

## Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE)

Around 95% of MTBE produced is used as an octane booster and oxygenate in gasoline. One of its major advantages is its good blending properties and for increasing the octane levels of lead-free gasoline. However, its use in reformulated gasoline has been phased out in the US due to environmental and health concerns.

MTBE can be employed in the petrochemicals industry to manufacture pure isobutene from C4 butane streams by reversing its formation reaction. It is a good solvent, used as a laboratory reagent to extract semi-volatile organic compounds from such sample types as leachates or solid wastes, and as a pharmaceutical agent to dissolve gallstones. Other outlets include the production of methacrolein and methyl methacrylate.

Exposure to MTBE can irritate the eyes, nose, skin and throat. It is extremely flammable.

ICIS pricing quotes MTBE in **Europe**, **Asia-Pacific** and the **US Gulf**. MTBE produced in the US Gulf is primarily sold to Latin America.

### **Frequency:**

- Published weekly on Fridays in three regions
- Published daily in **Europe\*** and the **US Gulf\***
- Real time Price Alert Service (PAS) delivering market news and trends throughout the day.

**\* FOR DETAILS SEE GASOLINE/NAPHTHA/CRUDE/MTBE ENTRY UNDER "CRUDE & PRODUCTS" SECTION**

## MTBE (EUROPE)

### **Daily Price Assessments:**

*See Gasoline/Naphtha/Crude/MTBE entry under "Gas, Nap" section.*

### **Weekly Price Assessments:**

#### *MTBE Spot Prices*

- FOB RDAM/AMST T2 (+) (USD/MT & conversion to US CTS/GAL)
- FOB RDAM/AMST T2 (\*) (USD/MT & conversion to US CTS/GAL)



NOTE: (+) Confirmed deals done throughout the week (Monday to Friday).

(\*) Bids and offers towards close of business on Friday (between 1600-1730).

#### *MTBE Feedstock Spot Prices*

- METHANOL FOB RDAM T2 (EUR/MT & conversion US CTS/GAL)
- RAFFINATE-1 CIF NWE (USD/MT & conversion to US CTS/GAL)

#### **MTBE (Asia-Pacific)**

##### **Weekly Price Assessments:**

#### *MTBE Spot Prices*

- FOB SINGAPORE (USD/MT & conversion to USD/GAL)
- CFR SINGAPORE (USD/MT & conversion to USD/GAL)
- CFR CHINA (USD/MT & conversion to USD/GAL)

#### **MTBE (US Gulf)**

##### **Daily Price Assessments:**

*See Gasoline/Naphtha/Crude/MTBE entry under "Gas Nap" section.*

##### **Weekly Price Assessments**

#### *MTBE spot prices*

- FOB USG (+) (US CTS/GAL & conversion to USD/MT)
- FOB USG (\*) (US CTS/GAL & conversion to USD/MT)

NOTE: (+) Confirmed deals done throughout the week (Monday to Friday).

(\*) Bids and offers towards close of business on Friday (between 1430-1630).

#### *MTBE Feedstock Contract Prices*

- METHANOL/FOB BARGE (US CTS/GAL)



### **General Information:**

**Assessment window:** Price assessments are based on information supplied by market participants through the week up to close of business on Fridays at 1630 hours in London, Singapore and Houston. *For details on daily assessments see Gasoline/Naphtha/Crude/MTBE entry under “Crude & Products” section.*

**Specification:** ICIS pricing assesses MTBE with a purity of 98% with maximum water content of 1,000 ppm and a maximum methanol content of 1.5% by weight.

**Timing:** In both the daily and the weekly MTBE reports, the price window reflects business 15-28 days forward in Asia, three weeks forward in the US, and 15 days forward in Europe, excluding prompt parcels that may be a distressed sale or a sale with a specific date premium.

**Terms:** 30-60 days after Bill of Lading date.

**Standard cargo size:** Typically 1,000-2,000 tonnes in Europe, 1,000-5,000 tonnes in Asia, and 50,000 bbl in the US.

**Assessment basis:** In Europe, price quotes reflect spot transactions in US dollars per metric tonne usually concluded on a FOB Amsterdam/ Rotterdam basis, incorporating two price range quotes: one based on confirmed business from Monday to Friday and the other towards close of business on Friday (between 16.00-16.30).

In Asia-Pacific, FOB Singapore quotes are assessed based on a formula related to the 92 RON gasoline Singapore numbers and the ICE Brent crude futures daily. The MTBE factor associated to the 92 RON gasoline Singapore numbers will be assessed daily based on the market conditions, while the crude differential related to the ICE Brent crude futures is assessed daily as well. CFR Singapore quotes reflect deep-sea material imported into Singapore and FOB is a USD/MT price quote plus trucking costs in Singapore. Market participants in Asia follow the tender business, with the majority of purchase tenders originating in Thailand. The CFR China quote reflects spot business into the country from southeast Asia, northeast Asia and the Middle East.

In the US, assessments are priced at a premium or discount to spot MTBE prices in Europe, as assessed by ICIS, and are quoted on an FOB USG basis.

All regional reports offer market commentary that includes details of traced transactions, news on the supply/demand balance, export/import information, contract price negotiations and general sentiment for price direction. Where applicable there is product information, comments on up and downstream market



developments and general market intelligence, including a gasoline and crude synopsis on the week. US reports carry trade data supplied by the US Department of Commerce.

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