



Dear customers, business partners,

Let us inform you about a significant change, which from **1<sup>st</sup> July 2016** will affect the transport of the goods by sea and will affect to all exporters.

### **What's SOLAS?**

In order to improve the safety of maritime transport, the **International Maritime Organization** (IMO) amended the SOLAS convention (Safety of Life at Sea), which establishes the obligations and responsibility of shippers to declare the actual weight (Verified Gross Mass - VGM) for all marine shipments. This Convention shall be binding on all 171 members of the IMO. The effective date of the new regulation was established on July 1, 2016.

### **Verified Gross Mass**

Verified Gross Mass (VGM) is the total actual weight of transported cargo, including Tare of container, weight of the cargo, packaging, pallets, lashing material and such. The responsibility for entering the VGM has always shipper (as stated on BL). VGM will be at ports and terminals randomly checked and in case of any differences between the actual and the declared weight (on BL) will be found; such container will be applied rule as given by the ocean carriers – **Container without VGM will NOT be loaded on the ship**. This will have, of course, consequences, - not only delay, but also additional costs for demurrage, detention, handling etc.

### **Determining VGM**

#### **There are two methods for weighing**

Method 1: Weighing the whole container after it has been packed (e.g. weighing the whole truck and containers at certified weighbridge and subtracting truck and chassis weight).

Method 2: Weighing all the cargo and contents of the container individually, and adding those weights to the container's tare weight. Factor in additional loading equipment weight, if any.

The shipper can do the weighing themselves, or ask a third party certified for such service (some terminals do provide this on premise). However, according to Chapter 2 of the IMO SOLAS Guidelines, any weighing equipment used to weigh the contents of the container must standards and requirements of the country or state in which the equipment is being used.

In addition, the method used for weighing the container's content is subject to the certification and approval as determined by the competent authority of the state in which the packing and sealing of the container are completed.

Weights set-up according to estimating or writing down weight from factory production plate (for cars and machinery), **will not** be accepted and will be considered as incorrect figure. The weights **have to be documented** and in case of irregularities able to presented to the shipping line as evidence (weighing ticket or weight calculation).





## VGM impacts on exporters

The regulation is globally legal-binding. All 171 IMO member countries have undertaken to implement regulation's amendments, including those in relation to verified gross mass (VGM), in their respective jurisdictions.

So in fact it means, that each exporter from **1<sup>st</sup> July 2016** have to have prepared solution how to provide VGM for each shipment. Unfortunately, even this rule is globally same for the whole world, till now are not well known some details. Information about tolerance of possible weight difference says from 0% to 2-3%. As closer the date of start will be, we do trust to receive and share with you

VGM have to be provided to us right after the loading, as it has to be provided to the shipping line on time. Our colleagues will inform you case by case till when, for which carrier, we need to have documents about the VGM in our hands

If you have any further questions, doubts or refinement information contact your Person in Charge in Advance AIRSEA

For more details you can visit below web page of IMO

<http://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Safety/Cargoes/Containers/Pages/Verification-of-the-gross-mass.aspx>