

Markets

SFE 200 Futures (9.30am AEST)	7772	-50	-0.6
NZX 50	11793	-139	-1.2
DJIA Futures	38340	102	0.3
S&P 500 Futures	5185	18	0.3
NASDAQ Futures	18243	64	0.4

Local Markets Commentary

The Australian market commences a new week's trade with the \$A at ~US64.75c amid safe-haven trade, March quarter reporting season warming, and new influential data in hand for China, ahead of earnings reports from high-profile US stocks tonight, and amid heightened geopolitical risk.

US equities markets fell by 1.2% - 1.6% overnight Friday, but futures are higher this morning.

Since overnight Friday trade:

- Iran has targeted Israel with hundreds of drones and missiles, overnight Saturday;
- Israel vowed to exact a price at an appropriate time, describing Iran's move as 'severe and dangerous';
- The US president promoted a G7 co-ordinated diplomatic response, and declared the US would not participate in any Israeli military response;
- Earlier Saturday, Iran had seized an Israeli-linked cargo ship in the Hormuz Strait; and
- Russia has continued concerted attacks across Ukraine.

Locally today, no major economic reports are scheduled for release.

Safe-haven considerations and inflation concerns are expected to play out however, following Iran's weekend assault on a commercial vessel in the Strait of Hormuz and Iran's first direct air attack on Israeli territory.

Regionally, post-ASX trade Friday, **China** reported a \$US58.55B **March international trade** surplus, against expectations for \$US70.2B and following \$78.43B for March 2023.

March exports fell by 7.5% year-on-year. Forecasters had anticipated a 3.0% decline following a 5.6% annualised February increase.

March quarter exports were 1.5% higher than for the March quarter 2023 however, at \$US807.50B.

March imports declined by 1.9% year-on-year, against consensus for a 1.2% increase, after tumbling by an annualised 8.2% in February.

As with exports, March quarter imports were 1.5% higher than for the March quarter 2023.

Friday evening, China also reported **March new lending** tallying 3.090 trillion yuan, against consensus for 3.560 trillion following February's 1.450 trillion.

Today, **Japan** is expected to report February machinery orders just

Today's Stock Watch

GenusPlus Group (GNP)

Anticipating 20% - 25% FY24 normalised EBITDA growth, against a previous forecast of 10% - 15%.

GNP has revised its outlook due to earlier than expected project starts and better than envisaged existing projects performance. Positive FY2025 commentary also lodged.

Findi Ltd (FND)

Reserve Bank of India provisional grant in hand to set up, own and operate white label ATMs in India.

Qoria Ltd (QOR)

March quarter operational statistics lodged this morning.

Resources

IperionX Ltd (IPX)

Framework agreement in hand for IPX and United Stars Holdings ahead of a potential 10-year commercial supply agreement for IPX titanium products. Details lodged.

Future Battery Minerals (FBM)

Initial Nevada lithium project resource estimated at 1.5Bt @ 783ppm Li for 6.2Mt LCE. 42% of the resource, calculated for the Lone Mountain deposit, qualifies for indicated status. The Lone Mountain mineralisation remains open at depth and to the north and east.

Aurora Energy Metals (1AE) / Macro Metals (M4M)

M4M has decided against exercising an option to acquire 85% of the lithium rights for 1AE's uranium project in Oregon, US.

Manuka Resources (MKR)

The Mt Boppy gold project resource has been updated to 4.28Mt @ 1.19g/t Au, for 163,000oz of gold.

Mine planning will initially be based on a resource component measuring 1.8Mt @1.74g/t Au, for 102,000oz of gold.

Piedmont Lithium (PLL)

Mining permit in hand for the Carolina lithium project, North Carolina, US.

Southern Cross Gold (SXG)

Victoria Sunday Creek project Rising Sunday prospect diamond drilling has delivered additional high-grade intersections. Assays lodged this morning.

Energy

Horizon Oil (HZN)

A drill rig has been mobilised to the Beibu Gulf China, Block 22/12 platform. Another rig is expected to be mobilised to the WZ12-8E platform by month's end. One WZ6-12 well and three WZ12-8E are expected to be drilled by the end of July.

HZN 26.95%; CNOOC 51.00% and operator.

