Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour
Matagaluega o Pisinisi, Alamanuia ma Leipa

e-newsletter

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In this edition:

2 APPRENTICESHIP GRADUATION 2017
3 SCALES VERIFICATIONS
4 EIF SUPERVISION MISSION TO SAMOA
5 APPLICATIONS FOR THE SA-MOA EXPORTS AWARDS 2017
6 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
7 APPRENTICESHIP: TRADE TEST
8 FOREIGN EMPLOYEE EMPLOY-MENT PERMIT
9 OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH (OSH)
10 SEMINAR ON CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
11 SAMOA AVA AWARENESS PROGRAM

Word from CEO

Greetings to all our subscribers and readers and on behalf of the Ministry, I wish you all a Happy New Year.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour continues with its monitoring role in making sure stakeholders, including businesses complies with the relevant legislative processes and requirements that are administered by MCIL. These included the on site calibration of scales and measures in wholesales, supermarkets and retail shops in both Upolu and Savaii. The Calibration of petrol pumps for both islands will be conducted in the second half of the current financial year.

The last quarter of 2017 in December was the highlight of the Ministry's work with the Apprenticeship Graduation of thirty-one (31) apprentices under the Apprenticeship and the Trade Test Schemes. They were awarded with Certificate of Due Completion and Grade 2 Trade Certificates approved by the Apprenticeship Council of Samoa. We wish them well with their respective careers in different trades.

The Ministry in close collaboration with the Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters (SAME) is launching the Samoa Exporter of the Year Awards 2018 (SEYA). Members of the business community are encouraged to register in the seven (7) different categories. The Awards ceremony is planned to be held in April 2018. For more information, please visit our newly revamped website on www.mcil.gov.ws .

Soifua

APPRENTICESHIP GRADUATION 2017

"This is the rule of life today,
As it has ever been;
The world bestows its smile on those
Who have the strength to win,
It looks for merit true,
It little cares how much you know
But asks, what you can do…."

Author Unknown

The 15th December 2017, was definitely a day to remember for the 26 graduates of the apprenticeship program and 5 graduates of the trade test program. It was a day of praises and celebration as the 31 graduates walked the isle to receive their well-earned certificates, with their families and friends cheering and applauding.

The keynote speech was delivered by the Associate Minister, Hon. Tuifa'asisina Misa Lisati Leleisiuao Palemene. Hon Tuifa'asisina emphasized and acknowledged the importance of the program to the development of Samoa, he also praised with gratitude the graduates for their hard work, and acknowledged their families and employers for their continuous support for the graduates not only mentally, practically but financially in contributing to their training fees.

Graduating class speaker, Mr Toosavili Tua acknowledged the Government's financial support which has helped them tremendously giving them (graduates and employers) only 50% of the total fee to pay.

The Apprenticeship Scheme registration for 2018, is now opened and the Ministry invites interested students to apply. Contact our Apprenticeship team and if you need clarification about the scheme. Application forms can be uplifted from the 4th floor of the ACB building or download it straight from the Ministry's website at www.mcil.gov.ws. The office is also opened for any queries regarding the scheme.

SCALES VERIFICATIONS

The Fair Trading and Codex Division under one of its mandate initiated scale verification for traders around the country. This is one of the objectives of the Metrology Act 2015, which is to ensure traders using weighting and measuring equipment are accurate and in accordance with international standards.

FTCD officers started their spot checks from the rural area on the 28th of August 2017. The officers visited each shop to check and issue a sticker to certify that the scale use by traders are accurate and robust.
The scale verification is expected to conclude in 2018. The division aims to ensure that consumers buy products that are not short weighted or measured.

Reminder to the Public

- All commercial engagements are to use the metric units such as kilogram or grams.
- Traders to bring in their new scales for verification.
- Under the Metrology Act 2015, you are entitled to see the measurement of any goods weighed or measured at the time of purchase.

