STRAIT OF HORMUZ MONITOR

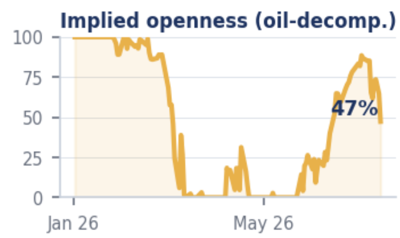
How open · how fast

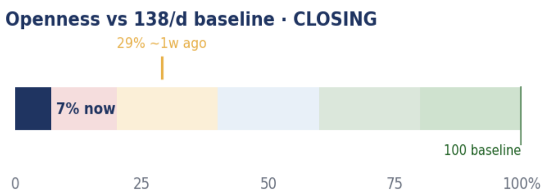
The headline question: how open is Hormuz, and how fast is it reopening? We lead with what we can OBSERVE; dark-share hides the rest.

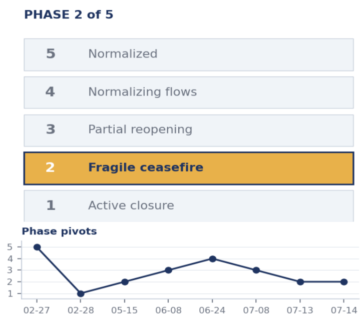
Hormuz ~7% open (observable) · **Phase 2/5 — Fragile ceasefire** · **CLOSING** -22.0 pts/wk

Backing out SPR releases, OPEC+ slack and demand destruction ($12/bbl combined, per Global Oil S/D v12), today's Brent implies Hormuz is 47% open. Observed visible openness is 7%, total flow estimate 40%; the residual Hormuz risk premium in Brent is $18/bbl. Forward Brent has the premium decaying to $-2/bbl by 12m (100% implied openness).

Of the ships we can SEE, only 55% are AIS-off — but the visible count is itself a fraction of true flow: 10 transits/day vs 138 baseline (~7%), with most traffic running dark/unobserved (50-80% on an all-traffic basis). Estimated total ~40% of 20 mb/d throughput (est., low-confidence).







SYNTHESIS — three-sentence headline

HOLD — Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, ESCALATING). Phase-1 triggers ARMING but UNFIRED — we refuse to over-call closure. The policy track escalated hard (a PROPOSED 20% Hormuz toll, an announced blockade of Iranian ports, two struck UAE tankers), but the PHYSICAL evidence does not support active closure: CENTCOM says the Strait is OPEN, ~8 mb/d still transited (US DOE + Kpler, ~40-55% of normal, NOT ~20%), no terminal is struck (Kharg intact), mining is ARMED not FIRED (a recycled 7 Jul funnel-the-ships statement, no detonation), and the market is NOT pricing closure (Brent ~$85 vs the $100-130 a real closure implies; gold FELL). A collapsed pause hardening into a tolled/blockaded contest — not a shut Strait. (Material correction: throughput reset 4.5 -> ~8 mb/d — the 4.5 was a stale Q1 average; cuts AGAINST closure.) HOLD — Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, ESCALATING). We refuse to over-call closure. The policy track escalated hard — a PROPOSED 20% Hormuz toll, an announced blockade of Iranian ports (due 4 p.m. ET), two struck UAE tankers (first fatality) — but every hard PHYSICAL indicator says collapsed-but-flowing, not shut: CENTCOM says the Strait is open; ~8 mb/d still transited (US DOE + Kpler, ~40-55% of normal); no terminal is struck (Kharg intact); mining is ARMED not FIRED (a recycled 7 Jul funnel-the-ships statement, no detonation); the market is not pricing closure (Brent ~$85 vs $100-130; gold FELL). The durability vector would mechanically tip to Phase 1 — we OVERRIDE and hold Phase 2, because the physical gate and price do not confirm closure. Material correction: throughput reset from a stale 4.5 to ~8 mb/d. Phase-1 triggers ARMING, not fired. Watch the 4 p.m. ET blockade biting the flow, a Kharg strike, a mine detonation, and a Brent break through ~$90-100. Iran's IRGC 'closed' (12 Jul) is a legal/rhetorical claim no Western authority recognises; CENTCOM (13-14 Jul) says the Strait 'remains open... traffic continues to flow'. Physically it is NOT shut: ~8 mb/d still transited Sunday (US DOE) and 14 vessels crossed (Kpler); liner carriers (Maersk, MSC, CMA CGM, Hapag) have suspended/rerouted via the Cape while tanker flow persists, much of it dark. No US escorts (Project Freedom not resumed). Reduced, contested, dark — but not near-zero.

