

Weekly 1 September 2013

Tim Fox
Chief Economist
+971 4 230 7800
timothyf@emiratesnbd.com

Aditya Pugalia Analyst +971 4 230 7802 adityap@emiratesnbd.com

FX Week

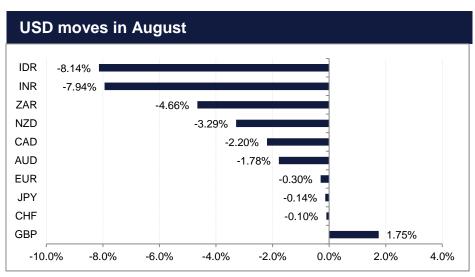
September event risk looms

September will bring a lot of event risk for financial markets to absorb, with the decision by the Fed over tapering QE being the most significant event during the month, and arguably for the rest of the year. Ahead of it this week's August US non-farm payrolls report will be a crucial staging point in determining what the Fed is likely to do. The ECB and the BOE also have critical policy meetings this week, with the credibility of their 'forward guidance' policies coming under scrutiny recently. Germany also faces its election on the 22nd September, and although the outcome is looking less and less in doubt, with a Merkel victory expected by most, the post-election Eurozone environment may present new pressures heading into Q4 and towards the end of the year. On top of all of this the US also faces the prospect of another fiscal deadlock towards the end of the month. However, all of these issues are currently taking something of a backseat to events in Syria, with speculation that the US will launch missile strikes soon keeping markets on tender hooks, unsure about the length of US involvement in the conflict there and nervous about the longer term consequences.

Attention remains on the Middle East

Most likely any missile attacks by the US will be a relatively short lived event, and unlikely to have long lasting impact on financial markets, barring any unexpected retaliation by Syria. The markets have recently favoured safety trades as the tension has escalated, lending the USD some broad support, but with the US emphasizing the limited nature and purpose of any assault, and with its key allies like Britain unable to take part, both gold and oil prices have corrected some of their recent spikes, with our precious metals team viewing the move up in gold as a 'false breakout'. Clearly the upcoming vote in Congress will be the immediate focus, with President Obama looking for the domestic political endorsement that UK PM Cameron could not achieve.

Whatever the outcome, however, it is difficult to construct a scenario in which oil prices will remain elevated for a significant period based on what seems likely to happen in Syria alone. Of course, part of the recent push up in oil prices is also to do with disruption to supplies in Libya, with Iraq also facing supply constraints this month due to maintenance work at its southern oil terminals. So global growth may still have firmer oil prices to contend with, but perhaps not at the extreme levels that occurred during past regional crises.



Source: Bloomberg, Emirates NBD Research



Fed tapering still appears to be on course

This may still complicate the global recovery, however, and may even inject a little more uncertainty into the Fed's decision later this month. But overall we still see the economic data seen to date as justifying a small tapering announcement at this month's FOMC meeting. Q2 GDP was revised up strongly to 2.5% last week, and with the weekly jobless claims data continuing to decline (falling 6000 in the latest week), we would be very surprised if this week's full August labour market report proves to be a barrier to the Fed beginning to reduce QE. The USD should continue derive support from this prospect, especially against emerging market currencies which have been most affected by anxiety about the outlook for US monetary policy.

ECB and BOE's forward guidance under scrutiny

Also, the contrast between the Fed's approach and that of the ECB and the BOE should be even more discernible following the policy meetings in Europe this week, lending support to the USD against the EUR and GBP in the process. Even after the recent improvement in Eurozone economic data, we would be surprised if ECB President Draghi changes his line of last month, when he pledged to keep policy rates at or below present levels for an 'extended period of time'. To the market this may represent a rebuff to the Austrian Central Bank Governor Nowotny's view that the recent data had removed the need for the ECB to cut interest rates further. Notwithstanding the Eurozone's recent recovery, the ECB is likely to see risks to it continuing coming from firmer bond yields as well as from a firmer EUR exchange rate. EUR/USD's retreat from 1.34 last week brings it within distance of our 1.30 1-month forecast, setting the stage for further declines in Q4.

