



# NEWSLETTER



## Enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS)



The Samoa Bureau of Statistics, Central Bank of Samoa and the Ministry of Finance hosted a mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s Statistics Department during February 13–17, 2017 to assist with the implementation of the Enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS), which was endorsed by the IMF's Executive Board in May 2015. The mission supported the development of the National Summary Data Page (NSDP), a national "data hub" that features data dissemination in Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) machine readable format.

The NSDP aims to serve as a one-stop publication vehicle for essential macroeconomic and financial data. The NSDP will go live by **April 13, 2017**, making Samoa the first country in the Asia and Pacific Region to implement the e-GDDS. This will be a major milestone for the agencies involved as it reflects their continuous commitment to improve the quality of data that are made available to the public.

The new NSDP will provide national policy makers as well as a broad range of national and international stakeholders, including investors and rating agencies, with easy access to information that the IMF's Executive Board has identified as critical for monitoring economic conditions and policies in a country. Making this information available in both human and machine-readable formats simultaneously to all data users will bring greater data transparency.



The e-GDDS was established by the IMF's Executive Board in May 2015 to support improved data transparency, encourage statistical development, and help create synergies between data dissemination and surveillance. The e-GDDS is an advance beyond the GDDS, which was established in 1997. A link to Samoa's NSDP will be available on the IMF's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) as well as SBS's website by April 13, 2017: at <http://dsbb.imf.org/> & [http://sbs.gov.ws/nsdp/National\\_Summary\\_Data\\_Page\\_\(NSDP\).htm](http://sbs.gov.ws/nsdp/National_Summary_Data_Page_(NSDP).htm)

## Population and Housing Census 2016 Activities in-progress

The New Year 2017 started with the continuation of Census scheduled activities since the completion of the fieldwork in November last year. The division were divided into 3 teams to coordinate 3 priority areas as follows.

### 1. Sorting of Population and Housing Census 2016 (PHC) Questionnaires



Census questionnaires were collected from all supervisors according to the 4 regions namely Apia Urban Area (AUA), North West of Upolu (NWU), Rest of Upolu (ROU) and Savaii. Tasks included the counting of census questionnaires in each Enumeration Area (EA) to make sure all forms or census questionnaires have been collected, sorted and arranged according to the household list.

Other duties included the taking note of new, vacant and demolished households as well as noting of other issues such as missing forms or missing EA.

There were 5 staff namely Talaimalo Simanu, Folavale Soomaalii, Poinsettia Epati and Kaisarina Moananu from the Census, Survey and Demography division and Morris Mlesi from the Social statistics division who were allocated to complete this task.

## 2. Questionnaire quality checking, editing and coding



Editing of questionnaires was also prioritised at the same time given its importance to the next stage of data cleaning. This process involves the following tasks:

- ◆ checking and editing of individual questionnaires to make sure errors are minimised
- ◆ skip patterns and instructions are properly followed throughout the entire questionnaire
- ◆ manually coding of some answers
- ◆ checking the answers given if they are appropriate and more accurate.

The Editing team commenced duties in January with only three staff of the Census and Survey Division namely Taiaopo Faumui-na, Lewis Sinclair and Aliimuamua Malaefono Taaloga. Due to limited number of staff as well as the complexity of the work, hired workers as well as staff from other divisions were on board to assist and speed up the process.

Eight enumerators were hired, and the two of them were allocated to the quality checking team. The rest were assigned to assist the scanning and data processing team together with the two staff from the Economic Statistics division namely Sulufaiga Tuuga and Litala Talaifono.

## 3. Scanning/verification of scanned questionnaires and data processing



The Scanning process was initially introduced in the 2011 census to capture, compile and interpret information collected from census questionnaires.

The scanning and verification process occurred in parallel with the editing and sorting activities under the control of Mr Junior Ah Yen with assistance from the IT team. Forms from Savaii region were used to test the scanners and the programme. Due to some complications with the scanning programmes, Mr Rara Soro of the Statistics Office of Vanuatu was hired for one week to assist the scanning team which caused a slight delay in meeting their target.



In addition, eight data entry operators were set up to speed up the processing of the data which comprised of four staff from the Data Processing and IT team and four hired workers.

