



BRIEFING

Fuel demand information for publication

Date:	14 May 2026	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	Sensitive	Tracking number:	REQ-0032970

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Nicola Willis Minister of Finance	Agree to publish fuel demand data on the MBIE website	18 May 2026
Hon Shane Jones Associate Minister for Energy	Agree to publish fuel demand data on the MBIE website	18 May 2026

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Eric Chapman	Head of Fuel Response Data Cell	Privacy of natural persons	
McLeish Martin	Head of Data, Research and Insights		✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
None

Minister's office to complete:

☐ Noted

☐ Overtaken by Events

☐ Approved

☐ Needs change

☐ See Minister's Notes

☐ Declined

☐ Seen

☐ Withdrawn

Comments



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Purpose

You have asked us to publish information about fuel demand. This paper seeks your decisions on what is published and when.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (the Ministry) recommends that you:

- a **Note** that MBIE met and shared the demand data with Bank Chief Economists and Economic commentators and they did not raise concerns with the quality of the data or public release.
- b **Agree** to publish fuel demand data on the MBIE website:
- Using a weekly comparison
 - Weekly on Wednesday beginning 20 May
 - With supporting text focussed on explaining the facts rather than interpreting them
- c **Note** that if you agree to publish, MBIE will provide updated near-final text for your approval prior to publication.

Yes/No

Noted

Privacy of natural
persons

McLeish Martin
Head of Data, Research and Insights,
MBIE
14/ 05 / 2026

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister of Finance
___ / ___ / 2026

Hon Shane Jones
Associate Minister for Energy
___ / ___ / 2026

We propose publishing bulk storage facility demand

Bulk storage demand is the most complete picture we have

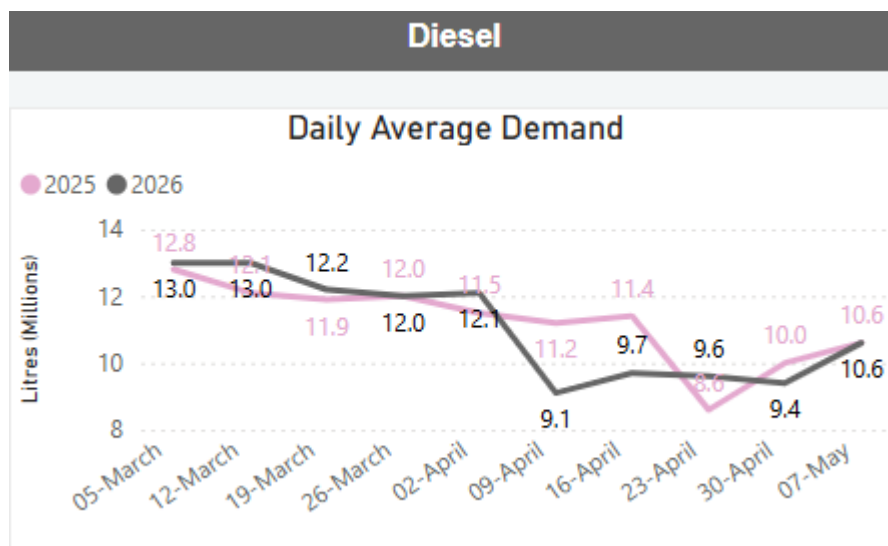
1. Bulk storage facility demand shows the volume of fuel being drawn from bulk storage facilities for distribution to downstream users like petrol stations, farms and other commercial customers.
2. It does not measure end-use/actual consumption, but over time provides a reasonable proxy as end users refill tanks. The advantage of bulk storage facility demand, compared to measures further downstream and closer to consumption, is that it offers 100 percent coverage of the fuel market.
3. We are working on a more timely indicator and we will provide an update on this as it is developed.

Options for publishing

Website Content

4. We recommend publishing the weekly series for each fuel type, in chart format for ease of understanding. Chart 1 below gives an example for diesel. (Note that actual look and feel will differ when loaded onto the MBIE website.) The chart shows the average daily demand for each week compared to the same period in 2025.
5. We recommend the website content focusses on simple, factual, comparison rather than interpreting or predicting what the changes in demand mean.

Chart 1: Weekly demand comparison to 2025



6. The other options are the daily comparison to 2025, and the monthly comparison to 2025, in Charts 2 and 3 respectively below. The daily demand is timelier but “noisier” and harder to interpret than the weekly movements, and less frequent monthly updates will not meet public expectations.