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ENHANCE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK (EIF) SUPERVISION MISSION TO SAMOA

TIER 1 and TIER 2 PROJECTS

From the 23-27 October 2017, the EIF Mission came to Samoa for its fourth visit as conducted annually. Miss Barbara Rippel from World Trade Organisation (WTO) was the Coordinator for the EIF Pacific region, whom conducted the mission in collaboration with the Trade Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) & the Trade, Commerce and Manufacturing Unit (TCMU) of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (MCIL).

The overall objective of the Executive Secretariat (ES) mission is to monitor and support the EIF programme in Samoa, focusing on implementation, results, leveraging and sustainability. The mission also aims to discuss further EIF collaboration in the Pacific region.

The EIF Project in Samoa consisted of two sets, **Tier 1** and **Tier 2** projects.

Tier 1 project – involves activities such building capacity to formulate trade policy, participate in negotiations and implement agreements.

Tier 2 project – activities on ground or physical implementation, this is to strengthen economic sector – from improved testing laboratories to better supply chains – to increase competitiveness in export markets.

After the 5 days mission both teams accomplished to assist the mission on the requirements needed to conduct the mission. Through scheduled meetings and site visits, the mission managed to meet all beneficiaries/implementing agencies, development partners and relevant ministries for direct discussions on the progress of the project and options for project sustainability.

Want to find out more about the Trade, Commerce & Manufacturing Sector?

Jump on our YouTube Channel.

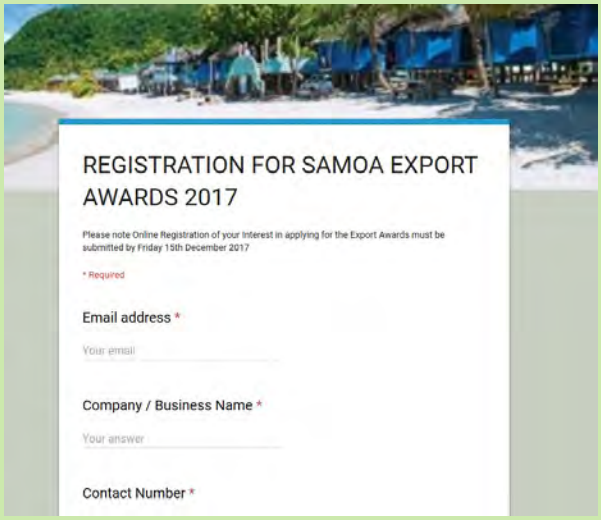
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLy71VP-OjCUl3INxfH-qrw?spfreload=10

REMINDER FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE SAMOA EXPORTS AWARDS 2017

In case you haven't heard, the Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters (SAME) in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour and other Government stakeholders, have revived an initiative to recognise and reward excellence in Exporting in the form of the **Samoa Exports Awards 2017**.

Any person or business that exports goods and/or services overseas can apply for the Awards, in one or all of the following 7 Categories:

- Best Agriculture and Fisheries Export,
- Best Value Added Export,
- Best Service Export,
- Best Emerging Export,
- Best in Innovation
- Excellence in Export Marketing, and
- Overall Exporter of the Year Award



A soft media launch of the Samoa Export Awards 2017 was held in MCIL's Conference Room on 9th August 2017 which was attended by several media representatives and highlighted the objectives of the Samoa Export Awards as being in recognition and reward for excellence in exporting; encourage and stimulate exporting activity; raise awareness of Samoa's Trading Partners of Samoa's products and services; build greater understanding of what is required to succeed in exporting; build partnerships between government and private sector to support export growth and encourage Innovation amongst Manufacturers, Exporters and Service Providers.

An online registration facility was created for applicants to register their interest in the Export Awards by 15th December 2017. Unfortunately to date, not many applicants have registered their interest online.

Please be reminded that an application form for the Export Awards can be downloaded from MCIL's website or obtained from our office. Interested applicants have until **28th February 2018** to file their application and supporting documentation. Our MCIL Team will conduct the initial assessment and verification of information provided in the Export Awards applications.