## 2017 International Monetary Fund (IMF) Article IV Consultation

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) Article IV team of economists and statisticians led by Niamh Sheridan visited Samoa from February 8 – 17 to hold discussions with authorities on the 2017 Article IV Consultation. Staff from the Pacific Executive Director's office, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank also joined the mission. The team met with the Government Statistician and staff from the Finance and Economic Statistics Divisions on February 9, to collect economic and financial information and discuss Samoa's economic developments. The team expressed its appreciation to the Bureau for the open and constructive discussions.

Under Article IV of the IMF's Articles of Agreement, the IMF holds bilateral discussions with members, typically on an annual basis. On return to headquarters, the IMF team reports its findings to IMF management and then presents them for discussion to the Executive Board, which represents all of the IMF's member countries. A summary of the Board's views is subsequently transmitted to the country's government. In this way, the views of the global community and the lessons of international experience are brought to bear on national policies. The IMF's regular monitoring of economies and associated provision of policy advice is intended to identify weaknesses that are causing or could lead to financial or economic instability.

## CPI, TRADE, IPI & VOLUME INDICATORS

### CPI MARCH 2017

This is the first release on the March 2017 base, and includes weights. The Consumer Price Index for March 2017 decreased by 0.6 percent compared to the previous month.

- ◆ The Food and Non Alcoholic Beverages index decreased by 1.3 percent, driven down by lower prices for market staples and fresh fish.
- ◆ Furnishing, Household Equipment and Maintenance index increased by 1.3 percent.
- ◆ The Average Annual Inflation for the year ended March 2017 was 1.2 percent.

### Highlights: LOCAL MARKET SURVEY

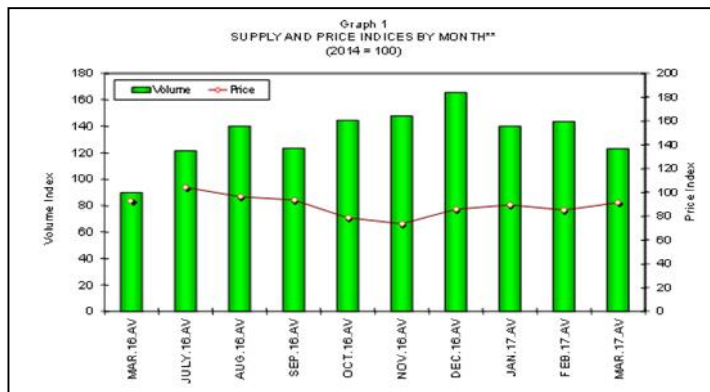
Beginning with the Local Market Survey issue for January 2017 a change in measurement of agricultural volume from Imperial to Metric unit of measurement (pounds to kilograms) has been incorporated to be in line with the **Metrology Act 2015** of the *Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour*. This change in measurement had minimal effect on the overall indices.

### LOCAL MARKET SURVEY IN MARCH 2017

At the main produce local market survey, showed overall decrease 14 percent while limited supply pushed the overall prices up 7 percent when compared to February 2017.

- ◆ Significant reduction in the supply of pumpkin, coconut, and head cabbage largely impacted the overall decline in the volume index and the 7 percent rise in the price index.

- ◆ The value of supplies fell 11 percent to \$62,800 from the previous month
- ◆ The total number of sellers fell 10 percent to 344 from 382 in February 2017. **(See Graph Below)**



### MERCHANDISE TRADE FEBRUARY 2017

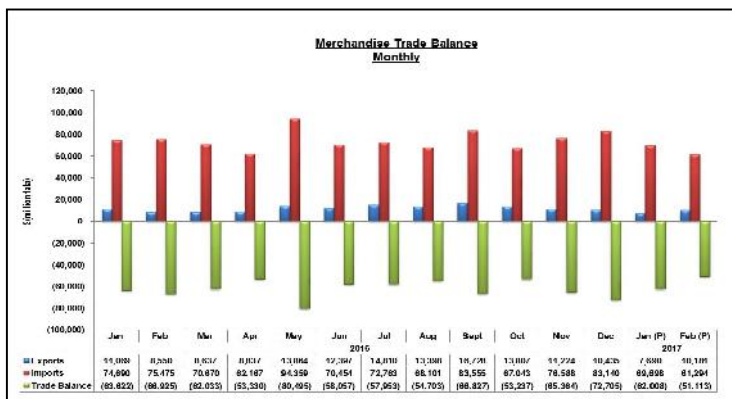
The merchandise trade balances decreased significantly as a result of a 17.6 percent reduces in imports payment despite a 32.4 percent hike in exports earnings. However, when compared to the same month of 2016, the current merchandise trade deficit was 23.6 percent lower. **(See Graph below)**

