



Te Mana Arai O Te Kuki Airani

# COOK ISLANDS CUSTOMS SERVICE

## FACT SHEET 3

### DEPARTURE OF MARINE CRAFT FROM THE COOK ISLANDS

This fact sheet explains how Customs and Immigration departure procedures for marine craft departing the Cook Islands can be streamlined with some early preparations on your part. The following information will assist you to prepare for and comply with Cook Islands border departure requirements.

**WARNING: Failure to comply with the Cook Islands Customs laws may result in prosecution and the detention/seizure of your marine craft**

#### Summary of departure requirements for marine craft departing the Cook Islands

The Cook Islands Customs Service ("Customs") hopes you had a pleasant stay in the Cook Islands.

To meet Cook Islands departure requirements relating to marine craft you must:

- **Small craft/yachts** – Complete and send Departure of Yachts and Pleasure Craft Advanced Information Sheet (CICS Form 035) (optional but recommended to avoid delays to your departure);
- Complete Cook Islands Departure Cards for each person on board your vessel;
- Complete an Outward Report and deliver it to Customs not less than 4 hours before your intended time of departure;
- **Small craft/yachts** – If applicable, present the yellow copy of your Import Entry (Temporary) for Yachts and Small Vessels form (see Customs Fact Sheet 2)
- Obtain a Certificate of Clearance from Customs in relation to every Customs port you visited within the Cook Islands;
- Depart directly from a Customs port to a point outside the Cook Islands; and

- Depart immediately and directly to the intended overseas destination when clearance is given.

**Note: All information provided to Customs must be accurate. Providing an erroneous or a false declaration to a Customs officer is an offence punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding \$30,000. Customs may also elect to detain/seize your vessel pending prosecution.**

#### For small craft/ yachts - How can I ensure that there is no delay in my intended departure time?

To ensure there is no delay in your departure, we suggest you give notice to Customs 72 hours prior to your intended departure. You can do this by completing a Departure of Yachts and Pleasure Craft Advanced Information Sheet (CICS Form 035) and faxing it to +682 29465 or emailing it to: [customs.craft@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:customs.craft@cookislands.gov.ck)

This form is available:

- Online – [www.mfem.gov.ck/customs/customs forms/CICS 035](http://www.mfem.gov.ck/customs/customs%20forms/CICS035); or
- From the Customs officer who clears you craft on arrival.

#### How do I obtain a Certificate of Clearance?

To obtain a Certificate of Clearance you must:

- Have available for Customs inspection, completed departure cards and passports for every person departing on the craft;
- Have completed an outward report in the prescribed form;
- Provide a recent photograph of the craft, suitable for visual identification/search and rescue;
- Answer any questions asked by Customs officers relating to the craft, its crew/passengers, its stores and its intended journey;
- Produce any documentation required by Customs officers relating to the craft's passengers/crew, stores and intended journey; and
- **Small craft/yachts** – If applicable, present the yellow copy of your import entry (temporary) for Yachts and Small Vessels.

A Customs officer will attend at the agreed time and place of departure. On completion a Customs and immigration formalities, the owner/master will be issued a Certificate of Clearance.

**Note: Departing the Cook Islands for a place outside the Cook Islands without obtaining a Certificate of Clearance is a criminal offence punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$30,000. Customs may also elect to seize/detain your vessel pending prosecution.**

### **What happens after Customs issue a Certificate of Clearance?**

Once the Certificate of Clearance is issued by Customs the craft is required to proceed immediately and directly to the intended destination. Under no circumstances is the owner/master to cause the craft to go to any further place in the Cook Islands. If due to extenuating circumstances you are unable to do so, you must advise Customs immediately on Ph 29356/29366 (8am – 4pm Mon to Fri) or 55368

**Note: Failure to depart immediately from the Customs port where you obtain your Certificate of Clearance is a criminal offence punishable by a prison term not exceeding 2 years or a penalty not exceeding \$30,000.**

### **Where are the Customs ports of departure?**

All craft departing from the Cook Islands for an overseas place must depart from a nominated Customs port. These are located at:

- **Avarua**, Rarotonga
- **Avatiu**, Rarotonga
- **Arutanga**, Aitutaki
- **Akaiami Sea Landing**, Aitutaki
- **Taunganui**, Atiu
- **Omoka**, Penrhyn
- **Yato**, Pukapuka
- **Tauhunu**, Manihiki
- **Tukao**, Manihiki

Marine craft intending to depart from a non-Customs port (including Suvarrow Island) must first obtain authorisation from the Comptroller of Customs. To obtain this authorisation, you must submit an application using CICS Form 027 by:

- Facsimile to +682 29465; or
- Email to [customs.craft@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:customs.craft@cookislands.gov.ck)

**Note: Failure to depart from a nominated Customs port of departure without authorisation is a criminal offence punishable by a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a penalty not exceeding \$30,000.**

### **Am I allowed duty-free stores aboard my vessel?**

Duty-free stores can be arranged prior to departure through duty free businesses by way of the Cook Islands Customs Service approved requisition form (CICS Form 044). This form is submitted to Customs by the duty free business for approval.

Customs will allow these goods to be shipped free of duty from the Cook Islands subject to certain conditions. The conditions include:

- That the amount of goods is appropriate for the service of the craft, or for the use and consumption of passengers and crew;
- That the person in charge of the craft or their agent has obtained prior permission from the Comptroller of Customs;
- That the goods are entered for export;
- All receipts for the goods are presented to Customs;
- Customs is satisfied that the goods will actually be shipped; and
- That the craft is departing for a country outside the Cook Islands.

Stores purchased duty-free must be available for inspection by Customs at the time of your departure.

### **Further information**

#### **Information about duty free allowances and prohibited/restricted imports:**

A list of duty free allowances (concessions) and prohibited and restricted imports is included in the *Advise to Travelers brochure* provided by the Customs officer on departure.

#### **Firearms**

Prior to departure, you must contact the Cook Islands Police to arrange for any firearms detained on your arrival to be delivered to the vessel. You should ensure sufficient time is allowed for transport of the firearms to the port of your departure, particularly where this is different from the port of arrival. Contact your local police officer for assistance.

#### **Arrival of yachts and small craft into the Cook Islands**

For further information regarding Customs formalities for marine craft contact:

*Cook Islands Customs Service  
P O Box 120  
Avarua, Rarotonga  
Cook Islands*

*Outside the Cook Islands phone:*

Ph: +682 29365/29366

Fax: +682 29465

Email:

[customs.craft@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:customs.craft@cookislands.gov.ck) or:

[Customs.info@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:Customs.info@cookislands.gov.ck)

Website: [www.mfem.gov.ck](http://www.mfem.gov.ck)