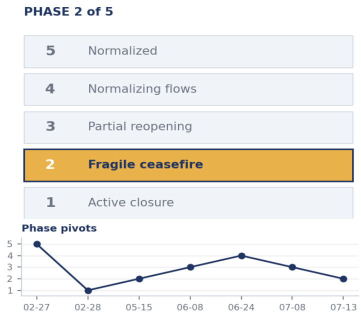
Hormuz ~5% open (observable) · **Phase 2/5 — Fragile ceasefire** · **CLOSING** -24.0 pts/wk

Backing out SPR releases, OPEC+ slack and demand destruction ($12/bbl combined, per Global Oil S/D v12), today's Brent implies Hormuz is 65% open. Observed visible openness is 5%, total flow estimate 22%; the residual Hormuz risk premium in Brent is $12/bbl. Forward Brent has the premium decaying to $-2/bbl by 12m (100% implied openness).

Of the ships we can SEE, only 60% are AIS-off — but the visible count is itself a fraction of true flow: 7 transits/day vs 138 baseline (~5%), with most traffic running dark/unobserved (50-80% on an all-traffic basis). Estimated total ~22% of 20 mb/d throughput (est., low-confidence).







SYNTHESIS — three-sentence headline

DOWNGRADE — Phase 3 -> Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, COLLAPSED). The 10-11 Jul pause broke: the IRGC struck the Cyprus-flagged containership GFS GALAXY off Oman (11 Jul; crew abandoned, one missing), the US ran a THIRD strike round (12 Jul; ~140 targets incl. Qeshm), and the IRGC Navy FORMALLY DECLARED the Strait 'closed until further notice' — the FIRST legal closure claim of the cycle. But Phase 2, NOT Phase 1: CENTCOM denies the closure and runs freedom-of-navigation ops, the Strait is physically OPEN (a thin dark flow still moves), no terminal struck (Kharg intact), no mining, no seizure campaign, and Brent only ~$79 — the market is NOT pricing closure. The tip to Phase 1 (a Kharg/terminal hit, mining, a seizure campaign, a US blockade, or Brent >$85) is not in evidence. For now: contested, formally 'closed' by Tehran but physically open — a collapsed pause, not a shut Strait. (Intraday: the market shook off the headlines and de-escalation signals re-emerged — talks continue — so the vector is turning less negative; see the bottom line.) DOWNGRADE — Phase 3 -> Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, COLLAPSED). The pause broke: the IRGC struck the containership GFS Galaxy (11 Jul), the US ran a third strike round (12 Jul; ~140 targets, Qeshm), and the IRGC Navy FORMALLY declared the Strait 'closed'. But Phase 2, NOT Phase 1: CENTCOM denies the closure, the Strait is physically OPEN, no terminal struck (Kharg intact), no mining, and Brent only ~$79 — the market is not pricing closure. The tip to Phase 1 (a Kharg/terminal hit, mining, a US blockade, or Brent >$85) is not in evidence. And into Monday's session the market SHOOK OFF the headlines as DE-ESCALATION SIGNALS re-emerged — Qatar/Pakistan mediating, US 'technical talks continue', Brent easing off its spike — so Phase 2 holds but the vector is turning less negative. A collapsed pause, formally 'closed' but physically open, with talks alive — possibly a brief one. Watch the two US carriers in the Gulf of Oman. Two answers, and both matter. LEGALLY: on 12 Jul the IRGC Navy declared the Strait 'closed until further notice' after warning shots — the first formal Iranian closure claim of the cycle. PHYSICALLY: it is NOT shut — CENTCOM denies the closure, runs freedom-of-navigation ops, and the southern route still moves a (thin, mostly dark) flow; no mining, no terminal struck, no seizure campaign. straits.live's 'CLOSED — Day 134' remains editorial. Contested and dangerous, but open.

