

RACQ Fuel Price Report –

March quarter 2024

5 April 2024

The RACQ fuel price report presents a summary of the fuel price trends in Queensland for the March quarter 2024.

Key points

- The average retail price of ULP in Brisbane decreased fractionally in the March quarter 2024 to 199.5 cpl, from 199.8 cpl in the December quarter 2023. The average price in the March quarter remained close to the record high for the Brisbane market observed in the December quarter.
- The indicative retail margin for ULP in Brisbane in the March quarter, at 20.4 cpl, was lower than the margin in the December quarter 2023 and remained well above the long-term average for the Brisbane market.
- At 200.5 cpl, the average price of diesel for the March quarter 2024 was 12.8 cpl lower than in the December quarter 2023, and the average retail margin in the March quarter for diesel was 15.4 cpl, significantly lower than the average margin in the December quarter of 22.5 cpl and above the long-term average margin.
- Brisbane was the most expensive of all the capital cities to buy ULP. For diesel, Brisbane was the most expensive of the five largest capital cities. Canberra and Hobart were more expensive for diesel.
- Miles was the cheapest Queensland regional centre to buy ULP in the March quarter at 175.5 cpl, and Dalby had the next lowest price for ULP at 179.0 cpl. Miles was the cheapest location for diesel at 187.2 cpl, while Dalby had the second lowest average price at 190.1 cpl.
- Longreach, at 217.5 cpl, was the most expensive centre for ULP in the March quarter, and Longreach also had the most expensive diesel at 212.6 cpl, followed by Biloela at 207.7 cpl.
- Average wholesale prices for ULP rose and for diesel fuel fell slightly in the March quarter 2024. After the gap between wholesale prices for ULP and diesel had widened in the second half on 2023, the terminal gate price for diesel fuel was 6.0 cpl above the average TGP for ULP in the March quarter, compared with a difference of 14.2 cpl in the December quarter.
- Average retail ULP prices in Brisbane in the coming June 2024 quarter are likely to increase slightly, reflecting an expected increase in the average crude oil price in Australian dollar terms in the next three months, and retail margins declining at least slightly from the high level in the March quarter.

