



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

Bulletin No.: 04/2016
RDIMS No.: 11733860
Date: 2016-05-12
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Subject: CANADIAN PROCEDURE FOR VERIFICATION OF THE GROSS MASS OF PACKED CONTAINERS

The *Canada Shipping Act, 2001* and section 104.(1) of the *Cargo, Fumigation and Tackle Regulations* (CFTR) require every shipper of cargo to be loaded in Canadian waters, to comply with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), Chapter VI, regulation 2.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted amendments to SOLAS Chapter VI, regulation 2 to:

- improve container safety;
- enhance maritime safety; and
- reduce the dangers to container ships, their crews and all involved in moving containers through the supply chain.

These new amendments which come into force on July 1st, 2016 require the shipper of a packed container to provide, in a signed shipping document, the container's verified gross mass (VGM).

The shipper must determine VGM using one of two methods.

Method 1: When a container is packed and sealed, the shipper may weigh, or have arranged that a third party weigh it.

Method 2: The shipper or, a third party arranged by the shipper; may weigh:

- each item of cargo (including packaged, non-packaged, unitized cargoes),
- dunnage (loose material under and between items to prevent damage to cargo)
- any securing material that will be loaded into a container.

Keywords:

1. Verified Gross Mass
2. Container safety
3. Calibration and certification

Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:

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Then add the tare mass of the container to the sum of the single masses of the container's contents.

A packed container will not be loaded onto the ship until the master or his representative and terminal representative either receive the shipping document containing the verified gross mass of the container or have the verified gross mass of the container obtained by using either Method 1 or Method 2.

Shippers, carriers, forwarders and terminal operators need to plan how to apply these new SOLAS requirements in an efficient and effective manner. They all have a strong incentive to encourage compliance, to avoid disruptions in the supply chain.

We encourage shippers to use trade approved weighing equipment to fulfill the SOLAS requirements. This will ensure they declare accurate container weights according to the well-established and understood regulatory regime for weights and measures.

Measurement Canada, an Agency of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, has authority under the *Weights and Measures Act* and its regulations, to administer and enforce trade measurement in Canada.

To help shippers comply with these new requirements, Transport Canada, Marine Safety and Security (TCMSS), in consultation with Measurement Canada, various stakeholder's groups and associations, has developed the attached transport publication (TP) "*Canadian Procedure for Obtaining the Verified Gross Mass of Packed Containers as Required by SOLAS VI/2*" TP 15330.

Note: The Verification of Gross Mass is not required for packed containers carried on a chassis or a trailer, and driven on or off a roll on / roll off ship engaged on:

- an inland voyage,
- a sheltered waters voyage,
- a near coastal voyage, or
- Class 2 and near coastal voyage, Class 1.

To learn about the calibration and the certification of weighing equipment for the purpose of trade, the shipper may contact any of the authorized service providers (ASP) listed on Measurement Canada's web site at:

<https://www.ic.gc.ca/app/mc/asp/srch/aspSearch.html>

This publication is available on line at the following link:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/tp-menu-515.htm>

Container safety is a shared responsibility. All parties have an interest in improving ship and cargo safety; and reducing risks to crew and others throughout the supply chain.