

## Verified Gross Mass of loaded container as from 01.07.2016

*As from the 01.07.2016 a new regulation will come into effect. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has amended the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) in Chapter VI, Part A Regulation 2, requiring the shipper to verify the Gross Mass of packed containers (VGM – Verified Gross Mass). According to this regulation the shipper is obliged to provide the Verified Gross Mass of each container prior to shipment on the vessel. Without this information containers may not be shipped on vessels any more. The reason for this new regulation is the discrepancy between notified and actual container weight. Discrepancies between these weights form a particular security risk for the vessel and its crew.*

*According to the regulation the “shipper” is obliged to provide the VGM. Hence, in case of FCL-containers this obligation has to be fulfilled by you as our customer.*

*The draft regulation provides for two methods to determine the VGM:*

- 1. **Method 1 – Weighing** – weighing the packed and sealed container using calibrated and certified weighing equipment.*
- 2. **Method 2 – Calculation** – weighing all packages and cargo items, including the mass of pallets, dunnage and other securing material to be packed in the container and adding the tare mass of the container to the sum of the single masses, using a certified method approved by the competent authority of the State in which packing of the container was completed.*

### **Requirements**

*For both methods a certification is required from the State in which the container has been packed and sealed. Weighing scales need to be certified by the competent authority and need to be in line with the corresponding tolerances of the State. It is not allowed to estimate the VGM and it is to be expected that the competent authority will randomly perform spot tests.*

### **Documentation**

*According to the regulation the shipper (i.e. the legal entity or person named on the bill of lading or sea waybill or equivalent multimodal transport document) is responsible for determining and documenting the VGM and providing the VGM in due time prior to the shipment to the vessel master or its representative. The exact deadline will vary for each shipping line. Should the documented VGM not be provided in time, the container will not be loaded on the vessel. The document with which the VGM is transmitted has to be signed by the shipper or somebody appointed by the shipper. These rules are valid for all container types, but not for bulk or out of gauge shipments.*

*We will further monitor the situation / progress on this important topic and keep you further informed about the development but we would recommend that you inform yourself in time about the pending local regulation and adapt your systems accordingly.*

# How to meet the container weight mandate

## As a shipper, what are your options?

### OPTION A.

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.



### OPTION B.

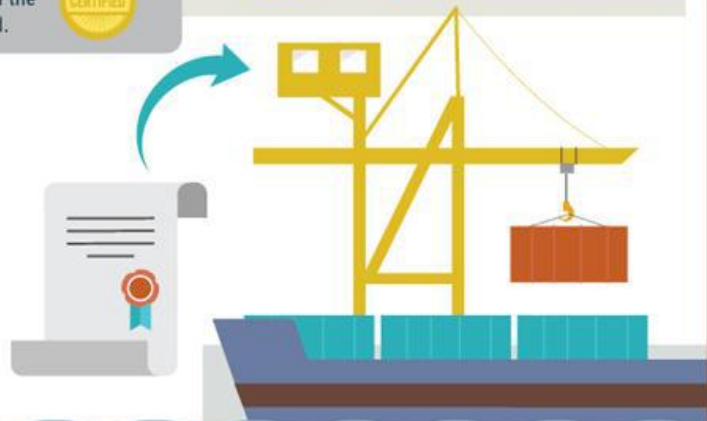
Weigh each item – including its packaging, palleting, dunnage and other packing and securing materials – going into the box.

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 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.

