

# Container Registrations

## February 2018

Release date: 28 May 2018

	Feb 18	Jan 18	Dec 17	Nov 17
<b>Total</b>	539	723	1,254	1,005
Business	338	393	596	535
Private	201	330	658	470

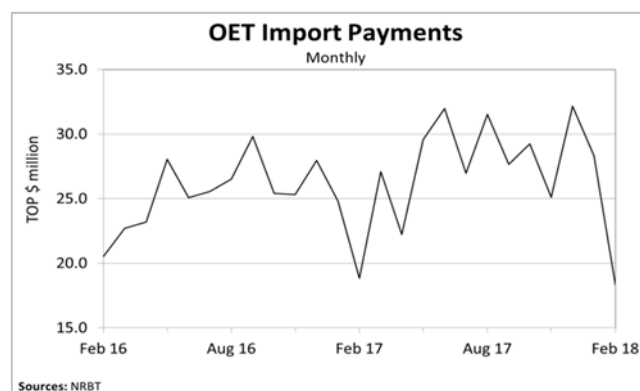
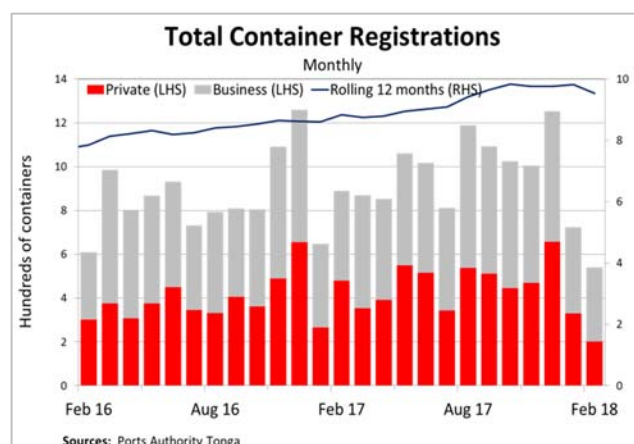
### Less cargo vessels arrived due to the cyclone

At the end of February, only six cargo vessels called at the Queen Salote International Wharf compared to eight cargo vessels in January 2018. On a monthly average, eleven cargo vessels arrived to Tonga in the past twelve months. Analysis of arrival patterns of cargo vessels that generally arrives in the month of February shows the disruption on scheduled ships caused by Tropical Cyclone (TC) Gita.

The total number of containers registered at the wharf therefore declined by 25.4% (184 containers) to 539 containers. This is lower than the monthly average of 640 containers in February of the past 5 years. Both private and business containers declined over the month by 39.1% and 14.0% respectively. Most of the containers arrived on cargo vessels from New Zealand, Australia and Japan.

Payments for imports (excluding oil) declined over the previous two months by \$10.0 million (35.3%) and \$3.8 million (11.9%) respectively which coincided with the decrease in total container registrations.

Over the year to February 2018, the total container registrations however rose by 833 containers (7.9%). Both private and business containers increased by 462 (9.5%) and 371 (6.4%) respectively indicating a rise in the informal distribution sector and a vibrant trade



sector. Events and celebrations held during the year, and the increase in private constructions contributed to this annual growth. This was also consistent with a \$26.9 million (8.9%) rise in import payments (excluding oil) as a result of higher payments for the import of wholesale & retail goods and miscellaneous goods (such as electrical infrastructure materials, medical, and technological goods).

The Reserve Bank's projections for positive economic growth support the outlook for higher imports and consequently container registrations will generally increase in the near term. Additionally, the recovery from cyclone Gita would contribute to more imports in the upcoming months. Private container registrations is also expected to increase, supported by the tax and duty exemptions on food items, clothes, beds and building materials in the wake of TC Gita. 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>Feb 18</b>	<b>Jan 18</b>	<b>Dec 17</b>	<b>Feb 17</b>	<b>Feb 18</b>	<b>Feb 17</b>	
Total containers	539	723	1254	890	11,441	10,608	100
Business	338	393	596	410	6,135	5,764	54
Private	201	330	658	480	5,306	4,844	46

**Source:** Ports Authority Tonga