



HON. HARRY D KUMA MP
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Our Ref: RF460/3/40

Date: 27th August 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. John Lagi
Comptroller (Act)
Customs & Exercise Division
Ministry of Finance & Treasury.

From: Hon. Harry D. Kuma, MP
Minister for Finance & Treasury

RE: FOLLOWUP TO MY MEMO ON SUSPENSION OF SUFFERANCE WHARF.

This letter follows my previous memo of 18th August 2025 regarding the suspension of sufferance wharves. I thank you for accepting and accommodating the policy direction outlined therein, within the Comptroller's discretionary powers under Section 2 of the Customs Act (CAP. 121).

As stated in that memo, the suspension does not apply to the loading of round logs and mineral-related products for export at sufferance wharves. These exemptions remain in place. I note the recent request by Gold Ridge Mining Ltd (GRML) to offload a bulk import of quicklime at Penguin Wharf. Given GRML's role as a significant mineral exporter and national project, it is important to facilitate their request. However, if quicklime can be handled at Leroy Wharf, it is critical that GRML be directed there to ensure compliance with the domestic laws.

The Need to Comply with Domestic Laws

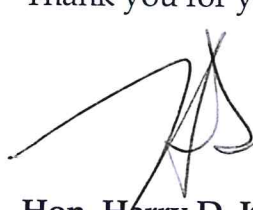
Historically, the use of sufferance wharves has been restricted to the loading of logs for export in various provincial locations. This was reasonable, as transporting logs to declared international ports would be impractical. By contrast, unloading and inspection of imported goods has always been conducted at the country's declared international seaports.

As Minister responsible for government budgets and finances, I acknowledge that discretionary powers are essential for the effective functioning of customs administration. However, such discretion must always be exercised within the framework of the law. This ensures fairness, justice, enhanced revenue collection, and compliance with other relevant legislation.

In this regard, I urge you to also consider the non-compliance of East Honiara wharves, including Penguin, with the Environment Act, as well as concerns raised by the Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA) regarding significant risks to international trade posed by the use of non-compliant wharves under ISPS standards. These wharves do not meet ISPS requirements. Furthermore, both the Honiara City Council and the Guadalcanal Province Planning Boards have confirmed that they have neither approved the construction of these wharves nor issued business licenses for their operation.

You will be aware that in the past, Customs authorities have exercised discretionary powers without sufficient regard to other laws. This has placed the Ministry of Finance and Treasury under unnecessary scrutiny. As a responsible and law-abiding government institution, I expect the Ministry to uphold all relevant and applicable laws in carrying out its responsibilities.

Thank you for your attention and consideration in this matter.



Hon. Harry D. Kuma, MP
Minister of Finance and Treasury
Ministry of Finance and Treasury.

CC: CEO, Solomon Islands Ports Authority
CC: General Manager, Leroy Wharf