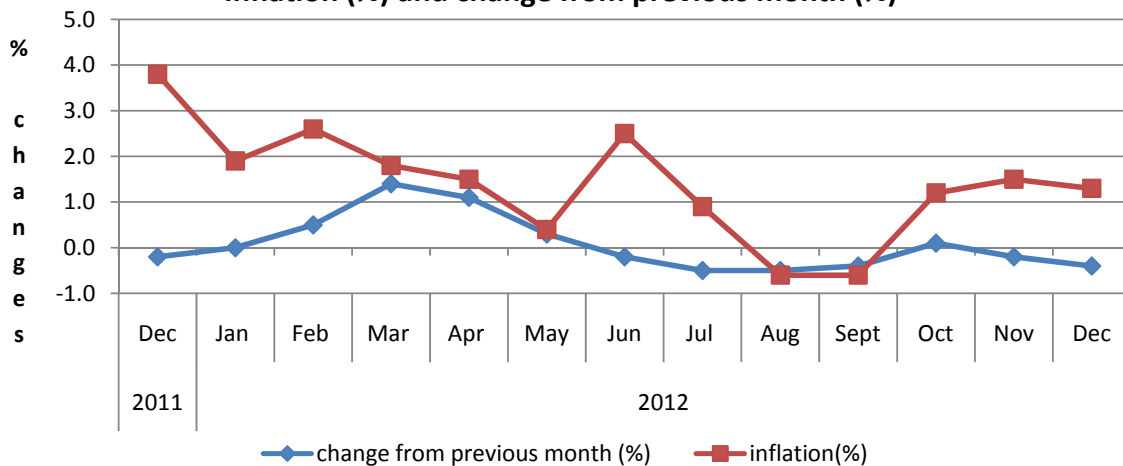




**GOVERNMENT OF TONGA
STATISTICS DEPARTMENT
MEDIA RELEASE**

**Consumer Price Index for December 2012 recorded a decrease of -0.4%
With an Annual Inflation Rate of 1.3%**

**Consumer Price index: December 2011- December 2012.
Inflation (%) and change from previous month (%)**



The **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** for December 2012 recorded a decrease of **-0.4%** over November 2012 (105.4) and now stands at 105.0. In comparison with the previous month, Local Indexes decreased by -2.3% and imported Indexes marked an increase of 0.9%. From the previous two months, October 2012 recorded an increase of 0.1% while November 2012 recorded a decrease by -0.2%.

The **Annual Rate of Inflation for December 2012 was 1.3%** compares to 1.5% in the previous month. Local Index marked a decrease of -0.1% while Imported Index marked an increase of 2.3%. The annual inflation for the same month of previous year, December 2011 was **3.8%**.

The Food Group marked the major decrease in the Index position of December 2012 by -0.9% due mainly to decrease in price of the Local food, fruits & vegetables like tomatoes, capsicum, cucumber, carrots, ripe & green banana, wetland & dryland taro, manioke and sweet potatoes. But Imported fruits & vegetables marked an increase causes by the increase in price of imported apple and onion. The Overall price of Meats, Fish & Poultry marked an increase causes mainly by price increase recorded in local seafood and imported meat such as octopus, mixed string fish, sea urchin, vasuva, chicken pieces, mutton flap and salted beef. In addition, Dairy Farm & Vegetable Products also recorded an increase causes by the increase recorded in price of egg, cheese and margarine. While Cereal & Cereal Products and Other Food marked a decrease due mainly to decrease in price of flour, sugar and tomato sauce compare to previous month.

Transportation Group marked the second largest decrease of -0.8% toward Index position of December 2012 due to increase in price of fuel both diesel and unleaded. While Household Operation Group marked the largest increase of 0.6% due to increase in price of LPGas.

Miscellaneous Goods & Services also recorded an increase of 0.1% due to increase in price of toothpaste while Housing, Clothing & Footwear, Tobacco, Alcohol & Kava Tonga remained unchanged compared to November 2012.

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