

Solventswire

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Platts Global Hydrocarbon Solvents Price Assessments

Northwest Europe

	FOB Rdam (\$/mt)	FD NWE (€/mt)
Solvent Naphtha (C9)	1014.75–1015.25	1059.75–1060.25
White Spirit (145-200)	1019.75–1020.25	929.75–930.25
Hexane (Special Grade)	774.75–775.25	829.75–830.25
Solvent Toluene		1109.75–1110.25
Solvent Xylenes		1069.75–1070.25

	CIF ARA (\$/mt)
Toluene	1259.50–1260.00
Mixed Xylene	1205.25–1205.75

United States

	FOB US Gulf (¢/lb)	FOB Chicago (¢/lb)
Toluene	61.75–62.25	63.75–64.25
Xylenes	61.75–62.25	63.75–64.25

	FOB US Gulf (¢/lb)	DER (¢/lb)
Hexane	64.00–64.50	63.00–63.50

		(¢/gal)
Hexane	–	340.20–342.90

Asia

	FOB Korea (\$/mt)	CFR China^ (\$/mt)	CFR India^ (\$/mt)
Solvent MX*	954.00–956.00	950.00–952.00	1069.00–1071.00

*Asian Solvent Mixed Xylene assessments reflect the close of Friday the previous week, as published in the Asian Petrochemicalscan and PCA 416. ^basis L/C 90 days. DER = Delivered East of Rockies.

Platts Global Chlor-Alkali Price Assessments

Northwest Europe

	CFR Med (\$/dmt)	FOB NWE (\$/dmt)	FD NWE CP* (€/mt)
Caustic Soda	450.00	343.00–347.00	
Chlorine		–	169–173

United States

	FOB US Gulf (\$/dmt)	FOB Plant* (\$/dst)
Caustic Soda	345–355	550–560

	US Contract (\$/dst)
Chlorine	870–880
Caustic Soda	895–905

Asia

	FOB NE Asia (\$/dmt)	CFR SE Asia (\$/dmt)	Domestic East China (Yuan/dmt)
Caustic Soda	314–316	358–360	789–791

*Europe chlorine contract prices, and US chlor-alkali FOB plant and US contract price assessments are made once a month on the first Tuesday of the month.

Platts Global Oxygenated Solvents Price Assessments

Northwest Europe

	FOB Rdam (\$/mt)	FD NWE (€/mt)
IPA	909.75–910.25	929.75–930.25
Phenol*	1010.75–1011.25	1021.75–1022.25
Acetone T2	821.75–822.25	849.75–850.25
MEK	1040.75–1041.25	1049.75–1050.25
E Acetate	876.75–877.25	899.75–900.25
B Acetate	1128.75–1129.25	1129.75–1130.25

	(€/mt)
Methanol	218.00–218.50
Methanol M1	218.25
Methanol M2	218.25
eMethanol cost	2069.15

United States

	FOB US Gulf (\$/mt)	DER (\$/mt)
IPA	981–1003	1101–1123
Phenol*	995–1005	1583–1593
Acetone T1	845–855	–
Acetone T2	–	1195–1205
E Acetate	1686–1708	1753–1775
B Acetate	2289–2311	2354–2376

	(¢/gal)
Methanol M1 Aug	65.75–66.25
Methanol M2 Sep	65.75–66.25
eMethanol cost	1194.82

	FOB DSP (190) (¢/gal)	FOB DSP (200) (¢/gal)
Industrial Ethanol	350.00–360.00	370.00–380.00

Asia

	CFR China (\$/mt)	CFR SEA (\$/mt)	CFR India (\$/mt)
Phenol	919–921	979–981	974–976
Acetone	739–741	899–901	829–831
Methanol	268.00–270.00		256.000

	FOB Shanghai (\$/mt)
eMethanol cost	2232.27

*Phenol is basis FOB Ex-Tank. FD NWE prices in table based on spot lots of 20 mt in the German mkt. FOB based on larger spot parcels for import/export. Asian phenol, acetone assessments are basis L/C 90 days. US acetone T2 price is a US domestic truck/rail contract price, for MMA use. DER = Delivered East of Rockies. DSP = Distilled Spirit Plant.

Hydrocarbon Solvents

European Hydrocarbon Solvents: Market expects price rise in August

- Rising feedstock prices drive bullish expectations
 - Strong gasoline demand supports solvent pricing
- A muted start was heard for August in the European hydrocarbon solvent markets, with thin activity in the week leading to Aug. 1.

Price gains were expected for August on the basis of rising feedstock costs seen in July.

Healthy demand was seen in the solvent naphtha market due to buying interest from the gasoline blending pool during the summer driving season.

SOLVENT NAPHTHA C9: Platts assessed the European truck price of solvent naphtha stable on the week at Eur1,060/mt FD NWE on Aug. 1, with no disproving indications.

The premium for solvent naphtha barges FOB Rotterdam was assessed stable at \$40/mt. The solvent naphtha barge premium is applied to an average of the Platts Eurobob gasoline FOB ARA barge assessment and the Platts premium unleaded 10 ppm gasoline FOB Rotterdam assessment.

SOLVENT TOLUENE: European solvent toluene was assessed at Eur1,110/mt FD NWE, stable on the week, with no disproving indications.

SOLVENT MX: The European truck price of solvent MX was assessed at Eur1,070/mt FD NWE, stable on the week, with no disproving indications.

WHITE SPIRIT: The European truck price of white spirit was assessed stable at Eur930/mt, with no disproving indications.

Meanwhile, the white spirit premium over jet fuel was assessed at \$45/mt FOB Rotterdam, unchanged on the week.

HEXANE: The European truck price of hexane was assessed stable on the week at Eur830/mt FD NWE,

with no disproving indications.

The hexane premium over naphtha was assessed stable on the week at \$145/mt FOB Rotterdam.

Platts is part of S&P Global Commodity Insights.

