

## **INFORMATION**

### **on performance in the Russian Federation of the requirements of the amendments to the SOLAS Convention**

adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2014 (entered into force on the 1 July 2016). The amendments require each loaded on board a ship container to be accompanied by a document containing its verified gross mass (VGM).

The verification of the gross mass of a packed container may be achieved by weighing the packed and sealed container (method 1) or 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 (method 2).

There's no standard form of the document confirming the verified gross mass of the container. The VGM can be specified in the bill of lading or other similar document or in a separate document attached to the bill of lading. Such document can be issued in paper or in electronic form.

The shipper is liable for verifying and issuing of the document confirming the VGM of the container. The shipper must provide the master of the vessel intended to load containers on board as well as the terminal performing the loading of the container by the verified and duly documented VGM of the container before the loading commenced.

If the VGM of the container has not been duly verified and documented, the ship's master shall not accept the container for stowage on board.

In May, 2016 the MSC of IMO approved a circular calling on the port State, flag State, shipowners and shippers to adopt the pragmatic approach to the beginning of application of the requirements concerning VGM verification, meaning that if the container is loaded on a ship before 1 July 2016, it might have no documental confirmation of its VGM within 3 months after that date.

Since the new requirements are the part of the SOLAS Convention they are subject to control by port State according to regulation I/19.

The Committee of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control at its 49th session considered the mechanisms and procedures for inspections by port State (for Europe only) to control the fulfillment of the requirements of the container gross mass verification taking into account the "pragmatic" approach.

The Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control calls on all stakeholders, including the port State to apply the practical and pragmatic approach for a period of 3 months after 1 July 2016, - (till the 01 October 2016) permitting packed containers that were loaded on a ship before 1 July 2016 and are transhipped on or after 1 July 2016 to be shipped to their final port of discharge without the VGM specified in SOLAS regulations VI/2.4 - VI/2.6;

The Russian Maritime Register of Shipping (RMRS) is assigned on behalf of the Russian Federation to carry out the verification of gross mass of the packed container by means of method 1 and method 2.

The availability of the calibrated weighing equipment that meet the requirements of the national law as well as the compliance with the SOLAS requirements of the method of weighing and of document issued upon the results of weighing are the subject of the certification of the organization by RMRS.

The information concerning RMRS and realization its functions (procedures) is available on the website of RMRS: <http://www.rs-class.org/ru/register/services/container/>.

The list of certified organizations is published on the website of RMRS: <http://www.rs-class.org/ru/register/lists/vgm/> and sent to the Harbour Masters of the Russian Federation (port State control authorities).

During inspection and clearance procedures on arrival and departure Port State control should make sure that the master of the ship and the terminal received the documents with VGM of the packed container planned to be loaded (already being loaded) on board the ship.

If the document does not contain information on the VGM of the packed container, this fact should not lead to detention. In this case, the deficiency with the code 01316 "Cargo information" will be recorded.