

# Practical guide to VGM

As of **1<sup>st</sup> of July 2016**, an amendment to SOLAS implies that shippers are required to provide the Verified Gross Mass (VGM) to the carrier as a condition for loading onto a ship for export. This practical guide illustrates the procedure.

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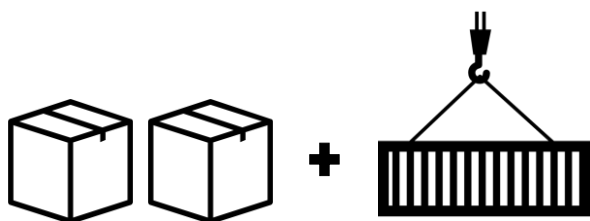
## WHAT IS VGM?

The Verified Gross Mass (VGM) is the shipper's declared total gross mass of a packed container, including all cargo individually, dunnage and materials used.

The weight submitted as VGM has no relation to the gross weight mentioned on packing list or HBL.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

It is solely the shipper's responsibility to provide this information to the carrier. Under the SOLAS requirements, the shipper named on the OBL is the party responsible for providing the certified gross weight certificate irrespective if delegated to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party or similar.



*All cargo individually,  
including dunnage and  
materials used*

*Container tare weight*



## HOW IS VGM DETERMINED?

### Method 1

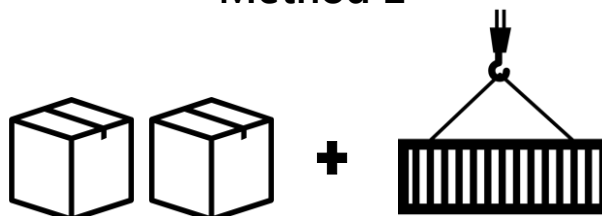


*Total weight*

*Weight of truck and  
chassis*

The entire stuffed container is weighed on a certified scale.

### Method 2



*All cargo individually,  
including dunnage and  
materials used*

*Container tare weight*

All cargo individually, including dunnage and materials used, is weighed whilst stuffing container, and when the loading is completed, the container tare is added.

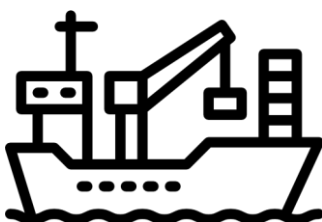
## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

In case of noncompliance or wrongly declared VGM, the carriers will refuse the cargo, and it will neither be possible to gate-in nor to load the cargo. This will most likely have cost associated, e.g. storage, extra trucking and perhaps even penalties and dead freight. These cost and liabilities are solely for the shipper/responsible party for declaring VGM.

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NO VGM, NO GATE-IN



NO VGM, NO LOAD

## LOCAL REGULATIONS

Please note that local authorities set the regulations locally and that all parties are responsible for getting familiar with the local rules.

SOLAS does not stipulate any margin for errors since this is a physical weighing requirement and adequate equipment and procedures should be used to meet the legal requirements. Fines and other penalties will be imposed under national legislation.

Local and national legislation will dictate the consequences of loading a container without a VGM. Moreover, local terminal operators determine deadlines and cut offs to provide the VGM.

## LAYOUT OF CERTIFICATES

There is no mandatory format for the layout of the certificates issued at this time. SOLAS is not expected to introduce one either, but the carriers may standardise the requirements globally or locally in due time.