US Hydrocarbon Solvents Weekly: Solvent toluene, xylenes prices rise sharply for August

- Barge markets rise on octane shortages, stronger energy
- Hexane prices strengthen with global energy complex

TOLUENE AND XYLENES: Prices for solvent grades of toluene and mixed xylenes in the US Gulf rose sharply in the week ending Aug. 1, tracking a run-up in barge market pricing.

Although US Gulf demand for solvents in July was seasonally slow, sources said, gasoline demand was very strong, increasing competition for octanes including toluene and MX.

In addition, octane booster supply is tight, said one source, pushing prices up.

Barge pricing soared 17% in July, last assessed at 424 cents/gal July 31, according to Platts data.

The fire-damaged reformer at the Marathon Galveston Bay refinery in Texas will remain offline through the third quarter, executives said during a quarterly earnings call.

The absence of this unit could also be affecting prices, the source said. "This could be impacting the Gulf more than we realize."

US solvent toluene was assessed at 62 cents/lb FOB US Gulf on Aug. 1, up 6 cents on the week, on distributor pricing heard at that level. FOB Chicago prices were assessed 6 cents higher at 64 cents/lb, maintaining the price spread with the US Gulf.

US solvent xylenes were assessed at 62 cents/lb FOB US Gulf, also up 6 cents on the week, on

Platts Global Oxo-Alcohols & Plasticizers Price Assessments

Northwest Europe

	FOB Rdam (\$/mt)	FD NWE (€/mt)
N-butanol	848.00-852.00	1098.00-1102.00
Isobutanol	788.00-792.00	1048.00-1052.00
2-EH	928.00-932.00	1198.00-1202.00
PA FL	1183.00-1187.00	1378.00-1382.00
PA MN	-	1628.00-1632.00

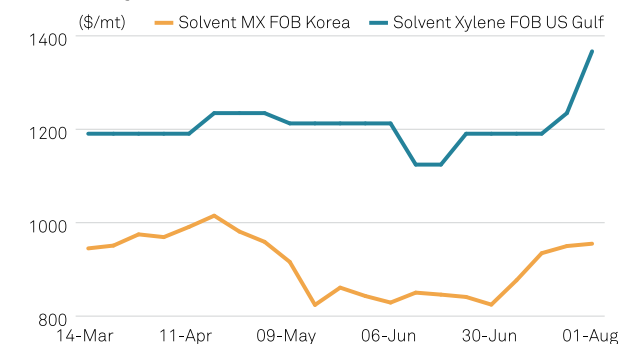
United States

	FOB US Gulf (\$/mt)	US Dom (¢/lb)
N-butanol	1895.00-1905.00	84.50-85.50
2-EH	1445.00-1455.00	89.50-90.50
DINP	-	90.50-91.50
DOTP	-	88.50-89.50

Asia

	CFR China (\$/mt)	CFR SEA (\$/mt)
N-butanol	1084.00-1086.00	1104.00-1106.00
2-EH	1194.00-1196.00	1259.00-1261.00
DOP	1244.00-1246.00	1259.00-1261.00
PA FL	1014.00-1016.00	1024.00-1026.00
DOTP	1220.00	1235.00

Global hydrocarbon solvents assessments



Source: S&P Global Commodity Insights

distributor pricing heard at that level. FOB Chicago prices were also assessed 6 cents higher, at 64 cents/lb, mirroring the rise in FOB Chicago toluene prices.

HEXANE: Hexane prices moved higher Aug. 1 compared with July 25 based on higher directions in

the Energy complex.

September NYMEX light sweet crude oil futures settled at \$81.37/b, up \$1.74 from July 25. September NYMEX RBOB settled at 287.30 cents/gal, up 7.67 cents from July 25.

US Gulf Coast hexane was assessed at 64.25 cents/lb for export material, up 1.5 cents from July 25, and 63.25 cents for domestic deliveries, also up 1.5 cents on the week, maintaining the same market structure.

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Asian Solvent-MX: Markets trade stable to firmer on week

- CPC, JG Summit sell tenders offer some reprieve
- Adjacent markets jump over \$50/mt on week

Asian solvent-MX prices were stable to firmer week on week July 28, considering the adjacent isomer-MX and toluene markets.

Platts assessed the FOB Korea marker at \$955/mt, considering tight supplies and stronger crude futures week on week. Meanwhile, the premiums on CFR SE Asia and CFR India rose on stronger demand and higher tradable and buy indications heard this week.

There were mixed moves in inventory stocks take this week, sources said. East China MX stocks rose 1,300 mt on the week to 28,200 mt July 28, up from 26,900 mt July 21. South China stocks dropped 600 mt to 900 mt July 28, down from 1,500 mt July 14, sources added.

Earlier this week, Taiwan's CPC and the Philippines' JG Summit awarded solvent-MX sell tenders. In JG Summit's sell tender, SK Chemical was heard to have bought 2,000 mt solvent-MX at FOB Korea plus \$15/mt for loading from Batangas Aug. 10-12. In CPC's solvent-MX tender, Itochu was the winner of 3,000 mt material at \$950/mt FOB Korea, industry sources said, but details could not be confirmed.

Ex-tank prices at Mumbai and Kandla ports were

around Rupees 91/kg, up Rupees 4/kg from a week ago. The premium for CFR India was assessed higher on the week at \$115/mt over FOB Korea, considering higher tradable levels at \$115-\$120/mt.

"Isomer-MX should be higher than solvent-MX, solvent-MX only can use for solvents, no other uses," a Southeast Asia-based trader said. "CFR SEA prices are fair value."

Adjacent markets isomer-MX prices were \$51.50/mt higher week on week at \$1,000/mt FOB Korea July 28 while toluene was \$55/mt higher week on week at \$975/mt.

Platts Asian Solvent MX Weekly rationale

Platts assessed Asian solvent-mixed xylenes up \$5/mt week on week at \$955/mt FOB Korea, up \$10/mt at \$1,020/mt CFR Southeast Asia, stable at \$951/mt CFR China and up \$10/mt at \$1,070/mt CFR India July 28.

