

# The Verified Gross Mass (VGM) SOLAS Convention

From the 1st July 2016, providing the vessel and terminal operators with the verified gross mass "VGM" prior to vessel loading will be a legal requirement for all shipments beyond 200 nautical miles offshore. The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea of 1974, with subsequent Amendments and Protocols, known as SOLAS (from "Safety Of Life at Sea") aims at preventing accidents resulting from shipper's non-declaration or mis-declarations of cargo weights.

Which method?	How to calculate the VGM?	Type of shipment	
		Case Goods/Kegs containers	ISO tanks/Flexitank containers
<b>Method 1 Weighing</b> 	Weigh the packed and sealed container. It can be performed by the shipper or a third party contracted by the shipper.		
<b>Method 2 Calculating</b> 	Add all packages and cargo items weights, the tare mass of the container and the sum of the single masses of the container's content, including the mass of pallets, dunnage and other packing and any securing material to be packed in the container.		

The data provided must meet with Local/National Laws/Rules, the same applies for the devices and processes used for weighing as mentioned above, it must be calibrated/certified in accordance with Local/National Rules. Enforcement and "policing" of VGM rules remain with the local government authorities, responsible for maritime affairs.

(Declaration may vary from port to port)

## What do we need from you?

Using the method described previously exporters will be responsible for providing JF Hillebrand with your goods' accurate gross weight to avoid delays, cancellation and additional costs. Please remember to provide us with the VGM (in kilos / Lbs), the container's number (indicated on the right-hand door) and seal number.

You will also need to add this information onto your packing lists and/or your commercial invoices. Please ensure to be consistent when carrying over this information in your customs declaration and/or your commercial documents.

JF Hillebrand will take care for the correct processing of data along the transport chain. We will relay the container's VGM to carriers prior vessel loading as required by the new regulation.

## What happens in case of non-declaration or mis-declaration of VGM ?

SOLAS imposes an obligation on the carrier and the terminal operator not to load a packed container aboard ship if the VGM has not been provided so "no VGM – no Load".

If the weight is incorrect, the container will be detained then weighed, resulting in delays and additional costs for the shipper.

If the verified gross mass is not communicated in time it could jeopardise the container being loaded aboard ship. The consequences will be the same as in mis-declarations or non-declarations of VGM.

The amendment points out that in case of collision damage the shipper's liability can be sought.

If you have any questions regarding the upcoming SOLAS regulation requirements, [please contact your local JF Hillebrand representative.](#)  
[World Shipping Council FAQ.](#)