Visa extensions for Yacht and crew in Tonga

In the past two years it has not been possible to spend a full season in Tonga. This is because crew can get extensions for a 6 month stay but the yacht cannot! I have been working with MFAT in NZ and the Tongan authorities to clarify the situation.

Tongan Immigration confirmed that yachties get a visitor’s visa on arrival, plus they can apply for up to 5 months extension of the visitor’s visa. The visa extension can be applied for in Vava’u or Tongatapu. (NZ and Australian passport holders get an initial one month. EU citizens get an initial 90 days).

The situation for the yacht is somewhat different. The boat gets 4 months when you arrive. Should you want longer an application has to be made to the CEO of Customs. The steps are as follows.

* Within 2 weeks of the 4 month expiry period, lodge the application. You will get a reply within one week.
* The application should state the name of the boat and the names of the crew.
* The application must be signed by a Customs Boarding Officer at either Vava’u or Nuku’alofa.
* Send the application to

Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Revenue and Customs,

Attn Mr Felefonu Mapakaitolo

Ports Authority Building

Hala Vuna

Nuku’alofa, Tonga

Ph: +676 23 651

Fax: +676 22 108

Email: felefonum@customs.gov.to

* The extension must be used within one year. It will not be for more than one year including the original 4 months.

By the Way, Mr Felefonu Mapakaitolo is the contact for all yachting matters, including pre arrival information. At email [felefonum@customs.gov.to](mailto:felefonum@customs.gov.to)

Thanks to Sau Niulala at the Tongan Revenue and Customs Department for clarifying this for us. His email is [saun@customs.gov.to](mailto:saun@customs.gov.to)