The FOB Korea marker was assessed at \$955/mt, taking into consideration the rangebound crude futures and adjacent markets.

There were no transparent bids or offers during the Platts Market on Close assessment process.

The spread of the CFR Southeast Asia marker to FOB Korea was \$5/mt wider at plus \$65/mt and assessed at \$1,020/mt amid tight supplies. Tradable levels were heard at around FOB Korea plus \$90/mt from a seller.

Platts assessed CFR China at \$951/mt considering the prompt ex-tank supplies in east China and higher solvent-mx prices across Asia. Prompt ex-tank supplies were heard at around Yuan 7,950-8,000/mt.

Platts assessed CFR India solvent-MX at \$1,070/mt, widening from the FOB Korea marker, with tradable indications heard at FOB Korea plus \$115-\$120/mt amid tight supplies.

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Oxygenated Solvents

European Oxygenated Solvents: Weak demand for IPA and MEK

- BUTAC demand heard improving
- Russian phenol cargoes observed in Turkey and India

Discussions in the European oxygenated solvent markets remained thin in the week to Aug. 1, due to the ongoing summer holiday season.

Acetone/Phenol

Platts assessed the FD Northwest Europe acetone spot price at Eur850/mt, steady on the week, within a trader's indicative range heard at Eur835-865/mt, and at the top of the range heard corroborated by another trader at Eur830-850/mt, pending further corroboration of lower levels from the market.

Platts assessed phenol's premium to benzene in Europe at Eur200/mt FD NWE, stable on the week, pending fresh indications from the market.

The phenol outright price was assessed up Eur7/mt on the week at Eur1,022/mt FD NWE amid higher benzene prices. Platts assessed benzene for delivery five- to 30-days forward at \$901/mt CIF ARA on Aug. 1, up \$1/mt from \$900/mt on July 25.

"Phenol premiums are unclear," a source said. "Russia is moving up, as is Asia," he added.

Russian cargoes were noted in Turkey and India, according to the trader.

IPA/MEK

Platts assessed the FD NWE isopropyl alcohol spot price steady on the week at Eur930/mt, within a trader's indicative range heard corroborated at Eur900-980/mt, above a second trader's indicative value heard at Eur900/mt, awaiting further corroboration of lower levels from the market.

“Demand is weak, and the market remains oversupplied,” a source commented on IPA and MEK fundamentals.

Platts assessed the FD NWE methyl ethyl ketone spot price at Eur1,050/mt, down Eur25/mt on the week, moving lower within a trader’s indicative range heard at Eur1,035-1,080/mt and toward a second trader’s indicative value heard at Eur1,035/mt.

ETAC/BUTAC

Platts assessed the FD NWE ethyl acetate spot price steady on the week at Eur900/mt, at the bottom end of a trader’s indicative range heard at Eur900-970/mt.

No change in fundamentals was heard in the European ETAC market.

Platts assessed the FD NWE butyl acetate spot price stable on the week at Eur1,130/mt, weighing a trader’s indicative range heard at Eur1,150-1,200/mt against a producer’s indication of prices being Eur40/mt below a Eur1,150-1,180/mt range.

“BUTAC demand is a bit better, with some customers ready to pay more,” a trader said.

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US Oxysolvents: Markets steady amid lack of activity

- Acetone, phenol hold steady after steep drops
- Industrial ethanol falls sharply

ACETONE: Platts assessed spot export acetone prices stable on the week at \$850/mt (38.55 cents/lb) FOB USG Aug. 1, in line with last-heard indications at that level.

Platts assessed domestic acetone prices stable at \$1,200/mt (54.4 cents/lb) FD DER, stable on the week, in line with July contracts last heard at \$1,200/mt.

PHENOL: Platts assessed spot export and domestic phenol prices stable on the week at \$1,000/mt (45.36 cents/lb) FOB USG and at \$1,588/mt (72 cents/lb) FOB

USEC ex-tank, respectively, pending fresh indications.

IPA: Platts assessed US spot export isopropyl alcohol prices at \$992/mt FOB USG, stable on the week, within last heard ranges at \$970-\$1,036/mt (44-47 cents/lb).

Platts assessed domestic IPA prices stable on the week at \$1,112/mt (50.4 cents/lb) FD DER, mirroring stability with the spot market.

INDUSTRIAL ETHANOL: US industrial ethanol was down 29 cents/gal, reflecting lower Chicago Argo ethanol futures. The industrial ethanol assessment was 355 cents/gal FOB DSP for 190 proof volumes and 375 cents/gal FOB DSP for 200 proof volumes.

ETAC/BUTAC: Platts assessed export ethyl acetate prices stable on the week at \$1,697/mt FOB US Gulf, amid no disproving pricing indications.

Platts assessed domestic ethyl acetate prices stable at \$1,764/mt FD DER, mirroring stability in the spot market.

Platts assessed export and domestic butyl acetate prices stable on the week at \$2,300/mt (104 cents/lb) FOB USG and at \$2,365/mt (107 cents/lb), respectively, amid no disproving indications.

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Asia Phenol/Acetone: Phenol rises on upstream gains, acetone firms on tight supply

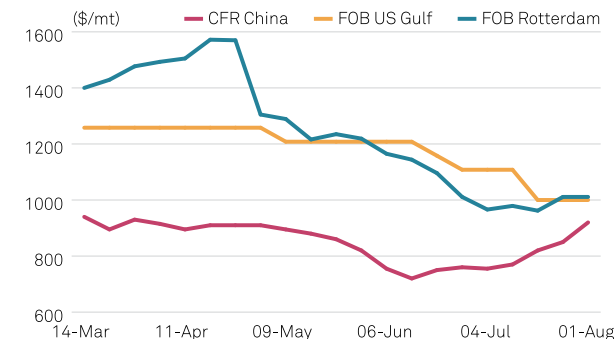
- Chinese plant turnarounds support Asian phenol prices
- Phenol downstream demand stays tepid

PHENOL
Phenol prices in China and Asia were strengthened week on week due to rise in the energy complex, said sources.