Chart 2: Daily demand comparison to 2025

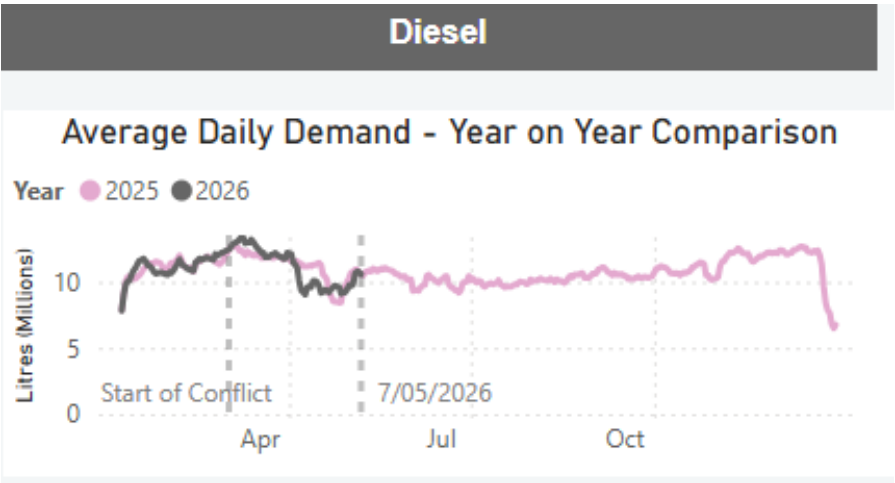
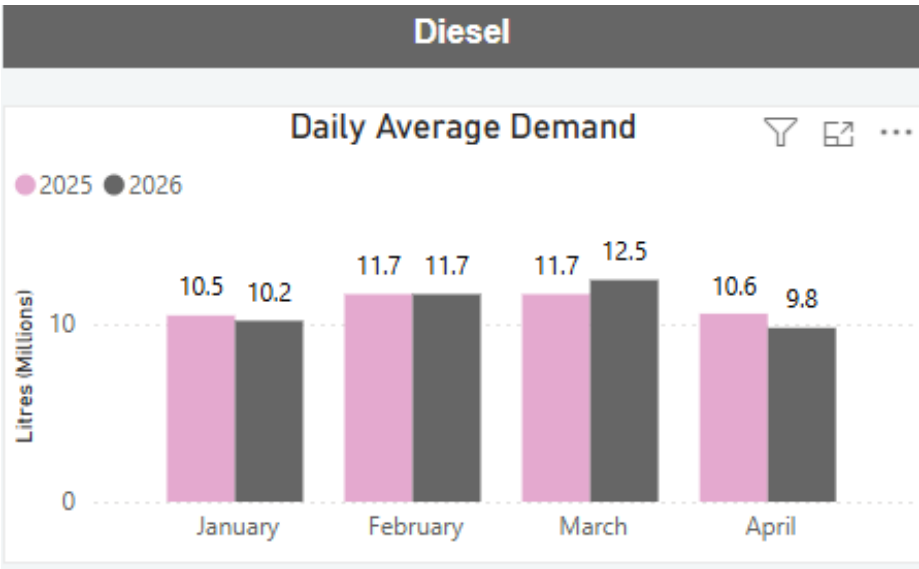


