

# Container Registrations December 2016

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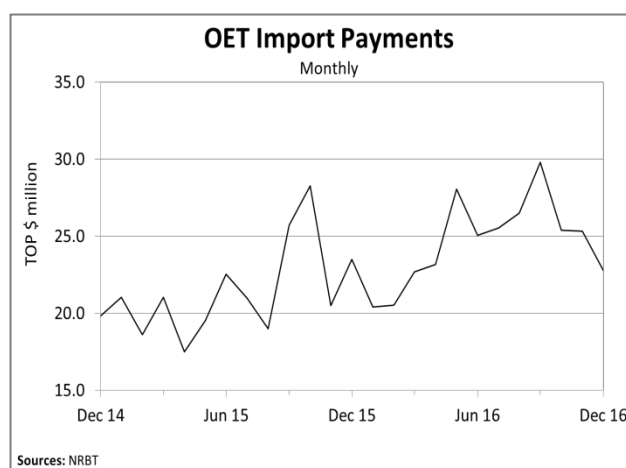
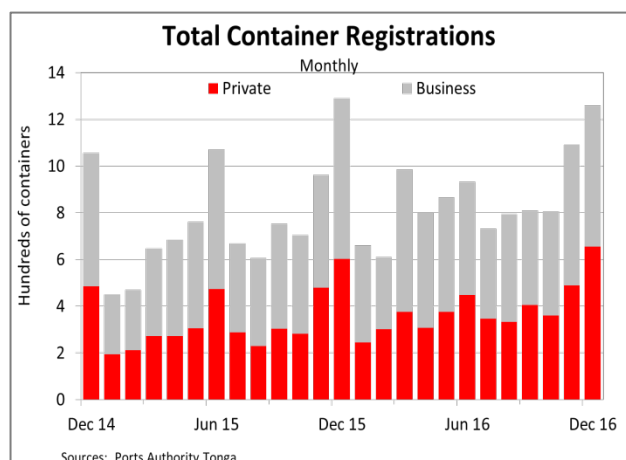
	Dec 16	Nov 16	Oct 16	Sept 16
<b>Total</b>	1,259	1,091	805	809
Business	603	602	444	404
Private	656	489	361	405

## Private container registrations edged higher in December

December 2016 recorded the highest total container registrations for the year, a similar trend to previous years. The total number of container registrations rose by 168 (15.4%) to 1,259 containers. This reflected the preparations for the Christmas and New Year season and other celebratory events during the period. It also reflects the seasonality of activities in the trade sector.

Majority of the increased container registrations was contributed by a 167 (34.2%) growth in private container registrations. Private container registrations recorded the highest level for the year of 656 containers in December 2016 surpassing the record in November 2016. The hike in private containers coincides with the increase in vehicle registrations as some individual imports their vehicles in containers together with other materials such as housing supplies. The total business container registrations remained steady

from the previous month, at 603 container registrations. The high record in container registrations may have contributed to the new high record of government revenue through



customs tax and excise duties during the month. Furthermore, it also coincided with the increased import payments (excluding oil) of \$2.6 million (10.3%) during the month. Majority of these containers were shipped from New Zealand, followed by Australia and the United States.

Over the year to December 2016, total container registrations continued to rise by 1,273 registrations (14.0%), driven mostly by a 732 (17.7%) increase in private containers indicating a rise in the informal distribution sector. Business containers also rose over the year by 541 registrations (10.5%). The large number of events and celebrations held during the year coincided with this annual growth. In addition, 29 extra cargo ships arrived over the year to December 2016 compared to the previous year. This coincided with a \$42.2 million (16.3%) rise in import payments (excluding oil) as a result of higher payments for the import of construction materials, vehicles and wholesale & retail goods.

The Reserve Bank expects imports and consequently container registrations to generally increase for the remainder of 2016/17. The Reserve Bank's liaisons with the construction and transport sectors had indicated growing demand in these sectors which will also drive imports in the near future. On-going construction projects 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 anticipated.

<b>Container Registrations</b>							
Total Number of Containers							
	<b>Month ended</b>				<b>Year ended</b>		<i>Share of Total</i>
	<b>Dec 16</b>	<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Dec 15</b>	<b>Dec 16</b>	<b>Dec 15</b>	
Total containers	1259	1091	805	1290	10,342	9,069	100
Business	603	602	444	688	5,697	5,156	55
Private	656	489	361	602	4,645	3,913	45

**Source:** Ports Authority Tonga