### EXPORTS REVENUE IMPROVES

- ◆ Exports were valued at \$10.2 million, increasing 32.4 percent from January 2017
- ◆ Machinery & Transport Equipment exports recorded the largest increase (up \$3.6 million from January 2017) and became the top commodity groups exported during February 2017, representing 45.2 percent of total exports value
- ◆ Exports to Australia recorded the largest increase (up \$2.9 million) from January 2017.

### IMPORTS PAYMENT DECREASE

- ◆ Imports were valued at \$61.3 million, decreasing 12.1 percent from January 2017
- ◆ Mainly responsible for the decrease in February 2017 were lower values of 'Machinery & Transport Equipment' (down \$3.2 million), 'Miscellaneous Manufactured Goods & Articles' (down \$2.4 million) and 'Manufactured Goods Classified Chiefly by Materials' (down \$2.0 million) commodity groups imported.
- ◆ 'Food and live animals' imports remained the top commodity groups imported during February 2017, representing 27.5 percent of total imports value
- ◆ Imports from Singapore and USA recorded largest increase (up \$4.2 million) while imports from New Zealand recorded the largest decrease (down \$6.9 million) from January 2017.

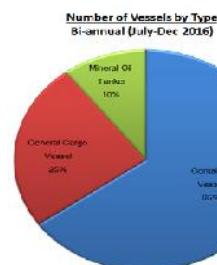


### SHIPPING STATISTICS REPORT (July –December 2016)

Data for the Shipping Statistics Report published by the Samoa Bureau of Statistics were collected mainly from Shipping Statistics Forms and cargo manifests, which were completed by Shipping agents and Stevedores as a port requirement for every international sea going vessel. This report excludes all domestic services and the Apia-Pago Pago route. Furthermore, if a vessel calls in more than once, its subsequent calls are recorded as a separate vessel.

### Highlights of the six months period (July-December 2016)

The total number of sea going vessels cleared at the port of Apia during the last six months (July to December) of 2016 was two hundred and seventy (270). Of the total, one hundred and six (106) international sea going vessels were accepted for tabulation, which consisted of sixty nine (69) Container Vessels, twenty six (26) General Cargo Vessels and eleven (11) Mineral Oil Tankers while one hundred and sixty four (164) vessels. **(See Table & Graph below)**



| Type of vessel       | Number of Vessles | Percentage   |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Container Vessel     | 69                | 65.1         |
| General Cargo Vessel | 26                | 24.5         |
| Mineral Oil Tanker   | 11                | 10.4         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>106</b>        | <b>100.0</b> |

### HR Activity

The Corporate Service Unit conducted four half days refresher sessions for all divisions in the Ministry; the aim of the programme for the awareness and reminding all staff on policies/ manuals and procedures from the PSC such as new changes of the WCEM 2015, Recruitment and Selection Manual 2016 and staff performance Appraisal.

## For more information:

### LOCATION & CONTACT

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Email address: [info.stats@sbs.gov.ws](mailto:info.stats@sbs.gov.ws)  
Website address: [www.sbs.gov.ws](http://www.sbs.gov.ws)

BDM, Ground Floor  
Development Bank of Samoa

### Corporate Services Statistics Division

Driver Corporate Services:  
Telea Papalii

### Social Statistics Division

Senior Environment:  
Tausulu Vaai—Reupena

### NEW RECRUITS

Statistical Clerk:  
Morris Molesi

### ICT & DP Division

Information Technology Officer:  
Euta Collins

### PLEASE NOTE

Contract Management performance management plan due in 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016

Staff End of Year Appraisal due in May – June, Performance Plan discussions should begin around May – June