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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

IBFC
SAMOA



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Legislative Updates
- Compliance Updates
- Digitisation of Registration Processes
- Samoa Companies Updates
- Trust Company Service Providers Spotlight
- Events

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TO UPDATES](#)



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Talofa and Greetings,

Welcome to the first edition of our 2026 Newsletter, covering the period from January to March.

The year has begun on a positive note, with the first quarter setting a strong and encouraging tone and marking meaningful progress across several key areas supporting Samoa as a preferred jurisdiction for international financial services.

A major highlight for the period has been the removal of Samoa from the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax related matters. This is a significant achievement for our country and our industry, reflecting years of focused work to strengthen our legislative framework, meet international standards, and demonstrate our commitment in ensuring Samoa remains a reputable jurisdiction for international finance services. The result is greater certainty and confidence for our clients and partners around the world.

We have also progressed important legislative updates, including tax reforms that signal our move toward a territorial tax system following the amendments completed in January 2026 as part of our efforts to safeguard the industry.

Samoa's removal from the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions marks a significant achievement for our nation and our industry - reflecting years of strengthening our legislative and compliance frameworks.

In this issue, you will find a closer look at these developments, including a summary of the legislative amendments passed during the quarter and what they mean for our industry, clients, and practitioners. We also share updated data on company registrations and incorporations for the period, providing insight into current activity levels within the industry. In addition, we highlight the successful rollout of new enhancements to our online registration system, and what these improvements mean for strengthening service delivery and further improving the ease of doing business going forward.

**OUR WORK ENSURES SAMOA
REMAINS COMPETITIVE,
FUTURE-FOCUSED, AND TRUSTED
BY CLIENTS AND PARTNERS
AROUND THE WORLD.**

I would also like to acknowledge the strong performance of one of our Trust Company Service Provider's during the period under review. Their commitment to compliance, service quality, and client care reflects the standards we continue to uphold as a jurisdiction. It is this collective professionalism that underpins the credibility of Samoa as a trusted provider of international financial services.

Looking ahead, we have a number of engagements and industry events planned in the coming months. These provide valuable opportunities to reconnect with partners, promote Samoa's value proposition, and continue strengthening relationships in key markets.

The progress made in this first quarter is encouraging, but we remain focused on the work ahead. Our priority continues to be maintaining a well-regulated, reputable, responsive, and internationally respected financial centre.

Thank you to our stakeholders, partners, and colleagues for your continued support. I hope you enjoy this first issue of our Newsletter and look forward to keeping you informed of our progress throughout the year.

Fa'afetai tele lava,

Tuifaasisina Sieni Voorwinden

THE MISCELLANEOUS (REMOVAL OF TAX EXEMPTION FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES) AMENDMENT ACT 2026 & LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Samoa continues to strengthen and modernise its financial regulatory framework through the enactment of the **Miscellaneous (Removal of Tax Exemption for International Companies) Amendment Act 2026**. This landmark legislation is part of Samoa's long-term efforts to enhance transparency and ensure international tax compliance, following its inclusion on the European Union list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions in 2017. The Act removes tax exemptions previously granted under several key legislations – including the International Companies Act 1988, International Insurance Act 1988, International Banking Act 2005, and Special Purpose International Companies Act 2012 – and will come into force in **January 2028**, allowing a smooth transition period for Trust Company Service Providers and their clients.

The Act's passage follows a full legislative process completed in January 2026, and its significance was quickly recognised internationally. On **17 February 2026**, the Council of the European Union officially removed Samoa from the EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions, reinforcing global confidence in Samoa as a cooperative and transparent jurisdiction. This milestone strengthens Samoa's international relationships, emphasises its commitment to high regulatory standards, and contributes to a more stable and credible environment for international business.