**prior to the ASX open.**

In overnight Friday **commodities** trade, **oil** turned 0.8% higher, Brent crude closing above \$US90.00/bbl again.

US **gold** (Comex) futures rose, but by less than \$US1.50/oz, settlement remaining below \$US2375/oz.

Iron ore (Nymex CFR China, 62% Fe) was pushed higher for a second consecutive session, settling above \$US106.00/t.

LME (3mth evening) **copper** swung greater than 1.2% higher and **aluminium** by greater than 1.6%. **Nickel** continued lower, but slightly so.

The **\$A** hovered about US64.90c after falling early Friday evening, and has this morning traded below US64.70c.

Overseas Markets

INDEX	CLOSE	+/-	%
Dow Jones	37983	-476	-1.2
S&P 500	5123	-76	-1.5
NASDAQ	16175	-267	1.6
FTSE 100	7996	72	0.9
DAX 30	17930	-24	-0.1
Shanghai Composite	3019	-15	-0.5

Overseas Markets Commentary

Trade diverged again across major European, UK and US equities markets overnight Friday, amid speculation regarding heightened geopolitical tensions, increasingly fluid inflation progress and related interest rate reduction expectations, and significant currency moves.

European and UK markets opened with improved sentiment, but European sentiment was ultimately dragged lower by risk-off sentiment demonstrated on the US open.

The UK's FTSE 100 proved the exception, pushed towards an almost record closing high on oil and mining sector gains due to stronger oil and base metals prices. Gold prices also touched a new peak in early trade.

In addition, UK GDP figures indicated likely growth, rather than recession, for the March quarter, but growth that would not push back an expected commencement on interest rate reductions.

In the US, earnings reports from major financial institutions proved underwhelming. The DJIA subsequently recorded its greatest weekly loss in just over a year.

In addition, reports emerged claiming a large telecom group in China was directed earlier this year to cease the use of overseas-manufactured computer chips by 2027.

This pushed stocks such as Intel and Advanced Micro Devices ~4% and 5% lower, and impacted general tech sector sentiment.

Among central bank commentary, one US Federal Reserve district president offered that she retained the view interest rates could be reduced twice this year, while maintaining that inflation could take some time yet to return to target levels.

Another maintained his view on progress with lowering inflation levels would depend on the next personal consumption expenditure (PCE) estimate, due the last Friday in April.

The \$US index was reportedly variously up by 0.5% and 0.7%

Pre-Open Announcements**Atomo Diagnostics (* AT1)**

\$750,000 worth of orders in hand for AT1-manufactured HIV self-tests carrying the Mylan brand, and destined for supply to low- and middle-income countries.

Last month, AT1 announced \$970,000 worth of such orders.

Sandon Capital Investments (* SNC)

SNC and Carbon Conscious Investments Pty Ltd (CCIL) plan to merge under a conditional off-market takeover, whereby SNC will offer to acquire all CCIL shares not owned by SNC and Sandon Capital Activist Fund for 6.67c cash.

This values CCIL at ~\$11.6M.

Additional details lodged post-trade Friday.

Boral Ltd (BLD) / Seven Group Holdings (SVW)

BLD's appointment of recent Bapcor (ASX: BAP) CFO Stefan Camphausen as CFO, in conjunction with the January-flagged resignation of recent CFO Belinda Shaw, becomes effective today.

Ms Shaw is remaining with BLD until the end of this week.

Duxton Water (D2O)

March update lodged post-trade Friday.

Volpara Health Technologies (VHT)

VHT shareholders have voted in favour of the scheme via which Lunit Inc will conditionally acquire VHT for \$1.15 per share.

VHT traded at \$1.13 - \$1.1425 last week.

The Calmer Co International (CCO)

CCO has issued \$650,000 worth of loan notes as substitutes for convertible notes issued early December 2023.

The December issue was found to have breached a conversion-related listing rule.

Advance ZincTek (ANO)

The FDA has issued a warning letter regarding out of specification (OOS) procedures relating to 67 bags of 3500 bags manufactured and tested over the past 4.5 years.

The majority of the issues regarding the 67 bags were prior to 2023.

ANO declares that no batches were released to customers unless they fully passed testing.