The Bank of England may also have to toughen up its pledge to keep UK interest rates low, in the light of clear market scepticism about this commitment. Despite BOE Governor Carney's dovish speech last week, in which he reiterated that the Bank would wait until the unemployment rate drops to 7.0% before 'even considering whether to raise the Bank Rate', UK Gilt yields continued to set new highs. It seems unlikely that new policy initiatives will be forthcoming at the upcoming MPC meeting, but the markets are clearly still doubtful whether words will be sufficient to keep interest rates low without recourse to more Quantitative Easing. In this context the economic data on tap this week will continue to test the nerves of the Bank, as the CIPS PMI data is likely to reflect the improvement seen in other data series maintaining upward pressure under yields and underpinning GBP.

JPY volatility reflects geopolitical uncertainty

The JPY has been one of the main beneficiaries of the geopolitical uncertainty, given the markets' perception of it as a safe-haven, with USD/JPY falling at one point to 96.82 last week. However, with the tension in Syria easing into the end of the week, the JPY has lost a little ground again as attention has turned back towards fundamentals, allowing USD/JPY to recover above 98.0. Economic data released at the end of last week showed national inflation in Japan climbing to 0.7% y/y in July, a clear improvement from the deflation that still prevailed as recently as May. Industrial production, unemployment and the manufacturing PMI were also all better than expected, a further testimony to Japan's improving confidence and to the success of PM Abe's policies. So long as the geopolitical situation remains steady, USD/JPY will probably take its cue from US data in the coming week, but any renewed tension in the Middle East could see it lose ground quickly. Further out, the focus will also be on the sales tax in Japan and whether the government will decide to raise it from 5% to 8% next year. A decision is likely to be made next month, but until then USD/JPY may struggle, as the prospect of an increase in the tax weighs on the Nikkei and as geopolitical risks remain fluid.



AUD exceeds our 1-month target

While the USD has had difficulty in rallying against developed currencies over the summer, it has showed consistent strength against EM currencies as well as against currencies that are often correlated with EM economies such as the AUD. The AUD has fallen below our-1month target recently (0.90) and looks on course to reach our 3-month forecast of 0.88 soon. Economic concerns about Australia's significant trading partners, such as China, have combined with domestic economic fragility to keep the AUD biased lower, with the RBA maintaining an easing bias even after cutting interest rates to historic lows of 2.50% in August. News this morning that China's manufacturing PMI rose to 51.0 in August may lend some support to AUD sentiment initially this week, but with the RBA expected to maintain its easing bias when it meets later this week the upside should be limited. Australian Q2 GDP growth data is also expected to confirm a slowing in activity, which will help to justify the RBA's dovish stance.

INR pressures remain

The INR continues to remain under pressure, despite a sharp pullback in the last two days to decline -3.6% 5d. The sharp pullback in the INR could in part be attributed to yet another short term measure by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The RBI said it would sell dollars directly to three large state-run oil companies in an attempt to take the bulk of their dollar demand away from the spot market. According to estimates, the three state-owned refiners buy about USD300mn each day. The RBI had last used this route during the global financial crisis in 2008.

The next few days could be critical for the INR as the US Congress votes on launching missiles against Syria and as critical US jobs data approaches. This week, the new governor of the RBI, Raghuram Rajan, will also take charge. His role is considered crucial in reviving economic growth especially at a time when the Q1 FY 2014 GDP growth came in at a four year low of 4.4% and inflation remains high. It will be interesting to see whether he pursues price stability or economic growth as his primary focus, especially in the context of the pressures on the INR.