Chart 3: Monthly demand comparison to 2025



Timing and frequency

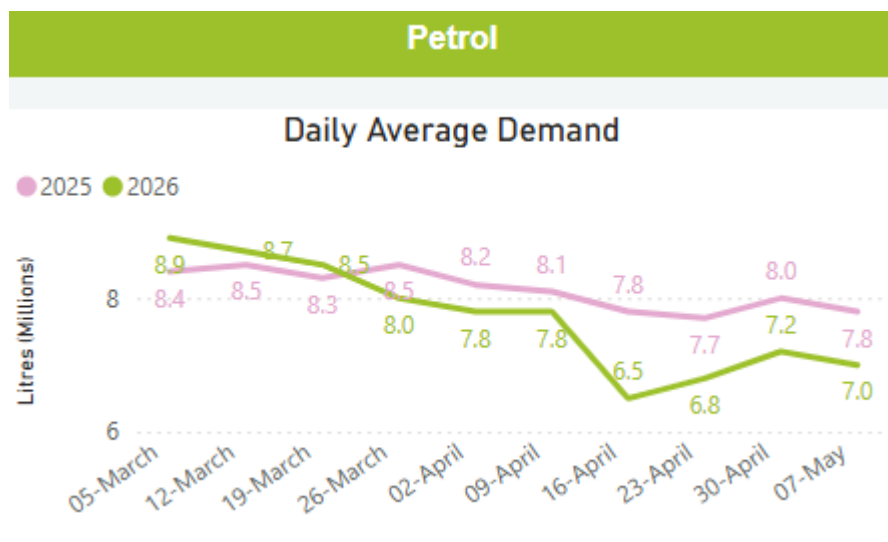
7. We recommend publishing the series weekly to tell a simple, consistent story and avoid changing the comparison period each time a new data point is received. We propose to do that each Wednesday using the most recent data, beginning 20 May.

What demand data is telling us

The picture it provides is clearer for petrol and jet fuel

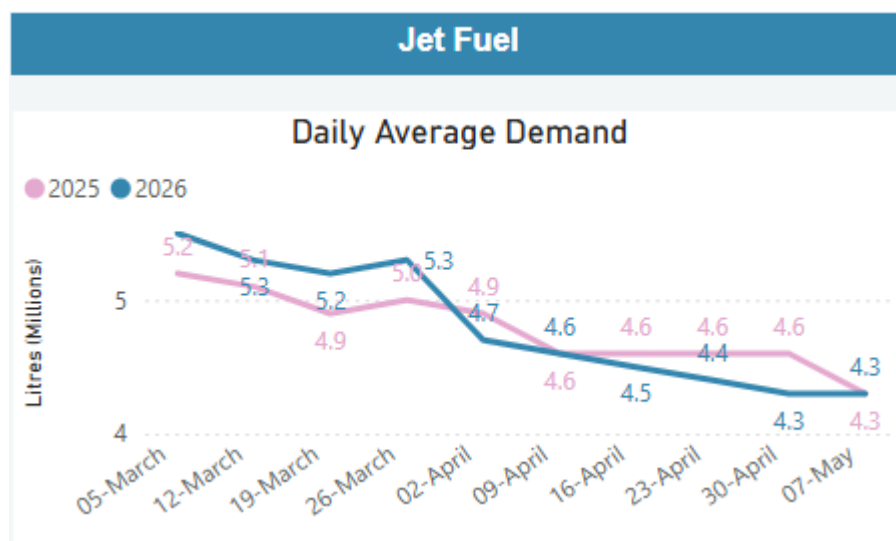
8. Petrol demand is below seasonal trend. Demand in March was up by 1.2 percent year-on-year, suggesting stockpiling behaviour, but April demand was down by 8.9 percent year-on-year. Retail fuel spend and public transport use suggest the same.

Chart 4: Weekly petrol demand comparison to 2025



9. Jet fuel demand is below seasonal trend. Demand peaked in February up 7.3 percent year-on-year, and declined steadily, with April demand down 2.2 percent year-on-year. Aviation departures declined steadily over the same period.

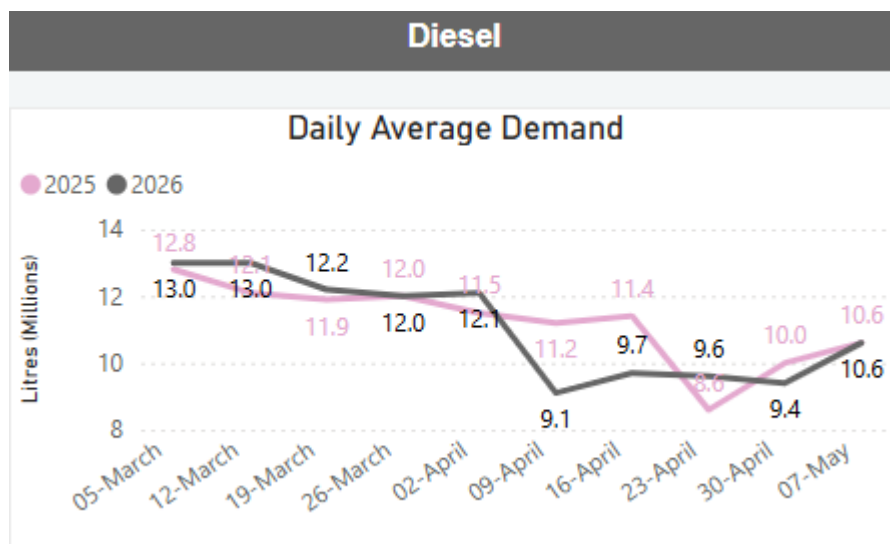
Chart 5: Weekly jet fuel demand comparison to 2025



