THE CATALYST

Accelerating smarter chemical logistics.

1Q 2026

OVER 40 YEARS IN THE GAME

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MARKET

- The U.S. Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) showed steady manufacturing expansion in Q1, with readings consistently above 52, signaling a modest rebound from late-2025 softness. Looking ahead, expectations point to continued but slower expansion, as growth moderates and companies remain disciplined on inventory levels. This sets up a stable backdrop that should support consistent freight demand, though not a broad-based surge.

CAPACITY

- Truck capacity remained broadly available at the beginning of Q1 but tightened noticeably as the quarter progressed, with lead times extending from roughly 2–3 days to 5–7 days. Looking ahead, capacity is expected to continue tightening gradually through the rest of the year, driven by higher operating costs, regulatory constraints, and limited new equipment rather than a surge in freight demand. Bulk capacity is tightening faster than general truckload, putting more upward pressure on pricing—particularly in bulk and contracted lanes—even as overall demand remains measured.

RAIL TRAFFIC

- U.S. rail traffic in Q1 2026 delivered modest year-over-year growth, with gains in carload volumes offsetting softer intermodal performance. Carloads increased roughly 4%, supported by strength in grain, chemicals, and coal, while intermodal volumes were flat to slightly down amid muted consumer demand and lean inventories. For the remainder of the year, rail volumes are expected to remain steady but uneven, with bulk and industrial commodities providing stability and intermodal growth tied to any improvement in imports and retail activity.

DIESEL/CRUDE OIL

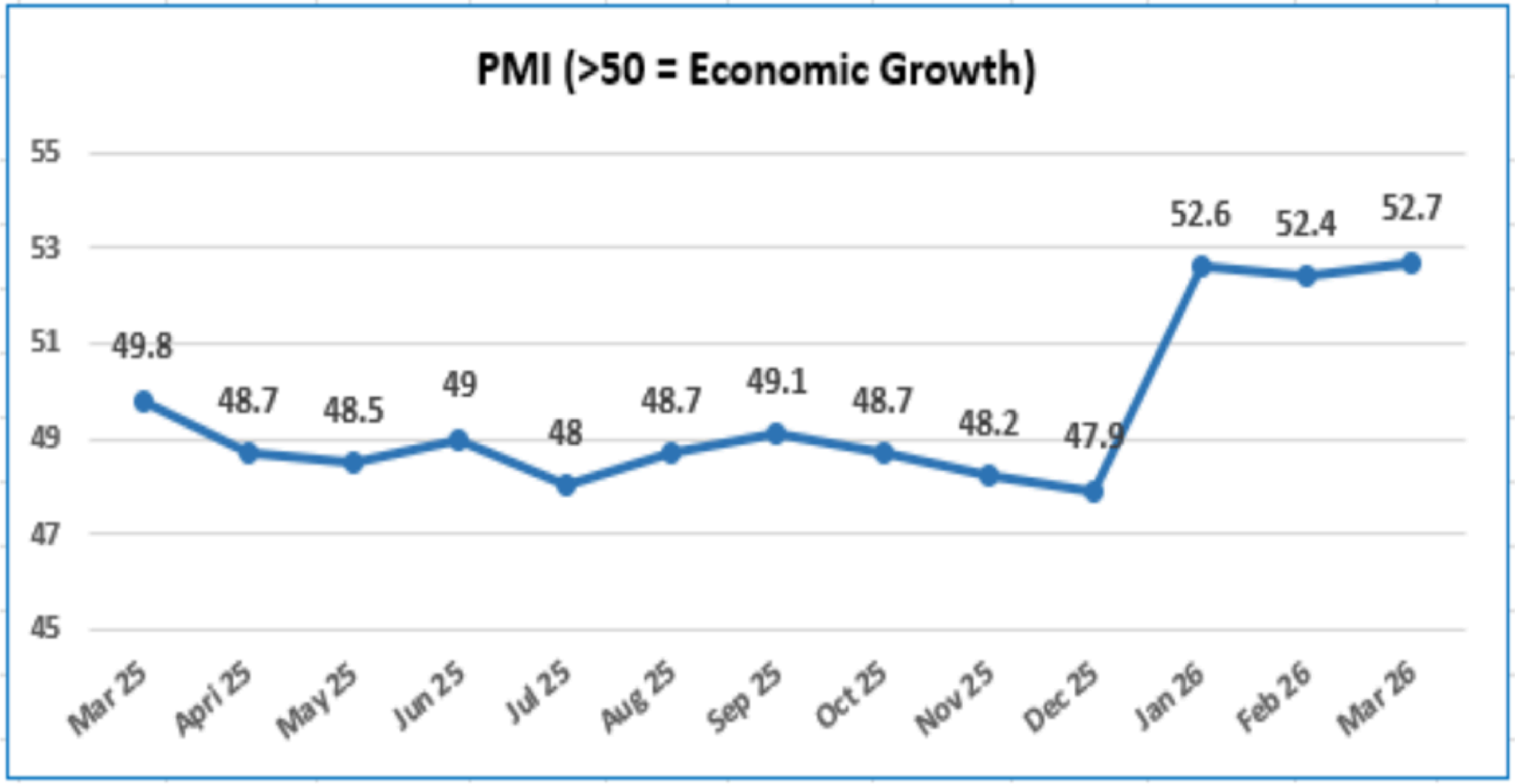
- Crude oil prices rose sharply in Q1, with WTI climbing from the low-$60s in January to close the quarter near $100 per barrel as conflict with Iran disrupted flows through the Strait of Hormuz. Diesel prices reacted even more aggressively, topping $5 per gallon nationally in March as global supplies tightened and exports were redirected. For the remainder of the year, oil and diesel prices are expected to remain elevated and volatile, with markets pricing in a sustained geopolitical risk premium even if conditions stabilize.