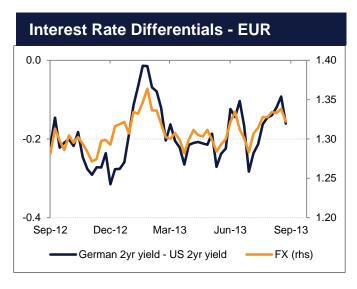


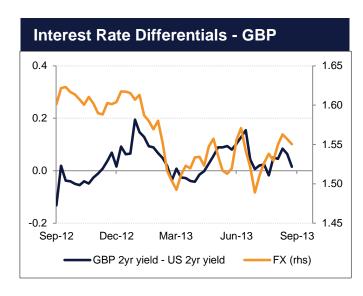
	FX Forecasts - Major						Forwards		
	Spot 30.08	1M	3M	6M	12M	3M	6M	12M	
EUR / USD	1.3222	1.30	1.25	1.20	1.15	1.3226	1.3231	1.3242	
USD /JPY	98.17	100.0	105.0	107.0	110.0	98.13	98.05	97.83	
USD / CHF	0.9298	0.95	1.00	1.04	1.10	0.9291	0.9282	0.9259	
GBP / USD	1.5504	1.52	1.48	1.45	1.47	1.5494	1.5485	1.5470	
AUD / USD	0.8901	0.90	0.88	0.85	0.80	0.8849	0.8800	0.8702	
USD / CAD	1.0537	1.04	1.06	1.07	1.10	1.0560	1.0583	1.0631	
EUR / GBP	0.8529	0.85	0.84	0.83	0.78	0.8537	0.8545	0.8561	
EUR / JPY	129.80	130.0	131.0	128.4	126.5	129.80	129.80	129.80	
EUR / CHF	1.2295	1.24	1.25	1.25	1.27	1.2290	1.2282	1.2261	
FX Forecasts - Emerging							Forwards		
	Spot 30.08	1M	3M	6M	12M	3M	6M	12M	
USD / SAR*	3.7505	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.7508	3.7517	3.7534	
USD / AED*	3.6730	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.6728	3.6732	3.6730	
USD / KWD	0.2855	0.282	0.285	0.282	0.28	0.2897	0.2930	0.3008	
USD / OMR*	0.3850	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.3845	0.3842	0.3834	
USD / BHD*	0.3770	0.376	0.376	0.376	0.376	0.3780	0.3790	0.3805	
USD / QAR*	3.6416	3.64	3.64	3.64	3.64	3.6454	3.6489	3.6529	
USD / INR	65.7050	64.00	62.00	59.00	57.00	65.7245	65.7374	65.7616	
USD / CNY	6.1203	6.15	6.15	6.20	6.20	6.1789	6.1979	6.2399	

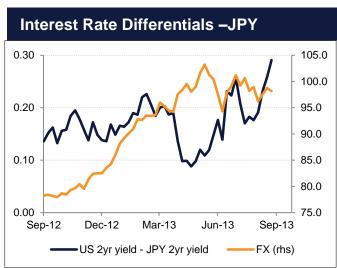
*Denotes USD peg Source: Bloomberg, Emirates NBD Research

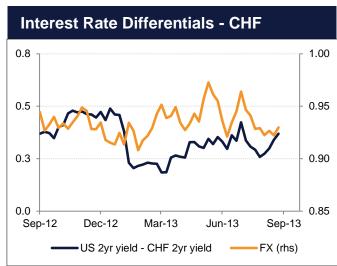


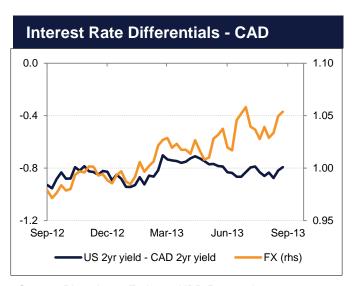
Major Currency Pairs and Interest Rates

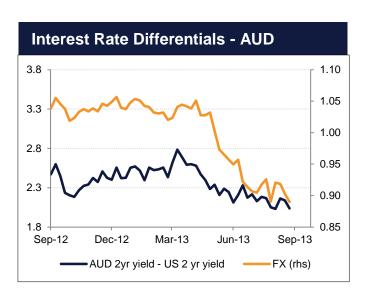










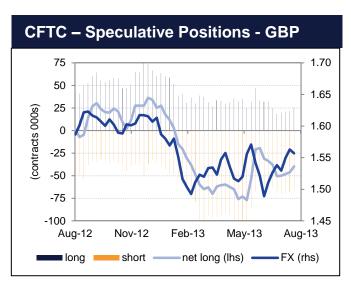


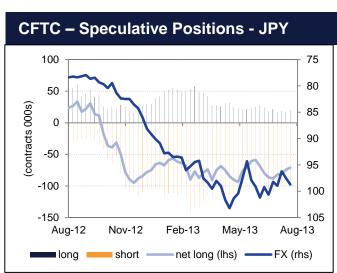
Source: Bloomberg, Emirates NBD Research