But more challenging to interpret for diesel

10. Bulk storage demand shows a more complicated story for diesel. It shows demand up 6.8 percent in March year-on-year, followed by a marked decline around Easter weekend and slow recovery since. Demand across April was down 7.5 percent year-on-year.
11. We interpret this as a period of stockpiling in March, with those stockpiles being drawn down in April, with minimal change in underlying consumption. Heavy Commercial VKT changed little over that period and one fuel distributor told us they have observed this behaviour in their electronic tank monitoring, which both support this interpretation.

Chart 6: Weekly diesel demand comparison to 2025



Key economic commentators agree with this approach and interpretation

We have had our approach to developing the data externally validated

12. We contracted Brad Olsen (Principal Economist Infometrics) to review our approach. He described the process as “reasonable and robust”.

We tested our interpretation of the data with key economic commentators

13. We have convened a regular meeting with the bank chief economists, Brad Olsen of Infometrics and Shamubeel Eaquub of Simplicity to test our analysis.
14. We briefed them on the demand data on 7 May and sought feedback on releasing the data publicly.
15. Feedback received to date has been:
 - a. There have been no allergic reactions to the quality of the data or the proposal to release it publicly.
 - b. One Economist came to similar conclusions to our analysis that petrol and jet fuel demand appear to be below average, while diesel demand has been around the historical average across the period from March to now.
 - c. However, another Economist noted that “the data look fine”, but we should be “cautious on making expansive conclusions using this data alone”.
16. These comments support the recommended approach of focussing web content on simple, factual, comparisons and presenting weekly demand comparison charts.

Next steps

17. A mock-up of the MBIE website content is in Annex 1. It is based on old data and is intended to illustrate what would be included, not the final text. If you agree to publish, we will provide final text to your office for approval prior to publication.

Annexes

Annex 1: Website content mock-up

Annex 1: Website content mock-up

NOTE: This mock-up is based on old demand data purely to provide an indication of what is included, look and feel. If you agree to publish the demand data we will provide a draft with up to date content for your approval prior to publication.

Fuel demand update

Published: XX May 2026

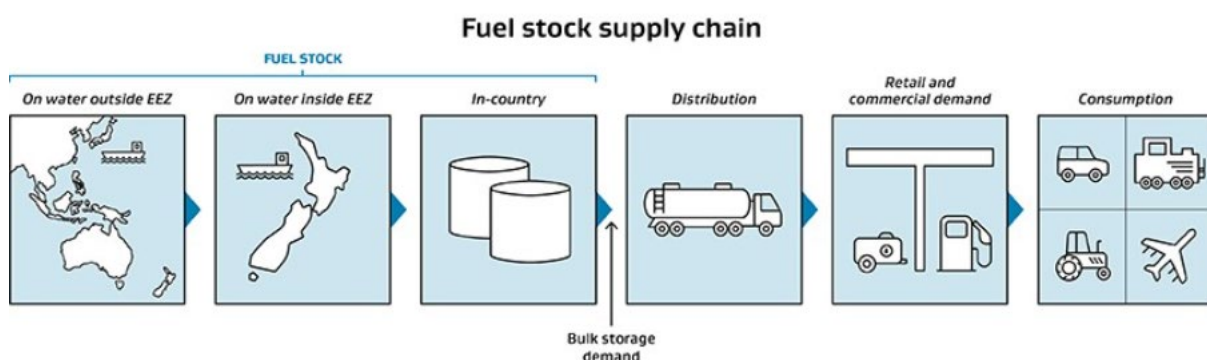
MBIE has made changes to the national fuel data published on our website. Alongside twice weekly updates on fuel stocks, we are now publishing data on demand from bulk storage facilities to create a detailed picture of fuel demand over time in New Zealand.

We will publish the latest information on current fuel demand on this page every Wednesday afternoon.

