

SOLAS Regulations

Safety of Life at Sea

Verified Gross Mass (VGM)

As from 1st July 2016, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) enforced the Safety of Life at Sea Conventions (SOLAS) requirements regarding the verification of the gross mass of packed containers.

“A packed container will not be allowed to be loaded on board vessels to which the SOLAS Convention applies unless the Verified Gross Mass (VGM) of the container has been provided to the ship’s master or his representative and to the terminal or its representative sufficiently in advance to allow for the edition of the loading plan.”

From this date each loaded container will need a verified gross mass to be carried and loaded aboard a ship.

Who is responsible for the registration of the weight?

The shipper is responsible for obtaining and documenting the Verified Gross Mass of a packed container. In this connection a shipper is a company, a legal entity or a natural person, which is named in the freight documents.

It has to be said that the SOLAS requirements cannot be associated with the INCOTERMS requirements. In any case the shipper is responsible for the correctness of the VGM, even if a third partner is instructed with the capture and documentation of the weight.

It is not allowed to estimate the weight of a container or the content of it.

Please also be reminded of this regulation: If the Verified Gross Mass is not provided, the container will not be loaded onto the ship.

How can the VGM be determined?

The Verified Gross Mass, also known as the VGM, means the total gross mass of a packed container which can be obtained by one of the two methods described below:

Method No. 1

Using calibrated and certified equipment, the shipper or a third party duly appointed by the shipper weighs the packed container at the end of the stuffing operation once the seal is affixed.

The scales, cradle bridge, lifting station or other device which is used for the inquiry of the container gross weight must correspond after present default in Germany to the exactness class III or higher by the directive in 2009 / 23 / the EC and be calibrated. This method is suited for every kind of goods which are packed in a container

Method No. 2

The shipper or a third party, by arrangement of the shipper, weighs all packages, cargo items, pallets, dunnage and other packing and securing material and adds the tare mass of the container. The total sum finally obtained is the weight to be provided. This method is subject to certification and approval by the competent authority of the State in which the packing and sealing of the container was completed.

Shippers, who want to determine the gross weight by addition of the single components, must ensure a certification subject to ISO or AEO. A scales of the **accuracy class III of the guideline 2009/23 /EG** has to be used for weighing.

The party who takes over the loading of the container may not rely on the package data which were made available to him by a third.

The tare weight of the container is shown on the door of the container.

The original-sealed packages which are marked clearly and permanently on the respective surfaces with the verified gross weight (VGM) of the parcels and packages, incl. all packaging materials, don't have to be weighed again at the container loading.

How must the VGM be documented and communicated?

We need a completely filled container VGM declaration to ensure a smooth loading operation and transport according to the SOLAS VGM regulations

It is mandatory to keep all relevant data as well as the cradle marks and calculation documents for the weight inquiry properly and within the time limit in case of a check.

Which data is part of the container VGM declaration?

The declaration VGM will be provided to you already partially pre-filled.

We kindly ask you to provide the following information for each container:

- Container type and size
- The container No.
- The VGM and their unit (kg or to)
- The complete name of the person in charge, which is authorized by the shipper to determine the VGM
- Should you have assigned third in your name with the inquiry of the VGM, the name of the company and person in charge must be given.
- The details for the inquiry of the VGM (applied method, certificated cradle mark, cradle date & time as well as a shipper reference are optional and can be added as needed).
The form can be used for several containers or the following deliveries (on the same day) under the same booking reference.

When must the VGM be transmitted?

The VGM data has to be transmitted to us immediately after loading and sealing of the container. The gross weight of the container has to be transmitted on time, so that the shipping company and the port of loading terminal have enough time for creating of a stowage and loading plan.

Further information about the country-specific SOLAS requirements under the following link:

http://www.deutsche-flagge.de/en/presentations-of-the-bmvi-info-event-on-11-4.2016?set_language=en (only in german)

<http://www.worldshipping.org/industry-issues/safety/global-container-weight-verification-rule-effective-july-1-2016>

With best regards
Your PM SHIPPING Team