

Dear Clients,

This is to inform You, that following the changes to the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention, approved by International Maritime Organization (IMO), a mandatory container weight verification (or VGM – Verified Gross Mass) requirement on Shippers will enter into force on July 1, 2016. The changes of SOLAS convention will require verification of container weights before loaded containers may be placed on board of the ship.

If the shipping document, with regard to packed containers, does not provide the verified gross mass, the Shipping Lines as well as Container Terminals will be obliged not to accept/ load such containers on to the ship.

As per clarification of SOLAS Convention, it will be the Shippers responsibility to verify container gross mass, to submit the data to the Forwarder and / or Shipping Line. The data received will be listed in KIPIS (Klaipėda Port Information) system as well as the systems of Shipping Lines.

The gross mass of a packed export container shall be verified by the Shipper using either of the two methods:

- Weighing the packed container using calibrated and certified equipment, and issuing VGM certificate (declaration), or indicating VGM in the shipping document.
- 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.

We would like to emphasize, that:

- With reference to the order, being prepared by Lithuanian Maritime Safety Administration, the Shipper of the cargo is obliged to store for 3 years all the VGM data, including container weighing certificates, certificates of weighing equipment and all the relevant data;
- With reference to the Supplement article No 217¹ to the Administrative Offenses Code of the Republic of Lithuania, the administrative responsibility (fines) is provided to the responsible person and head of the company, for the submission of incomplete or false data;
- The Shipper of the cargo is responsible for the submission of VGM before the packed containers are stowed aboard ships, and takes all the financial and other risks, related to the incidents, such as delay of container departure and etc., because of false VGM data submitted.

In order to meet the requirements of SOLAS convention, and to ensure smooth and timely departure of containers from the port of Klaipeda, we ask You to initiate submission of VGM data starting from June 20, 2016.

If you have any questions, or you do not have a possibility to verify container gross mass, please do not hesitate to contact us – we will arrange certified weighing of the containers in the container terminals or find other places to make container weight verification.