



UNIVERSAL FORWARDING OVERSEAS NEWSLETTER

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SOLAS- VERIFIED GROSS MASS REQUIREMENT

Update from our newsletter dated: March 22, 2016:

Universal Forwarding Overseas (UFO) would like to update you on the new requirement regarding Verified Gross Mass (VGM) that is currently scheduled to become effective July 1, 2016. The Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) will require the VGM of containers to be declared before they are allowed to be loaded on a vessel. This requirement is being put into effect in order to avoid misdeclared container weights that can contribute to vessel accidents.

VGM is the total gross mass of a packed container which includes the cargo weight, block and bracing materials, and the container tare weight. It is the shipper's responsibility to provide the VGM and it can be calculated using one of the following methods.

Method No. 1 – Weighing:

Weigh the packed container using certified weighing equipment.

Method No. 2 – Calculating:

Formula: Mass of cargo + all packaging + container tare mass= VGM

The container tare mass is normally listed on the container. Also, some carriers will provide a database listing container tare masses.

Universal requirements for submitting the VGM to ocean carriers prior to loading have not been officially released yet. This is causing confusion among shippers who are unsure how soon the VGM needs to be declared. Containers will not be loaded if the VGM is submitted late. However, the Ocean Carrier Equipment Management Association (OCEMA), has released a publication named OCEMA's VGM Best Practice highlighting some of the submission standards they are recommending.

According to this publication, a VGM cutoff date/time will be advised by the carrier at the time of booking. The preferred method of VGM submission is electronic submission. The party submitting the VGM must also certify it as correct by signing the document or providing an electronic signature. A link to this publication is provided below.

<http://www.ocema.org/docs/OCEMA%20VGM%20Best%20Practice.pdf>

Universal Forwarding Overseas, Ltd (UFO) will provide updates on this requirement as more information becomes available. Thank you for your continued support.

As always, please contact Marc Mugfor (mmugfor@ufold.com) with any questions or concerns on the above information.

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