

Customs Talk: Passenger Clearance at International Airports

FS: What do passengers need to know regarding Customs clearance when arriving at international airports in Fiji?

ACEO: Fiji has two international airports in Fiji, namely Nadi International Airport and Nausori International Airport. FRCA offers two types of services to passengers arriving at any international airports. There are two types of services namely the Immigration (primary line) and Customs clearance (secondary line). The immigration officers verify travel documents for all arriving and departing passengers in Fiji and stamp passport for immigration purpose. The Customs officers present in the baggage Hall may conduct physical inspection of the accompanied luggage and may require passengers to answer questions relating to the content of the baggage.

FS: How does FRCA classify passengers arriving into Fiji through international airports?

ACEO: Passengers arriving at the border are profiled according to the risks. This is through advance passenger analysis which lays the foundation of our targeting ensuring that only legitimate movements are facilitated. For statistical purpose passengers can also be classified as tourists, diplomats, investors, returning Fiji citizens and people travelling to Fiji on business or work.

FS: How about those passengers in transit, do they have to go through clearance?

ACEO: There are two types of transits; firstly those that are transferred directly to the departure lounge who do not go through any immigration or customs clearance checks. This is for those who depart Fiji within 6 hours from the time of arrival. Secondly are those whose transit time in Fiji is more than 6 hours and would be classified like as normal bona fide passenger finally disembarking in Fiji. They will have to go through the normal passenger clearance and would check in again for their connecting flight.

FS: What other law enforcement agencies that assist control our borders at our International Airport?

ACEO: The Ministry of Health, Fiji Immigration, Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF), Airports Fiji Limited (AFL), and Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji (CAAF) assist in the border control for passenger disembarking at international airports. FRCA preforms duties and comply with legislative requirements of 23 other agencies at border when clearing passengers and cargo.

FS: What documents are required be submitted to Customs by a passenger when arriving at the international airport?

ACEO: The passengers are required to submit their passport with their completed arrival cards to Customs officers at immigration counters. The passenger may also need to provide more documents to Customs for the processing of their immigration documents. For example: for passenger traveling to Fiji for business or work purposes may need to provide travel itinerary, currency declaration, accommodation, work permit or investment permit, return airline ticket, valid visa if require. Tourists travelling to Fiji for holiday may need to provide travel itinerary, accommodation, return airline ticket and at times valid visa stamp on their passport. Returning Fiji residents may need to provide more information on their currency declaration and other requirements for clearance of unaccompanied personal and household effects.

FS: Following the immigration checks, what other processes does Customs check e.g. baggage and cargo?

ACEO: The secondary line Customs officers process passengers and may physically check their baggage content. Thus, passengers themselves decide on which channel to take depending if they have anything to declare of Customs and Bio security interest. The opening, unpacking and repacking of the baggage is the responsibility of the travelling passenger. Green lane if they have nothing to declare; and to the Red lane if they wish to voluntary declare anything.

FS: What happens, if the passenger is carrying dutiable goods (for example two extra bottles of liquor) and knowingly does not declare to Customs?

ACEO: The goods are detained by the Customs officer and the passenger is charged under the provisions of the Customs Act. The officer will assess duty on the extra 2 bottles and the passenger will be required to pay the duty and the fine failing to declare the goods.

FS: What happens if the passenger honestly declares that he or she have two extra bottles of liquor in their possession?

ACEO: The Customs officer will assess duty on the extra liquor and ask passenger to pay the duty. Once the passenger pay's the duty, the Customs officer will issue him or her with the receipt of the transactions. The passenger does not face any fines or penalties.

FS: What is the passenger allowance given to passengers at the time of arrival into Fiji for their personal use?

ACEO: Passenger can bring into Fiji, following quantities of cigarettes, cigars and tobacco;

- a. Cigarettes, not exceeding 200 sticks; Or
- b. Cigars, not exceeding 200 net grams in weight; Or
- c. Tobacco, not exceeding 200 net grams in weight; Or
- d. Any combination of the goods in (a), (b) and (c); provided the total net weight does not exceed 200 net grams; And

For example: 1 gross (with 200 net grams or sticks) locally produced cigarette can qualify as passenger allowance.

Passenger can bring into Fiji, following quantities of spirit liquors, wine or beer;

- a. Spirituous liquors, not exceeding 2.25 litres; Or
- b. Wine, not exceeding 4.5 litres; Or
- c. Beer, not exceeding 4.5 litres; Or
- d. Any combination of the goods in (a), (b) and (c); provided that the combination does not exceed the equivalent quantity.
- e. The travelling passenger should be 18 years and above to qualify for liquor, cigarette or tobacco allowance.

Normal Passenger can bring other dutiable goods not exceeding FJD\$1,000 in value for their own personal use.

Gold Card Holders can bring other dutiable goods not exceeding FJD\$2,000 in value for their own personal use.