Demand, however, remained subdued.

Platts assessed phenol CFR China marker up \$70/mt week on week at \$920/mt Aug. 1 and the FOB Korea benzene marker rose \$45.50/mt to \$918.33 FOB Korea.

Global phenol assessments



Source: S&P Global Commodity Insights

Demand remained very weak, a source said, adding that with the rise in energy prices, it was getting difficult to sell any phenol in the market. Capacity in China was going through turnarounds amid low demand. Zhejiang Petrochemicals 1, or ZPC 1, phenol plant was going for a turnaround which would support other phenol capacity within China, said a source.

Meanwhile, Taihua Industrial’s Ningbo 650,000 mt/year phenol ketone plant was shut for around a week following some plant trouble, a source added.

Demand for cumene for blending had petered out. This resulted in more cumene demand from the phenol side compared to the blending side, the source said.

Domestic ex-tank Kandla/Mumbai prices in India were heard firmer by Rupees 8/kg on the week at Rupees 98/kg Aug. 1.

Around 500 mt from a H2 August loading, mid-September arrival, Middle East cargo was heard traded at \$975/mt CFR India Aug. 1. There were offers heard for a US origin cargo at around \$975-\$990/mt CFR India. The cargo was due to arrive in the first week of October and was already on waters, mentioned a source. As per market sources, phenol inventory was lower than usual levels and hardly any cargoes were received between July 15 to Aug. 1 due less imports. One of the Indian phenol producers announced to

revise their ex-factory prices effective Aug. 1. The upside was primarily on account of high upstream benzene price, although demand was tepid due to the ongoing monsoon season, sources said.

ACETONE

Acetone inventories in Asia were low, said a source, both within South Korea and China market.

Acetone prices had risen because of the higher energy complex despite lackluster demand, another source said.

The East China tradeable price was around Yuan 6,600-6,700/mt, a source said, adding that a difference was observed in what was deemed to be tradeable value in the East China market and factory gate prices announced by different domestic China companies. The ex-factory prices announced by various acetone producers were in the range of Yuan 6,800-6,850/mt to Yuan 7,000/mt on Aug. 1.

India domestic ex-tank Kandla/Mumbai acetone prices were heard rising by Rupee 4/kg on the week at Rupees 77/kg ex-tank amid firmer market indications and tighter inventory situation. CFR India buying and selling interest was firmer with levels elevated mostly on account of tight supply, sources said. Offers were heard in the range \$830-\$850/mt while buying interest varied in the range \$780-\$830/mt. With FOB levels raised to about \$750/mt from Korea, selling interest was at a higher price, mentioned a producer.

The upside in prices was also supported after India's largest producer, Deepak Phenolics Ltd announced to shut its acetone and phenol unit for two days starting Aug. 1 for a periodic maintenance turnaround, S&P Global Commodity Insights reported earlier. Located in Dahej, Gujarat, the plant can produce 300,000 mt/year phenol and 180,000 mt/year acetone. The company's downstream isopropyl alcohol (IPA) unit plant run rates were not affected by this maintenance drive. However, there was a backlog in phenol and acetone delivery from the Dahej unit of the producer on account of the maintenance shutdown, mentioned a market source.

PHENOL: Platts assessed the CFR China marker up \$70/mt week on week at \$920/mt on Aug. 1, tracking stronger domestic China phenol prices, which were up Yuan 700/mt on the week at Yuan 8,200/mt, or around \$947.28/mt on an import-parity basis. Platts assessed CFR Southeast Asia phenol \$70/mt higher on the week at \$980/mt, tracking the changes in CFR China marker as well as a higher feedstock benzene prices week on week. CFR India phenol was assessed at \$975/mt, up \$35/mt on the week, based on a trade heard done at those levels, also under offers heard at \$1070/mt.

ACETONE: Platts assessed the CFR China acetone marker up \$50/mt week on week at \$740/mt on Aug. 1, considering stronger domestic China prices. The domestic price of acetone in China was up around Yuan 550/mt at Yuan 6,850/mt, or around \$788.42/mt on an import-parity basis. Platts assessed CFR Southeast Asia acetone up \$50/mt on the week at \$900/mt, in line with higher benzene prices and China prices. CFR India acetone was assessed at \$830/mt, up \$80/mt on the week, considering a selling indication and a bid at \$830/mt.

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Oxo-Alcohol and Plasticizers

European Oxo Alcohols: Prices stable amid thin market activity

- Demand slumps during holiday period
- Weak market fundamentals persist

European oxo-alcohols markets were muted in the week to July 27, with poor downstream buying appetite and abundant supply limiting spot activity.

Tepid domestic demand and a lack of export opportunities were weighing on the European market, with participants considering early shutdowns to stem supply, according to a source.

Meanwhile, competitively priced imports from Asia

and the Middle East are displacing European product, with export markets already accounted for.

"There is no home for it, players are contemplating shutting down as there is so much supply and [they] are just meeting minimum threshold," a market source said.

Poor market fundamentals and sluggish demand is expected to persist into mid-2024, according to a trader.

"Producers and consumers would welcome some tightness in the market, however, it is not expected," the source added.

While falling Rhine water levels could create potential disruptions, the extensive market length means water fluctuations are less of a concern.

Export n-butanol spot prices were assessed unchanged at \$850/mt FOB Rotterdam, in line with trader indications heard at \$850/mt.

Domestic NBA spot prices were assessed unchanged on the week at Eur1,100/mt FD NWE, considering feedback of slow demand during the summer holiday period and tracking stable export spot values.

Platts assessed European isobutanol spot prices unchanged on the week at Eur1,050/mt FD NWE, considering market feedback of ongoing weak demand and tracking steady n-butanol spot values amid pending fresh market indications.

Export IBA prices were assessed at \$790/mt FOB Rotterdam, unchanged on the week, trailing stable domestic IBA pricing.