WHAT WE SEE

CHEMICAL TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

MARKET INDICES

U.S. MANUFACTURING PURCHASING MANAGER'S INDEX (PMI)



MARKET INDICES

AMERICAN CHEMISTRY COUNCIL

ECONOMIC TRENDS – 4/10/26

Indicator		M/M	Y/Y	
Chemical Exports (Feb)		↓ 1.0%	↓ 3.5%	
Plastic Resin Exports (Feb)		↓ 1.9%	↓ 3.2%	
Chemical Wholesale Sales (Feb)		↑ 1.4%	↑ 6.7%	
Chemical Shipments (Feb)		↓ 0.4%	↑ 1.6%	
	Carloads	W/W	Y/Y (13-wk MA)	
Railcar Loadings (4/4)	34,933	↑ 4.5%	↑ 3.0%	
Energy Prices	**Last Year**	**Last Week**	**This Week**	**W/W**
Brent Oil ($/bbl)	$62.70	$112.06	$95.02	↓
Henry Hub ($/mm Btu)	$3.53	$2.81	$2.68	↓
Competitiveness ratio*	17.8	39.9	35.5	↓

*The ratio of Brent oil price to Henry Hub natural gas price is a proxy for U.S. Gulf Coast petrochemical competitiveness. Generally, when the ratio is above 7, the U.S. is comparatively advantaged. When it is below 7, the reverse is true. Energy prices as of 4/9.