For further clarification and information, please contact Ms Fiu Jacinta Matulino (jacinta.matulino@mcil.gov.ws) or Ms Lisi M Iosefa (lisi.iosefa@mcil.gov.ws) on 20441 or Click link :http://bit.ly/MCILExPortAwrd

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Public Awareness On The Labour And Employment Relations Act 2013 ('Lera'), And Labour And Employment Relations Regulations 2016 ('Regulations')

Awareness was conducted for both Upolu on 17th November 2017 and Savaii on 23rd November 2017 to further educate employers and workers on working conditions and entitlements as stipulated in our national labour law. This was also the opportunity to gauge the views of employers and workers of challenges and/or issues with implementing of the LERA and Regulations for the review of the LERA.

Monitoring And Evaluation

A total of 16 businesses were visited by labour inspectors for the reported period to determine the level of compliance in accordance with requirements of the LERA, as well as observe best practices initiated by employers to promote decent work. Based on M&E findings it was reported that 50% of the 16 businesses visited complied, 40% failed to comply and 10% attempted to comply. It is important for labour inspectors to carry out regular M&E to ensure employers and workers are fulfilling their mandated obligations.

Professional Development

Principal Labour Inspector Ms Cedrela Tamati was fortunate to participate in the Regional Course on Informality from the 16th to 20th of October 2017 in Chiba Japan. The objective of this course was to bring together statisticians and labour analysts from 16 invited countries around the Asia-Pacific to discuss technical aspects and share experiences in the production and use of statistics on informality.

Employment Permit Inspector Ms Saeumalo Keipo was also fortunate to participate in the Regional Training on Rural Workshop on Fishing in Solomon Islands. This was an opportunity to explore working conditions and entitlements of fishermen.

APPRENTICESHIP: TRADE TEST

The Apprenticeship Council has endorsed the revival of the Trade test program. The program serves as a stepping stone for the Samoan people that possesses exceptional hand skills in their respective trades, but are not academically qualified to enter into formal education to acquire qualification that will recognize their skills. The Carpentry and Joinery trade kick started the program with its first Grade 2 test that was held in November 2017. Five tradesmen took the 3-day challenge, which started from an upgrading class which was held on the 1st of Nov, 2017; the sitting of their theory test was done 2 days later on the 3rd of Nov, 2017; and then ended with a whole day practical test which was held the following day at the NUS.

The 3 days' trade test was supervised by the Apprenticeship team with 2 certified carpenters taking the leading role in conducting the classes, theory and practical test.

We are happy to say that all five tradesmen passed with merits and later joined the Apprenticeship Due Completion graduates during the Graduation ceremony which was held later in December, 2017.

FOREIGN EMPLOYEE EMPLOYMENT PERMIT (FEEP)

The Foreign Employee Employment Permit Policy 2017 was endorsed by Cabinet on 26th December 2017 and will effective on the 1st of February 2018.
This includes new fees, application form, checklist and additional requirements such as the need to provide a police clearance report and a medical clearance report.

The main objective of the policy is to:

1. Improve working environment by having clear guidelines for the effective and efficient implementation of PART IX of the LERA.
2. Have an efficient tool to ensure employers recruit highly skilled non-citizen workers to industries that contribute to the development of the economy of Samoa.

ACTIVITIES	*Oct*	*Nov*	*Dec*	*Total*
Total FEEP applications received	**37**	**47**	**25**	**109**
New Applications	*33*	*39*	*16*	*88*
Renewals	*4*	*8*	*9*	*21*
Applications Approved	*37*	*45*	*24*	*106*
Applications declined	*0*	*2*	*1*	*3*

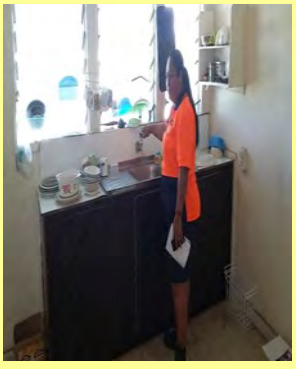
Total FEEP issued from – October to December 2017

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH (OSH)

Monitoring & Evaluation

Inspections were conducted to Government Ministries and State Owned Enterprises in Savaii in November 2017. A total of 14 workplaces were examined, and from the 14 workplaces four were issued with Improvement Notices. An Improvement Notice is issued when employers fail to put in place effective systems and processes in accordance with OSH legislation. OSH Inspectors revisit these workplaces to determine progress; if not other measures are then applied.

