

# Container Registrations

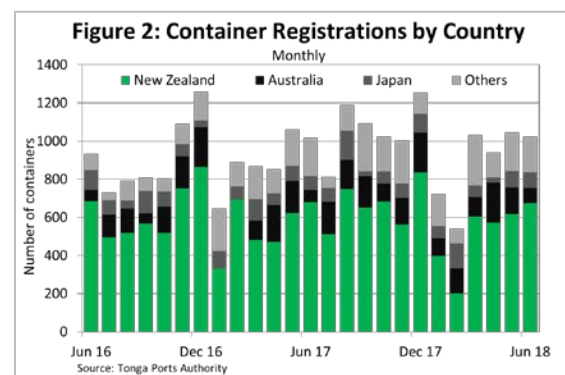
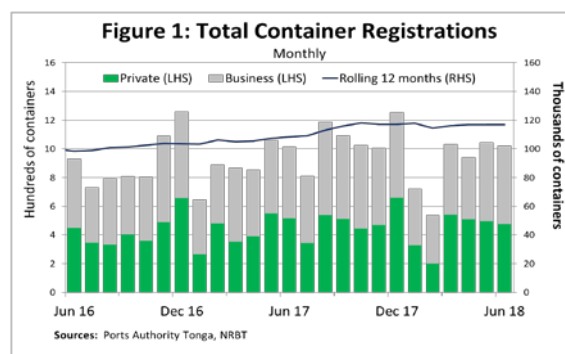
## June 2018

Release date: 7 September 2018

	Jun 18	May 18	Apr 18	Mar 18
<b>Total</b>	1,024	1,046	941	1,032
Business	547	550	432	492
Private	477	496	509	540

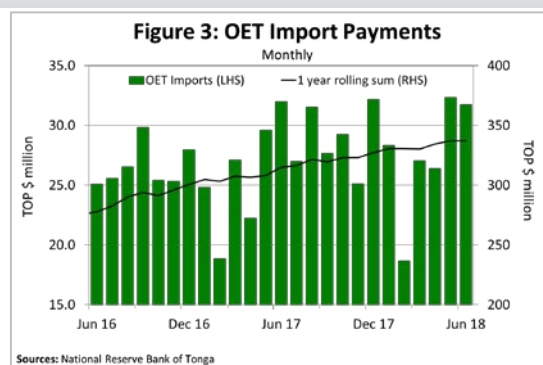
### Total container registrations remained high over the month

As a partial indicator for the trade sector, the number of containers indicated strong trade activities over the month as it remained high. The total container registrations slightly declined over the month by 22 containers (2.1%) driven by a 3.8% and 0.5% fall in private and business containers respectively (Figure 1). This is also higher than the monthly average of 877 containers in the past five years. The number of business containers reflected the continued busy season in Tonga as annual church conferences continued and preparations for the Heilala Festival. Containers that arrived on cargo vessels from Australia, United States and Japan decreased over the month and outweighed the increase in containers from Indonesia and New Zealand (Figure 2).



Similarly, total payment for imports (excluding oil) slightly declined over the month by \$0.6 million (1.8%) coinciding with the decline in total container registrations (Figure 3). This was due to a decline in payment for wholesale & retail imports of \$4.9 million (19.8%), which outweighed a rise in payments for miscellaneous goods (such as electrical infrastructure materials and medical goods) of \$2.9 million, construction imports and motor vehicles of \$0.8 million and \$0.2 million respectively.

Over the year to June 2018, the total container registrations rose by 857 containers (7.9%). Both business and private containers increased by 484 (8.5%) and 373 (7.2%) respectively indicating a rise in the informal distribution sector and a vibrant trade sector. This supports the Reserve banks' expectation that the trade sector will grow by 2.0% in 2017/18. It is also consistent with a \$22.0 million (7.0%) 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 expects imports and consequently container registrations to generally increase in the near term coinciding with the growing demand for construction. On-going construction projects and new private residential constructions are anticipated to contribute to the rise. The excise tax and import duty exemptions on food items, clothes, beds and building materials in the wake of TC Gita is expected to increase the in-kind assistance from families abroad. Hence, the total number of imported containers is expected to rise in the upcoming months. Spill over effects on the trade, tourism, construction sectors and other sectors in the economy are also anticipated.

Container Registrations							
Total Number of Containers							
	Month ended				Year ended		Share of Total
	Jun 18	May 18	Apr 18	Jun 17	Jun 18	Jun 17	
Total containers	1024	1046	941	1017	11,683	10,826	100
Business	547	550	432	502	6,165	5,681	53
Private	477	496	509	515	5,518	5,145	47

**Source:** Ports Authority Tonga