MARKET INDICES

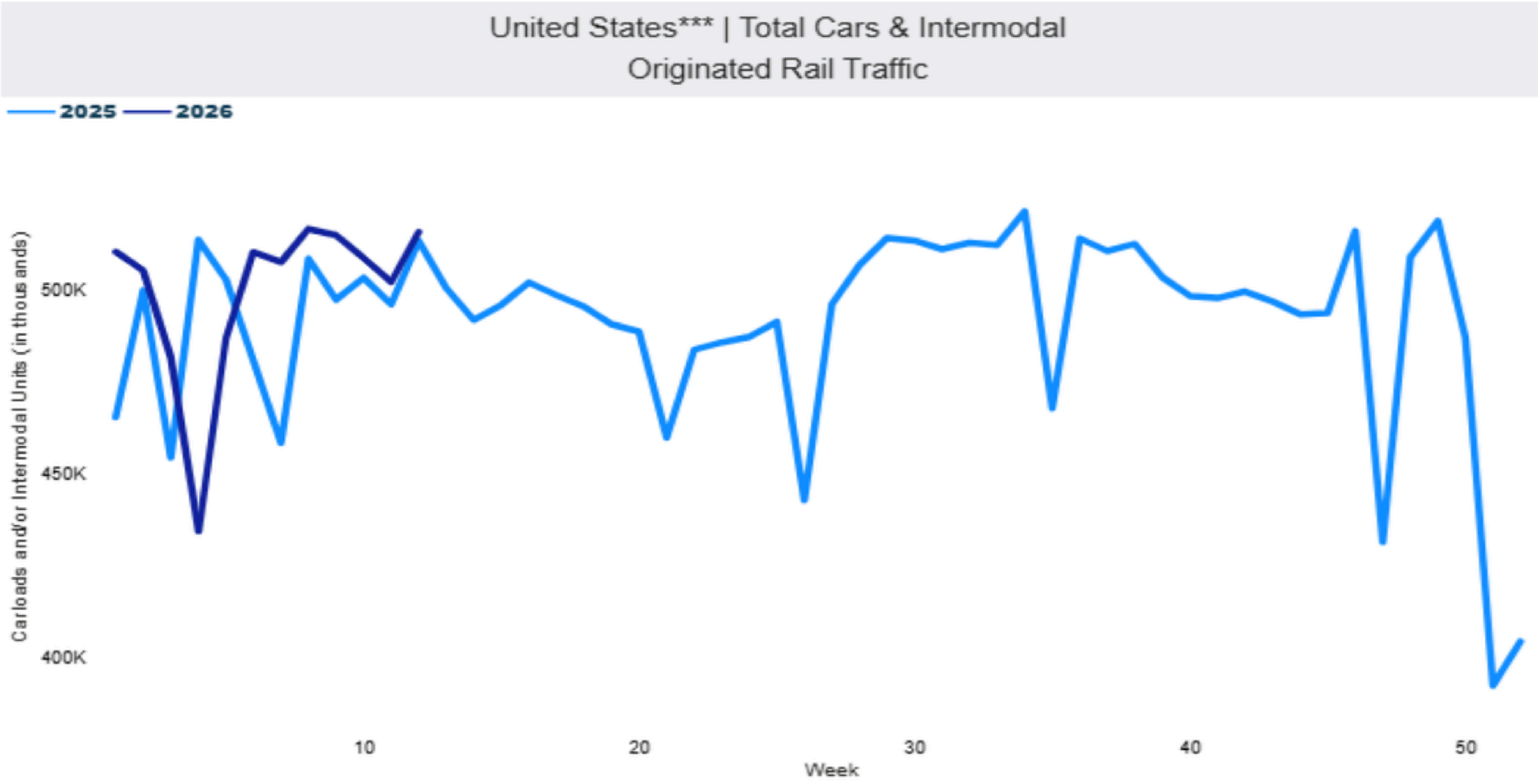
AMERICAN CHEMISTRY COUNCIL

SURVEY OF ECONOMIC FORECASTERS – MARCH 2026

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2026	2027
	Y/Y % Change (unless noted otherwise)					Change from Feb '26 Outlook	
GDP	2.9	2.8	2.1	2.3	2.1	▼	~
Consumer Spending	2.6	2.9	2.6	2.1	2.0	▼	~
Business Investment	6.5	2.9	4.1	3.8	3.4	▲	~
Industrial Production	-0.2	-0.6	1.2	1.1	1.3	▼	▼
Light Vehicle Sales (mm)	15.5	15.8	16.2	15.7	16.2	▼	~
Housing Starts (mm)	1.42	1.37	1.36	1.35	1.39	~	▼
Consumer Prices	4.1	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.4	~	▼
10-Year Treasury Notes (%)	3.96	4.21	4.29	4.18	4.19	~	▲
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.4	▼	▲
Exchange Rate - $/Euro	1.08	1.08	1.13	1.17	1.19	▼	▼

