

SOLAS CONVENTION

Starting from July 1st 2016 a new regulation has come into force: **SOLAS**, acronym for Safety of Life at Sea, an international convention by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), aimed at guaranteeing the safety of operations of merchant ships, and especially the protection of human life at sea.

The VGM is given by the weight of goods, packaging and possible lashing materials, plus the container tare weight.

SHIPPER = subject stated in the bill of lading responsible for checking the gross mass of the container being transported (Verified Gross Mass: VGM).

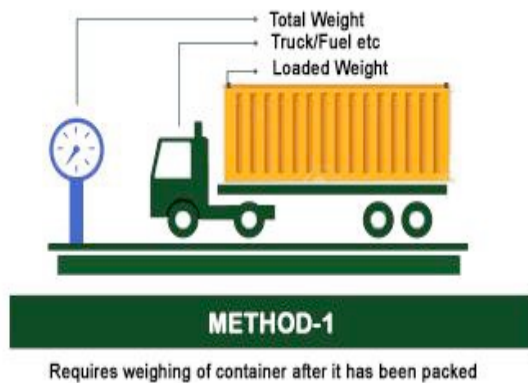
VGM = it must be sent to both the ship's master and the terminal operator. Without this important document, the container cannot be loaded on the ship.

TIMES OF VGM TRANSMISSION = when the loading operation is over, the VGM must be immediately sent to Forwarding & Logistic in time to send it to the carrier to allow for the cargo plan processing.

METHODS TO GET THE VGM

METHOD 1

THE CONTAINER IS EMPTY AND INSTALLED ON THE CHASSIS-TRAILER = weighing of vehicle + container (empty at entrance and load at exit with the addition of tare weight deducted from the "CSC plate" detectable from the container itself).



METHOD 2

The shipper – or a third party in charge- can weigh the single elements da be loaded adding them to the container tare weights based on the following steps:

STEP 1 = weighing of packages and cargo items: the weight of the single packages and cargo items is determined based on the specific certifications. In case the weight cannot be deduced univocally from the documentation, it will have to be established by the shipper using calibrated and certified equipment:

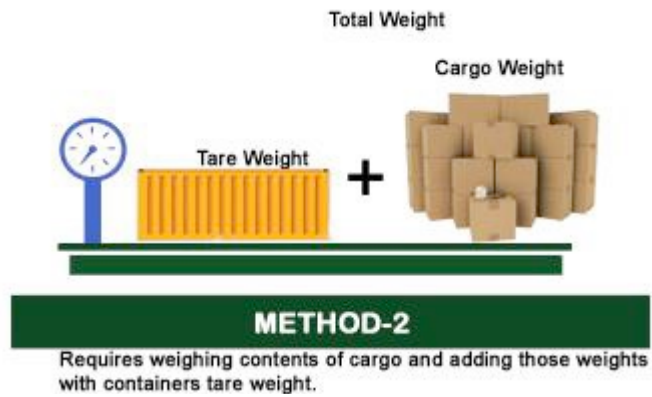
STEP 2 = weighing of pallets, fixation materials and bottom boards: the weight is determined through the information provided by the supplier;

STEP 3 = determination of the container tare weight: the shipper must calculate the container tare weight (based on the CSC Plate).

The summation of the weights obtained during the above steps represents the VGM (verified gross mass) of the container.

As for the detections of VGM with Method 2, the circular letter N. 133/2017 states that it is allowed only for the operators having the status of AEO (Authorized Economic Operator as per the Union Custom Code), i.e. having a Quality Management System according to the UNI/EN/ISO 9001 or ISO 28000 standards.

A 3% tolerance of the verified weight (VGM) is allowed in case of checks and tests before shipping.



OBLIGATION TO DECLARE THE VGM

The circular letter states that the shipper is responsible for declaring the VGM: without this piece of information, the container cannot be loaded; moreover, the circular letter N. 134/2017 sets forth the penal sanctions in case of false declarations in the Shipping Document.

For further information on the new SOLAS regulation, please visit the following website:
www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Safety/Cargoes/Containers/Pages/Verification-of-the-gross-mass.aspx