



The Cook Islands Review

Looking to the Future

“The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power” - unknown

There has never been a more challenging time to be involved in the financial services industry.

International financial markets are extremely volatile due to geopolitical issues around the world. The relentless push continues from international organisations and the world’s major economies to impose international regulatory standards for transparency in tax matters and tighter banking regulations to control the international flow of funds and money laundering.

The resulting increase in compliance costs and difficulty in creating and maintaining international business and banking relationships forces clients to reassess their international investment plans, restructure, downsize, and often relocate to their home jurisdiction.

This all makes doing business extremely difficult. But this is the position financial service providers throughout the world find themselves in, including those in the Cook Islands, and they must find a way forward.

Cook Islands Finance (CIF) was established in 2009 to encourage, promote and develop the Cook Islands financial services industry. In recent years it has found itself working increasingly with Government and industry to navigate the technical and practical issues resulting from the acceptance and implementation of FATCA and CRS, as well as the requirements of the OECD, FATF and EU, than it has working towards its founding objective. This has been a matter of necessity. The recent activity of CIF is more fully detailed in its Annual Report 2018-2019 which has recently been published and is available on the CIF website (www.cookislandsfinance.com).

Whilst not ignoring its role in assisting the Cook Islands to meet its international obligations, the coming year will see CIF look to refocus on its primary reason for being. It will be applying its energy and resources to encouraging and developing new ideas and products and ensuring the Cook Islands remains relevant and competitive in the current international financial services market.

This refocus will be assisted by a restructuring of the CIF Board which will see increased representation from industry and in particular the Trustee Companies Association. Industry will have greater input into the strategic direction of CIF and how it applies its resources.

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The Cook Islands
Financial Services
Development
Authority now
operates as “Cook
Islands Finance.”

“Looking to the Future”



**Dallas Young, chair of
Cook Islands Finance
Board**

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Hon. Mark Brown, recently stepped down as chair of the CIF Board and appointed Ms. Dallas Young in his place. Ms. Young is an experienced professional with a strong history of working in the Cook Islands public sector with a focus on fiscal management, economic policy and strategic relations. Ms. Young sees her role as “facilitating discussion around innovative solutions and decisions at the Board level to the benefit of the industry as a whole for the long-term within the mandate of Cook Islands Finance” Her aim is to “empower Cook Islands Finance to be pioneering, resourced, and able to get on with the job.”

Looking to the future, positivity and solution driven thinking will be essential.

**“The Cook Islands
is not on the EU’s
AML/CFT blacklist
nor its list of non-
cooperative tax
jurisdictions.”**

In the News

EU “blacklist” updated

The UAE and Marshall Islands have been removed from the EU’s “blacklist” of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions, leaving nine jurisdictions on that list: Belize, Fiji, Oman, Samoa, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu and the three US territories of American Samoa, Guam and US Virgin Islands.

Cook Islands Finance CEO appointed

Alan Taylor has been appointed by the Cook Islands Finance Board as the full time CEO of CIF. Alan had been Acting CEO since December 2018. CIF is recruiting for a full time Marketing Director to take on Alan’s marketing responsibilities and generally looking to bolster its marketing resources.

Articles Published

The **10th Annual Trusts and Foundations Guide**, published by China Offshore (www.chinaoffshore.com.hk), contains information on Cook Islands trusts and foundations provided by Cook Islands Finance. It also contains a Q&A with Alan Taylor, Cook Islands Finance CEO. Alan answers questions on the key advantages and features of the Cook Islands’ trust and foundation laws, as well as the challenges faced when planning for the management of the wealth of Chinese HNWIs.

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Alan Taylor, recently appointed as CEO of Cook Islands Finance, will be at STEP Asia Singapore in November

Private Banking in the Cook Islands



Gerard Field, CEO, Capital Security Bank

CSB has a “dedicated Rarotongan banking team and a very conservative policy toward investing client funds”

The Cook Islands financial services industry is best known internationally for its innovative laws and expertise in administering and managing structures designed to protect wealth and provide for its seamless transition to future generations. In particular, the Cook Islands was a pioneer in asset protection trust law and remains a leader in that field.

The Cook Islands may not, however, be as well-known for the banking services it offers and in particular private banking to meet the needs of individuals seeking to enhance their wealth management plans. Those services are available in the Cook Islands through **Capital Security Bank (CSB)**.

CSB is the only full service private bank operating exclusively within the Cook Islands. It has been a member of the Cook Islands financial services industry since 1997. CSB’s CEO is Gerard Field who has over 25 years’ experience in banking working in international markets.

As would be expected from a full service private bank CSB offers cash, trading, managed investments and precious metal accounts. It can also provide a prepaid debit card for clients to access funds.

Gerard noted “We’ve been the Private Bank of the Cook Islands for 23 years. Our vision is to be the preferred private bank for our clients across the globe whether a Cook Islands entity or from further afield. We understand clients are seeking security of their funds while ensuring easy access when required. We achieve this through our dedicated Rarotongan banking team and our very conservative policy toward investing client funds.”

CSB does not lend but invests in a high-quality portfolio of highly liquid investment grade bonds and bank deposits which give it an excellent Tier 1 Capital ratio of over 18%.

For more information on Private Banking in the Cook Islands contact CSB or Cook Islands Finance.



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**The Cook Islands providing
financial services from the
heart of the South Pacific.**

Upcoming Events

Singapore: Alan Taylor , CEO Cook Islands Finance, will be attending the STEP Asia Conference being held in Singapore at Marina Bay Sands on 5-6 November, along with representatives from the Cook Islands financial services industry. Over a number of years the STEP Asia Conference has proved to be a must attend event for all professionals involved in the trust, tax and estate planning fields. Cook Islands Finance will once again be a major sponsor of the STEP Asia Conference, continuing its support of this outstanding event. We look forward to seeing you there.



**STEP Asia Conference 2018 was held in Hong Kong.
Cook Islands Finance will be a sponsor of the 2019
event to be held in Singapore**

Visit Our Website

We regularly add topical items under our Industry News webpage and post articles to highlight Cook Islands financial services and products to advisors, intermediaries, clients and those with an interest in what the Cook Islands can provide. Please visit our [website \(www.cookislandsfinance.com\)](http://www.cookislandsfinance.com) for more information.

About Us

The Cook Islands Financial Services Development Authority (“FSDA”), operating as Cook Islands Finance, is a government agency tasked with the promotion and development of the financial services industry in the Cook Islands. The FSDA was established in 2009 and functions independently from the Financial Supervisory Commission that regulates the industry. The FSDA focuses on promoting the Cook Islands and its financial services and products as well as coordinating on industry relevant issues. The FSDA is an important point of contact for any financial institution looking to establish a presence in the Cook Islands. Individuals seeking a Cook Islands financial service provider can find details on our [website. \(www.cookislandsfinance.com\)](http://www.cookislandsfinance.com)

Important Information: The Cook Islands Financial Services Development Authority, operating as Cook Islands Finance, does not provide advice, recommendations or opinions regarding legal and/or tax matters under any circumstances. To the extent that this communication, or anything referenced herein may concern tax matters, it is not intended to be used, and cannot be used, for the purpose of avoiding tax liabilities or penalties that may be imposed by law, foreign and domestic. The Cook Islands Financial Services Development Authority strongly recommends that before any person makes a decision to create a structure, professional legal and tax advice should be taken in his/her country of residence.