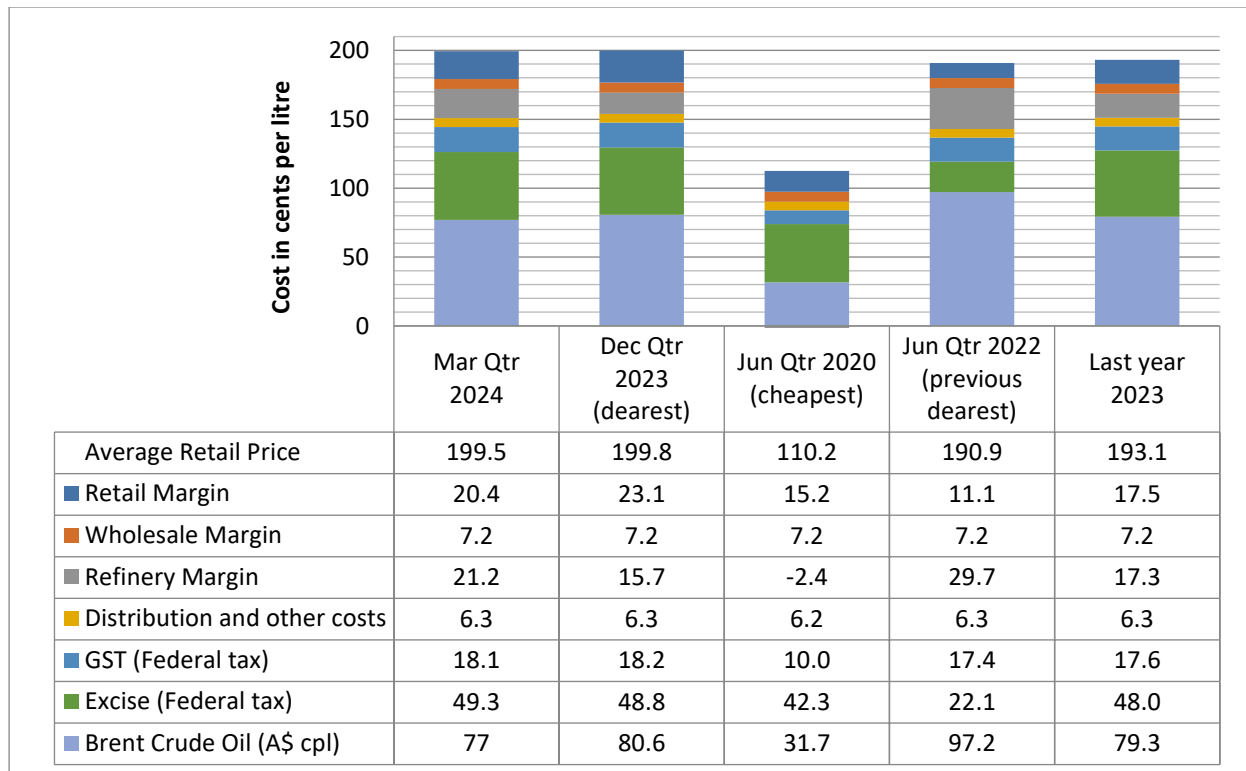
ULP cost breakdown in Brisbane

The average retail price of Regular ULP in Brisbane for the March quarter 2024 was 0.3 cpl lower than the December quarter 2023, and 8.6 cpl higher than the earlier record in the June quarter 2022.

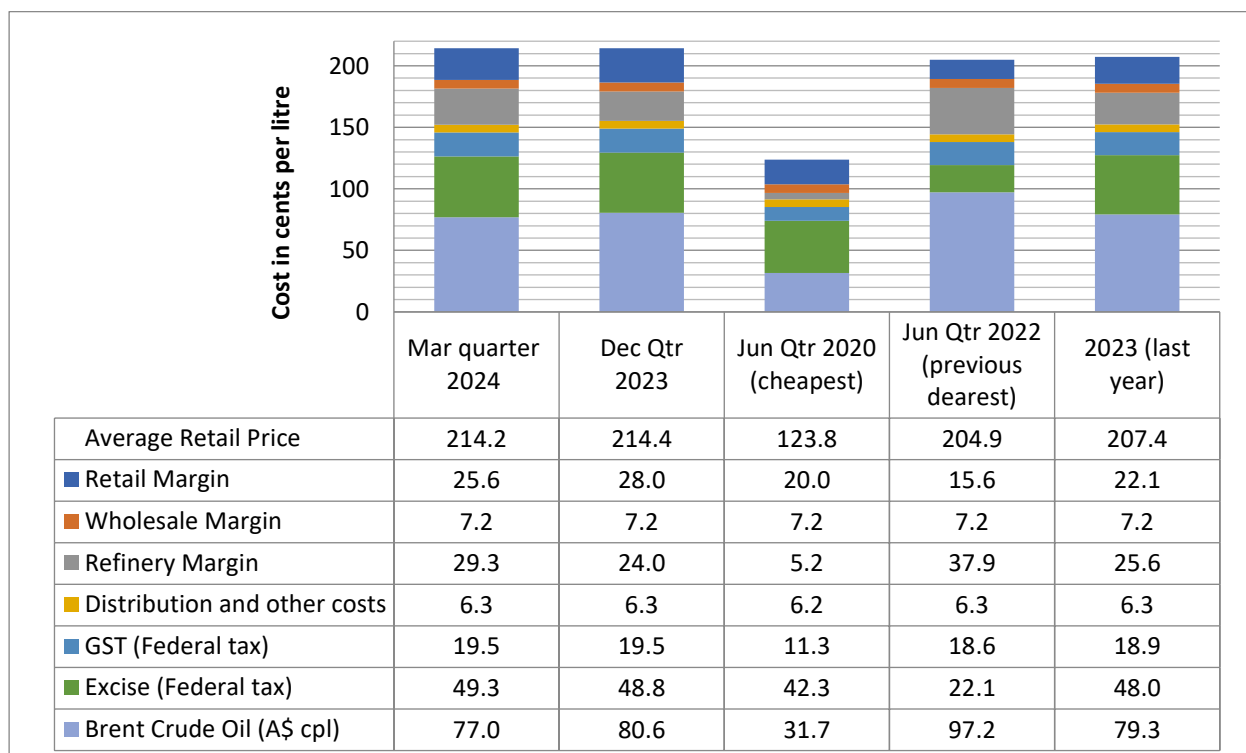
Indicative retail margins charged on ULP in Brisbane in the December quarter, at 20.4 cpl, were lower than in the December quarter and were higher than the average margin in 2023 (17.5 cpl). Monthly average margins for ULP fluctuated during the quarter, at 20.7 cpl in January, 11.8 cpl in February and 27.6 cpl in March.

