

# Container Registrations

## May 2017

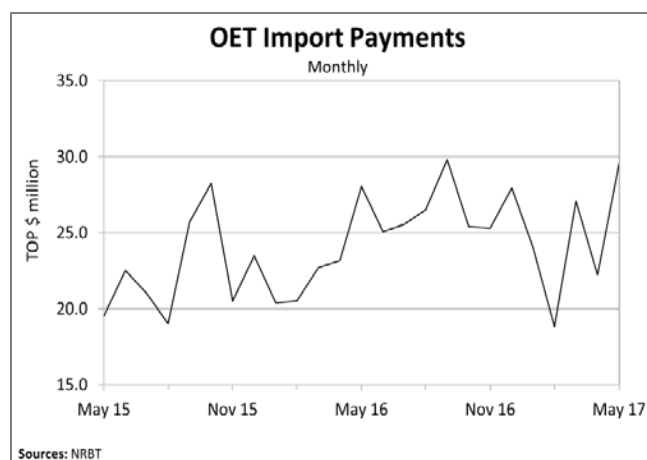
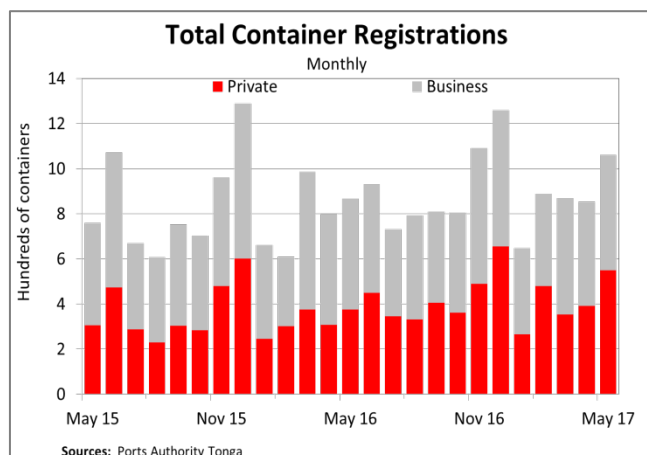
Release date: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017

	May 17	Apr 17	Mar 17	Feb 17
<b>Total</b>	1,062	853	869	890
Business	512	462	515	410
Private	550	391	354	480

### Both business and private container registrations increased

It is a typical trend for container registrations to increase in May given the events scheduled for the month especially the annual church conferences and spending on special Sundays given that May is known as the family month in Tonga. Business container registrations increased by 50 containers (10.8%) as wholesale and retail stores gear up for times of increased demand for variety of goods particularly food. Additionally, private containers rose by 159 registrations (40.7%) indicating a continued strong performance in the informal distribution sector. New Zealand continued to be the major originating country source of the containers, followed by Australia and Indonesia.

The increase in container registrations coincided with a \$7.3 million (32.9%) rise in import payments (excluding oil) over the month. This was due to higher payments for imported miscellaneous goods and



wholesale and retail goods which rose by \$3.0 million (128.1%) and \$4.2 million (27.7%) respectively. The rise in wholesale and retail goods import payments coincided with the increase in business containers.

In year ended terms, the total container registrations rose by 762 registrations (7.6%), driven by the 815 (19.1%) rise in private containers indicating a rise in the informal distribution sector. However, business containers declined over the year by 53 registrations (0.9%). The large number of events and celebrations held during the year, and increase in private constructions supported this annual growth. In addition, 36 extra cargo ships arrived during the year to May 2017 compared to the previous year. This is also consistent with a \$32.0 million (11.6%) rise in import payments (excluding oil) as a result of higher import payments for wholesale & retail goods, construction materials, and vehicles.

The Reserve Bank expects imports and consequently container registrations to generally increase in the near term. 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>May 17</b>	<b>Apr 17</b>	<b>Mar 17</b>	<b>May 16</b>	<b>May 17</b>	<b>May 16</b>	
Total containers	1062	853	869	867	10,741	9,979	100
Business	512	462	515	491	5,662	5,715	53
Private	550	391	354	376	5,079	4,264	47

**Source:** Ports Authority Tonga