MARKET INDICES
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS

US TOTAL CARS & INTERMODAL

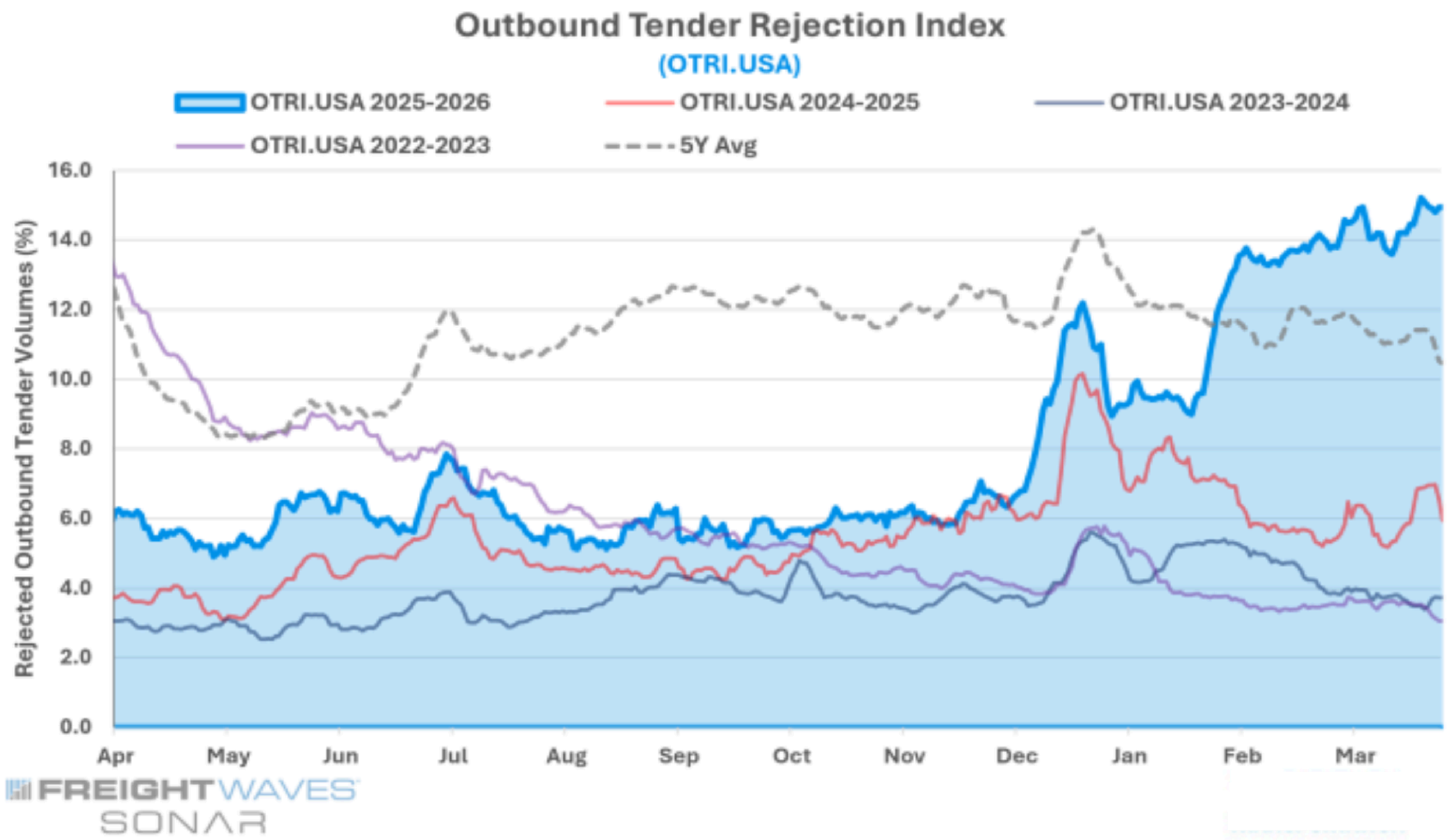


*Canadian traffic includes the U.S. operations of Canadian railroads.
**Mexican traffic includes the U.S. operations of Mexican railroads.
***United States traffic excludes the U.S. operations of Canadian and Mexican railroads.
****Data for 2025 are for Week 2-53

