

MINISTRY OF REVENUE & CUSTOMS NEWSLETTER



❄️ HIGHLIGHT ❄️



Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry, Mr. Michael Cokanasiga had the privilege of visiting New Zealand Customs' operations in Auckland and Wellington.

MORE ISSUES INSIDE:

**TAX WEEK AWARENESS,
DISPOSAL AND MANY MORE!**

CEO's visitation to New Zealand Customs



Mr. Michael Cokanasiga, the Chief Executive of the Ministry, was invited by New Zealand Customs in November 2024 to observe their operations in Auckland and Wellington up close. Opportunities included touring their Auckland Sea Cargo Inspections Facility, learning about Auckland Airport operations, and touring the Wellington Police Dog Training Center, where detector dogs are trained.

Comptroller Christine Stevenson says, "These face-to-face visits with Pacific partners are extremely useful and I am pleased Michael found his trip valuable too. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with Tongan Customs on a range of workstreams."

Pacific Leadership Programme (PLP)

To the 17 participants who successfully finished the Pacific Leadership Programme (PLP) in December 2024, congratulations.

In December, they participated in the ten-month program's last challenge, where they had a talanoa to share their leadership experiences with a panel that included Mr. Michael Cokanasiga, the Ministry's CEO; Leitu Sa, the New Zealand Deputy High Commissioner to Tonga; and Joe Cannon, the Deputy Chief Executive International and Governance for New Zealand Customs. The panelists gave feedback on each participant's leadership narrative.

Building leadership competency in Pacific border agencies is the goal of a long-standing relationship between New Zealand Customs and its Pacific colleagues, of which the PLP is a part. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand provides funding and support for it.



TAX WEEK 2024

Compared to prior years, Tax Week 2024 was different. Instead, in partnership with MAFF, PMO Local Government Division, MTED, and Statistics Department, 2024 Tax Week concentrated on a Tax incentive policy consultation for the Agriculture and Tourism industries as well as the establishment of a community border watch program. The team have divided up and were conducting this consultation for Vava'u and Ha'apai in addition to here in Tonga.

Ban importation of vehicle older than 10 years

In November 1st, 2024, the ban on importing vehicles older than 10 years; not including vehicles with 10+ seats, trucks or buses was in effective.

Master Trainer Programme (MTP)

The first Working Group Activity (WG1) of the MTP on Risk Management (RM) and Post Clearance Audit (PCA) was held at the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS) Headquarters in Suva by the World Customs Organization in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The WCO/JICA Joint Project's flagship program, MTP, aims to collaborate with Customs administrations to create more sustainable training capacity...

continued on next page >>>

Master Trainer Programme (MTP)

on important Customs topics by creating a pool of highly qualified trainers, customized training materials, and training programme/course curricula.

The first MTP Working Group Activity was attended by thirty Customs officers from Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The MTP is important for Fiji and other Pacific Island countries because it will help develop the skills and capacity of customs professionals, which can help to enhance revenue collection, support economic development, build regional cooperation, and improve border security, said Mr. Udit Singh, CEO of FRCS, who expressed gratitude for the assistance provided by WCO and JICA in enhancing capacity development of Customs administrations in the Pacific.



Authorized Economic Operator Program



AEO is a business entity involved in international movement of goods requiring compliance with the provisions of the national Customs and other laws and regulations related to the import, export, or transit of goods.

Tonga Customs Secure Export Scheme is designed to complement and contribute to Tonga's Trade Policy Framework specifically related to Export development and trade facilitation. Officially launched on the 30th November 2024, the program is now open for businesses to apply.

Hon. Minister Tiofilusi Tiueti presented the certificate to Pacific Sunrise Fishing as the first export business to become a Tonga Customs AEO member.

AEO needs to meet specific criteria which may include appropriate record of good compliance with Customs and other related regulations, a system of managing records for necessary internal controls and audit, financial solvency, and supply chain security measures.



Disposal at damaged tobacco at Tapuhia Landfill

In December 2024, the Tapuhia Landfill in Vaini disposed of a list of damaged tobaccos and tobacco producing materials. The tobacco manufacturer, the Ministry of Revenue and Customs, and the Ministry of Health collaborated to make sure that tobacco that was determined to be damaged and unfit for sale or consumption by the general public was disposed of safely.

Truck loads of the damaged tobacco were taken from the company's Customs warehouse and emptied at Tapuhia Landfill for disposal while being watched over by the authorities. 9 cartons of Pall Mall cigarettes, 104 cartons of Long Beach cigarettes, and 11 loose sleeves of Long Beach cigarettes were among the damaged tobacco that was disposed of.

The Ministry of Revenue and Customs, along with its stakeholders, will keep implementing measures to guarantee that goods produced in warehouses approved by Customs maintain high standards of conformity with Tonga's laws.



Revenue office @ Tungi Colonnade
1st Floor
Nuku'alofa



Customs office @ Fe'ao mo e Ngalu
Customs building
Ma'ufanga



Contact Us!



R: 7400-550
C: 7400-650



R: cst@revenue.gov.to
C: info@customs.gov.to



www.revenue.gov.to