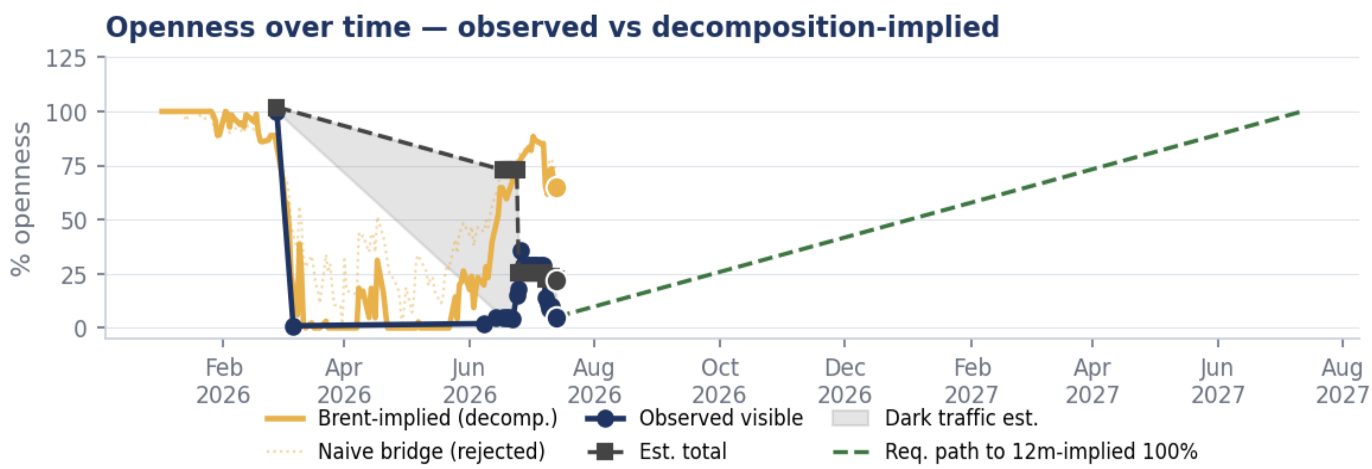
As of 2026-07-13 · **Sources:** visible transits (Windward / hormuzmonitor) · dark-share (Vortexa) · throughput (EIA Q1 avg) · Brent (ICE) · diplomatic (analyst principal-scored). Baselines: 138 ships/day · 20 mb/d.

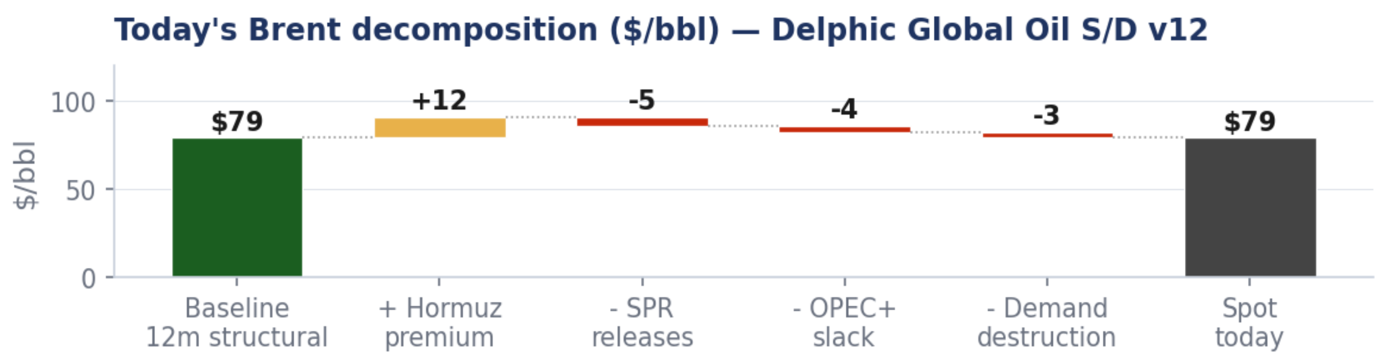
SYNTHESIS

What this means · oil-pricing consistency check

Two readings — the physical openness curve and the oil pricing curve — tell parallel stories. The gap between them is the central tension and the value of the monitor.

Backing out SPR releases, OPEC+ slack and demand destruction ($12/bbl combined, per Global Oil S/D v12), today's Brent implies Hormuz is 65% open. Observed visible openness is 5%, total flow estimate 22%; the residual Hormuz risk premium in Brent is $12/bbl. Forward Brent has the premium decaying to $-2/bbl by 12m (100% implied openness).