*REMOVING TAX
EXEMPTIONS TO
STRENGTHEN
TRANSPARENCY*

Looking ahead, several legislative reforms are underway. SIFA's Legal Division is partnering with the Ministry of Revenue (MOR) to finalise guidelines for a **territorial tax system (TTS)**, which will inform proposed amendments to the Income Tax Act 2012. This major reform aims to enhance clarity and improve international alignment, therefore remains a top priority for the financial year. In addition, a joint review of the **International Companies Act 1988** is assessing unallocated procedural fees and outdated fee structures to support cost recovery and regulatory sustainability.



Further, amendments to the **Trust Company Service Providers Regulations 2018** are progressing, targeting improvements in drafting consistency, the introduction of new cost-recovery fees, stronger deterrence against filing non-compliance, and clearer insurance requirements. These amendments have undergone industry consultation and are now with the Office of the Attorney General for final clearance.

REGULATORY & SUPERVISORY UPDATES

In safeguarding and enhancing Samoa's reputation as a trusted centre for international financial services, we continue to place capacity building at the forefront of our efforts. Strengthening expertise and capability across the sector enables us to effectively implement international standards, that we are committed to add to reinforce our compliance framework and foster a strong and robust culture of compliance among our licensed trust company service providers (TCSPs) and their clients.

Recent reforms including the removal of tax exemptions for our international companies and the upcoming introduction of a territorial tax system marks an important step forward in aligning Samoa with global best practices. These developments present valuable opportunities to strengthen our supervisory approach with a clear focus on meeting the economic substance requirements and the nexus approach. Encouraging genuine business activity in Samoa not only supports compliance but also contributes to sustainable economic growth, while ensuring clear and credible connection between income generation and economic activity matters particularly in the area of intellectual property income.



Our regulatory framework continues to evolve through the adoption of innovative risk-based approaches for AML/CFT supervision. With the support of technical assistance, we are developing advanced tools to enable us to focus resources where they are most needed. By prioritizing key risk indicators, such as organizational structure, type of customers, service offerings and delivery channels, we are enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of our oversight. In this context the risk assessment conducted by TCSPs on their clients is very important in strengthening the overall compliance ecosystem.

We are also making steady progress towards the establishment of a Register of Beneficial Ownership Information. Ongoing collaboration with international experts is ensuring that this framework is both robust and practical, in balancing transparency with cost effectiveness. The collection of essential identification information such as name, date of birth, nationality, tax identification number, will further reinforce Samoa's commitment to transparency and accountability.

Finally, our work on Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) continues to deliver strong and encouraging results. In close partnership with the Ministry of Revenue (MoR) we are advancing toward a comprehensive report for later this year. To date, we achieved an impressive 95% response rate from all our registered international companies with 84 financial institutions identified. Of these, 52 have been classified as reporting financial institutions and will soon be onboarded to the MoR portal for automatic information exchange. The remaining 32 classified as non-reporting financial institutions are asked to provide information to verify their status. Additional AEOI initiatives are underway with entities classified as non-financial institutions or non-financial entities. They must provide information to justify their status.

Together, these efforts reflect Samoa's ongoing commitment to excellence, transparency, and international cooperation, positioning the jurisdiction as a credible, compliant, and forward-looking participant in the global financial landscape.

DIGITIZATION OF REGISTRATION PROCESS

As the world continues to revolutionize, the race to automation is becoming the new norm. Business operations have shifted focus to digitization to ensure they meet customer demands and be more productive and competitive. SIFA has the same perspective in mind as we step towards achieving our long-term goal of becoming a paperless registry. This compliments well our vision of “moving with the times”.

However, our journey is not a race to automate, rather a step to transform and modernize our processes to cater for the rapid advance in technology especially for ease of doing business. On that note, we are excited to share our progress over the last four years. We had successfully automated our renewals, reminders, and strike-off processes. These processes were time consuming resulting in unnecessary amount of paperwork. The industry welcomed these new developments and encouraged us to continue our digitization.



The continued increase in registrations reflects growing client confidence in our team and the strength of Samoa as a preferred jurisdiction.

