



Date: May 1, 2015

**To: Ship Owners / Managers / Operators of Container Vessels and Vessels Equipped for Carriage of Containers**

**Subject: Container Weight Verification**

**Reference: SOLAS VI Chapter 2, MSC.380(94), MSC.1/Circ.1475**

The IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) approved changes to the SOLAS Convention regarding a mandatory container weight verification requirement on shippers.

A new requirement was added to SOLAS VI Chapter 2 by the adoption of Resolution MSC.380 (94).

This requirement will become legally effective on July 1, 2016. After that date, it would be a violation of SOLAS to load a packed container onto a vessel if the vessel operator and marine terminal operator do not have a verified container weight.

Shippers, freight forwarders, vessel operators, and terminal operators will all need to establish policies and procedures to ensure the implementation of this regulatory change.

Under the SOLAS amendments, there are two methods shippers may use to determine the container weight once the container packing process has taken place:

1. Weighing the packed container using calibrated and certified equipment; or
2. Weighing all packages and cargo items, including pallets, dunnage and other securing material, and adding the sum of these weights to the tare mass of the container using a certified method approved by the competent authority of the State in which packing of the container was completed.

This verification does not apply to containers carried on a chassis or a trailer when driven onboard ro-ro ships engaged in short international voyages (not more than 200 miles from port).



Certain types of cargo items (e.g. scrap metal, unbagged grain and other cargo in bulk) do not easily lend themselves to individual weighing of the items to be packed in the container. In such cases, usage of Method No.2 would be inappropriate and impractical, and Method No.1 should be used instead.

The shipping document, signed by the shipper, is to be submitted to the master or his representative and to the terminal in advance for use in preparation of the ship's stowage plan.

In the absence of documentation from the shipper, the container shall not be loaded unless the master or his representative and the terminal representative have obtained the verified gross mass through other means.

The "Guidelines Regarding the Verifies Gross Mass of Container Carrying Cargo" -MSC.1/Circ.1475 provides recommendations on how to interpret and apply the provisions of the SOLAS requirements.

If you have any questions and/or concerns, please feel free to contact me directly at [nbmarine@consultant.com](mailto:nbmarine@consultant.com), +1(504) 520-9540 or visit our web site at [www.nbmarine-consultants.com](http://www.nbmarine-consultants.com)

Respectfully Yours,

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