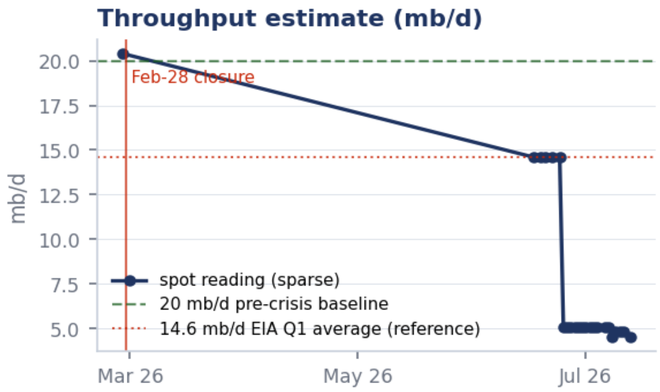
HOW BRENT TRANSLATES TO OPENNESS — Delphic decomposition

- **DECOMPOSITION** — Brent_spot = baseline + Hormuz_premium - non-Hormuz_offset. Baseline = $79/bbl (Delphic 12m structural fair-value, full normalization). Peak Hormuz premium = $34/bbl (Strike scenario vs baseline). Solving for premium and mapping linearly 0..peak gives implied openness 0..100%.
- **NON-HORMUZ OFFSETS TODAY** — $12/bbl backed out of today's Brent (per Global Oil S/D v12): $5 from active US/IEA SPR releases (172 mb US commitment, ~164 mb of 400+ mb deployed by May 8); $4 from deployed OPEC+ slack (UAE coiled-spring flush, Saudi paper quota); $3 from permanent demand destruction (~0.5-0.8 mb/d, teapot exits + electrification).
- **SPOT vs FORWARD** — SPOT $79: implied premium $12/bbl, openness 65%. 12m-FORWARD $72: offsets shrink to $5/bbl (SPR refill demand reverses release pressure above $85; demand recovers +1.0 mb/d by 12m); premium $-2/bbl, openness 100%.
- **WHY NOT THE NAIVE BRIDGE** — A linear bridge from observed crisis-peak ($118) to pre-crisis avg ($64) would imply 73% openness today — attributing 100% of Brent's decline to Hormuz reopening. That is analytically wrong: SPR / OPEC+ / demand destruction have done the heavy lifting. The decomposition method (65%) is the honest answer.

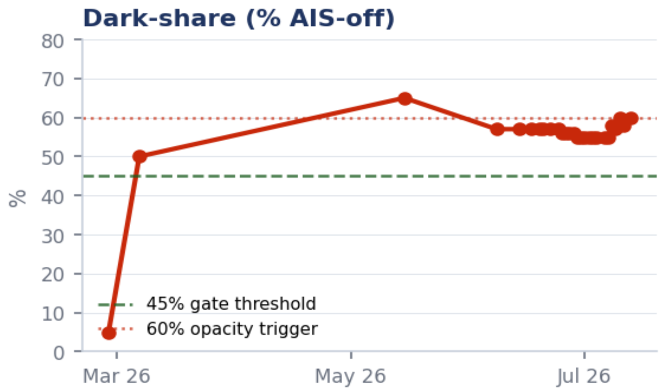
TRAJECTORY

Where we are vs where we have come from

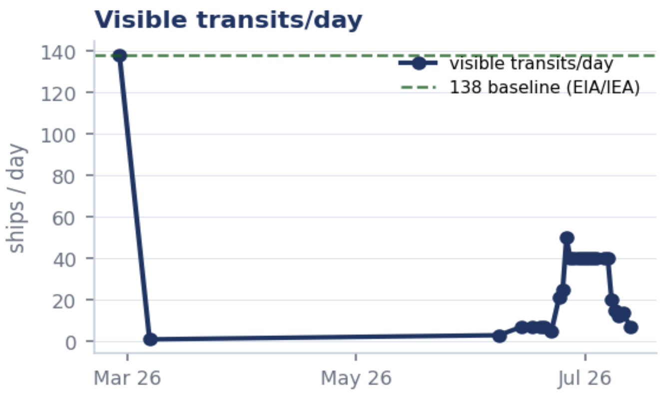
Dark-share and visible transits are the reliable trajectory signals. Throughput is shown as a reference (EIA Q1 average), not a daily spot.