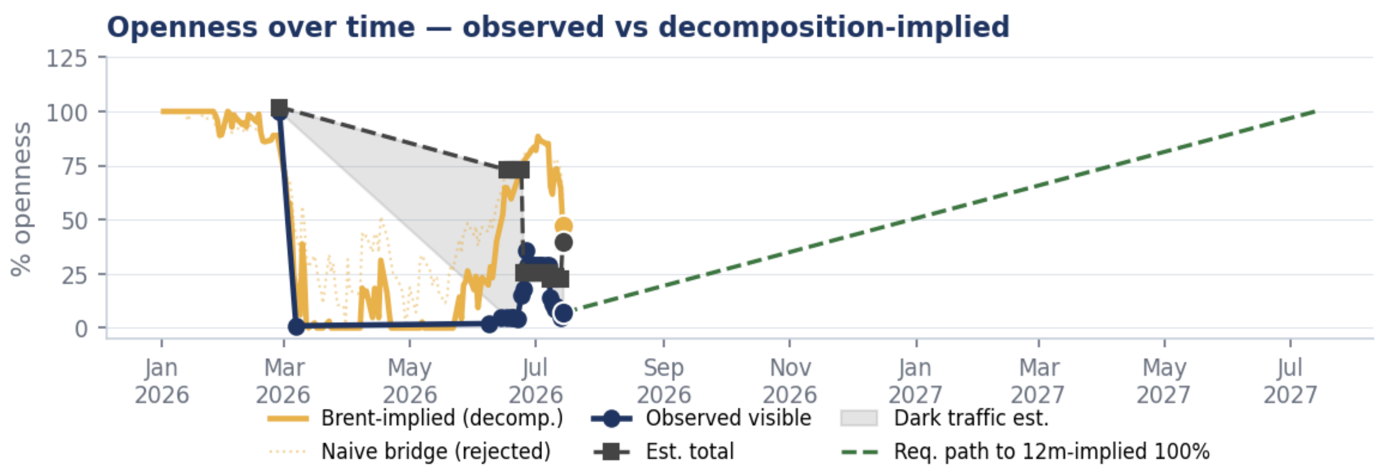
As of 2026-07-14 · **Sources:** visible transits (Windward / hormuzmonitor) · dark-share (Vortexa) · throughput (EIA Q1 avg) · Brent (ICE) · diplomatic (analyst principal-scored). Baselines: 138 ships/day · 20 mb/d.

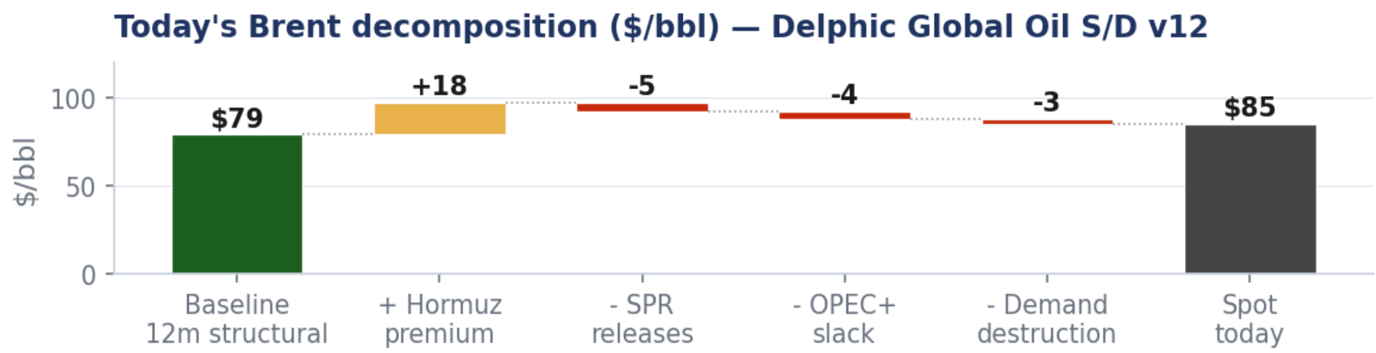
SYNTHESIS

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 47% open. Observed visible openness is 7%, total flow estimate 40%; the residual Hormuz risk premium in Brent is $18/bbl. Forward Brent has the premium decaying to $-2/bbl by 12m (100% implied openness).