Refinery margins were 21.2 cpl for ULP in the March quarter, increasing from 15.7 cpl in the December quarter 2023.

ULP cost breakdown in Brisbane



PULP 95 cost breakdown in Brisbane

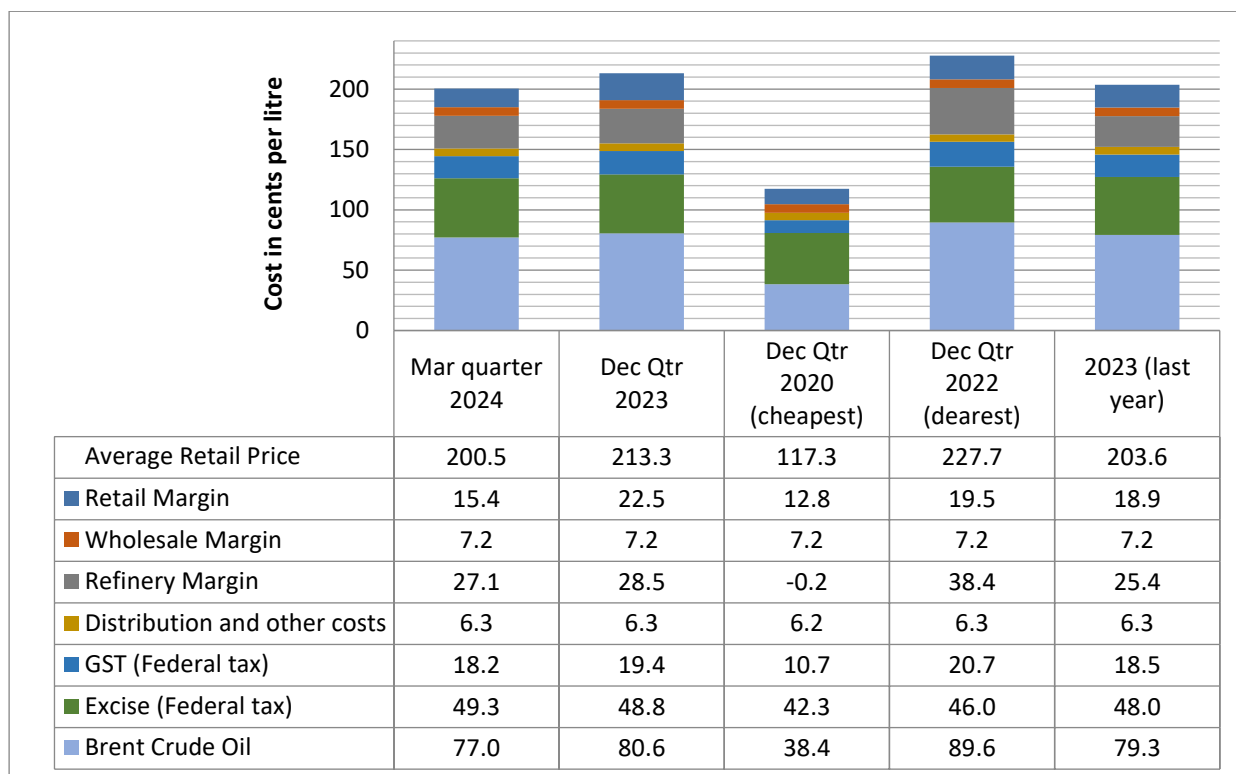


The charts above show the cost breakdown for a litre of Regular ULP (ULP) and Premium ULP (PULP 95) sold in Brisbane for the March quarter 2024. For comparison, the December quarter 2023, the June quarter 2022 (the previous most expensive quarter), the June quarter 2020 (the cheapest quarter in the last 10 years) and the 2023 annual average, are also displayed.

Diesel cost breakdown in Brisbane

The average retail price for diesel in Brisbane in the March quarter fell by 12.8 cpl, reflecting a reduction in retail margins of 7.1 cpl, and a reduction in the average wholesale price of 5.8 cpl. Average diesel prices in the March quarter remained well below the highest quarterly price in the December quarter 2022.

The chart below shows the cost breakdown for a litre of diesel sold in Brisbane in the March quarter 2024. For comparison, the December quarter 2023, the December quarter 2020 (the lowest price quarter in the last 10 years), the December quarter 2022 (the highest price quarter) and the 2023 yearly average are included.