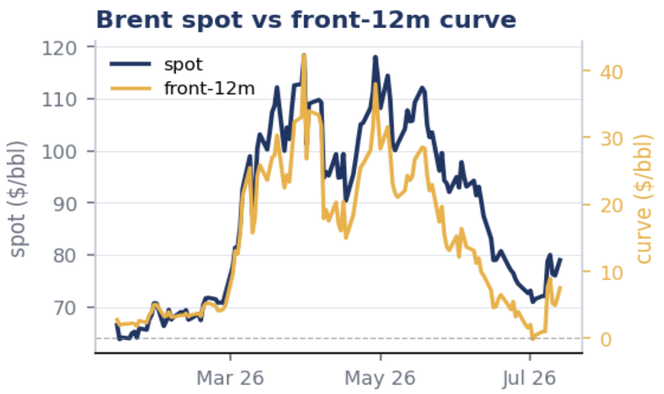
Throughput estimate vs 20 mb/d baseline · 14.6 EIA-Q1 reference line is an average, not a spot. The line is sparse because daily spot is genuinely uncertain while dark-share is high.



% of vessels with AIS off — the observability gap (Vortexa). Falling = visibility returning. Gate clears below 45.



Visible transits/day vs 138 baseline — the reopening curve and the headline openness metric (Windward / hormuzmonitor). The slope is the reopening velocity.



Brent spot + front-12m curve over the last 6 months (ICE, parquet). Falling spot + flattening curve = war-premium discharging.

ANALYSIS

Read · triggers

Thesis. DOWNGRADE — Phase 3 -> Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, COLLAPSED). The 10-11 Jul pause broke: the IRGC struck the Cyprus-flagged containership GFS GALAXY off Oman (11 Jul; crew abandoned, one missing), the US ran a THIRD strike round (12 Jul; ~140 targets incl. Qeshm), and the IRGC Navy FORMALLY DECLARED the Strait 'closed until further notice' — the FIRST legal closure claim of the cycle. But Phase 2, NOT Phase 1: CENTCOM denies the closure and runs freedom-of-navigation ops, the Strait is physically OPEN (a thin dark flow still moves), no terminal struck (Kharg intact), no mining, no seizure campaign, and Brent only ~$79 — the market is NOT pricing closure. The tip to Phase 1 (a Kharg/terminal hit, mining, a seizure campaign, a US blockade, or Brent >$85) is not in evidence. For now: contested, formally 'closed' by Tehran but physically open — a collapsed pause, not a shut Strait. (Intraday: the market shook off the headlines and de-escalation signals re-emerged — talks continue — so the vector is turning less negative; see the bottom line.)

