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Verification of the Container Gross Weight (Weight) (VGM) Amended Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations effective July 1st 2016

Dear valued customers,

With the following bulletin we would like to inform you about the upcoming legal amendments and their impact on the transport of containers by sea. Our information is based on the recent announcements, which have not yet been adopted into local law. All information is provided on a "without prejudice" basis.

Why amended SOLAS/VGM regulations?

Reporting of lower than actual gross weights for containers is potentially dangerous, regardless of whether the maximum payload of containers is being exceeded or not. Therefore, to ensure the safety of personnel in the ports and at sea, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) introduced an amended regulations stating that the gross weights of all sealed containers must be verified, documented and obtained prior to loading onto a vessel.

What will change?

Effective 1st July 2016, the verified gross mass (VGM) of each sealed container must be reported to the carrier prior to loading. It is the shipper's responsibility to communicate the VGM to the carrier. Exporters who use ocean carriers that transship their cargo in "hub ports" should be ready to comply with the new regulation before 1st of July.

VGM – What does it include?

The verified gross mass of a container includes the gross weight of the goods and it's packaging, the weight of the securing material as well as the tare (weight) of the empty container.

How can the VGM be determined?

There are two methods to determine the VGM:

1. Method: Weighing

The shipper weighs the sealed container to determine the VGM. The weighing equipment must be calibrated and certified by national standards.

2. Method: Addition

The shipper adds up the weights of all packages and the securing materials inside the container. Finally the tare weight of the container is added. In order to make use of this method, the responsible party needs its method to be certified. This method is not suitable for any kind of bulk cargo.

Note: With either method there must be a signature of a responsible person!



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What consequences are possible?

If the VGM is not communicated to the carrier in time, the container will not be loaded. All charges will be for shippers account.

Do you have any further questions?

There are still many open questions related to this topic, mainly due to the fact that national agencies have not yet published a final national framework of rules and regulations. If you have any questions, please kindly address them to your local sales or customer-service representative. We will keep up-dated about any news regarding this topic.

Where do I get more information?

<http://www.worldshipping.org/industry-issues/safety/cargo-weight>

With best regards,

Your a. hartrodt Team

* No responsibility can be taken for the correctness of this information

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