

Oil tanker traffic through Hormuz at near standstill as attacks strain Iran truce

By **Jonathan Saul**

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Cargo ships sail in Saudi waters near the Dammam Port in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, May 17, 2026. REUTERS/Mohammed Benmansour/File Photo [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) 

Summary

Renewed clashes raise shipping risks

Two tankers transit Hormuz early Thursday, data shows

Some insurers advising shipping companies to pause voyages

LONDON, July 9 (Reuters) - Oil tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz was at a near standstill on Thursday, according to data and sources, as shipping risks escalated after the U.S. renewed airstrikes on Iran, triggering retaliation by Tehran in the Gulf.

Just two tankers had so far sailed through the strait in the early hours of Thursday. They included the crude supertanker Berg 1, which had loaded at Iran's Kharg Island and is subject to U.S. sanctions, according to analysis from Kpler.

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The Marshall Islands-flagged chemical tanker Well Sail, also transited the strait, Kpler analysis showed. Its previous loading destination was near Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, according to LSEG ship tracking data.

Shipping industry sources said vessels were increasingly switching off their public AIS tracking transponders, making it harder to see all of the ships crossing.

"Tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has essentially stopped, which tells you more about risk perception right now than any statement from Washington or Tehran," Jorge Leon, head of geopolitical analysis at Rystad Energy, wrote in a report.

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LATEST FLARE-UP LEAVES U.S.-IRAN TRUCE TEETERING

Iranian armed forces launched attacks on U.S. military infrastructure in neighbouring Gulf states on Thursday in response to U.S. strikes on Iran's southern coastal and eastern provinces, putting further strain on a three-week-old truce.

The latest flare-up in the four-month conflict began earlier this week with attacks on three tankers in the strait that the U.S. blamed on Tehran.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Navy said on Thursday that U.S. attacks on Iran and intervention in redirecting shipping were disrupting the strait's gradual reopening, warning that any further U.S. intervention would draw a "crushing response".

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The Strait of Hormuz handled about a fifth of global oil supplies before the war erupted on February 28 with U.S. and Israeli strikes against Iran.

Daily traffic in the past two weeks had risen to its highest levels since the war's outbreak, averaging 40 ships transiting the strait, which was still far off the pre-conflict average of 125 to 140 daily sailings.

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Some war underwriters have advised shipping companies to pause voyages through the strait while others are reviewing their policy terms after the renewed vessel attacks, insurance industry sources told Reuters.

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"The Hormuz reopening story looks more fragile after the latest escalation," ship broker Clarksons said in a report.

One of the three vessels hit this week, the Marshall Islands-flagged Qatari LNG tanker Al Rekayyat remains stranded and awaiting salvage operations off Oman after a projectile strike late on Tuesday sparked a fire in its engine room.

Despite earlier fears of an explosion, industry sources said that risk was low for now and its cargo of liquefied natural gas appeared secure.

The ship registry of the Marshall Islands, one of the world's top flag states, told Reuters there were no reported injuries or environmental impacts as a result of the incident involving the Al Rekayyat.

"As recent incidents have shown, the (marine war) market is now facing the prospect of potentially severe losses involving vessels of substantial value," said one marine war underwriter, who asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the situation.

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