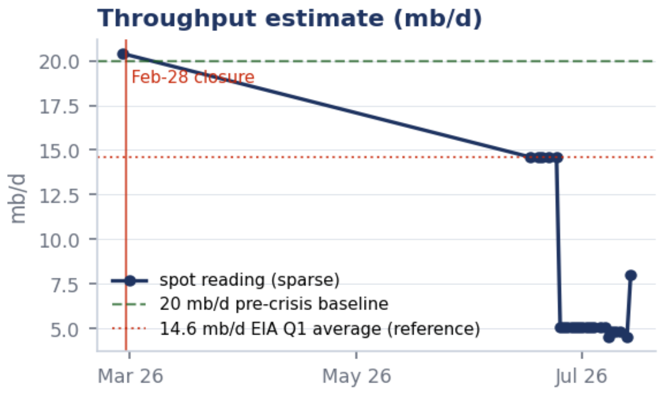
HOW BRENT TRANSLATES TO OPENNESS — Delphic decomposition

- **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 $85: implied premium $18/bbl, openness 47%. 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 62% 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 (47%) is the honest answer.

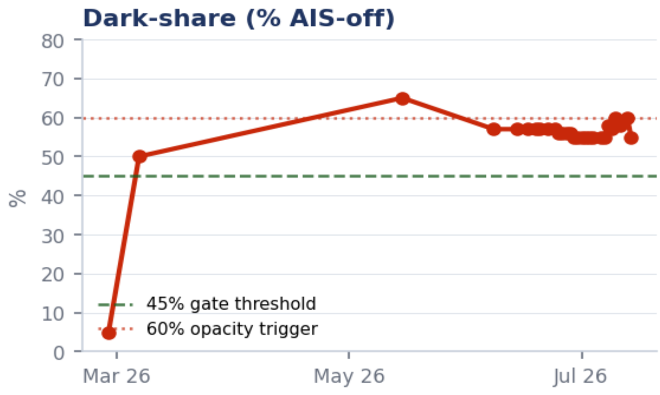
TRAJECTORY

Where we are vs where we have come from

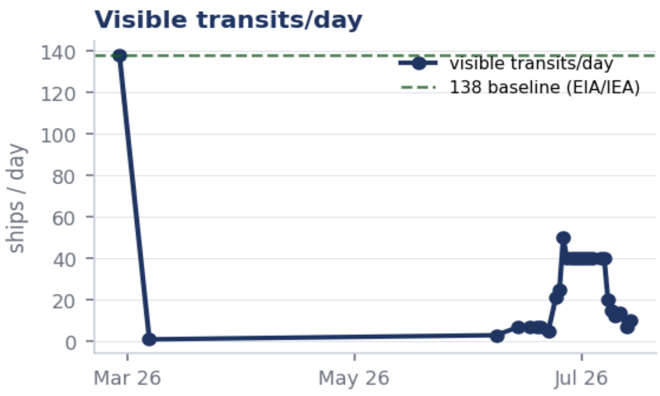
Dark-share and visible transits are the reliable trajectory signals. Throughput is shown as a reference (EIA Q1 average), not a daily spot.



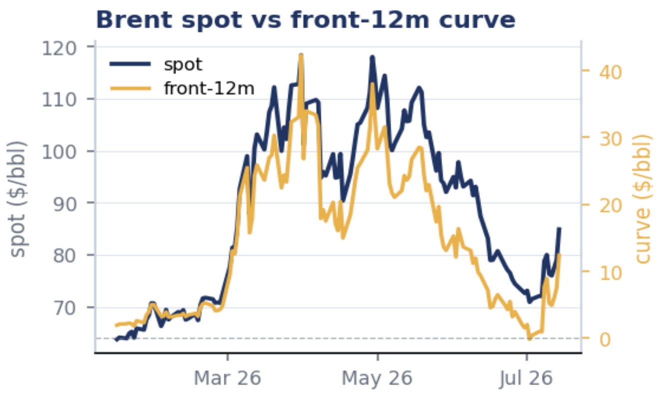
Throughput estimate vs 20 mb/d baseline · 14.6 EIA-Q1 reference line is an average, not a spot. The line is sparse because daily spot is genuinely uncertain while dark-share is high.