MARKET INDICES

FREIGHT WAVES OUTBOUND TENDER REJECTION INDEX

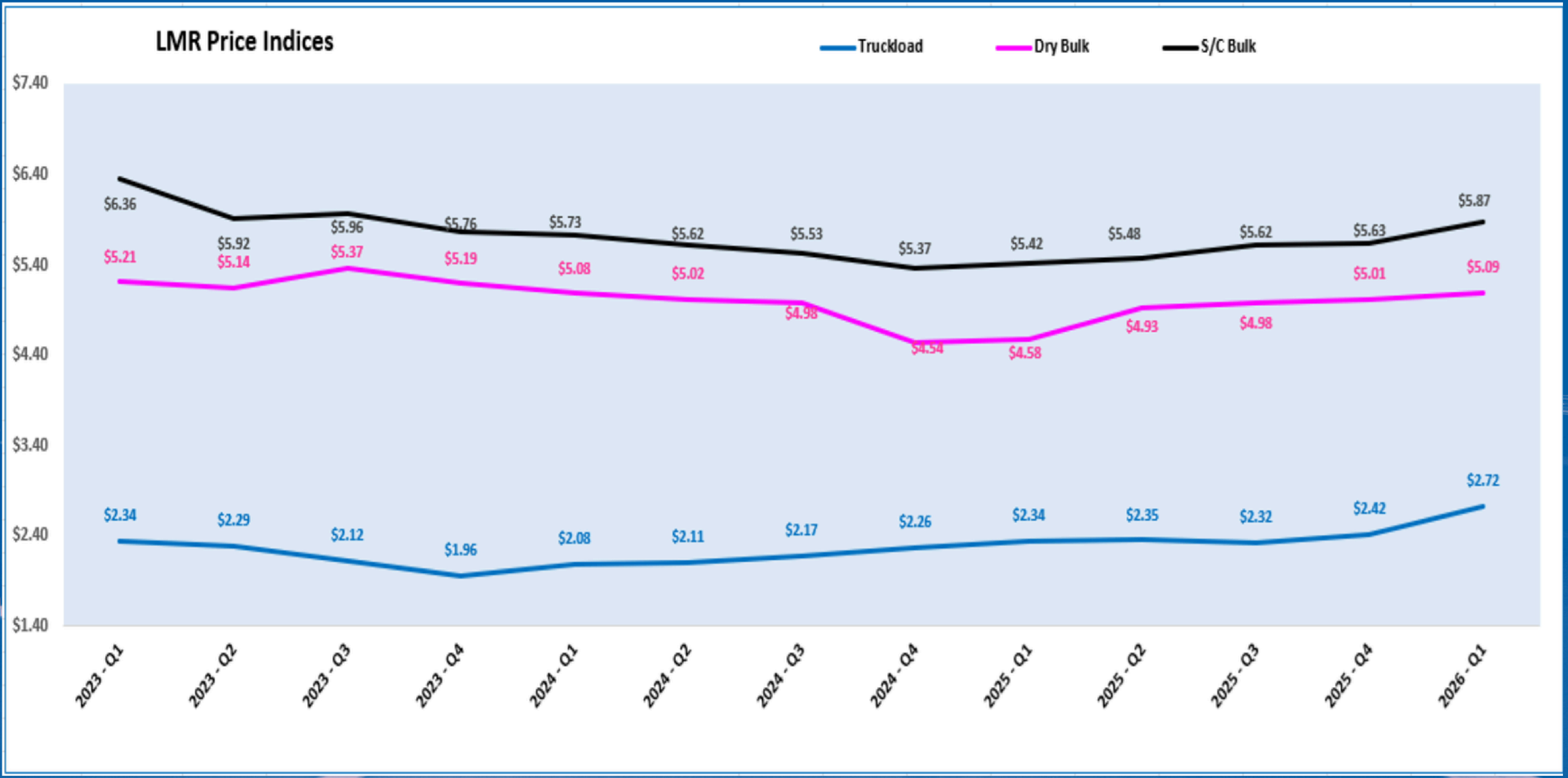
OTRI, USA



WHAT'S IN MOTION

THE LATEST MOVES SHAPING CHEMICAL FREIGHT

MARKET SUMMARY
