

	Information Notice 2016-001
	DEPARTMENT OF MARINE SERVICES AND MERCHANT SHIPPING (ADOMS)
	Container Weighing

Verification of the gross mass of packed containers - amendments to SOLAS regulation VI/2

1. These amendments will enter into force on 1 July 2016, and are set out in full in the annex to resolution MSC.380 (94) (see annex 1). The main issues which introduce the requirement for the gross mass of a packed container to be verified by the shipper prior to loading on a ship are covered in this notice.
2. The Maritime Safety Committee also approved the Guidelines regarding the verified gross mass of a container carrying cargo (MSC.1/Circ.1475), with a view to establishing a common approach for the implementation of the SOLAS requirements regarding the verification of the gross mass of packed containers.
3. The verification of the gross mass of a packed container may be achieved by either of two methods:
 - .1 Weighing the packed container using calibrated and certified equipment; or
 - .2 Weighing all packages and cargo items, including the mass of pallets, dunnage and other securing material to be packed in the container and adding the tare mass of the container to the sum of the single masses, using a certified method approved by the competent authority of the State in which packing of the container was completed.
4. In accordance with the new paragraph 6 of SOLAS regulation VI/2, if the shipping document, with regard to a packed container, does not provide the verified gross mass and the master or his representative and the terminal representative have not obtained the verified gross mass of the packed container, it shall not be loaded on to the ship.
5. Ultimately, and in conformance with the Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing, the ship's master should accept the cargo on board his ship only if he is satisfied that it can be safely transported. Nothing in the SOLAS regulations limit the principle that the master retains ultimate discretion in deciding whether to accept a packed container for loading onto his ship. Availability to both the terminal representative and to the master or his representative of the verified gross mass of a packed container sufficiently in advance to be used in the ship stowage plan is a prerequisite for the container to be loaded onto a ship to which the SOLAS regulations apply. It does, however, not constitute an entitlement for loading.

6. In Antigua and Barbuda, it is intended that export containers will all be weighed in accordance with method 1 utilising equipment that has been deemed suitable by the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards. Alternatively method 2 may be used by shippers that have been approved by the Bureau of Standards. In both cases, the related certification and calibration shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Bureau of Standards.
7. Empty containers can utilise the tare weight which visually appear on the container in accordance with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard for container marking and identification provided it can be confirmed that the container is indeed empty.
8. With regards to Port State Control within Antigua and Barbuda it is intended that ADOMS will conduct random inspections to determine that the requirements for both export and import containers have been met, usually in conjunction with vessel inspections.
9. In order to clarify responsibilities; MSC.1/Circ.1475 defines Shipper as a legal entity or person named on the bill of lading or sea waybill or equivalent multimodal transport document (e.g. "through" bill of lading) as shipper and/or who (or in whose name or on whose behalf) a contract of carriage has been concluded with a shipping company.

Issued April 2016

Annex 1 – Text of SOLAS Regulation VI/2 Ammendment**CHAPTER VI CARRIAGE OF CARGOES AND OIL FUELS****Part A
General Provisions****Regulation 2 – Cargo information**

The following new paragraphs 4 to 6 are added after existing paragraph 3:

- 4 In the case of cargo carried in a container*, except for containers carried on a chassis or a trailer when such containers are driven on or off a ro-ro ship engaged in short international voyages as defined in regulation III/3, the gross mass according to paragraph 2.1 of this regulation shall be verified by the shipper, either by:
 - .1 Weighing the packed container using calibrated and certified equipment; or
 - .2 Weighing all packages and cargo items, including the mass of pallets, dunnage and other securing material to be packed in the container and adding the tare mass of the container to the sum of the single masses, using a certified method approved by the competent authority of the State in which packing of the container was completed.
- 5 The shipper of a container shall ensure the verified gross mass** is stated in the shipping document. The shipping document shall be:
 - .1 Signed by a person duly authorized by the shipper; and
 - .2 Submitted to the master or his representative and to the terminal representative sufficiently in advance, as required by the master or his representative, to be used in the preparation of the ship stowage plan***.
- 6 If the shipping document, with regard to a packed container, does not provide the verified gross mass and the master or his representative and the terminal representative have not obtained the verified gross mass of the packed container, it shall not be loaded on to the ship.

* The term "container" should be considered as having the same meaning as defined and applied in the International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC), 1972, as amended, taking into account the Guidelines for the approval of offshore containers handled in open seas (MSC/Circ.860) and the Revised recommendations on harmonized interpretation and implementation of the International Convention for Safe Containers, 1972, as amended (CSC.1/Circ.138/Rev.1).

** Refer to the Guidelines regarding the verified gross mass of a container carrying cargo (MSC.1/Circ.1475).

*** This document may be presented by means of EDP or EDI transmission techniques. The signature may be an electronic signature or may be replaced by the name, in capitals, of the person authorized to sign."