Export 2-ethyl hexanol spot prices were assessed unchanged on the week at \$930/mt FOB Rotterdam, in line a trader indication heard at \$930/mt.

The domestic 2-EH spot price was assessed unchanged on the week at Eur1,200/mt FD NWE, mirroring stable export values while also considering feedback of weak demand and limited trading activity.

The phthalic anhydride market also saw little activity in the week, with poor demand and market

length weighing on sentiment.

A market source said that smaller demand was being met throughout the summer, while overall European demand remained subdued, with an uptick unlikely in the coming months.

Platts assessed the PA flake FD NWE spot price steady on the week at \$1,380/mt FD NWE, weighing a trader range heard at Eur1,400-1,450/mt, against feedback of quiet summer demand and weak market fundamentals.

PA flake export prices were unchanged on the week at \$1,185/mt FOB Rotterdam, following stable domestic PA pricing and pending fresh market indications.

PA molten prices were calculated at Eur1,630/mt FD NWE, unchanged on the week, trailing steady PA flake prices.

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US Oxo-alcohols: Domestic 2-EH, NBA prices rise on week

- 2-EH export price rise on week
- Domestic DOTP, DINP stable on week

US spot export 2-ethylhexanol and domestic contract oxo-alcohol prices rose from a week ago July 27, amid steady demand.

For export NBA, no new indications were heard of price changes over July 21-27 period. Meanwhile, Platts assessed 2-EH down \$200, moving towards a price indication heard at \$990-\$1,000/mt FOB USG and considering a price indication heard at around \$1000/mt FOB USG July 27, pending confirmation of lower trading activity.

A trader source said that there is more movement in the export market, adding that arbitrage could start to emerge due to the increase in Asian prices.

Platts assessed domestic contract NBA and 2-EH down 0.5 cent on the week, tracking the movement in upstream spot polymer-grade propylene levels during

the July 21-27 period.

On the plasticizer size, domestic diisononyl phthalate and dioctyl terephthalate were assessed stable on the week. The DOTP assessment considered an indication heard at 88-90 cents/lb and a corroborated price indication heard at 89 cents/lb July 27.

The market maintained its previous structure with DINP at a two-cent premium to DOTP. The DINP assessment considered a corroborated price indication at 91 cents/lb delivered basis and talk of DINP at 2-3 cents premium to DOTP delivered basis.

A trade source said there is an increased interest from customers due to inventory reduction. Nevertheless, the source added that some customers are going to buy DOTP until August.

“Demand has remained stable,” an importer source said, adding that the market may even see a drop in prices due to some market statistics and citing the Evonik’s trade update.

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Platts US Oxo-alcohols Weekly Rationale

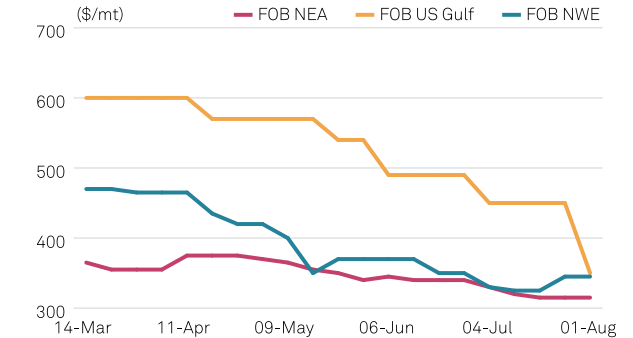
Platts assessed US export normal butanol prices at \$1,900/mt FOB USG July, stable on the week, pending fresh indications.

Platts assessed US export 2-ethylhexanol at \$1,450/mt FOB USG, falling \$200 on the week, moving toward the top range of a trader indication at \$990-\$1,000/mt FOB USG and considering a price indication heard at around \$1,000/mt FOB USG from an exporter July 27, pending confirmation of lower trading activity.

Domestic NBA and 2-EH contracts were assessed down 0.50 cents on the week at 85 cents/lb and 90 cents/lb, respectively, tracking the movement in upstream spot polymer-grade propylene levels during the July 21-27 period.

Domestic DOTP remained stable on the week at 89 cents/lb. The assessment considered an indication

Global caustic soda assessments



Source: S&P Global Commodity Insights

heard at 88-90 cents/lb and a corroborated price indication heard at 89 cents/lb July 27.

Domestic DINP was assessed stable on the week at 91 cents/lb delivered basis. The assessment considered a corroborated price indication at 91 cents/lb delivered basis and talk of DINP at 2-3 cents premium to DOTP delivered basis. The market maintained its previous structure with DINP at a two-cent premium to DOTP.

Platts is part of S&P Global Commodity Insights.

Asia Oxo Alcohols: 2-EH CFR China rises on the week amid tighter spot

- Firmer crude lends support
- Shandong 2-EH up Yuan 100/mt on week

The 2-ethyl hexanol CFR China marker continued to extend gains in the week to July 27, as an ongoing production shortage in China has pushed up the indicative bids and offers.

The September ICE Brent crude oil futures contract was up \$0.45/b from the previous Asian close at \$83.57/b at 0830 GMT, and this has lent a firmer support for the oxo alcohol market.

“There is firmer support for NBA and 2-EH due to

the strengthening in the price for propylene feedstock lately,” a major NBA producer in Northeast Asia said.

The RMB price for 2-EH China was up Yuan 100/mt to Yuan 10,200/mt in Shandong, which comes in at around \$1,200/mt CFR China on an import-parity basis.

“The DOP and DOTP markers are making margins now, and the supply is tight as a few 2-EH plants producers are now under turnaround,” a producer in NE Asia said.

DOP and DOTP are plasticizer and 2-EH is a feedstock for plasticizer.

A plasticizer producer in NE Asia said that due to firmer 2-EH feedstock price and the Chinese local price, the overall plasticizer price is going up and inquiry has been increased.

“We have increased our price due to the latest increase in 2-EH and PTA feedstock cost,” a plasticizer producer said.