Bulk storage demand

Bulk storage demand data reported by fuel companies shows how much fuel is being drawn from storage facilities for distribution to, for example, petrol stations, farms and other commercial users.

This infographic shows the fuel supply chain and where in the supply chain fuel stocks and bulk storage demand are measured.



Demand data is different from consumption data. Demand data represents the fuel supplied into the downstream distribution system. It is an indicator but not a direct measure of fuel consumption, or use. This is because fuel is also held in storage tanks beyond terminals – at service stations, truck stops, airports and customer sites.

Consumption data is a measure of fuel that is used (for example when driving a car, using a tractor, running a generator or heating a building).

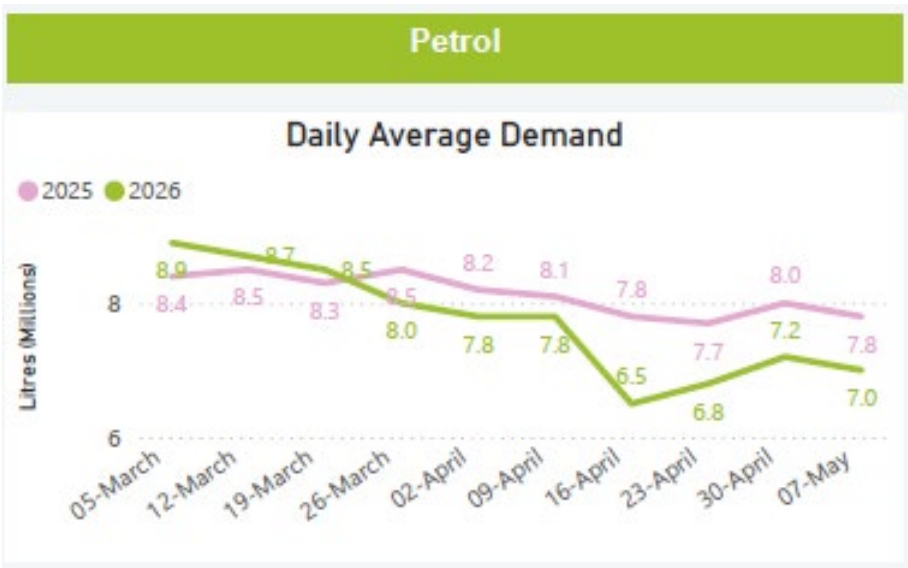
Travel indicators, such as Vehicle Kilometres Travelled, provide another indication of fuel consumption. More information about transport demand indicators can be found on the Ministry of Transport's dashboard:

[Fuel response monitoring dashboard | Ministry of Transport](#)

Trends in demand for petrol, diesel and jet fuel

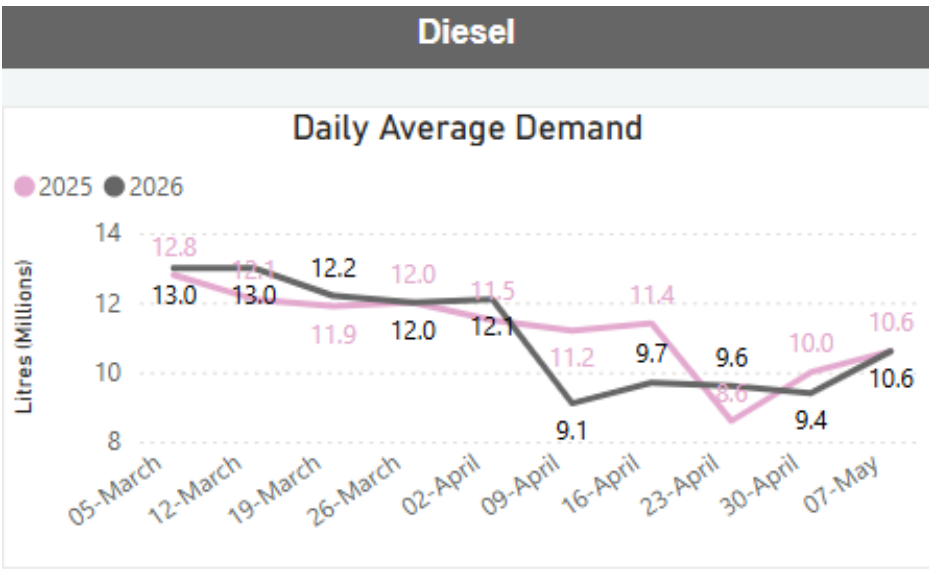
This demand data is as at 7 May with a starting date of 28 February 2026. We will update this data each week.

