



Safety Of Life At Sea (SOLAS), Verified Gross Mass (VGM), effective as per 1st July, 2016

Effective from 1st July 2016, The SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea - Chapter VI, Part A, Regulation 2) regulations will come into place. This means a packed container will no longer be allowed to be loaded on board vessels unless its **Verified Gross Mass (VGM)** has been provided by the shipper to the ocean carrier, before vessel loading.

The new regulation was adopted by the IMO (International Maritime Organization) to increase maritime safety at ports and sea, in order to reduce the danger to cargo, containers, and all those involved in the container supply chain.

The Verified Gross Mass (VGM) is the weight of the cargo including packages and cargo items, lashing and securing, plus the tare weight of the container carrying this cargo.

SOLAS will oblige the **SHIPPER** to provide VGM in a “shipping document”, either as part of the shipping instruction or in a separate communication, before vessel loading. With the new regulation, the shipper showing in the bill of lading, or the entity authorized by the shipper, will be responsible to provide the VGM to the ocean carrier.

The Verified Gross Mass of the container must be obtained via either one of the following two weighing methods before the containers can be loaded on our vessels:

- 1) Weighbridge** - Requires weighing the container at a calibrated and certified weighbridge, after it has been packed and sealed, before delivery to the terminal.
- 2) Calculated VGM** - Requires weighing of all cargo and contents of the container at a certified weighbridge and adding those weights to the container’s tare weight as indicated on the door end of the container.

In respect of both Method 1 and 2, the weighing equipment used must meet the applicable accuracy standards, certifications and requirements of the country in which the equipment is being used.

**Without VGM information, to be provided by the shipper,
the container cannot be loaded on board our vessels!**

Please submit the VGM towards Seatrade USA via E-mail, FAX or Hardcopy

Below items are mandatory when you submit the VGM:

- Full Shipper name (must match shipper in B/L)
- Booking or Bill of lading number:
- Container number
- Verified Gross Mass (VGM)
- Unit of measurement / weight scale in KGS
- Signature (Responsible Party)
- Name authorized person

The general process of VGM data transmission is:



The VGM CUT-OFF time should be 24hours prior to the vessel arrival (ETA). Exceptions only to be discussed on case by case basis.

The terminal will accept your container without the VGM, however the VGM must be submitted before VGM CUT-OFF, otherwise the container cannot be loaded on the vessel. The shipper will be fully responsible for all the potential consequences, risk and cost arising from this regulation and/or delivery of the container without VGM.

For an overview of this regulation, the TT Club, World Shipping Council, ICHCA International Ltd. and the Global Shippers' Forum, jointly created and published a PDF document, which can be found on our website for easy reference: www.nagalogistics.com

Please also find the picture on page 3, created by JOC.com, for your clear guidance.

We trust to have informed you with this information, and remain at your disposal in case of any questions.

Yours sincerely,

NAGA Logistics

Source and References:

- [http://www.worldshipping.org/industry-issues/safety/SOLAS CHAPTER VI Regulation 2 Paragraphs 4-6.pdf](http://www.worldshipping.org/industry-issues/safety/SOLAS%20CHAPTER%20VI%20Regulation%20Paragraphs%204-6.pdf)
- [http://www.worldshipping.org/industry-issues/safety/faqs/SOLAS VGM Industry FAQs Dec 2015 US letter WEB.pdf](http://www.worldshipping.org/industry-issues/safety/faqs/SOLAS%20VGM%20Industry%20FAQs%20Dec%202015%20US%20letter%20WEB.pdf)
- <http://www.joc.com/special-topics/container-weights>

How to meet the container weight mandate

As a shipper, what are your options?

METHOD 1

Take a loaded container over a **weighbridge**, subtract the weight of the truck, chassis, and fuel to get the weight of the packed container.



Scales must be certified and calibrated in line with the national standards of the country where the weighing occurred and Method 2 is subject to national certification and approval.



METHOD 2

Weigh each item – **including its packaging, palleting, dunnage and other packing and securing materials** – going into the box.

Add that sum to the weight of the container to find the weight of the packed container.



What are you required to do?

Provide a document, paper or electronic, signed by the shipper to the shipping line and terminal declaring that the **shipper verified** the weight and that it was weighed properly.



The SOLAS amendment will be enforced by the coast guard or other agency responsible for SOLAS regulations in a given country and punishments for violations will vary by country.

What happens in the case of noncompliance?

There are all kind of possibilities for what could happen to the box that failed to provide the certified weight document but none are settled.

Terminals may choose to hold a container or send it back, but whatever happens, the ship will leave and the container will not.



All our activities are carried out on the basis of the conditions applying in the relevant industry with respect to the activities concerned. The 'Algemene Nederlandse Cargadoors Voorwaarden' deposited in the latest version at the Registry of the District Court in Amsterdam, Dordrecht, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Middelburg and Rotterdam and the Chamber of Commerce in Amsterdam, Dordrecht, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Middelburg and Terneuzen shall apply to the activities referred to in Article 1 of those conditions.