

Container Registrations

August 2016

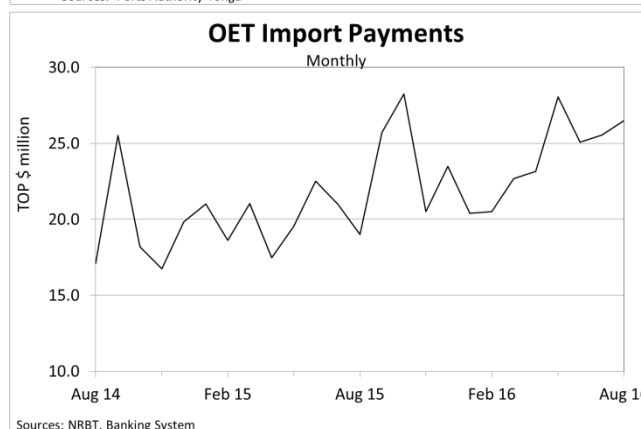
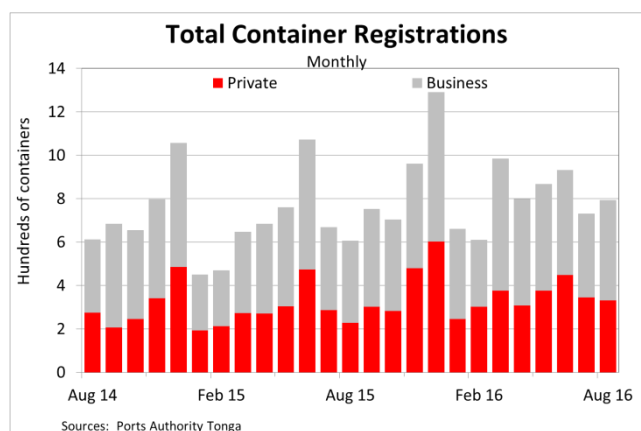
Release date: 11 November 2016

	Aug 16	Jul 16	Jun 16	May 16
Total	793	731	932	867
Business	461	385	483	491
Private	332	346	449	376

High number of cargo ships contributed to rise in registrations

The business containers continued to drive the monthly increase of total container registrations. At the end of August 2016, a total number of 793 containers were registered. An increase of 2 vessels in the number of cargo ships that arrived in August 2016 contributed to the higher registrations over the month of 62 containers (8.5%).

A total of 13 cargo ships recorded during the month being the highest number of ships which had arrived in 2016. Business containers increased by 76 registrations, offsetting a 14 containers decline in private containers. The rise in business containers could possibly indicate businesses' preparations for celebrations taking place during the month such as the LDS Tonga Mission Centennial celebration. This is in line with a \$1.0 million (3.7%) increase in import payments (excluding oil) in August 2016, due to higher payments made for wholesale & retail trade, vehicles and other import payments.



Over the year, the total number of containers registered increased by 1,533 registrations (17.9%), driven by a rise in both private and business containers. Private containers increased the most by

877 registrations, which reflected a lively informal distribution sector. This is consistent with events taking place during the year ended August 2016, including annual church conferences, various family reunions and the celebration of the Tupou College 150th anniversary. In addition, an extra 20 cargo ships arriving during the year also contributed to the annual increase. Import payments (excluding oil) also increased by \$49.4 million (20.5%) over the year to August 2016, due to higher payments for import of construction materials and motor vehicles. The higher import payments is in line with the on-going construction activities in the country and a rise in vehicles registered over the year by 790 vehicles (33.3%). This in turn supports an increase in government revenue collection.

The NRBT expects imports and consequently container registrations to generally increase in 2016/17 due to festivities scheduled for this financial year including the Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints 100th Anniversary, annual church conferences, one-off events such as family reunions and on-going activities in the country. Credit growth is projected to continue in 2016/17 which will support growth in imports. Furthermore, NRBT's liaisons with the construction and transport sectors had indicated growing demand in these sectors which will drive imports in the near future. On-going projects such as the construction of the St. George Palace, LDS chapels, renovation of the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel and new private residential constructions are anticipated to contribute to the rise. Spill over effects on the trade, tourism, construction sectors and other sectors in the economy are also expected.

Container Registrations							
Total Number of Containers							
	Month ended				Year ended		<i>Share of Total</i>
	Aug 16	Jul 16	Jun 16	Aug 15	Aug 16	Aug 15	
Total containers	793	731	932	607	10,087	8,554	100
Business	461	385	483	378	5,685	5,029	56
Private	332	346	449	229	4,402	3,525	44

Source: Ports Authority Tonga