Petrol demand – Weekly Demand Comparison



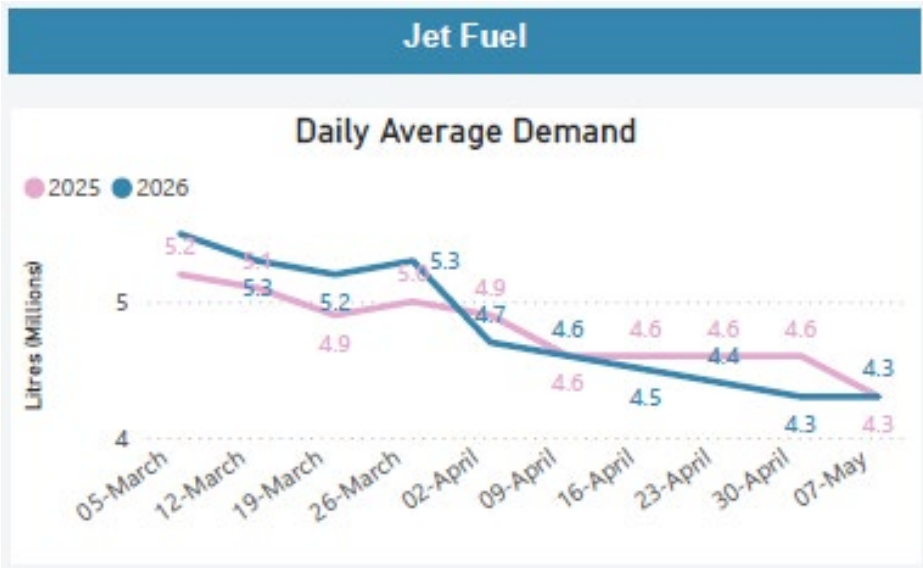
(Note that actual look and feel will differ when loaded onto the MBIE website)

Diesel demand – Weekly Demand Comparison



(Note that actual look and feel will differ when loaded onto the MBIE website)

Jet fuel demand – Weekly Demand Comparison



(Note that actual look and feel will differ when loaded onto the MBIE website)

Fuel Demand Comparisons

Fuel demand is inherently complex because fuel underpins almost every aspect of economic activity and daily life.

Demand by week can be affected by public holidays and weather events, this is particularly evident in April due to Easter and Anzac Day, which makes comparison by month more appropriate than weekly comparisons.

Petrol

- Petrol had a modest increase in demand (up 1.2%) in March which has been followed by a sharp fall in April (down 8.9%).

Diesel

- A sharp increase in demand for Confidentiality

Jet fuel

- Jet fuel demand was elevated through January (up 5.4%) and February (up 7.3%), in March (up 4%) and April (down 2.2%) jet fuel demand fell sharply from these earlier highs.

Data Period and Quality

The data period is 1 January 2025 to 7 May 2026. Fuel companies provide the data on Tuesday and the data is usable from the previous Thursday.

Data file

XYZ.xlsx

Disclaimer

MBIE endeavours, to the best of its knowledge and ability, to ensure the data provided and published is accurate. However, as the data is received from external sources, MBIE does not warrant that it is current, accurate or complete. The data may be changed, deleted, added to or otherwise amended at any time as new information becomes available.

New Zealand is continuing to closely monitor the impacts of the conflict in the Middle East on global fuel markets. While this is a fast-moving situation internationally, fuel supply into New Zealand remains stable and onshore and incoming stocks are sufficient. There is currently no need for New Zealanders to change how they buy fuel.

It is important to remember that fuel supply is inherently dynamic, with stock levels fluctuating week to week as fuel is consumed and new shipments arrive. Changes in stock levels reflect normal patterns rather than supply disruption.

Fuel importers manage their imports in line with demand and minimum stockholding obligations. Fuel companies are providing immediate updates to officials if they are made aware of disrupted supply, and there have been no reports of material issues with future shipments.

More information

Fuel stocks update webpage

MoT dashboard

[Fuel supply disruption response](#)

[Fuel security](#)

MBIE media contact

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