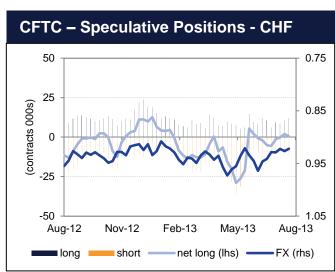


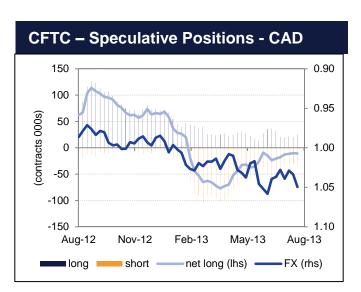
Major Currency Positions*

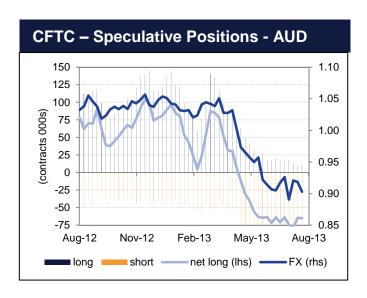












Source: Bloomberg, Emirates NBD Research *Data as of 25th June, 2013



Economic Calendar

Date	Country	Event			
2-Sept	China	HSBC/Markit Manufacturing PMI			
	Italy	PMI Manufacturing			
	Switzerland	PMI Manufacturing			
	France	PMI Manufacturing			
	Germany	PMI Manufacturing			
	Eurozone	PMI Manufacturing			
	UK	PMI Manufacturing			
	Brazil	Trade Balance			
3-Sept	UK	BRC Sales			
	China	Non-Manufacturing PMI			
	Australia	Retail Sales			
	Australia	RBA Cash Rate Target			
	Switzerland	GDP			
	Brazil	Industrial Production			
	US	ISM Manufacturing			
4-Sept	Australia	GDP			
	China	HSBC/Markit Services PMI			
	Italy	PMI Services			
	France	PMI Services			
	Germany	PMI Services			
	Eurozone	PMI Services			
	Eurozone	PMI Composite			
	Eurozone	GDP			
	Eurozone	Retail Sales			
	US	MBA Mortgage Applications			
	US	Trade Balance			
	Canada	Bank of Canada Rate Decision			
	US	Federal Reserve Releases Beige Book			
	Russia	CPI			
5-Sept	Australia	Trade Balance			
	France	ILO Unemployment Rate			
	UK	Bank of England Rate Decision			
	Eurozone	ECB Announces Interest Rate			
	US	ADP Employment Change			
	US	Initial Jobless Claims			



5-Sept	US	Factory Orders
	US	ISM Non-Mfg Composite
	Japan	BoJ Target Rate
6-Sept	Germany	Trade Balance
	France	Trade Balance
	Switzerland	CPI
	UK	Industrial Production
	UK	Trade Balance
	Germany	Industrial Production
	Canada	Unemployment Rate
	US	Change in Nonfarm Payrolls
	US	Unemployment Rate

Source: Bloomberg



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Emirates NBD Research& Treasury Contact List

Emirates NBD Head Office 12th Floor Baniyas Road, Deira P.O Box 777 Dubai

Aazar Ali Khwaja

Group Treasurer & EVP Global Markets & Treasury +971 4 609 3000 aazark@emiratesnbd.com

Tim Fox

Head of Research & Chief Economist +971 4 230 7800 timothyf@emiratesnbd.com

Research

Khatija Haque

Senior Economist +971 4 509 3065 khatijah@emiratesndb.com

Irfan Ellam

Head of MENA Equity Research +971 4 509 3064 Mohammedie@emiratesnbd.com

Aditya Pugalia

Analyst +971 4 230 7802 adityap@emiratesnbd.com

Jean-Paul Pigat

MENA Economist +971 4 230 7807 jeanp@emiratesnbd.com

Sales & Structuring

Head of Sales & Structuring

Sayed Sajjid Sadiq +971 4 230 7777 sayeds@emiratesnbd.com

London Sales

Lee Sims +44 (0) 20 7838 2240 simsl@emiratesnbd.com

Saudi Arabia Sales

Numair Attiyah +966 1 282 5625 numaira@emiratesnbd.com

Egypt

Shahinaz Foda +20 22 726 5050 shahinaz.foda@bnpparibas.com

Singapore Sales

Supriyakumar Sakhalkar +65 65785 627 supriyakumars@emiratesnbd.com

Group Corporate Communications

Ibrahim Sowaidan

+971 4 609 4113 ibrahims@emiratesnbd.com

Claire Andrea

+971 4 609 4143 clairea@emiratesnbd.com