

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS ON PACER PLUS

PACER was first signed in 2001 as a framework agreement aimed at developing trade and economic relations between the 14 Forum Island Countries and Australia and New Zealand. Articles 5 and 6 of the PACER Agreement are specific in triggering negotiations on PACER Plus. PACER Plus is a Free Trade Agreement that Samoa, together with other Forum Island Countries, is set to negotiate with Australia and New Zealand.

In October 2009, the Forum Trade Ministers agreed that extensive national consultations need to take place before any draft consolidated legal text on PACER Plus is to be tabled. The Ministers identified the following as priority areas for consideration in light of PACER Plus negotiations:

- Rules of Origin
- Trade Facilitation:
- Labour Mobility
- Development Assistance, focusing on physical infrastructure for trade, trade development and promotion

They also identified as other priority issues for discussion Services, including Health, Education, Telecommunications, Shipping and Aviation, Investment, Economic Cooperation and Environment including Renewable Energy.

In following this mandate, MFAT began Samoa's first round of national consultation in March 2010. To date, a total of 32 ministries, professional organizations, private sector organizations and civil society have been included in the first round of national consultations. This round is essentially aimed at giving participants a brief introduction to PACER and PACER Plus as well as gauging initial ideas from stakeholders on possible areas, they feel, should be included in such an Agreement. An overview of the key priority areas as identified by the Forum Ministers for initial discussions was presented and commented upon at these consultations.

As the Ministry prepares for further consultations with various stakeholders, we encourage written submissions on any issues a company, organization or individual may feel valid for consideration of Samoa's national interests under such an Agreement.

Submissions may be emailed to Henry Tunupopo at henry@mfat.gov.ws or Reina Wilson at reina@mfat.gov.ws of our Trade Division.

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