LMR PER MILE COST PER MODE

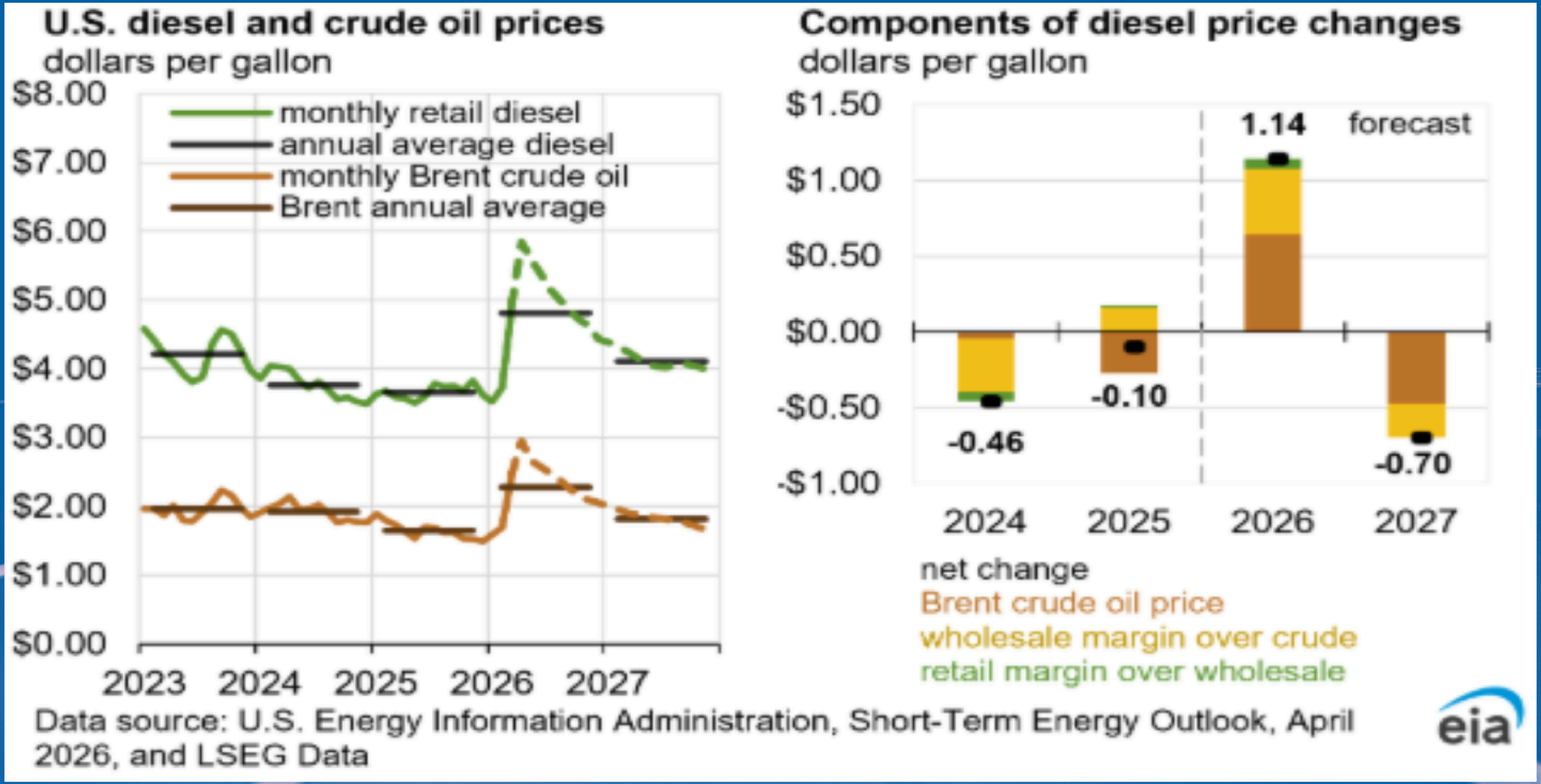


Per mile costs are based on LMR over the road line haul plus fuel > 400 miles. Excludes any shipments using dedicated capacity.