Platts Asian Oxo Alcohols Weekly Rationale

Platts assessed normal butanol CFR China up \$15/mt on the week at \$1,085/mt July 27, below a selling indication heard at \$1,130/mt CFR China.

Platts assessed NBA CFR Southeast Asia up \$15/mt on the week at \$1,105/mt, below a selling indication heard at \$1,130/mt CFR China.

Platts assessed 2-EH CFR China up \$25/mt on the week at \$1,195/mt CFR China, below a selling indication heard at \$1,250/mt CFR China from a producer, above buying indications heard at \$1,070-1,180/mt CFR China from two buyers.

2-EH CFR SE Asia was assessed unchanged on the week at \$1,260/mt, with no bids and offers heard by market close.

The tradable RMB price for 2-EH China was heard traded at Yuan 10,200/mt in Shandong, up Yuan 100/mt in the week to July 27, which comes in at around \$1,200/mt CFR China on an import-parity basis. East China 2-EH was heard traded at Yuan 10,500/mt ex-

tank and this comes in at around \$1,235/mt CFR China on an import-parity basis.

Platts assessed Dioctyl phthalate CFR China up \$15/mt at \$1,245/mt, below selling indications heard at \$1,280/mt CFR China by market close, above a buying indication heard at \$1,225/mt CFR SE Asia. A 20-mt cargo was heard traded at \$1,260/mt CFR China but this parcel were below the minimum 100-mt threshold for assessment.

Platts assessed DOP CFR Southeast Asia was assessed unchanged at \$1,260/mt CFR SE Asia based on a deal heard concluded at \$1,260/mt CFR SE Asia, below a selling indication heard at \$1,290/mt CFR SE Asia. Another deal was heard traded at \$1,380/mt CFR Jakarta for H1 August arrival.

Platts assessed PA CFR China up \$20/mt at \$1,015/mt, below a selling indication heard at \$1,025/mt CFR China by a producer, and above buying indications heard at \$910/mt CFR China by a buyer.

A 100-mt parcel was heard done at \$1,040/mt CFR China, but the buyer of the cargo is unknown.

Platts assessed PA CFR Southeast Asia unchanged at \$1,025/mt CFR SE Asia, below a selling indication heard at \$1,030-1,040/mt by a producer by market close.

A 60-mt and 100-mt parcel was heard done at \$1,060/mt CFR Philippines and CFR Vietnam, but the buyer of the cargo is unknown.

Platts assessed the Dioctyl terephthalate CFR China marker up \$10/mt at \$1,220/mt on a stronger adjacent market, below a selling indication heard at \$1,240/mt CFR China.

Platts assessed the DOTP CFR Southeast Asia marker up \$20/mt at \$1,235/mt, based on a deals trade heard concluded at \$1,230-1,250/mt CFR Haifang and CFR Ho Chi Minh City.

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Methanol

European Methanol: Prices firm further amid higher buy ideas

- Bids for Aug increase Eur3/mt on day
 - Deal for 1,000 mt done at Eur218/mt
- Spot European methanol values increased again Aug. 1 amid firmer buy ideas in the market. Bids for August were indicated at Eur215/mt July 31 and heard to have increased Eur3/mt Aug. 1 to Eur218/mt.

There was also a trade for 1,000 mt heard done at Eur218/mt for August, following an initially quiet start to the week.

A seller had previously said that inventories had been depleted and this had prompted a recovery in demand.

In southern Europe, the market remained fairly slow amid the ongoing summer holiday season, but a trader said that activity was not as slow as expected.

“Compared to the usual August market and also to how dull the market has been in the past couple of quarters, I was expecting a dead August, but there’s been a sign of life,” the source said.

The global methanol market outlook largely depended on developments in China, the source added.

Platts European Methanol Daily Rationale

Platts assessed the FOB Rotterdam five- to 30-day forward methanol spot price at Eur218.25/mt Aug. 1, up Eur3/mt on the day.

August was assessed up Eur3/mt at Eur218.25/mt, moving above the bid in the latest heard Eur218-224/mt bid-offer range.

September was assessed up Eur1/mt at Eur218.25/mt, moving above the bid in the latest heard Eur218-224/mt bid-offer range.

A flat structure was drawn between mid-August and mid-September dates and extended to all remaining laycans.

Methanol bunker fuel delivered to Rotterdam was assessed at a \$35/mt premium over methanol FOB Rotterdam, stable on the day, pending fresh market feedback.

FOB Rotterdam eMethanol cost was assessed unchanged at a \$70/mt premium to eMethanol cost at the gate of the facility, pending fresh market feedback.

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US Methanol: Spot prices steady, supply disruption in Trinidad and Tobago

- Two units expected offline through H1 August
- One bid heard at 58 cents/gal, no offers

US Gulf spot methanol was assessed steady on the day on Aug. 1 amid a muted market.

A single bid was heard at 58 cents/gal as offers disappeared from the market.

M2 and M3, the Methanol Holdings (Trinidad) Ltd. facilities in Trinidad and Tobago, are currently offline, sources said Aug 1. The methanol units went

down during the week beginning July 24 and are anticipated to remain offline through the first half of August, a source said. A disruption to the natural gas supply led to the shutdown but the exact dates were not confirmed. M2 and M3 have a total methanol production capacity of 1.12 million mt/year, according to S&P Global Commodity Insights data.

Exports from Central and South America, have primarily been destined for the US, Western Europe and Northeast Asia, according to S&P Global. Trinidad and Tobago is the region's largest exporting country but, despite the disruption to production, it was not expected that the company will need to go to the spot market to cover any contracted volumes, the source said.

Platts assessed US methanol list contract prices for August at 155.5 cents/gal, 2 cents lower on the month based on the average of monthly producer-posted prices. US net contract prices for August were assessed at 85.53 cents/gal, based on market feedback that contract discounts are about 45% in 2023.

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Platts US Methanol Daily Rationale

Platts assessed August spot methanol at 66 cents/gal FOB USG on Aug. 1, steady on the day pending fresh indications.

