RLA Market Insights – Thursday, 18 September 2025

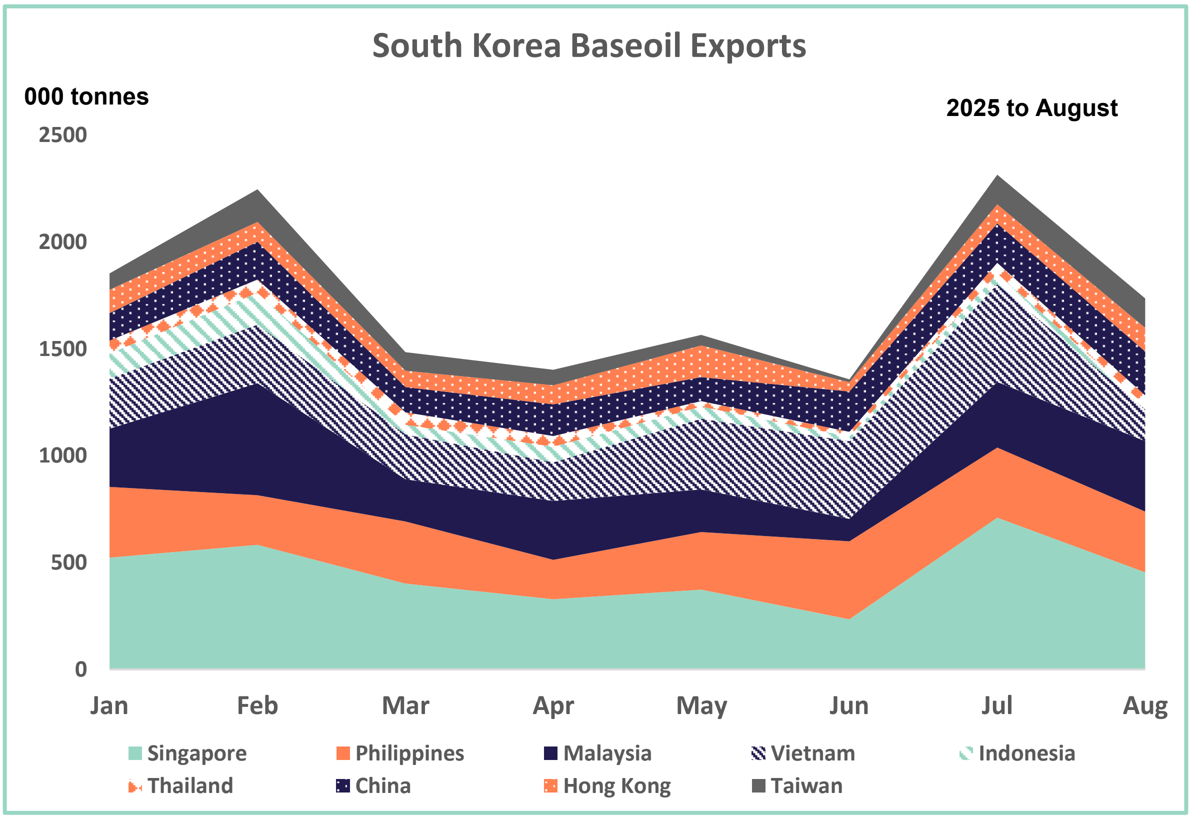
South Korea Base Oil Exports

South Korea's base oils exports slumped to a three-month low of 331,700 tonnes in August, down from more than 350,000 tonnes in July and 23% lower YoY, according to Korea Customs Service data. The decline came despite the completion of extensive maintenance earlier in the summer, which had raised expectations of a rebound. Instead, the fall pointed to unexpected production issues, run cuts, or stock-building following maintenance.

The slowdown was not confined to South Korea. Taiwan's exports dropped to a seven-month low, while Singapore also showed signs of weaker shipments. Combined exports from the three key Asian suppliers fell to below 520,000 tonnes, marking the lowest in seven months and over 100,000 tonnes less than a year earlier.

This contraction in supply coincided with the typical seasonal demand slowdown in August across Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the US. However, the reduced availability of surplus volumes cushioned the impact of weaker consumption, preventing a sharp downward adjustment in prices. Instead, base oils prices held firm relative to gasoil and against benchmarks in other markets such as the Americas during the third quarter.

The limited build-up of surplus volumes suggested that supply tightness would persist beyond August. With Asia's base oil fundamentals already tighter than usual in the first seven months of the year, the August export slump and limited spot availability raised the likelihood of prolonged tightness through the remainder of Q3, keeping pressure on buyers and lending continued support to prices.



SHORT TERM OUTLOOK – OIL TANKER MARKET

A monthly report covering the next four months including trends in oil supply, demand and trade, tanker demand and supply, spot, and time charter rates for MRs up to VLCCs, comparisons with FFAs plus the latest news on developments impacting the oil and tanker sectors.

MEDIUM TERM OUTLOOK – OIL TANKER MARKET

Concise analyses of topical issues, consistent market data series and views on future trends in tanker charter rates. The report covers Oil Prices; Economic Developments; Oil Demand and Supply; Trade; Tanker Demand, Supply and Rates. Sent to clients around January, April, July and October each year

SHORT TERM OUTLOOK – VLGC MARKET

A monthly report looking four months ahead at likely trends in the VLGC Spot Market with the latest on key LPG carrier trades, benchmark LPG prices, arbitrage developments, a comparison with FFAs and recent news

MEDIUM TERM OUTLOOK – LPG CARRIER MARKET

A quarterly series of regular reviews, analyses and forecasts of the LPG Carrier Market. The report covers Economic Developments; LPG production, consumption and pricing; LPG, chemical gases and ammonia trade, LPG Carrier Demand, Supply and Rates for Fully Ref, Semi-Ref and Pressurised Ships. Reports sent to clients around January, April, July and October each year.

CHEMICAL CARRIER WORLD SERVICE

An annual consultancy service currently providing Clients with an Annual Fundamentals Report, a Forecast Update, two quarterly Market Monitors, Monthly Commodity Trade Bulletins for key countries, an annual presentation on the market outlook and access to RLA's consultant's and analysts to discuss issues arising from these reports.

WADE MARITIME GROUP

SINGAPORE OFFICE
10 Anson Road
#10-11 International Plaza
SINGAPORE 079903
T: +65-6950 7561

LONDON OFFICE
Terminal House
52 Grosvenor Gardens
London, UK SW1W 0AU
T: +44-20-3386 9413

INDIA OFFICE
SCO 10, First Floor
Sector - 79, Mohali,
Punjab, INDIA 140308
T: +91-172-4105887

E: info@wademaritime.com | research@richardsonlawrie.com
W: www.wademaritime.com | www.richardsonlawrie.com