



Compulsory Verified Weighing of Export Containers SOLAS IMO Marine Order 42

As of 1 July 2016, the Verified Gross Mass (VGM or declared weight) of an export container must be provided before it arrives at an Australian container terminal.

If you are a freight forwarder, there are a number of ways in which you may wish to inform your clients and clarify responsibilities. One possible method is to discuss the new requirements with your clients, using the following steps.

MAKE A TIME TO VISIT YOUR CLIENT AND DISCUSS COMPULSORY VERIFIED WEIGHING

Use the opportunity of a sales call, a relationship building discussion or some other opportunity.

DISCUSS THE CHANGES TO MARINE ORDER 42 AND THE NEED TO VERIFY ALL EXPORT CONTAINER WEIGHS

There has always been a requirement to weigh containers (previous MO42 / Chain of Responsibility).

You must now verify that the gross mass is weighed using a device that has been calibrated and certified. If you don't, your export container will not be accepted by the terminal and will not be loaded.

DISCUSS WEIGHING METHODS

METHOD 1: Weigh the whole container.

METHOD 2: Weigh the units, packaging, all dunnage and add the tare of the container.

Discuss the need to use a weighing device that is calibrated and certified.

Any device that falls under the National Measurement Institute (NMI) legislation will have a certification seal/label. For those weighing devices that don't fall under the legislation, a number of organisations can test the scale to see whether it fits within the applicable maximum permissible allowances. Some of these providers can be found on the NMI website: <http://www.measurement.gov.au/TradeMeasurement/Licensees/Pages/ServicingLicensees.aspx>

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Use the new **SOLAS app**

Those loading and transporting containers can find some information on how to handle aspects of the new requirements from the easy-to-use CoR/SOLAS app, a form of ready reference at your fingertips. **Search for SOLAS in your App store.**



REMIND YOUR CLIENT THAT THEY NEED TO RECORD WEIGHTS

There is no prescribed method of recording weights or retaining the print-outs (where they are available), so you should use a process that best suits your business.

If you are using a device that does not print-out or electronically send the readings to your database, you may need to consider a means of noting the weight and the packing unit to which it relates (Methods 1 & 2). If using Method 2, one possible means of doing this may be the following:

- Print a container loading tally sheet
- Note the container number and tare weight
- Individually weigh the items (dunnage, pallets, etc.) and include the weight of anything else going into the container
- Keep loading tally sheet in export job file in case of audit.

In the end, you need to be confident that you can show how you arrived at the weight declared should you be faced with an audit.

REASSURE YOUR CLIENT THAT THE WEIGHT PROVIDED IN THE PRA WILL BE ACCEPTED AS A VGM

By properly completing the PRA (Pre-Receipt Advice), you are submitting a VGM.

Certain information must be shown to the master of the vessel prior to the container being loaded, including:

- Container number
- Container type/ISO code
- Container tare weight
- Cargo gross weight
- Verified gross mass total
- Method of weighing (Method 1 or 2)
- Signature and date.

In Australia, a container cannot enter a terminal unless it has a booking through the Vehicle Booking System (VBS) and has a PRA with a clear/accepted status.

The PRA contains all the information required for the terminal (noted above), and therefore the master of the vessel, to accept and load the container.

Once accepted, if you have any changes to the VGM in the PRA, you will be required to resubmit it. The container may be rejected and removed if the VGM is changed once it has entered the terminal.

OBTAIN AUTHORITY FROM YOUR CLIENT FOR YOUR COMPANY TO DECLARE A VGM ON THEIR BEHALF

To ensure a smooth operational and administrative flow, you should consider obtaining a letter of authority from your clients to declare the VGM on their behalf.