Fuel excise

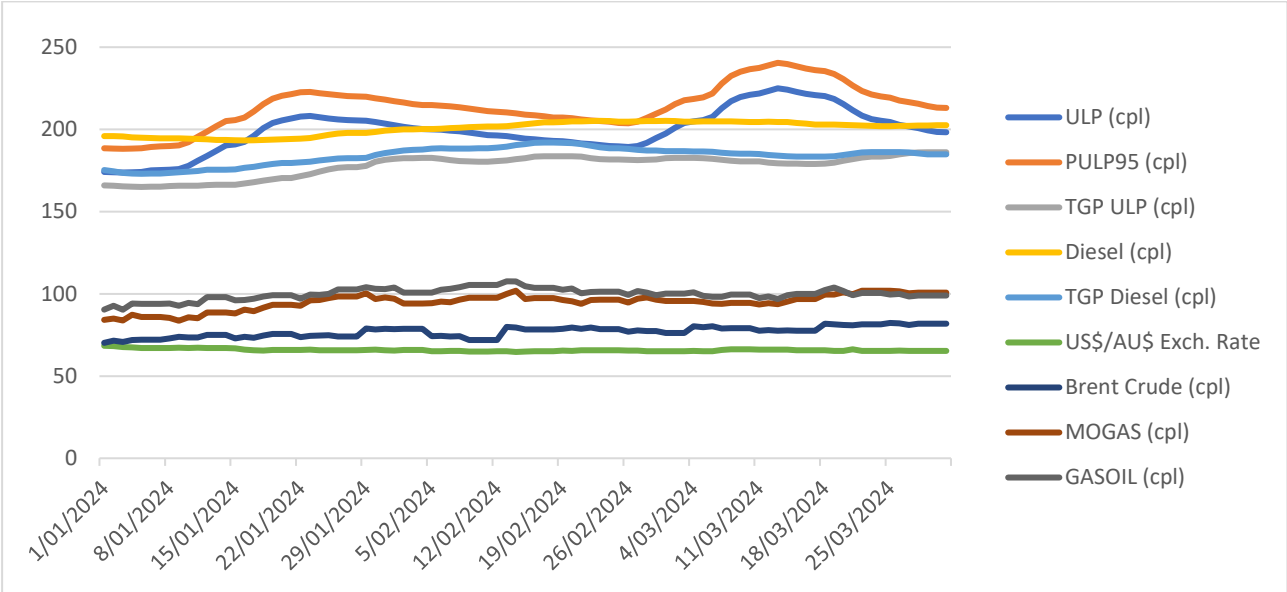
An indexation increase in fuel excise occurred on 5 February 2024, with the excise increasing by 1.8% or 0.8 cpl, reflecting the increase in the consumer price index (CPI) in the second half of 2023. The next change in fuel excise will occur on 1 August 2024, based on changes in the CPI in the first half of 2024. The excise rate is likely to increase by 0.7 cpl to 50.3 cents per litre if the CPI increases by 1.5% in the six months to June 2024.

Fuel price trends March quarter 2024

Two price cycles occurred in Greater Brisbane in the March quarter 2024. The first started on 4 January 2024 and lasted to 26 February 2024. The second cycle started on 27 February and was in the latter stages of the discounting phase on 31 March 2024.

Prices fell by differing amounts from the peak in each of these cycles. In the first cycle, the average ULP price fell by 18.7 cpl, from a high of 208.1 cpl on 23 January 2024 to a low of 189.4 cpl on 26 February 2024. In the second cycle, the average ULP price had fallen by 26.8 cpl from a peak of 225.0 cpl on 13 March 2024

to 198.2 cpl on 31 March 2024. The size of price reductions in both cycles has been limited due to a gradual increase in wholesale prices during the quarter, from 166 cpl in early January to 186 cpl by the end of March.



Comparison to other capital cities

Brisbane was the most expensive of the five largest capital cities for ULP in the March 2024, and had a higher average price than Canberra, Hobart and Darwin. For diesel, Brisbane was the most expensive of the five largest capital cities in the March quarter. Canberra and Hobart were more expensive than Brisbane for diesel. In the March quarter 2024, Perth was the cheapest Australian capital city to buy ULP and Adelaide had the lowest average price for diesel.

The tables below present the average January, February and March average prices and retail margins on ULP and diesel for Australian capital cities.