ANO will hence report to the FDA and TGA a final risk assessment.

In addition, an independent consultant is expected to report that nonconformities 'could not have had any impact on the efficacy or safety' of products made available to customers.

Resources**Newpeak Metals (* NPM)**

Outlaying \$500,000 for a package of tenements prospective for REE, scandium and uranium.



during overnight Friday trade, at five-month peaks, and Britain's pound at five month lows against the \$US. This further supported a FTSE rise, favouring large exporters.

In geopolitical developments, the US was reported to be boosting its Middle East military capacity and repositioning at least on warship already in the region.

Meanwhile, the US administration declared an Iranian attack against Israel was anticipated 'sooner rather than later'.

Earlier Friday evening, **China's** March international trade figures had included a surplus, exports and imports that each undershot expectations.

Also Friday evening, China reported March new lending greater than twice as much recorded for February but which also came in sub-consensus.

Earlier Friday, the **Bank of Korea** held a monetary policy meeting at which the 3.5% base interest rate was retained. Policy makers cited price stability as a requirement for any monetary policy easing.

Among overnight Friday data releases and reports, the **UK** reported 0.1% February GDP growth, on par with consensus following a 0.3% (revised from an initial 0.2% estimate) January increase.

Against February 2023, GDP was down by 0.2% rather than the anticipated 0.4% following a 0.3% annualised January decline.

Average GDP growth for the three months to the end of February came in at 0.2% from a 0.1% fall for November through January.

The NIESR GDP indicator pointed to 0.4% March GDP growth, after suggesting 0.2% for February.

Meanwhile, February industrial production surprised on the upside, improving by 1.1% against consensus for no change following January's 0.3% decline.

Against February 2023, output was up 1.4% against consensus for 0.6% year-on-year growth following January's annualised 0.3% increase.

UK February international trade statistics included a £2.291B deficit, following a £2.205B January shortfall.

In **Germany**, a final March CPI reading confirmed the initial estimate of 0.4% inflation growth for the month and 2.2% on an annualised basis.

Inflation had also grown by 0.4% during February but the year-on-year growth was recorded at 2.5%.

In the **euro zone**, a European Central Bank (ECB) professional forecasters survey revealed 61 participating company and financial institution economists retained the view inflation would fall to 2.4% this year and to 2.0% in 2025, also remaining at ~2.0% for 2026.

This survey, conducted 18 – 21 March, essentially proved little change in overall expectations, with GDP expectations including 0.5% 2024 growth, and 1.4% for 2025 and 2026.

In the **US**, a preliminary April consumer sentiment reading, as calculated by the University of Michigan undershot expectations, coming in at 77.9 rather than an expected 79, following the final 79.4 reading recorded for March.

The current conditions component index dropped to 79.3 from 82.5. The expectations component index declined to 77.0 from 77.4.

The tenements are located across 16,100ha within Quebec and Labrador, Canada.

NPM settled 118.18% higher Friday, at 2.4c, after announcing a Finland assets sale.

NPM traded as high as 4.5c intra-session, with ~26.8M shares changing hands across 712 transactions.

Iris Metals (* IR1) / Nex Metals Explorations (* NME)

IR1 is selling its WA Kookynie gold project to NME for ~54M IR1 shares.

A 2% NSR royalty also applies.

Predictive Discovery (* PDI)

Heralding Guinea Bankan gold project PFS results.

Galan Lithium (GLN)

GLN has secured up to \$15M worth of standby equity capital through to 31 January 2029.

As security, GLN is placing 15M shares with lender Acuity Capital, for nil cash consideration.

Details lodged post-trade Friday.

Emerald Resources (EMR)

EMR has declared its recommended takeover offer for Bullseye Mining 'best and final', having secured 78.26% of Bullseye.

Far Northern Resources (* FNR)

Gold and base metals explorer completed its ASX listing Friday, following a \$4.165M IPO at 20c per share.

Opened at 19.5c, the company's day one high, and traded as low as 16.5c before settling at 17c.

246,608 shares changed hands across 33 transactions.

~35.75M quoted shares.

FNR holds granted mining leases for one project in the Northern Territory and one in northern Queensland and an exploration licence for a second northern Queensland project.

