

Container Registrations

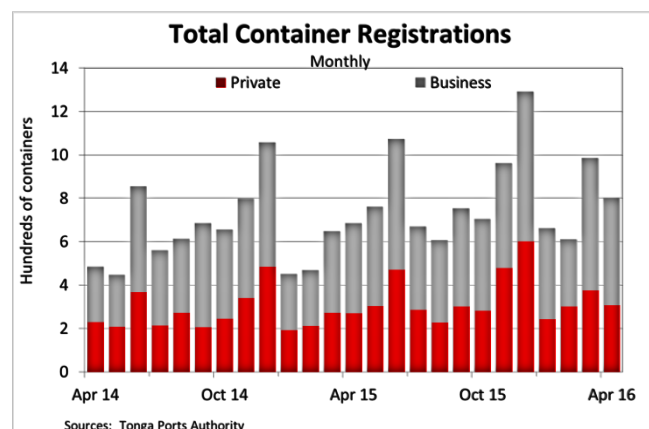
April 2016

Release date: 30 June 2016

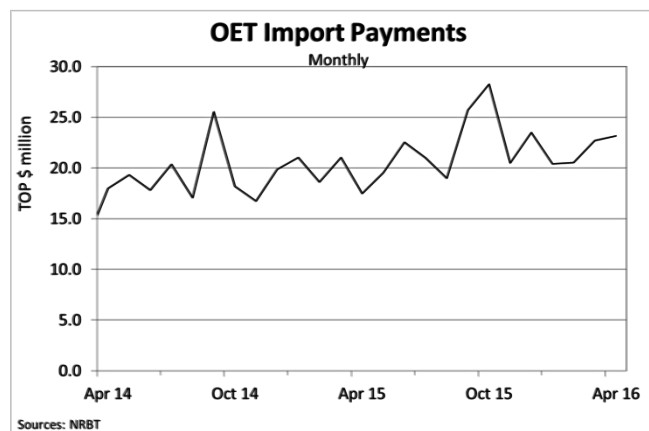
	Apr 16	Mar 16	Feb 16	Jan 16
Total	799	985	610	661
Business	491	609	308	416
Private	308	376	302	245

Registrations dropped following strong month

799 containers were registered in April 2016, which decreased by 186 registrations (18.9%) compared to March 2016. This is consistent with a decline in the number of cargo ships arriving during the month by 4 vessels. As usual, the majority of containers registered were for businesses. Both business and private container registrations declined over the month by 118 (19.4%) and 68 (18.1%) respectively.



Import payments are usually made in 2 – 3 months in advance, resulting in lagged effects on container arrivals. Despite the lower container registrations in April, import payments (excluding oil) slightly rose by \$0.5 million, which is likely to be reflected in the future months' of container registrations data. The high import payments for containers in March 2016 was exceptional given it included extra vessels that got delayed from previous month.



The total number of containers registered during the year ended April 2016, increased by 1,952 registrations (24.6%) due to rises in both business and private containers. This was due mainly to an increase in the business containers by 1,055 registrations (22.8%); private containers also increased by 897 registrations (27.2%). This is consistent with a \$33.7 million (14.5%) rise in import payments (excluding oil) and improvements in credit growth reflecting the growing economic activities during the year. This is also in line with the National Reserve Bank of Tonga's (NRBT) growth forecast for the distribution sector. This in turn may supports a rise in government revenue collection.

The NRBT expects imports and consequently container registrations to generally increase in 2015/16 due to festivities scheduled for this financial year including the Tupou College Toloa's 150th Anniversary and also church annual conferences. Additionally, more shipments are expected after the commencement in March 2016 of Polynesia Line's direct shipments from the U.S. to Tonga every month. This may support an increase in customs duty collections and an upturn in government revenue. Credit growth has rebounded and is expected to record a growth of 14.4% at the end of 2015/16 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, renovations of the Tanoa 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>
	Apr 16	Mar 16	Feb 16	Apr 15	Apr 16	Apr 15	
Total containers	799	985	610	684	9,872	7,920	<i>100</i>
Business	491	609	308	412	5,679	4,624	<i>58</i>
Private	308	376	302	272	4,193	3,296	<i>42</i>

Source: Tonga Ports Authority