% 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. HOLD — Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, ESCALATING). Phase-1 triggers ARMING but UNFIRED — we refuse to over-call closure. The policy track escalated hard (a PROPOSED 20% Hormuz toll, an announced blockade of Iranian ports, two struck UAE tankers), but the PHYSICAL evidence does not support active closure: CENTCOM says the Strait is OPEN, ~8 mb/d still transited (US DOE + Kpler, ~40-55% of normal, NOT ~20%), no terminal is struck (Kharg intact), mining is ARMED not FIRED (a recycled 7 Jul funnel-the-ships statement, no detonation), and the market is NOT pricing closure (Brent ~$85 vs the $100-130 a real closure implies; gold FELL). A collapsed pause hardening into a tolled/blockaded contest — not a shut Strait. (Material correction: throughput reset 4.5 -> ~8 mb/d — the 4.5 was a stale Q1 average; cuts AGAINST closure.)

READ — Openness * phase * velocity

- **IS IT OPEN? CONTESTED AND DANGEROUS — BUT OPEN AND FLOWING** — Iran's IRGC 'closed' (12 Jul) is a legal/rhetorical claim no Western authority recognises; CENTCOM (13-14 Jul) says the Strait 'remains open... traffic continues to flow'. Physically it is NOT shut: ~8 mb/d still transited Sunday (US DOE) and 14 vessels crossed (Kpler); liner carriers (Maersk, MSC, CMA CGM, Hapag) have suspended/rerouted via the Cape while tanker flow persists, much of it dark. No US escorts (Project Freedom not resumed). Reduced, contested, dark — but not near-zero.
- **TRANSITS — collapsed to ~10-14/day observable; the DARK flow carries more (LOWER BOUNDS)** — Kpler: 14 all-vessel crossings Sunday (4 crude tankers, ~-60% vs the prior week); 13 tankers Wed 9 Jul (vs a ~33/day norm); the weekend trough ran ~5-6/day. Against a ~100-120/day norm that is ~10-15% AIS-ON — but a FLOOR: dark transits outnumbered observable ones for three straight days (Bloomberg), and spoofing resumed. Dark share is a MAJORITY, best-estimated ~55% (range 40-60, LOW confidence — no clean scalar).
- **HOW OPEN — implied ~high-60s%, physical ~40-55% — both say REDUCED, not SHUT** — IMPLIED openness (pricing) sits high-$60s% — Brent ~$85 carries a wide premium, but the market prices a CONTESTED corridor, not a catastrophe (no $100+ break; Goldman: >$100 only if closure persists a month). OBSERVABLE throughput ~8 mb/d = ~40% of the ~20 mb/d all-liquids norm — FAR above the ~20% a genuine closure implies. Price and flow agree: degraded and dangerous, not shut.
- **PHASE** — HOLD — Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, ESCALATING). The durability composite (-1.18) sits below the -0.5 line, so the mechanical rule would TIP the model to Phase 1 — and the DOWNGRADE-RISK trigger duly fires. We OVERRIDE and HOLD Phase 2: the physical gate does not confirm closure (throughput ~8 mb/d = ~40% of normal, not the near-shut-in a Phase-1 label asserts), no oil terminal is struck, mining is armed-not-fired, and the market is not pricing closure. This is precisely the pricing-vs-physical divergence the monitor exists to surface: the diplomatic vector screams downgrade; the flow says the Strait is open. Phase-1 triggers ARMING, unfired.
- **VELOCITY** — SHARPLY NEGATIVE on the policy/diplomatic track — a PROPOSED 20% toll, an announced port blockade (due today), two struck tankers, a third strike night — but the PHYSICAL gate is holding far better than the rhetoric: ~8 mb/d still moves and Brent is below $90. The swing (24-72h): whether the 4 p.m. ET blockade actually BITES the flow, a terminal is struck, or a mine detonates (tip to Phase 1) — vs a Muscat off-ramp that converts the toll into a managed-fees regime and pauses the strikes.