Energy

Prominence Energy (PRM)

PRM is relinquishing the Louisiana, US Bowsprit oil project lease.

The Bowsprit-1 well will be abandoned and the site remediated.

Trading Halts

Company	Code	Resuming
Alvo Minerals	ALV	16 Apr
Amplia Therapeutics	ATX	16 Apr
Butn Ltd	BTN	15 Apr
Dart Mining	DTM	15 Apr
Kin Mining	KIN	16 Apr
Linus Technologies	LNU	15 Apr
New World Resources	NWC	16 Apr
NEXTDC Ltd	NXT	15 Apr



March export and import prices were reported to have risen by 0.3% and 0.4% for the month, following consensus for a 0.3% for both. February's prices had been recorded respectively 0.7% and 0.3% higher than for January.

Against March 2023, March export prices fell by 1.4%, following a 2.0% annualised February drop.

March import prices appreciated by 0.4% year-on-year however, following an annualised 0.9% February decline.

Tonight in the **US**, March retail sales, the April New York Fed manufacturing index, a housing market index and February business inventories are due.

Also tonight, **World Bank** and **International Monetary Fund** (IMF) Spring meetings commence in Washington.

Elsewhere, **G7** foreign ministers are preparing to meet Wednesday through Friday for a scheduled forum on Capri.

Companies scheduled to report earnings later today or tonight include: Bright Dairy & Food, Charles Schwab Corporation, Goldman Sachs, HDFC Bank, M&T Bank Corporation and Toho.

In overnight Friday and weekend corporate news, a JP Morgan Chase net income margin (NIM) forecast appeared to disappoint, while the group reported a 6.0% rise in March quarter profit.

Both Citigroup and Wells Fargo reported profit falls, Wells Fargo also reporting a NIM drop due to weakened borrowing demand.

Commodities

COMMODITY	CLOSE	\$US/	+/-	%
Gold (COMEX 100 Jun)	2374.1	oz	1.40	0.1
Silver (COMEX 5000 May)	28.33	oz	0.08	0.3
Platinum	975	oz	-5	-0.5
WTI Crude (NYMEX May)	85.66	bbbl	0.64	0.8
Brent Crude (ICE EUR Jun)	90.45	bbbl	0.71	0.8
Iron Ore (NYMEX CHN port;62%Fe)	106.05	t	1.34	1.3
Copper (LME 3mth Evening)	9463	t	113	1.2
Nickel	17812	t	-19	-0.1
Aluminium	2496	t	40	1.6
Lead	2178	t	33	1.5
Zinc	2829	t	70	2.5
Tin	32363	t	647	2.0

Commodities Commentary

Oil – since overnight Friday trade, **Iran** followed up a threat to shut the Hormuz Strait with the seizing of a Portugal-flagged commercial cargo ship by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) off the UAE coast. Seven IRGC members had reportedly been killed in this month's attack on Iran's consulate in Damascus, Syria. The targeted cargo ship was reported to be linked to an Israeli billionaire.

In addition, overnight Saturday, Iran launched a significant, but swift, drone and missile attack on targets in Israel.

Overnight Friday trade considerations included: China's petroleum trade statistics for March; a potential near-term escalation of Middle East conflict; and a new 2024 demand forecast.

Earlier Friday, **China** reported a 6.23% year-on-year drop in March oil imports to 11.55MMbbl/d (49.05Mt).

Strickland Metals	STK	15 Apr
Titanium Sands	TSL	16 Apr

Suspensions *(selected)*

Company	Code	Since
Entyr Ltd	ETR	27 Mar
HeraMED Ltd	HMD	5 Apr
Jayex Technology	JTL	28 Mar
KneoMedia Ltd	KNM	7 Mar
Osteopore Ltd	OSX	28 Mar
Tigers Realm Coal	TIG	12 Apr

Ex-Dividends

Code	Ex-Div	Div (c)	Franking (%)	Yield (%)
CDM	Today	3	100	8.86
CDO	Today	6.5	100	7.57
NHC	Today	17	100	10.52
SDI	Today	1.5	100	3.78
WAA	Today	3	100	3.41
WGB	Tomorrow	6	100	4.94
SOL	Wed	40	100	2.51
HZN	Thu	1.5	0	19.44
TRS	Thu	10	100	1.43
WAM	Thu	7.75	60	9.34
WAX	Fri	5	60	4.05
MFF	22 Apr	6	100	2.60
ACF	29 Apr	2.85	100	3.79