Hazards are inevitable within workplaces, despite their severity it is crucial that employers and employees understand the risks and consequences of not adhering to safety and health procedures.



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH (OSH)

OSH Awareness Programme

An awareness program was conducted on the provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2002 ('OSHA'), and OSH Regulations 2017 in December 2017. This activity is strategized under the division's Key Performance Indicators for the FY17/18.

The awareness focused on educating Government Ministries and State Owned Enterprises for the reason that Government Ministries for the first half of this FY have not been able to comply with at least 50% or more of the minimum standards of the OSH Act and OSH Regulations 2017.

A representative of the Accident Compensation Corporation was invited was also invited to present on that day in partnership to promote awareness of the importance of OSH.

Professional Development

Principal OSH Inspector Mrs Ilovea Fa'amatuainu participate at a training program held in Turin, Italy from the 27th November to 08th December 2017 on "Academy on Rural Development: Towards decent work in the Rural Economy".

The main objectives of this training are:

•Acquire tools and practical methods, successfully designed and tested in other national or regional contexts and adaptable to their own environment;

•Share experiences and knowledge with individuals and/or organizations with common interests in rural development

•Gain deeper understanding of the roles of policy makers, including workers and employer's organization required for the promotion of integrated rural development.

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SEMINAR ON CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY FOR LATIN AMERICAN, CARIBBEAN AND SOUTH PACIFIC COUNTRIES, HELD ON 11TH – 31ST OCTOBER 2017 IN THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The purpose of this seminar was intended to share fair understandings of the contents of foreign investment and business in China and the trade relations between Caribbean, South Pacific Countries and China. The Evolvement of China's economic development zones and Special economic zones was also one major aspect of this course.

Miss Ranan Schuster (Foreign Investment Officer) of MCIL and representatives Nelly Samoa, Saratusi, Events, Marketing & Distribution, Island Farm Samoa, Senetenari's Tattooist and Elaine's Quality Furnishing represented Samoa at the seminar.

The opportunity to participate in the course has provided participants with in-depth knowledge on investment related policies, industry development programmes for SMEs, strategies and incentives as well as an insight into methodologies of promoting or facilitating foreign investment into the country. Having the opportunity of being exposed to the experiences of similar countries to Samoa, in terms of developing countries, has instilled the knowledge of the various strategies different countries take up in order to foster positive growth in the economy as well as other important factors contributing to the economic growth.

MCIL NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE

We continue to make improvements and updates to our site to cater to our clients needs and always welcome your feedback.

If you have any suggestions on how we could improve our site, get in touch with our Communications team at mpal@mcil.gov.ws.

SAMOA AVA AWARENESS PROGRAM

7th NOVEMBER 2017 – SAVAI'I

In preparation for the introduction of the Samoa Ava Regulations, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour conducted an awareness program in Savai'i on the 7th November 2017.

The objective of this standard is to protect consumers and facilitate safe trade by ensuring product safety and quality standards of 'ava and 'ava products for human consumption or medicinal purposes.

The Samoan varieties are ava le'a. ava la'au, ava loa, ava toga and ava talo. Samoa is one of three (3) main producers and supplier for kava products in the region. The local industry and kava growers considered expanding their farms to cater for local demands and export purposes when the ban in European markets was lifted two years ago.

The awareness program being run in Savai'i will help Samoan ava growers prepare for the introduction of the new regulation.

This is an exciting opportunity for Samoa to strengthen its economy for the future, and encourage better business practices and benefits for overseas markets.

MCIL acknowledged PHAMA project that have supported the programme.

Site visit at Neiafu and Taga