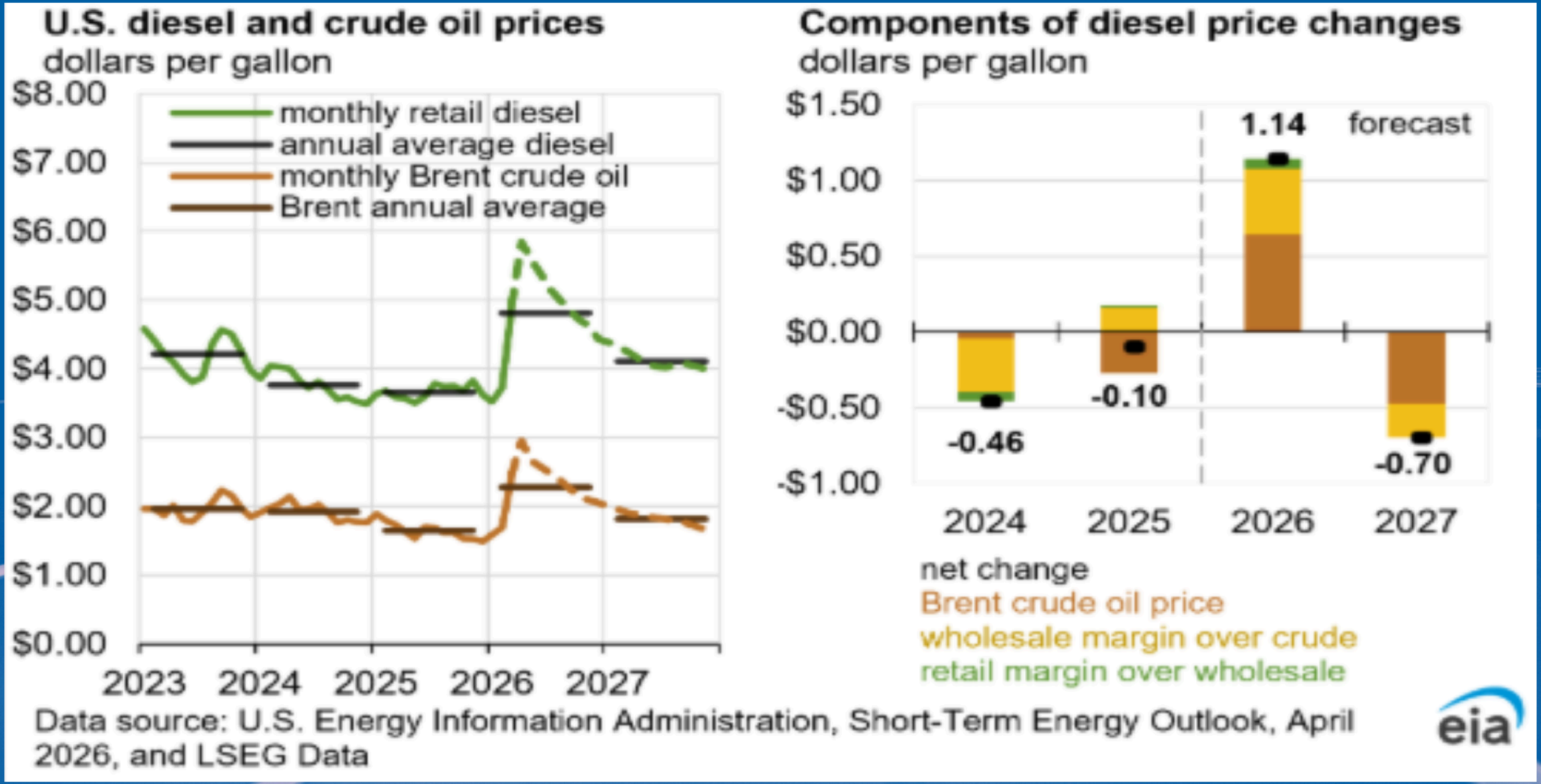
MARKET SUMMARY
SPOT MARKET RATES/CAPACITY

INDUSTRY TRENDS	WEEK APR 13 - APR 19 VS APR 06 - APR 12	MONTH MAR 2026 VS FEB 2026	YEAR MAR 2026 VS MAR 2025
Spot Load Posts	-5.5%	+9.2%	+68.4%
Spot Truck Posts	+1.9%	-2.3%	-10.1%
Van Load to Truck	-6.7%	+0.1%	+89.5%
Van Spot Rates	-8.4%	+0.5%	+4.5%
Flatbed Load to Truck	-9.8%	+33.9%	+81.6%
Flatbed Spot Rates	-7.0%	+1.1%	+4.7%
Reefer Load to Truck	-7.5%	+1.5%	+145.7%
Reefer Spot Rates	+16.4%	-0.4%	+5.2%
Fuel Prices	-3.7%	+12.8%	+55.5%