City	Average ULP Price (cpl)				Indicative ULP Retail Margin			
	January	February	March	March quarter	January	February	March	March quarter
Brisbane	191.9	195.2	211.0	199.5	20.7	11.8	27.6	20.3
Adelaide	184.0	193.5	192.2	189.8	12.6	10.0	8.6	10.4
Canberra	185.3	205.8	205.5	198.7	15.2	23.6	23.1	20.6
Darwin	183.9	190.9	191.6	188.8	8.7	4.5	5.1	6.1
Hobart	184.4	196.5	198.8	193.2	6.9	6.7	9.1	7.5
Melbourne	187.1	199.4	200.5	195.6	16.7	16.4	17.5	16.9
Perth	178.5	189.0	187.7	185.0	8.0	7.0	5.5	6.9
Sydney	184.5	198.3	203.6	195.4	14.4	16.0	21.2	17.2

* The retail margin is the average retail price minus the average local TGP and local freight costs (assumed to be the same as Brisbane: 1.36cpl). The TGP varies between cities.

City	Average Diesel Price (cpl)				Indicative Diesel Retail Margin			
	January	February	March	March quarter	January	February	March	March quarter
Brisbane	195.2	202.8	203.6	200.5	16.2	12.4	17.0	15.4
Adelaide	185.8	198.0	196.7	193.4	7.2	8.0	10.6	8.6
Canberra	202.2	208.9	208.4	206.5	23.7	18.7	22.2	21.5
Darwin	191.7	199.3	199.8	196.9	9.6	6.4	10.7	8.9
Hobart	199.8	207.0	208.4	205.0	15.6	11.0	16.6	14.4
Melbourne	191.5	201.0	202.8	198.4	12.3	10.5	16.2	13.0
Perth	190.4	198.2	198.5	195.6	13.2	10.3	14.4	12.7
Sydney	193.8	202.0	202.6	199.4	15.3	11.9	16.4	14.5

* The retail margin is the average retail price minus the average local TGP and local freight costs (assumed to be the same as Brisbane: 1.36cpl). The TGP varies between cities.

Comparison of the SEQ metropolitan centres

The table below presents the average March quarter prices and retail margins on ULP and diesel for SEQ metropolitan centres. This analysis separates Brisbane into central, western, northern, southern, and bayside regions.

City	Average ULP Price (cpl)				Indicative ULP Retail Margin			
	January	February	March	March quarter	January	February	March	March quarter
Brisbane Inner	194.0	196.0	212.9	201.0	22.8	12.6	29.5	21.6
Brisbane West	199.3	197.1	219.1	205.2	28.1	13.7	35.7	25.8
Brisbane North	190.1	190.4	206.3	195.6	18.9	7.0	22.9	16.3
Brisbane South	189.6	192.6	207.4	196.5	18.5	9.2	24.0	17.2
BNE Bayside-Redlands	193.3	199.3	216.9	203.1	22.1	15.8	33.5	23.8
Logan	193.3	195.6	211.1	200.0	22.2	12.2	27.7	20.7
Ipswich	188.8	197.1	208.5	198.1	17.3	13.3	24.7	18.4
Moreton Bay	194.0	195.5	215.4	201.6	22.4	11.7	31.5	21.9
Gold Coast	188.4	196.8	201.1	195.4	16.4	12.5	16.8	15.2
Sunshine Coast	184.0	188.9	207.4	193.4	11.8	4.4	22.9	13.0

* The retail margin is the average retail price minus the average Brisbane TGP and varying local freight costs.

The Sunshine Coast was the cheapest centre in SEQ to buy ULP in the March quarter, with an average price of 193.4 cpl. Brisbane West was the most expensive area in SEQ in the March quarter at 205.2 cpl.

City	Average Diesel Price (cpl)				Indicative Diesel Retail Margin			
	January	February	March	March quarter	January	February	March	March quarter
Brisbane Inner	199.6	206.8	207.4	204.6	20.6	16.4	20.9	19.3
Brisbane West	200.3	204.9	204.7	203.3	21.3	14.4	18.1	17.9
Brisbane North	194.5	203.5	205.3	201.1	15.5	13.1	18.7	15.8
Brisbane South	195.7	202.4	203.7	200.6	16.7	11.9	17.1	15.2

BNE Bayside-Redlands	195.4	205.3	205.2	202.0	16.4	14.8	18.6	16.6
Logan	194.1	203.0	202.5	199.9	15.1	12.5	15.9	14.5
Ipswich	195.3	201.8	202.4	199.8	15.9	10.9	15.4	14.1
Moreton Bay	195.0	202.4	202.9	200.1	15.6	11.5	15.9	14.3
Gold Coast	197.4	202.6	203.2	201.1	17.6	11.3	15.8	14.9
Sunshine Coast	196.6	203.0	203.6	201.1	16.5	11.5	16.0	14.6

* The retail margin is the average retail price minus the average Brisbane TGP and varying local freight costs.