Thus in 2025, we started our work in automating the processing of our Certificate of Good Standing. Phase 1 of this work is now completed where our Trust Company Service Provider can now submit a request for Good Standing online and access the Certificate online through the SIFA Registration System. A new feature was also created as part of this work. The “document verification” reference where a user of our Certificate can verify the authenticity of these documents online via our website: www.sifa.ws.

This new feature now applies to all documents/certificates issued by SIFA via the SRS going forward. Transforming our processes from manual to online has been gradual due to competing priorities and challenges. The fear of losing confidentiality and adjusting to the use of electronic documents are some of these challenges. Despite this, we are adamant that time will tell and as the traditional way of doing business is slowly disappearing, everyone will accept and adapt to the new changes.

SAMOA COMPANIES UPDATES

SIFA has registered **more than 90,000** new international companies since inception. Noted are the companies on the Register as of 31 December 2025.

LIVE REGISTRATION FIGURES FROM JAN - DEC 2025

Live companies	30,661
New incorporations	2,389
Foundations	2

TRUST COMPANY SERVICE PROVIDERS SPOTLIGHT - ASIACITI TRUST SAMOA LTD.

As we review performance for the period January to March, we are pleased to recognize ASIACITI Trust Samoa Limited (ATSL) for achieving the highest growth rate in new company incorporations for the first quarter of 2026, compared to the same period in 2025. This achievement reflects strong momentum and the steady progress demonstrated by their team during this period.

The level of growth achieved highlights the confidence clients continue to place in ATSL. It is also a reflection of the trust built through consistent and reliable service delivery. Their operational processes remain efficient and well-coordinated, allowing incorporations to progress smoothly despite the increase in activity. At the same time, the team has continued to apply a thorough approach to due diligence, ensuring all regulatory requirements are met. Documentation continues to be prepared accurately and submitted on time, helping to minimize delays and maintain an organized workflow.



The positive results also reflect continued market interest in Samoa as a preferred jurisdiction for company formation. It reinforces Samoa's reputation as a credible and competitive international business centre, supported by trustees who can manage growth responsibly. Growth achieved alongside consistent compliance practices reinforces confidence in the jurisdiction and contributes to the long-term stability and reputation of the sector.

While this quarter's incorporation performance places ATSL at the forefront based on numerical growth alone, we recognize and value the ongoing efforts and contributions of all trust company service providers who continue to support and strengthen Samoa's international financial services industry.

We extend our sincere congratulations to ASIACITI Trust Samoa Limited (ATSL) on this achievement and look forward to seeing this positive momentum continue together with their ongoing contribution to the growth, credibility and strength of Samoa's international financial services sector.



UPCOMING EVENTS

April – May 2026 IWF Weightlifting Universal Cup

Samoa will host the 2026 Samoa IBFC Universal Weightlifting Cup for the very first time, from 25th April to 1st May 2026. This prestigious tournament, sanctioned by IWF, will bring together athletes from more than 70 countries, making it one of the largest international sporting events ever held in Samoa.

As the brand representing the promotional and outreach arm of the Samoa International Finance Authority, Samoa IBFC is proud to serve as the Naming Rights Sponsor of this landmark event. Building on a long-standing tradition of supporting Samoa Weightlifting, our sponsorship underscores our commitment not only to nurturing local talent but supporting Samoa on the global stage.

The Universal Cup is expected to attract significant global attention, with athletes, officials, and supporters contributing to tourism promotion, and stimulating economic activity across the country. Beyond the competition, the event will inspire the next generation of local athletes, engage communities nationwide, and reinforce Samoa's reputation as a proud and capable host dedicated to excellence inclusivity and the celebration of sport.



May 2026 - Hanoi, Vietnam

Team Samoa IBFC will embark on its first international mission of 2026 with a visit to Hanoi, Vietnam from 18th to 22nd May.

The visit will focus on raising awareness, sharing information, with meetings designed to introduce Samoa's international financial services offerings and engage with new and prospective partners. This engagement highlights our proactive commitment to strengthening international relationships and expanding Samoa's reach and reputation within the global financial services community.