READ — Openness * phase * velocity

- **IS IT OPEN? FORMALLY 'CLOSED' BY IRAN — BUT PHYSICALLY STILL MOVING** — Two answers, and both matter. LEGALLY: on 12 Jul the IRGC Navy declared the Strait 'closed until further notice' after warning shots — the first formal Iranian closure claim of the cycle. PHYSICALLY: it is NOT shut — CENTCOM denies the closure, runs freedom-of-navigation ops, and the southern route still moves a (thin, mostly dark) flow; no mining, no terminal struck, no seizure campaign. straits.live's 'CLOSED — Day 134' remains editorial. Contested and dangerous, but open.
- **TRANSITS — collapsed to a trickle; the DARK flow carries what moves (LOWER BOUNDS)** — AIS-ON transit has all but stopped (Lloyd's List: ~zero >10k-dwt AIS-on crossings of the Southern Highway since ~9 Jul). TOTAL observed collapsed to ~6-9 crossings/day over the weekend strikes (vs ~18-22 earlier this month, ~130 pre-war). No fresh HARD daily print exists for 12-13 Jul — PortWatch's last is 5 Jul = 34 (~39% of the ~88/day norm), now 8 days stale; Kpler counts ~108 ships crossing 'over the weekend' (a multi-day aggregate, not a daily). OUR VIEW: ~7/day observable; dark share ~57-60% (Vortexa, off the 65.2% May peak); AIS-traceable crude ~2.5 mb/d (ShipFinder) + ~2 mb/d dark implies ~4.5 mb/d all-in. CAVEAT: GPS-spoofing (30+ Gulf jamming clusters), 'zombie-ship' fraud and ~half of traffic AIS-off make every count a LOWER BOUND.
- **HOW OPEN — implied ~65-70%, physical ~20-25% and falling** — IMPLIED openness (pricing) sits in the high-$60s%/low-70s% — Brent ~$79 carries a war premium that has RE-WIDENED on the flare-up, but the market is pricing a contested corridor, NOT a supply catastrophe (no $85+ break). OBSERVABLE physical throughput ~20-25% of normal and falling as the strikes re-shutter AIS-on traffic — but read that as a FLOOR (dark barrels + AIS gaps understate it). Both numbers down; the gap is the value of the monitor.
- **PHASE** — DOWNGRADE — Phase 3 Partial reopening -> Phase 2 Fragile ceasefire (COLLAPSED). The durability vector has collapsed (a formal closure declaration + a struck vessel + a third US strike round drive the diplomatic composite well below the -0.5 downgrade line), and the physical gate fails hard (throughput ~4.5 < 12, dark ~60% > 45). Phase 2, not 1, only because flows are not YET fully cut and no terminal is hit.
- **VELOCITY** — SHARPLY NEGATIVE. The pause is dead: kinetically the exchange is in its heaviest round yet, diplomatically Tehran has declared a closure, and the war premium is re-widening. All three vectors point the WRONG way. The swing is whether it stabilises at a contested Phase 2 or tips to Phase 1 on a terminal strike, mining, or a runaway oil break.

OFFICIAL RECORD * SoH — Statements * decisions - as regards the Strait

- **GFS GALAXY — a tanker/boxship struck, the pause broken (11 Jul)** — The IRGC struck the UAE-owned, Cyprus-flagged containership GFS Galaxy ~9nm east of Oman for using an 'unauthorized route' — an engine-room fire, the crew abandoned ship, one crew member missing (10 of 11 Indian nationals rescued). This is a STRIKE, not a boarding/seizure — but it broke the 10-11 Jul silence and re-armed the whole cycle.
- **FORMAL CLOSURE DECLARATION — the first legal claim of the cycle (12 Jul)** — The IRGC Navy declared the Strait 'closed until further notice' after firing warning shots; Iran's Persian Gulf Strait Authority said vessels on 'unauthorized routes' lose 'safe-passage guarantees'. This is the single most important development — the first FORMAL Iranian closure order this cycle (prior 'closed' reads were editorial). No Western authority recognises it; CENTCOM says the Strait stays open.
- **US THIRD STRIKE ROUND + CENTCOM DENIAL (12 Jul)** — The US struck ~140 targets around the Strait (missile batteries, air defences, IRGC fast-attack boats, comms; Qeshm Island) — ~300+ cumulative across the cycle; an Iranian navy officer (Lt. Dehghani) was killed at Jask. CENTCOM says forces are 'postured to ensure freedom of navigation' and the southern route is available — an explicit rejection of the closure.
- **NO TERMINAL, NO MINING — the line to Phase 1 UNFIRED** — Critically: NO oil-export terminal has been struck (Kharg is intact), NO mining is confirmed, and there is NO seizure/detention campaign. These are the triggers to Phase 1 (active closure) — all unfired. Trump is weighing a renewed naval blockade (USS Abraham Lincoln + USS George H.W. Bush moved into the Gulf of Oman; 20+ warships in theatre), which would be the escalation to watch.
- **PRICE — a bump, not a shock** — Brent ~$79 (+~4%, highest since 22 Jun), WTI ~$74 (+4%) — the war premium re-widened, but this is ~9% above pre-conflict, not a supply-loss blowout; the glut + OPEC+ (a fifth straight monthly hike) + record UAE output cap it. War-risk cover has re-spiked (~8x pre-crisis, ~$2.5m/VLCC; up to 5% of hull / $5-7.5m for US/UK/Israel-nexus vessels). The market is NOT pricing a closure.
- **DIPLOMACY — strained, not (yet) collapsed** — Araghchi was in Muscat (11-12 Jul) with Oman's FM; Oman floated a TWO-ROUTE split, Iran wants single joint management (fears being bypassed) — UNRESOLVED, but talks continued through the strikes. Trump calls

the MoU 'over' yet keeps the channel open, demanding Iran formally state the Strait is open; US officials say Iran privately called the ship attack a hardliner 'mistake'. A collapse of THIS channel would be the next leg down.