Ipswich had the lowest average diesel prices in SEQ in the December quarter, with an average price of 199.8cpl. Logan had the next lowest average price at 199.9 cpl. Brisbane Inner City was the most expensive area for diesel in SEQ at 204.6 cpl.

Record High Retail Prices

In March 2024, two locations reported a new record daily average ULP price:

- Nambour's record price of 220.3 cpl observed on 8 March 2024
- Noosa's record price of 231.2 cpl observed on 10 March 2024.

These locations also reported record high prices for premium grades of petrol on the same days.

Fuel prices across Queensland

Miles was the cheapest Queensland regional centre to buy ULP in the March quarter at 175.5 cpl, and Dalby had the next lowest price for ULP at 179.0 cpl. Most regional centres also had the same or lower average price compared with Brisbane¹. At 217.5 cpl, Longreach was the most expensive centre for ULP in the March quarter. The other locations with a higher average price than Brisbane were Blackwater, Emerald, and Mt Isa.

Miles was the cheapest location for diesel at 187.2 cpl, while Dalby had the second lowest average price at 190.1 cpl. Beaudesert, Bowen, Bundaberg, Cairns, Charters Towers, Childers, Gladstone, Goondiwindi, Gympie, Hervey Bay, Lockyer Valley, Mackay, Maryborough, Nambour, Roma, Somerset, Toowoomba, Townsville, Whitsunday and Yeppoon also had a lower average price than Brisbane. Longreach¹ was the most expensive regional centre for diesel at 212.6 cpl, followed by Biloela at 207.7 cpl.

The tables below present the average prices and retail margins on ULP and diesel for regional Queensland localities, and the Rest of Queensland average prices.

City	Average ULP Price (cpl)				Indicative ULP Retail Margin			
	January	February	March	March quarter	January	February	March	March quarter
Brisbane	191.9	195.2	211.0	199.5	20.7	11.8	27.6	20.4
Rest of Queensland	186.4	195.8	198.2	193.4	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Atherton	186.8	196.4	199.7	194.3	9.5	6.9	10.1	8.8
Beaudesert	177.4	178.7	183.6	179.9	5.1	-5.8	-0.9	-0.5

¹ RACQ does not monitor in all regional centres in Queensland. In discussing the cheapest or dearest centre, it is implied that this only refers to the centres listed in this report. Other centres may be more or less expensive.

Biloela	192.7	196.6	196.7	195.3	16.4	8.1	5.4	10.0
Blackwater	200.9	200.9	200.9	200.9	22.3	10.2	7.4	13.3
Bowen	179.0	189.4	191.8	186.8	1.0	-0.9	1.3	0.5
Bundaberg	171.5	184.8	186.9	181.1	-4.2	-3.1	-1.0	-2.7
Cairns	174.8	190.8	191.1	185.6	-1.6	2.3	2.4	1.0
Charters Towers	193.6	195.5	199.9	196.3	16.4	6.0	10.3	10.9
Childers	186.6	189.9	192.7	189.7	11.6	2.6	5.5	6.6
Dalby	170.6	181.9	184.4	179.0	-3.1	-4.1	-1.6	-2.9
Emerald	209.6	211.7	211.4	210.9	30.1	20.0	16.9	22.3
Gladstone	167.4	189.2	190.6	182.4	-7.4	2.3	0.9	-1.4
Goondiwindi	169.5	186.2	187.1	181.0	-6.0	-1.5	-0.7	-2.7
Gympie	176.1	186.6	186.7	183.1	3.1	1.3	1.3	1.9
Hervey Bay	179.5	187.0	190.3	185.6	4.8	0.1	3.3	2.7
Ingham	192.4	191.2	189.8	191.2	15.5	2.0	0.5	6.0
Innisfail	186.0	190.0	192.2	189.4	8.6	0.5	2.5	3.9
Kingaroy	170.4	187.0	189.8	182.4	-3.3	1.1	3.8	0.5
Lockyer Valley	180.1	193.3	194.4	189.3	7.7	8.6	9.7	8.7
Longreach	218.2	217.1	217.2	217.5	33.2	20.0	17.3	23.5
Mackay	178.1	190.7	192.0	186.9	2.8	0.0	1.7	1.5
Mareeba	187.0	198.5	198.3	194.6	9.8	9.2	8.9	9.3
Maryborough	178.5	186.5	190.5	185.2	4.2	0.0	4.0	2.8
Miles	167.1	179.0	180.4	175.5	-8.3	-8.6	-7.2	-8.0
Moranbah	193.9	194.4	194.3	194.2	16.2	1.3	1.5	6.3
Mount Isa	210.1	210.1	210.6	210.3	22.9	10.6	11.0	14.8
Nambour	176.5	186.7	196.7	186.7	4.3	2.2	12.2	6.2
Noosa	188.8	189.3	218.4	198.8	16.4	4.6	33.7	18.2
Rockhampton	175.3	193.8	192.5	187.2	-0.9	5.4	1.4	2.0
Roma	191.9	191.2	191.4	191.5	14.8	1.8	1.9	6.1
Somerset	181.0	188.3	195.7	188.3	8.6	3.7	11.0	7.8
Toowoomba	184.6	199.0	188.6	190.7	11.9	14.1	3.7	9.9
Townsville	176.5	188.6	188.8	184.7	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.9
Tully	188.8	193.6	198.4	193.6	10.7	3.3	8.0	7.3
Warwick	180.3	189.8	190.7	187.0	7.3	4.6	5.4	5.8
Whitsunday	172.1	185.7	186.8	181.5	-4.8	-6.6	-5.1	-5.5
Yeppoon	175.6	189.0	190.0	184.9	-1.2	0.2	-1.7	-0.9