Forward month September spot methanol was assessed at 66 cents/gal FOB USG, also steady on the day.

The assessment came above a September bid heard at 58 cents/gal FOB ITC that did not challenge the previous assessment.

The assessment maintained the previous market structure.

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Asian methanol: China up \$7/mt on potentially tight supply

- Methanol market shrugs off downbeat factory data
- Trinidad gas supply disruption impetus for bullish sentiment
- Thin discussions in India

The Asian methanol market shrugged off downbeat factory activity and instead surged \$7/mt on the back

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that a natural gas supply disruption in Trinidad and Tobago could affect methanol production at two plants, sources said Aug. 1.

Offers for end-August and any-September arrival cargoes were heard at \$275/mt CFR China, while a bid was at \$268/mt CFR China.

Platts assessed CFR China up \$7/mt on the day at \$269/mt Aug. 1.

Meanwhile, the Caixin manufacturing purchasing managers' index fell to 49.2 in July from 50.5 in the previous month, S&P Global Commodity Insights data showed Aug. 1, pointing towards a slowdown in China's energy-intensive manufacturing sector.

A reading above 50 indicates an expansion, while a reading below 50 reflects a contraction.

Trade discussions in India were thin amid lower domestic ex-tank discussions in India.

Offers at Mumbai port heard at around Rupees 22/kg early Aug. 1 were heard withdrawn later around 4:30pm Singapore time as a few market participants revised up their offers by Rupee 0.25/kg to Rupee 22.25/kg, a local buyer said.

This was equivalent to \$245/mt on an import parity basis. High inventories and low demand kept domestic ex-tank prices weak, said a downstream buyer.

Amid lack of bids and offers, tradable value was heard at around \$255/mt CFR India through a buyer. Some market participants eyed on gains in the adjacent China market.

Platts assessed CFR India methanol at \$256/mt up \$1/mt on the day Aug. 1.

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Platts Asian Methanol Daily Rationale & Exclusions

Platts assessed Asian methanol up \$7/mt day on day at \$269/mt Aug. 1, above a bid at \$268/mt CFR China and under offers at \$275/mt CFR China.

The East China methanol domestic price was

assessed up Yuan 68/mt over the same period at Yuan 2,343/mt ex-tank amid discussions at Yuan 2,340-2,345/mt ex-tank.

The CFR Southeast Asia methanol price was assessed \$5/mt higher day on day at \$290/mt, in line with gains in adjacent markets amid thin price discussions.

Platts assessed CFR India methanol at \$256/mt Aug. 1, up \$1/mt on the day, amid thin trade discussions, reflecting gains in adjacent markets and slight improvement in the India domestic ex-tank price. No firm offers/bids were heard during the assessment process.

The India domestic methanol ex-tank Kandla price was assessed at Rupee 22.10/kg, up Rupee 0.10/kg on the day, under offers heard at around Rupee 22.25-22.50/kg. An offer heard at Rupee 22/kg seemed non-repeatable to the wider market.

Singapore-delivered methanol bunker was assessed at a \$55/mt premium to CFR Southeast Asia methanol, stable day on day, with no disproving indications heard.

FOB Shanghai renewable methanol was assessed at a \$24/mt premium to ex-works costs.

Exclusions: No market data was excluded from the Aug. 1 assessment.

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The above rationale applies to the following market data codes: <AAWAZ00> for CFR China daily, <AAWBA00> for CFR Southeast Asia daily, <AAWB00> for domestic China daily, <MLCFI00> for CFR India daily, <PHACH00> for CFR Korea weekly, <PHACI00> for CFR Taiwan weekly, <PHACJ00> for CFR Southeast Asia weekly, <AABAG00> for CFR India Netback, and <AAVAR04> for China domestic.

(Weekly price assessments can be found on PCA348, and daily price assessments are on PCA653)

Chlor-Alkali

European Chlor-Alkali, EDC/VCM: Producers seek to raise caustic offers amid tight supply

- Activity thins at start of holiday season

- EDC export offers fall on higher supply

Caustic soda: Market activity remained thin Aug. 1 with the majority of European production running at reduced operating rates due to weak demand and with a number of participants further down the chain also shut for annual summer maintenance. Producers said that despite the typically slow summer demand they were able to take advantage of reduced chlorine production, which had been seen rebalancing caustic supply. This was conditioned by the weak pricing seen throughout the year. European offer indications into the Mediterranean market were heard within the \$450-\$500/dmt CFR range. Export indications from the Northwest European hub were muted as producers sought to raise offer pricing in the contract market.

The extent to which caustic exports from the US has been impacted by a legal dispute between Olin and Shintech was shown this week. Olin is not supplying Shintech with VCM. The companies are embroiled in a legal dispute over Olin's contract to supply Shintech with VCM, the immediate precursor to the construction staple used to make pipes, window frames, vinyl siding, and other products. Olin expects the financial fallout from its shut vinyl chloride monomer unit in Freeport, Texas, to stretch into the third quarter of 2023, the company said July 27.

Olin shut the 835,000 mt/year unit July 12, citing equipment failures, according to its chief customer, US polyvinyl chloride producer Shintech. Olin announced in June that the VCM plant had been restarted but running at reduced rates. Olin's chlor-alkali and vinyls operations are running "not all that far above 50%"

capacity amid weak market conditions, CEO Scott Sutton said July 28.

“Global market conditions are quite poor,” he said during the world’s largest chlor-alkali producer’s Q2 2023 earnings call. He said Olin was not participating in caustic soda markets as much as usual given declining prices, “and doing that, of course, slows the rate of decline.” Olin has permanently shut more than 1 million mt/year of US caustic soda capacity since March 2021 as part of a strategy to sell less product at higher prices overall and avoid markets deemed weak.