Reports & Events

(selected; all times AEST)

When	Company	Report/Event
Today	QOR	Mar Q (webinar midday)
Tomorrow	COE	Mar Q (tele 10.30am)
	RIO	Mar Q
Wed	BOQ	Interim
	EVN	Mar Q (tele 10.30am)
	NVX	AGM; Mar Q (w/cast 8.30am)
Thu	AEF	Mar Q (FUM)
	ATG	Mar Q
	BHP	Mar Q (w/cast 8.30am)
	STO	Mar Q
Fri	BFG	AGM
	ILU	Mar Q
	WDS	Mar Q



March quarter imports proved 0.7% higher than for March quarter 2023, however, at 137.4Mt.

Third party data estimated China's March seaborne oil imports from Russia at a 1.816MMbbl/d record high. Some of this volume (on up to seven tankers) was attributed to oil destined for India, but hit en route by US sanctions.

The International Energy Agency's (IEA) April oil market report included a 1.2MMbbl/d crude demand growth forecast. This represented a 130,000bbl/d cut from the previous IEA prediction.

In addition, the forecast contrasted sharply with OPEC's 2.25MMbbl/d 2024 demand growth forecast confirmed the previous day. This week, US government agency the EIA predicted 950,000bbl/d 2024 world demand growth.

Overnight Friday, IEA also predicted 2024 supply to increase by 770,000bbl/d to 102.9MMbbl/d.

A weekly US petroleum drill rig report from Baker Hughes, also published overnight Friday, included two fewer operational oil rigs. This brought the total number of oil rigs in operation back to 506, the same tally as for two weeks prior.

For the week to Friday 12 April, Brent crude prices declined by ~0.8% and WTI by ~1%.

Gold – overnight Friday gold sentiment proved strongest in earlier-rather-than-later trade, prices exceeding \$US2400/oz.

Safe-haven demand, on Iran's vow of retaliation and the US confirming it would defend Israel, remained a major influence in early trade.

Some profit-taking was thought to be responsible for an ultimate price retreat from session peaks, amid relative ongoing \$US strength due to a shift in the timing of any US interest rate cuts this year.

Among the forecasters, Goldman Sachs raised its 2024 price prediction to \$US2700/oz from \$US2300/oz.

Inflation updates are due for the UK, Japan and Canada this week. Together with earnings reports from large-cap and high-profile stocks, the figures and other key data could push and pull gold sentiment more than usual. Geopolitical developments are nonetheless expected to hold sway, at least early-week.

Base metals – China's March international trade statistics appeared to mostly influence LME base metals trade from early overnight Friday.

China reported a 16% year-on-year jump in March copper imports to 474,000t.

Some metals analysts had anticipated a higher year-on-year increase due to China's remaining Covid restrictions during March 2023.

In addition, higher copper prices later in March were speculated to have dampened late-month interest.

China's March iron ore imports were reported 0.49% higher year-on-year, at 100.72Mt.

China's March quarter iron ore imports rose by 5.5% year-on-year to 310.13Mt. This was in part attributed to the Covid restrictions still in place during the March quarter 2023 and also a greater number of adverse weather events impacting shipping from Australia and Brazil during the March quarter 2023.

Further, seaborne iron ore cargoes were reported relatively high for late-March - early-April 2024.

China's March GDP growth is anticipated **tomorrow**, together with



fixed asset investment, industrial production and retail sales.

Exchange Rates

CURRENCIES	LAST	+/-	%
AUD – USD	0.6473	-0.0057	-0.87
EUR – USD	1.0647	-0.0024	-0.22

US Data Tonight

Retail sales	Mar
NY Fed (Empire State) manufacturing	Apr
Business inventories	Feb
NAHB housing market index	Apr

Other Overseas Data Today & Tonight

Japan	Machinery orders	Feb
Euro zone	Industrial production	Feb

Need More Information?

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