MARKET SUMMARY
CRUDE OIL/DIESEL FUEL PRICING



MARKET SUMMARY
CRUDE OIL/DIESEL FUEL PRICING

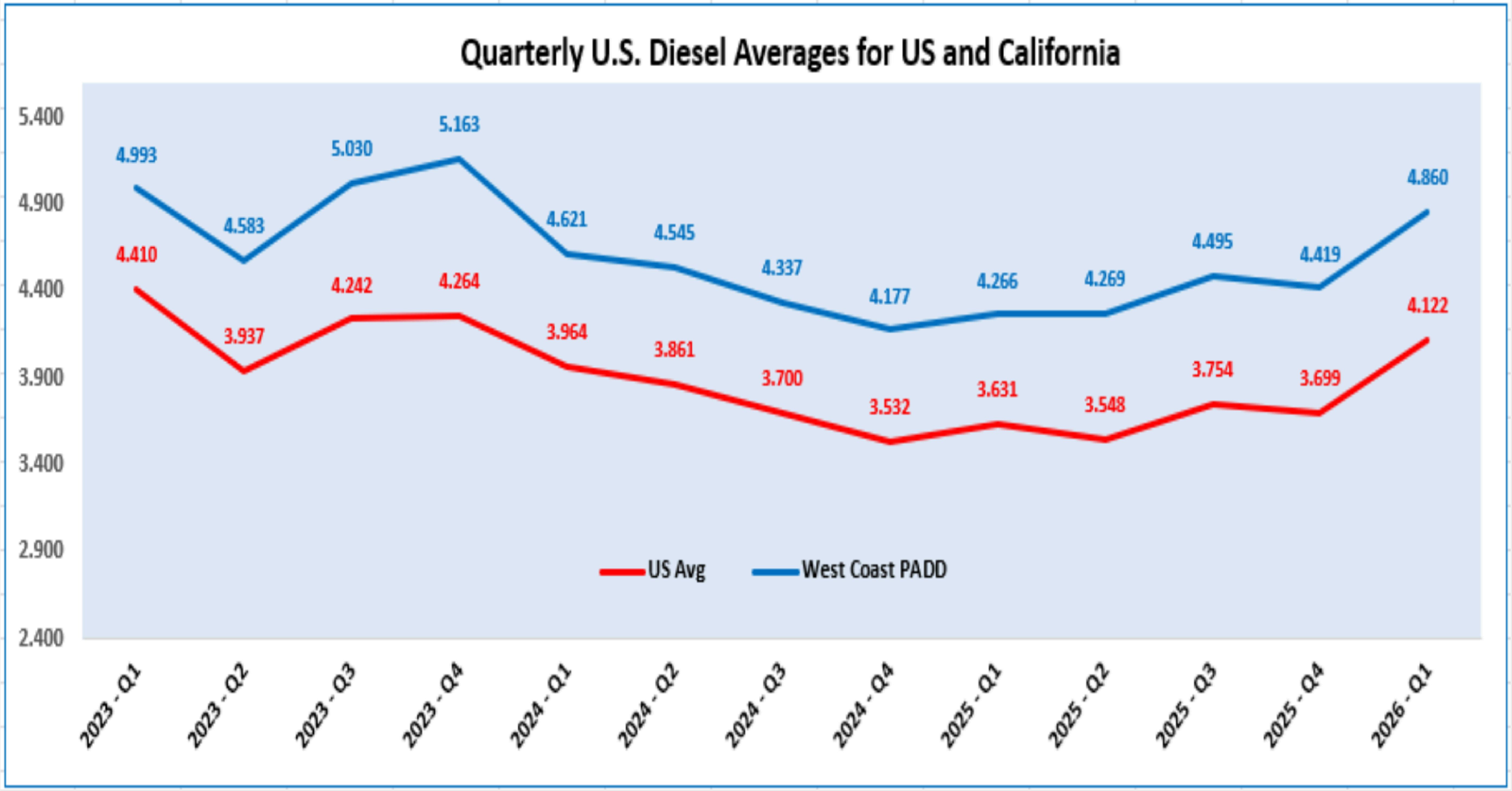


LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

QUARTERLY

U.S. DIESEL AVERAGES FOR US AND CALIFORNIA

NOTE: MARCH DIESEL – US AVG $5.4 / WEST COAST $6.6



THE EXPERTS IN CHEMICAL LOGISTICS & FREIGHT MANAGEMENT

EXPERTISE

- Bulk Chemical Focus Since 1981
- Non Asset Based (Access To ~100 Bulk Assets Via Grammer
- Avg Mngt Tenure - 25 Years
- Avg Ops Tenure - 13 Years
- Quick & Effective Response
- Mulitmodal
- Dedicated Resources 24/7

SERVICES

Total Shipment Management

- Pricing/RFPs
- Scheduling
- Performance
- Qualifications/Contract
- Freight Audit/Payment
- Analytics/Business Intel
- Customized Processes

RELATIONSHIPS

- 475 Tankers
- 8,000 Van / LTL / Drayage
- 900 Flatbed
- 800 End-Dump
- 120 Roll-Off
- 900 Haz Mat
- 200 Haz Waste
- Rail/Transload
- Puerto Rico

VISIBILTY

- Tracking - Real Time Access To Asset/Trail Map
- Automated Notification Alerts to Selected Users
- Automated Analytics
- Web Portal
- Detailed Summary Billing

SYSTEMS/SECURITY

- McLeod Power Broker
- Cloud Hosted
- Connectivity with SAP, Elemcia, E2Open, Czarlite, DAT
- AS2/SFTP
- MFA Protection

WE DON’ T MIMIC SOLUTIONS. WE CREATE THEM.

LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

LINKEDIN

FACEBOOK

VISIT US AT LRMI.COM
CONTACT US AT:
800-472-1090

LMR