WHERE WE'VE COME FROM — Trajectory

- **2026-07-07/08** — IRGC strikes three tankers (first ceasefire-era attack); a two-way US-Iran exchange (US strikes 80+ targets, Iran hits Gulf bases). DOWNGRADE Phase 4 -> Phase 3.
- **2026-07-09/10** — The contained exchange runs a second/third day through the mourning week; oil FALLS to ~$76, no terminal struck. Phase 3 HELD, tilting to de-escalation.
- **2026-07-11** — The guns fall silent, talks reportedly restarting (Araghchi to Oman); Phase 3 held, de-escalation tilt firming — with the caveat that a fresh strike would re-open the escalation path.
- **2026-07-11/12 (the reverser)** — The pause COLLAPSES: IRGC strikes the GFS Galaxy (11 Jul), the US runs a third strike round (~140 targets, Qeshm), and the IRGC Navy FORMALLY declares the Strait 'closed' (12 Jul). The exact tail the 11 Jul read flagged.
- **2026-07-13** — DOWNGRADE Phase 3 -> Phase 2. Formal closure + struck vessel + third strike round; but physically open, Kharg untouched, no mining, Brent ~$79 (not a shock). Contested and dangerous, not shut.

WHERE IT'S HEADED — Direction * accelerants * reversers

- **DIRECTION** — ESCALATION, contained for now. The pause is dead and Tehran has declared a closure, but the Strait is physically open and the hard Phase-1 triggers are unfired. The swing is the next 24-72h: does it stabilise at a contested Phase 2 (talks limp on, no terminal hit), or tip to Phase 1?
- **TIP TO PHASE 1 (active closure)** — A confirmed strike on an oil-export terminal (Kharg), OR confirmed mining of the Strait, OR a vessel-seizure/detention campaign, OR a US naval blockade actually imposed, OR a Brent break well through $85. Any of these takes it to Phase 1 and a supply-loss repricing. Watch the two US carriers in the Gulf of Oman.
- **PATH BACK TO PHASE 3** — A strike-pause + an Oman-brokered route understanding (the two-route vs single-management dispute resolved) + Tehran rescinding the closure order. Possible, but the channel is now under heavy strain and the burden of proof has flipped to escalation.

SCENARIOS — Base * Bear * Bull

- **BASE** — A contested Phase 2 holds: strikes continue at a controlled tempo, no terminal is hit, dark barrels keep the corridor at ~20-25% of normal, talks limp on in Muscat; Brent holds high-$70s/low-$80s with a ~$8-12 premium.
- **BEAR** — Phase 1: a Kharg/terminal strike, confirmed mining, or a US blockade shuts the corridor; the dark flow halts, Brent +$15-25 to $95-105, a supply-loss shock. The two carriers + Trump's blockade talk make this a live tail.
- **BULL** — A fast re-pause: an Oman route deal + a strike halt + Tehran rescinding the closure re-establishes Phase 3 within 1-2 weeks and bleeds the premium. Harder now that a formal closure is on the table.

Bottom line. DOWNGRADE — Phase 3 -> Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, COLLAPSED). The pause broke: the IRGC struck the containership GFS Galaxy (11 Jul), the US ran a third strike round (12 Jul; ~140 targets, Qeshm), and the IRGC Navy FORMALLY declared the Strait 'closed'. But Phase 2, NOT Phase 1: CENTCOM denies the closure, the Strait is physically OPEN, no terminal struck (Kharg intact), no mining, and Brent only ~$79 — the market is not pricing closure. The tip to Phase 1 (a Kharg/terminal hit, mining, a US blockade, or Brent >$85) is not in evidence. And into Monday's session the market SHOOK OFF the headlines as DE-ESCALATION SIGNALS re-emerged — Qatar/Pakistan mediating, US 'technical talks continue', Brent easing off its spike — so Phase 2 holds but the vector is turning less negative. A collapsed pause, formally 'closed' but physically open, with talks alive — possibly a brief one. Watch the two US carriers in the Gulf of Oman.

