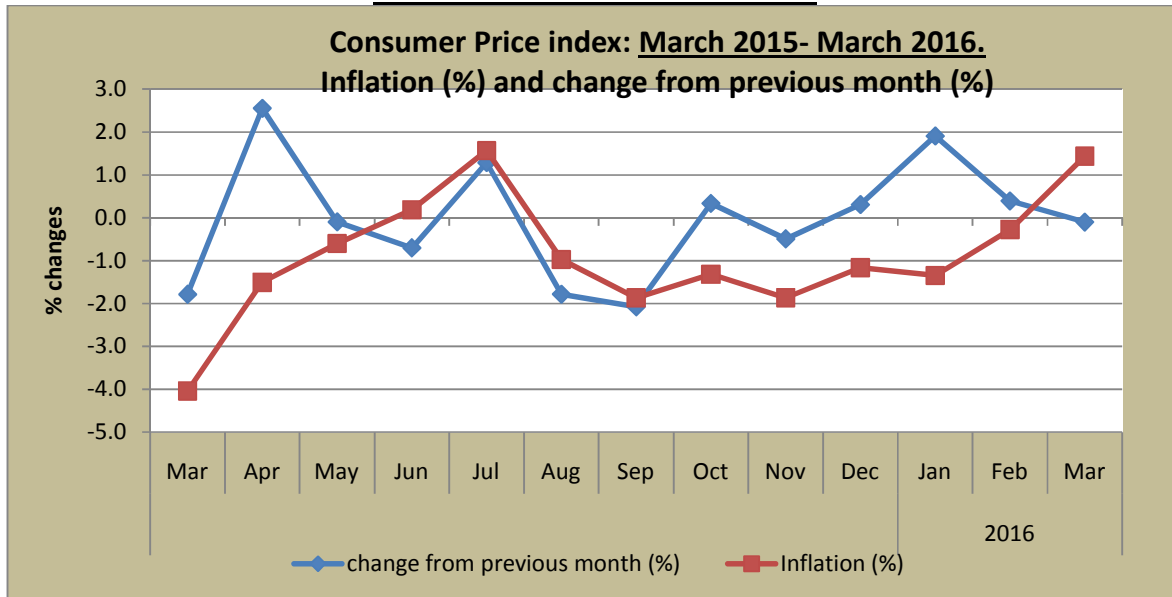




GOVERNMENT OF TONGA
STATISTICS DEPARTMENT
MEDIA RELEASE

**Consumer Price Index for March 2016 recorded a decrease of 0.1%
With an Annual Inflation Rate of 1.4%**



The **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** for **March 2016** recorded a decrease of **0.1%** from **February 2016 (108.5)** and now stands at **108.4**. In comparison with the previous month, local index recorded an increase of **1.9%** and import index decreased by **1.7%**. For the previous two months, **February 2016** recorded an increase of **0.4%** and **January 2016** increased by **1.9%**.

The **annual rate of inflation for March 2016 was 1.4%** compares to **0.3% deflation** in previous month. This was the first **Inflation** since **July 2015 (1.6%)**. The **annual inflation** for the same month of previous year, **March 2015 was -4.0%**. **Local Index** marked an increase by **12.6%** while **Imported Index** decreased by **6.3%** in **March 2016**.

Food Group recorded an increase of **1.7%** towards the index position of **March 2016**. This was due to increase in prices of some **fruits and vegetables and meat, fish and poultry** items. Prices of some imported items (tinned & packaged food, frozen meat) also increased throughout the months.

Housing Group recorded a decrease by **-0.7%** in the index position of **March 2016**. This was due to decrease in prices of **Timber** compares to the previous month.

Household Operation group recorded a decrease by **-3.0%** towards the index position of **March 2016**. This was due to decrease in price of **Electricity** and **kerosene** compares to the previous month.

Tobacco, alcohol & kava Tonga group index marked a decrease by **1.0%** compares to the previous month. This was due to decrease in price of **Winfield blue** compares to the previous.

Clothing & footwear groups index recorded no change compares to the previous month.

Transportation group index recorded a significant decrease by **2.7%** in the index position of **March 2016**. This was due to decrease in price of both **Petrol and Diesel** compares to the previous month.

Misc. Goods and Services group index recorded an increase of **0.4%** due to increase in price of some items compared to the previous month.

Detailed information from this release is available from the Statistics Department Or visit our website at www.spc.int/prism/tonga/