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

- **TWO UAE TANKERS STRUCK — the first fatality on a hull (13 Jul)** — Iran struck the UAE-flagged tankers MOMBASA and AL BAHIYAH with cruise missiles in the southern lane / Omani waters — one Indian crew member killed (Mombasa), eight injured. The IRGC claimed them as 'non-compliant' ships that entered a 'mined route'; the UAE MoD condemned a 'grave violation' and 'reserves the right to respond.' A vessel strike and the first death this round — but a strike on shipping, NOT on an oil-export terminal.
- **TRUMP'S PROPOSED 20% TOLL + AN ANNOUNCED BLOCKADE — proposal, not yet imposed, not yet biting the flow** — Trump declared the US 'THE GUARDIAN OF THE HORMUZ STRAIT' and PROPOSED a toll of '20% on all cargo shipped' for safe passage (all countries except Iran); CENTCOM says it will resume the maritime blockade of IRANIAN PORTS from 14 Jul 4 p.m. ET. Three distinctions matter: (i) the toll is a PROPOSAL — announced, NOT imposed, and whether/how it is implemented is unknown; (ii) a blockade of Iran's PORTS is not a closure of the Strait to all traffic; (iii) as of this read (02:00 ET) neither is in force and neither has bitten the flow data. The IMO says there is 'no legal basis' for tolling an international strait.
- **MINING — ARMED, NOT FIRED (do not let it be laundered into 'closure')** — The 'mining confirmed' line traces to a RECYCLED 7 Jul statement by the US CNO (Adm. Caudle) that Iran laid mines to FUNNEL shipping toward its waters/tolls — a shaping operation (laying began ~March; the US claims it destroyed 16 minelayers), NOT a sealing of the Strait, and with NO detonation on any hull, then or 12-14 Jul. This is capability/intent, not effect. The Phase-1 mining trigger is ARMED, not fired — and no fresh 12-14 Jul confirmation exists.
- **CENTCOM SAYS OPEN — and ~8 mb/d still moves** — CENTCOM explicitly rejects the closure: the Strait is 'open to all vessels seeking to lawfully transit.' The US DOE says >8M barrels of oil transited on 12 Jul (with US area-protection, not escorts), and Kpler independently puts crude+condensate at ~8.9 mb/d through the first week of July — corroborating a corridor running at ~40-55% of normal, not a shut-in. Reroute cushions (Saudi East-West ~5 mb/d spare, UAE Fujairah ~1.5 mb/d) exist but cannot replace Hormuz.
- **NO TERMINAL — the one clean Phase-1 trigger, UNFIRED** — No oil-export terminal has been struck — Kharg's oil/gas infrastructure is intact, deliberately spared. A confirmed strike on Kharg / an export terminal, a mine detonation, or the blockade actually cutting flow to near-zero are the lines that would convert this contested corridor into a genuine supply loss. None is fired.
- **PRICE — Brent up but NOT pricing closure; an inverted haven** — Brent ~$79 Monday (+~4%, highest since 22 Jun), ~$85 Tuesday (a one-month high, ~+8% over two sessions) — but FAR below the $100-130 a genuine closure implies. Goldman: >$100 only IF

closure persists another month; XAnalysts/IG see the earlier spike unlikely to repeat (OPEC+'s fifth hike, stranded-tanker releases, soft demand cap it). The tell: GOLD FELL (~-2%) and US yields ROSE (10Y ~4.59%) — an oil-INFLATION impulse, not a flight-to-quality closure bid. War-risk hull cover ~5% of vessel value; Gulf voyage premiums into double-digit millions.

- **DIPLOMACY — a live channel under a collapsing MoU** — Araghchi met Oman's FM al-Busaidi in Muscat (11-13 Jul); the sides agreed to 'continue technical and political talks' on safe-passage mechanisms, with Qatar mediating in Tehran. But the June MoU is collapsing: Trump has declared the ceasefire OVER, and the proposed 20% toll repudiates the MoU's 'Hormuz toll-free 60d' — with OFAC's GL X oil-waiver (to Aug 21) now at risk. Talks run underneath the escalation; the crux is whether Muscat converts the toll into a managed-fees off-ramp or it hardens into enforcement.