TRIGGERS — open materiality list (name · status · rule · source)

NAME	STATUS	RULE	SOURCE
RE-STRESS	ARMED	brent_1m > +8%	brent.parquet (ICE)
OPACITY	ARMED	dark_share > 60%	dark_share.json (Vortexa)
DIPLOMATIC DETERIORATION	FIRED	durability < 0	diplomatic_scores.json (analyst)
NEAR-CONFIRM	DORMANT	throughput > 12 mb/d AND dark_share < 50%	throughput_mbd.json + dark_share.json
DOWNGRADE-RISK	FIRED	brent_1m > +8% OR durability < -0.5	brent.parquet + diplomatic_scores.json

METHODOLOGY & SOURCES

How the monitor works

Reference page: indicator families, baselines, computed metrics, sources, and the phase state-machine rules. All upstream data lives in the Dropbox store at delphic-market-data/store/.

INDICATOR FAMILIES

- **PRICING (leads / warns)** — Brent spot + front-12m curve from ICE (parquet). War-risk premia from manual entry. Pricing leads the call — can trigger downgrades alone but cannot trigger upgrades without physical confirmation.
- **PHYSICAL (confirms upgrade / lags)** — Throughput estimate (EIA Q1 average, reference only). Dark-share % (Vortexa). Visible transits/day (Windward / hormuzmonitor). The physical gate gates upgrades past Phase 2.
- **DIPLOMATIC (durability)** — Five milestones scored -2..+2 by the principal: navigation freedom, nuclear / ballistic, sanctions / reconstruction, ceasefire compliance, succession stability. Composite is the weighted average.

BASELINES

- **138 ships/day** — Pre-crisis steady-state visible transits (EIA / IEA 2025 reference). Denominator for visible_pct.
- **20 mb/d** — Pre-crisis throughput baseline (EIA). Denominator for est_total_pct.
- **Brent endpoints (Delphic Global Oil S/D v12)** — Structural fair-value baseline $79/bbl (12m, full normalization, no Hormuz premium). Peak Hormuz premium $34/bbl (Strike scenario $113 vs baseline $79). Non-Hormuz offsets today: SPR $5 + OPEC+ slack $4 + demand destruction $3 = $12/bbl. Used by the decomposition on the synthesis page.

COMPUTED METRICS

- **visible_pct** — = visible_transits / 138 — the OBSERVABLE openness headline.
- **est_total_pct** — = throughput_mbd / 20 — estimated total including covert flow. Labelled low-confidence whenever dark-share > 30%.
- **observability_gap** — = est_total_pct - visible_pct — the unobserved share.
- **velocity_pts_per_week** — = visible_pct now minus visible_pct ~7 days ago (nearest non-today entry within +/-3 days), normalised. Labels: ACCELERATING > +3, RECOVERING +0.5..+3, STALLED within +/-0.5, CLOSING < -0.5.
- **implied_openness (Delphic decomposition)** — Brent_spot = baseline + Hormuz_premium - non-Hormuz_offset. Solve for Hormuz_premium, then implied_openness = clamp(100 * (1 - premium / peak_premium), 0, 100). Same formula on 12m-forward Brent with shrunk offsets. The naive linear bridge (without backing out non-Hormuz factors) is REJECTED.
- **phase (state machine)** — UPGRADE requires physical confirmation (throughput > 12 AND dark-share < 45) AND durability >= 0 AND pricing momentum > 0. DOWNGRADE may fire on pricing or durability alone (asymmetric).

SOURCES

- **Visible transits** — Windward and hormuzmonitor public counts; written to store/soh/visible_transits.json
- **Dark-share** — Vortexa AIS-off coverage; written to store/soh/dark_share.json
- **Throughput estimate** — EIA Q1 2026 average mb/d; written to store/soh/throughput_mbd.json. Not a daily spot reading.
- **Brent + front-12m curve** — ICE daily prints, mirrored to store/commodity/brent.parquet and store/commodity/brent_co12.parquet.
- **Diplomatic scores** — Analyst principal-scored, store/soh/diplomatic_scores.json.
- **History** — store/soh/history.jsonl. Seeded with public-record anchors (EIA, Vortexa, Windward, press). Appended every build.