



FAQs

Verified Gross Mass -
Container Weighing

samskip

> Top 12 Frequently Asked Questions

1 What is the scope of the new SOLAS rules?

All Samskip related sea transport of laden containers. Empty and cleaned tank-tainers do not require a VGM. Tanktainers with residues do need a VGM however.

2 Who is 'the shipper' under the SOLAS requirements?

Either the shipper named on the ocean bill of lading or sea way bill or equivalent multimodal transport document (CMR) or the one who has concluded a contract of carriage with Samskip is the party responsible for providing the maritime carrier ('master') with the verified gross mass (VGM) of a packed container.

A forwarder acting as agent (putting the carrier and shipper in a direct contractual arrangement), will not be named as shipper on the bill of lading. A forwarder acting as principal (entering into commercial relations with carriers) will be named as shipper on the bill of lading.

3 Can I determine which weighing method I use to determine the VGM?

Interpretation can vary per member state. For instance, in some states, method 2 (virtual weighing) requires ISO/AEO accreditation or formal registration with the competent authority of the state. Please check with the local governing body.

4 How should I report the VGM to Samskip?

Providing the VGM is easy. All you need to do when placing your order via EDI or by e-mail, is to simply include the (estimated) VGM excluding container weight. After booking you will be able to update the VGM via EDI or the Samskip web portal.

Samskip is currently working on the IT systems. In May/June we will invite our clients to start trialling the online portal, in preparation of the effective date 1st July 2016.

5 a When should I provide the VGM to Samskip?

Prior to arrival of the (tank)container onto the terminal of which the sea-going vessel will depart. The VGM is required in order to prepare the stowage plan of the ship.

The effective date will be as from the first IMO loading port on or after July 1, 2016. Please note that if you ship end of June 2016 and the last sealage takes place after July 1, 2016, the VGM will be required for this shipment.

b Should I already provide the VGM when placing the order?

If, when placing your order, you do not yet have the exact Verified Gross Mass excluding container weight, simply provide an estimated VGM excluding container weight.

If the VGM is not known yet, Samskip will provide your estimated VGM excluding container weight on the booking confirmation. After booking we will send you updates on the VGM. We will, for instance, add the container weight to the provided information.

With every update you receive, you will find a direct link to our online portal where you will be able to update the VGM if required.

6 Is Samskip obliged to check the VGM?

No. Samskip will only need to ensure that the VGM has as a condition for ship loading been communicated sufficiently in time to be used in the ship stow planning process.

Samskip has:

- No obligation to check the correctness of the VGM;
- No obligation to notify shipper or governmental authorities;
- No obligation to weigh a packed container for which the shipper has already provided the VGM.

7 a Can Samskip provide the exact container weight of the container?

Yes, Samskip can provide the exact container weight. In case of shipper's owned equipment the exact container weight will need to be provided to Samskip.

b Can Samskip assist me in weighing the container at a charge and what is that charge?

Yes, depending on the port of loading, Samskip can probably assist. Samskip has published a list of publicly available weighbridges and will continuously update this list. So far, only a limited number of terminals have a weighbridge; those that have are often still contemplating on the exact weighing charges.

8 What jurisdiction does apply (load port or load country)?

The competent authority of the state in which the packing and sealing of the container was completed. For instance, if a container is packed and sealed in Milano (IT); then loaded onto a vessel in Rotterdam (NL) to arrive in Grangemouth (UK), Italian jurisdiction applies.

9 What are the consequences if I do not provide the VGM or an incorrect VGM?

Non-compliance will inevitably incur additional costs and charges, already recoverable under usual contract of carriage terms that may be expected to include weighing costs, repacking costs, administration fees for amending documents and demurrage charges.

On top of this fines and other penalties may be imposed under national legislation. (Note: The new SOLAS requirements apply equally to both under and overweight containers.)

10 Will the weight found on a CMR or other paperwork presented to Samskip, be used to update the VGM?

No, Samskip will not update the VGM following any paperwork provided.

11 The SOLAS requirement derives from safety aspects. Cargo mass information may also be required for Customs purposes. If the VGM declared for SOLAS purposes subsequently is amended, for example after actual weighing of the packed container, does Customs need to be informed?

No. SOLAS does not regulate Customs matters. The mass required under SOLAS versus Customs requirements may be different; e.g. Customs may require cargo mass, while SOLAS requires the total VGM of the packed container.

12 What is the procedure for part loads/less than container loads (LCL)?

This will depend on your contractual arrangement with the co-loading freight forwarder that enters into the contract of carriage with the carrier and thus becomes the shipper to the carrier; see question 2.

Disclaimer: interpretation can vary per member state.

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