* The retail margin is the average retail price minus the average local TGP and local freight costs. The TGP and freight costs vary between cities. This indicative margin is calculated on the monthly average TGP and retail price.

City	Average Diesel Price (cpl)				Indicative Diesel Retail Margin			
	January	February	March	March quarter	January	February	March	March quarter
Brisbane	195.2	202.8	203.6	200.5	16.2	12.4	17.0	15.4
Rest of Queensland	197.0	203.7	204.5	201.7	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Atherton	199.8	202.9	204.9	202.5	17.1	9.1	15.0	13.7
Beaudesert	188.7	193.9	200.4	194.4	8.7	2.4	12.8	7.9
Biloela	206.5	208.1	208.5	207.7	24.5	14.7	18.4	19.2

Blackwater	200.1	203.5	203.0	202.2	15.8	7.9	10.7	11.5
Bowen	187.6	198.1	199.4	195.0	4.8	4.2	9.4	6.1
Bundaberg	197.2	200.1	201.2	199.5	13.8	5.2	10.2	9.7
Cairns	190.7	203.1	203.0	198.9	8.9	10.3	14.1	11.1
Charters Towers	197.7	199.7	199.8	199.1	15.8	6.7	10.6	11.0
Childers	193.9	199.7	201.9	198.5	11.1	5.4	11.5	9.3
Dalby	184.7	190.7	195.0	190.1	3.2	-2.3	5.9	2.3
Emerald	196.9	204.4	204.1	201.8	11.7	7.8	10.7	10.1
Gladstone	186.7	200.7	202.2	196.6	6.3	8.8	13.7	9.6
Goondiwindi	185.4	195.3	197.6	192.8	2.0	0.5	6.7	3.1
Gympie	186.9	198.6	197.6	194.4	5.9	6.2	9.1	7.1
Hervey Bay	191.5	198.1	201.3	196.9	8.9	4.1	11.1	8.1
Ingham	201.8	201.5	200.6	201.3	20.2	8.7	11.7	13.5
Innisfail	196.8	202.1	205.2	201.3	13.9	8.1	15.2	12.4
Kingaroy	198.6	204.3	204.4	202.4	17.1	11.3	15.4	14.6
Lockyer Valley	190.1	196.3	199.0	195.1	9.9	4.6	11.2	8.5
Longreach	212.1	212.3	213.4	212.6	21.5	10.3	14.6	15.5
Mackay	195.2	202.0	203.1	200.1	14.6	9.5	15.4	13.2
Mareeba	199.3	206.4	206.6	204.1	16.7	12.8	16.9	15.5
Maryborough	189.7	198.7	199.3	195.9	7.7	5.2	9.7	7.5
Miles	177.4	190.8	193.3	187.2	-5.8	-3.9	2.6	-2.4
Moranbah	204.0	200.7	200.4	201.7	20.9	5.7	10.2	12.2
Mount Isa	201.8	207.1	207.4	205.4	9.9	4.0	8.2	7.4
Nambour	189.9	200.2	199.5	196.5	9.8	8.6	11.9	10.1
Noosa	201.7	205.8	207.6	205.1	21.5	14.1	19.8	18.5
Rockhampton	191.8	204.9	204.7	200.5	9.9	11.6	14.7	12.1
Roma	190.7	196.7	198.2	195.2	5.7	0.2	5.6	3.9
Somerset	189.4	194.1	197.2	193.5	9.1	2.4	9.4	6.9
Toowoomba	191.4	197.6	198.6	195.8	10.9	5.7	10.5	9.0
Townsville	189.4	200.2	201.1	196.9	9.2	8.8	13.6	10.6
Tully	201.3	202.8	205.6	203.2	17.7	8.2	14.9	13.6
Warwick	184.1	196.1	198.3	192.8	3.2	3.8	9.9	5.6
Whitsunday	188.1	193.8	195.8	192.6	5.9	-0.4	6.4	4.0
Yeppoon	190.2	199.6	200.1	196.6	7.7	5.8	9.6	7.7