WHERE WE'VE COME FROM — Trajectory

- **2026-07-07/11** — IRGC tanker strikes (7 Jul) and a two-way exchange (8 Jul) end the ceasefire era; a contained mourning-week cycle, oil to ~$76; a brief 10-11 Jul pause (Araghchi to Oman). Phase 4 -> Phase 3.
- **2026-07-11/12** — 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). DOWNGRADE Phase 3 -> Phase 2.
- **2026-07-13** — The policy track escalates: Trump announces a 20% Hormuz toll + a resumed blockade of Iranian ports; two UAE tankers are struck (first fatality); Brent gaps ~+4% to ~$79. Phase 2 held — but the vector turns sharply negative.
- **2026-07-14** — HOLD Phase 2 (escalating). The blockade is due to resume 4 p.m. ET; Brent ~$85. But the corridor is OPEN and flowing (~8 mb/d, ~40-55% of normal), no terminal struck, mining armed-not-fired, market not pricing closure. Throughput corrected 4.5 -> ~8. Phase-1 triggers arming, unfired.

WHERE IT'S HEADED — Direction * accelerants * reversers

- **DIRECTION** — Escalation on the policy/diplomatic track (toll, blockade, tanker deaths) sitting on top of a physical corridor that is degraded but OPEN (~40-55% of normal). The next 24-72h decide whether the escalation finally bites the flow (Phase 1) or the Muscat channel converts it into a managed regime.
- **TIP TO PHASE 1 (active closure)** — The 14 Jul 4 p.m. ET blockade actually cutting flow to near-zero, OR a confirmed strike on an oil-export TERMINAL (Kharg), OR a MINE DETONATION on a hull, OR a Brent break decisively through ~$90-100. Any of these turns the contested corridor into a supply-loss shock. The two US carriers in the Gulf of Oman are the accelerant.
- **PATH BACK TO PHASE 3** — A Muscat understanding that converts the toll into a managed fees/insurance regime + a strike pause + Tehran softening the closure, with the blockade stood down. The channel is live — but the bar is higher now that a toll, a blockade and a collapsing MoU are all on the table.

SCENARIOS — Base * Bear * Bull

- **BASE** — Phase 2, escalating, holds: the blockade is enforced against Iranian-port traffic but the corridor keeps ~40-55% of flow moving (much of it dark), no terminal is struck, and Muscat talks limp on; Brent holds low-to-mid $80s with a wide premium.
- **BEAR** — Phase 1: the blockade bites flow to near-zero, OR a Kharg/terminal strike, OR a mine detonation halts the dark flow; Brent +$10-25 to $95-110, a genuine supply shock. The announced blockade + laid mines make this a live tail — but it is NOT the base.
- **BULL** — A Muscat off-ramp: the toll converted into a managed fees regime, strikes paused, the closure softened re-establishes a fragile Phase 3 and bleeds the premium. The channel is alive; the domestic-economic pull on Tehran (>100% inflation) argues it wants the off-ramp.

Bottom line. HOLD — Phase 2 (Fragile ceasefire, ESCALATING). We refuse to over-call closure. The policy track escalated hard — a PROPOSED 20% Hormuz toll, an announced blockade of Iranian ports (due 4 p.m. ET), two struck UAE tankers (first fatality) — but every hard PHYSICAL indicator says collapsed-but-flowing, not shut: CENTCOM says the Strait is open; ~8 mb/d still transited (US DOE + Kpler, ~40-55% of normal); no terminal is struck (Kharg intact); mining is ARMED not FIRED (a recycled 7 Jul funnel-the-ships statement, no detonation); the market is not pricing closure (Brent ~$85 vs $100-130; gold FELL). The durability vector would mechanically tip to Phase 1 — we OVERRIDE and hold Phase 2, because the physical gate and price do not confirm closure. Material correction: throughput reset from a stale 4.5 to ~8 mb/d. Phase-1 triggers ARMING, not fired. Watch the 4 p.m. ET blockade biting the flow, a Kharg strike, a mine detonation, and a Brent break through ~$90-100.

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.