EDC/VCM: Spot EDC prices fell in Europe with import pricing seen in the high \$200s/mt CFR Europe. One producer said US export offers into Rotterdam were seen this week at levels of \$200/mt FOB US Gulf Coast plus freight of \$65-\$75/mt, implying lower pricing and the weight of global supply in view of the Olin VCM production issues. Greater quantities of EDC are being exported from the US, pressuring EDC pricing, according to a trader.

Platts European Chlor-Alkali, EDC/VCM Weekly Rationale

Platts assessed CFR Mediterranean caustic soda spot prices at \$450/dmt Aug. 1, unchanged on the week, at the bottom of a trader indication in the mid-to-high \$400s/dmt, considering a trader offer indication heard in the mid-\$400s/dmt CFR Med, pending further feedback.

Platts assessed FOB Northwest European caustic soda spot prices unchanged on the week at \$345/dmt, in line with stability in CFR Med spot values and pending further indications.

Platts assessed ethylene dichloride spot prices down \$20/mt on the week at \$260/mt FOB NWE, taking direction from a trader selling indication heard at \$265-\$275/mt CFR NWE Aug. 1 and declining Asia spot values, pending fresh FOB NWE indications.

Platts assessed FOB NWE vinyl chloride monomer spot prices unchanged on the week at \$690/mt,

tracking stability in Asia spot values pending fresh FOB NWE indications.

The chlorine contract price was calculated at Eur171/mt Aug. 1, down Eur50/mt from July.

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Platts US Caustic Soda: Spot export prices down \$100/dmt on week

- Market participants’ expectation: weak demand, lower prices
- Olin CEO says chlorovinyls operations running at low capacity

US spot export caustic soda prices slid \$100/dmt on the week Aug. 1, based on a deal heard for 5,000-6,000 dmt concluded at \$350/dmt FOB USG.

Platts assessed prices at \$345-\$355/dmt FOB.

Market sources had expected prices to decline sharply given soft demand and competition from exports from other regions.

In company news, Olin CEO Scott Sutton told analysts July 28 that the company’s chlorovinyls operations were running “not all that far above 50%” capacity amid weak market conditions.

“Global market conditions are quite poor,” he said during Olin’s Q2 2023 earnings call. He said Olin was not participating in caustic soda markets as much as usual given declining prices, “and doing that, of course, slows the rate of decline.”

“We’ll stay in that positioning for a little while,” Sutton said. “I expect it to change. Maybe it will change twice over the next year.”

Olin buys product on the market to supply customers when needed, and those purchases reached 17.7% of overall sales in Q2, the highest since Olin started tracking that volume in late 2020.

“When we’re faced with weak market conditions, we may well reduce our production as we have,” Sutton said. “It doesn’t mean that we back out of the market according to that same production volume decrease.

We go out into the market and buy volumes out of the market to satisfy the demand that we have.”

He also said Olin’s recent outages of its 835,000 vinyl chloride monomer unit was not a driver of US caustic soda market activity. Sutton said US caustic soda prices have declined amid the “mass of flows that’s come out of Asia and that has impacted global trade flows and tends to back things up in the US Gulf Coast, that’s been more the driver of how caustic pricing has changed.”

In Asia, the FOB Northeast Asia caustic soda marker was assessed flat on the week Aug. 1 at \$315/dmt, while the CFR Southeast Asia marker was assessed down \$5/dmt week on week at \$359/dmt.

In Europe, Platts assessed caustic soda prices flat on the week Aug. 1 at \$450/dmt CFR Med and \$345/dmt FOB NWE.

Asia Caustic Soda: Stable to lower on strengthening PVC market

- Selling indications heard at \$320-\$380/dmt FOB Northeast Asia
 - PVC prices at highest point since March 2023
- Asian caustic soda prices were stable to lower week-on-week Aug. 1 as the PVC market continued to receive support.

The FOB Northeast Asia caustic soda was assessed unchanged from its previous assessment at \$315/dmt Aug. 1, below tradable indications heard between \$320-\$360/dmt from sellers.

The CFR Southeast Asia caustic soda price was assessed \$5/dmt lower from its previous assessment at \$359/dmt Aug. 1 above buy indications heard between \$350-\$355/dmt and in line with a tradable indication heard at \$350-\$360/mt. The assessment is also below a sell indication heard at \$360-\$380/mt.

Meanwhile, local China caustic soda prices were assessed Yuan 20/dmt higher from its previous assessment to close at Yuan 790/dmt Aug. 1 in line with

tradable indications heard between Yuan 780-800/dmt.

While prices from regional producers continued to remain high, trade sources noted that upsides remain limited on selling aggression from traders, although buying appetite was heard to be low week-on-week.

“They [traders] are trying to grab market share and so are willing to do anything to sell, they are signaling to the market that prices will go down, but no one wants to follow,” said one source, who added that margins are already thin due to higher energy costs.

Sell indications were heard ranging from \$320-\$380/dmt FOB Northeast Asia from producers, while tradable price levels from traders were heard at \$350-\$360/dmt CFR Southeast Asia. Regional traders told S&P Global that they expect prices to be lower in the near-term due to weak demand.

“Given that PVC prices are rising, there might be a little room for downward movement,” said one source.

Caustic soda prices are expected to see continued pressure from a strengthening vinyl market.

Platts assessed CFR Far East Asia vinyl chloride monomer \$10/mt higher week on week at \$660/mt July 27 amid continued global tightness. Further downstream, The PVC CFR China weekly price marker increased \$10/mt week-on-week to close at \$810/mt July 26, its highest point since Mar. 15, 2023, when it closed at \$855/mt, S&P Global data showed.

Average caustic soda plant operation rates were heard to be around 80.5%, up slightly week-on-week, according to some market sources.

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Subscriber Notes

Platts publishes weekly methanol assessments for April 14, April 28 and May 5

Platts, part of S&P Global Commodity Insights, has published its US/Americas Methanol Weekly Assessments for April 14, April 28 and May 5.

The pages had not been published on the original date due to a technical error that has since been resolved.

The affected pages appear in Platts Petrochemical Alert page 347.

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