

Vehicle Registrations

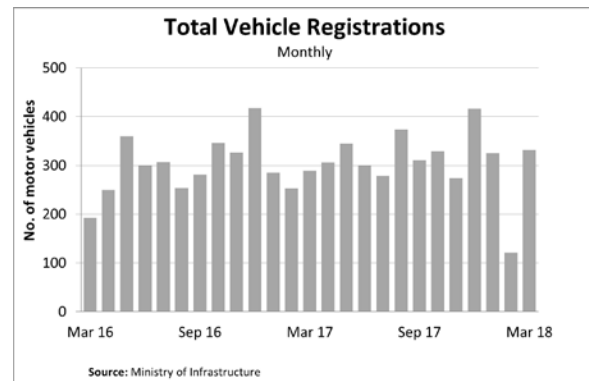
March 2018

Release date: 15 August 2018

	Mar 18	Feb 18	Jan 18	Dec 17
New Registrations	332	121	325	416

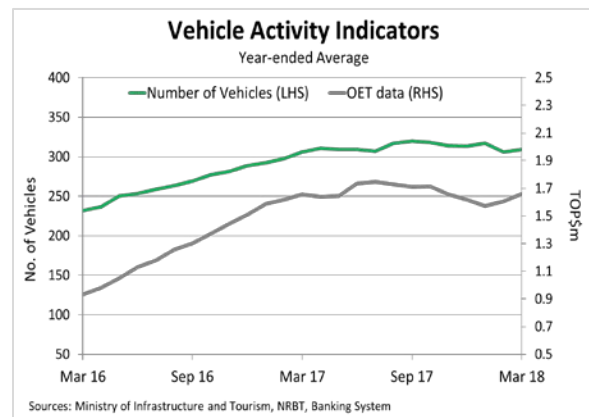
Private vehicle registrations increased during the month

As a partial indicator of activities in the transportation sector, the total vehicle registrations increased over the month by 211 registrations. Majority of the increase was driven by the the increase in private vehicles such as cars, other light vehicles and heavy vehicles. Liaison with the Ministry of Infrastructure confirmed that the disruptions caused by tropical cyclone Gita to various business operations resulted in delays of vehicles registered in February and contributed to the increase in the March registrations.



The rise in vehicle registrations coincided with the increase in the number of imported vehicles recorded by the Ports Authority which rose by 215 vehicles over the month. Additionally, there were 5 more cargo vessels arriving during March compared to last month. The higher vehicle registrations over the month was consistent with a slight increase in vehicle import payments by \$0.6 million to a total \$2.0 million in March.

In year ended terms, the total number of vehicles registered slightly rose by 43 registrations to a total of 3,669 vehicle due to the rise in registered light vehicles, government vehicles, and heavy vehicles. These outweighed a decrease in cars and bus registrations. The annual rise in the level of vehicle registrations can be attributed to the availability of vehicles' hire purchase, and the convenience of vehicle online purchasing. The rise in purchasing power of returning seasonal



workers from abroad have also contributed to the annual rise. Moreover, the import payments for vehicles recorded in the Overseas Exchange Transactions reports slightly increased by 0.1% over the year to March 2018.

On the outlook, given that Tonga is still on the recovery phase from tropical cyclone Gita which occurred in February 2018, lower demand for vehicles is expected. Despite the progressive increase in petrol prices, the total registrations of vehicles are projected to increase in the short term supported by the advance payment for vehicles and the higher purchasing power of returning seasonal workers from Australia and New Zealand.

Total Number of Vehicle Registrations								
	Month ended				Year ended			Shares of Total*
	Mar 18	Feb 18	Jan 18	Mar 17	Mar 18	Mar 17	% growth	
Total vehicles	332	121	325	289	3,712	3,669	1.2	100
Cars	129	52	130	123	1,491	1,556	-4.2	40
Light vehicles+	122	49	126	103	1,411	1,347	4.8	38
Heavy vehicles++	54	8	42	31	357	339	5.3	10
Taxis and rentals	24	6	19	23	319	321	-0.6	9
Motorcycles	1	3	5	3	37	36	2.8	1
Government vehicles	2	1	0	4	78	44	77.3	2
Buses	0	2	3	2	19	26	-26.9	1

* Based on year-ended vehicle registration numbers.
 +Vehicles lighter than 1500kgs excluding cars
 ++Vehicles heavier than 1500kgs excluding Buses
 Source: Ministry of Infrastructure and Tourism