* The retail margin is the average retail price minus the average local TGP and local freight costs. The TGP and freight costs vary between cities. This indicative margin is calculated on the monthly average TGP and retail price.

Oil markets and price outlook

The table below presents the average price of Brent crude oil in January, February and March 2024, in US\$/bbl (US\$ per barrel), A\$/bbl and A\$-cpl.

	January	February	March	March quarter
Brent crude oil US\$/bbl	78.4	80.1	83.1	80.5
Brent crude oil A\$/bbl	117.8	122.5	126.8	122.4
Brent crude oil A\$-cpl	74.1	77.1	79.7	77.0

In the March quarter 2024, the average price for Brent crude oil was slightly lower than in the December quarter 2023, declining from US\$ 83.3 to US\$ 80.5. During the quarter, the average price rose from US\$78.4 in January to US\$ 83.1 in March. In Australian dollar terms, the international oil price increased gradually from \$117.8 per barrel in January to \$126.8 per barrel in March, as a slight decline in the Australian dollar combined with the increasing US dollar oil price. The quarterly average price of \$122.4 per barrel was below the average December quarter price of \$128 per barrel.

Oil production restrictions by OPEC+ members, especially Saudi Arabia and Russia, starting in July 2023 led to higher oil prices in the second half of 2023, with increased production by non-OPEC countries such as the United States partly offsetting the impact of the production cuts. These OPEC production cuts were in addition to reductions in production which followed reduced demand during the COVID 19 pandemic. As demand for oil is also picking up with economic recovery in importing countries, the production restrictions are continuing to tighten the oil supply and demand balance in 2024.

The Singapore benchmark prices for refined fuels increased during the March quarter 2024, with MOGAS (unleaded petrol) increasing by 17 cents per litre and GASOIL (diesel) increasing by 9 cents per litre from the beginning of January to the end of March 2024. These changes have eliminated the gap between wholesale prices for petrol and diesel fuel which had opened during the September quarter 2023. This gap reflected stronger demand for diesel fuel and limited extra refining capacity. Asia Pacific refinery capacity was limited in 2023 due to combination of planned turnarounds (large-scale refinery maintenance) and unplanned refinery outages.

The latest forecasts for the average value of Brent crude oil in the second quarter of 2024 by market analysts and the US Energy Information Administration are for an average of US\$ 88 per barrel, similar to the latest Brent crude oil price and above the average price in the March quarter. This is based on the current production restrictions by Saudi Arabia and Russia remaining in place. Despite the Australian dollar being expected to be slightly stronger in the June quarter than on average in the March quarter, this suggests the crude oil component of fuel prices will be higher in the June quarter.

The average retail margins for ULP in the March quarter 2024 remained well above longer term averages. Therefore, if the average petrol margin declines by several cents per litre in the June quarter, this would partly offset the effect of higher average crude oil prices and lead to ULP prices being slightly higher in the June quarter than the March quarter. If diesel margins are similar in the June quarter to the March quarter, the average price for diesel would also be higher than in the March quarter, reflecting the expected higher crude oil price. Average prices in regional Queensland in the June quarter would also be slightly higher than the March quarter average. In SEQ, prices could vary significantly from the quarterly average as prices go through different stages of the cycle.

The next quarterly fuel price report will be released in July 2024.

Data quality and data sources

Prices, price differences, margins and differences in margins presented in this report may not add up due to rounding.

Data and analyses presented in this report supersede all previous reports.

All data presented in this report are RACQ calculations using OPIS data.