



Marine Department
The Government of Hong Kong Administration Region

Notice to SHIPPERS (Cargo Owners)

The Amendment to SOLAS Chapter VI Regulation 2 demanding verification and declaration of gross mass (VGM) of packed container set for international shipment will be in force on 1 July 2016. Local legislation, the Merchant Shipping (Safety) (Carriage of Cargo) Regulation (Cap. 369AV) has been revised to give effect to the new requirement and shall be in force on the same day.

The Amendment to SOLAS Chapter VI Regulation 2 requires Shipper to verify the gross mass of packed container by either of the 2 methods (“Method 1” and “Method 2”) described in the guideline and declares subsequently to Carrier. Method 1 is known to be the direct weighing of packed container after sealed. While Method 2 is the accumulation of mass of all items inside packed container and the tare mass of the container. As suggested in IMO’s guideline, the procedure of applying Method 2 to acquire the verified gross mass of packed container has to be certified or approved by the local Administration. The process is to ensure Shippers or Forwarders carrying out Method 2 understand and adhere to the principle of application so that the accuracy of the result delivered comparable to that of Method 1. Any incorrect verified gross mass declared could cause the delay of shipment of the packed container. In the past 2 weeks, hundreds of operators in the Forwarding industry had registered with Marine Department as Method 2 users. **Shippers (owners of cargo) are strongly advised to register with Marine Department as Method 2 users irrespective of whether Shippers (owners of cargo) may seek assistance from Forwarders for signing the Bill of Lading or not.** You can imagine if the Forwarders have to weigh all cargoes to be packed in a container to meet the VGM requirements, the time involved not to mention the cost will definitely affect the container shipment schedule that no one would like to see.

Please note that the registration is a one-time process and requires no fee. Marine Department pledges to render all assistance to all applications to assure the registration carried out smoothly and at the earliest.

Marine Industrial Safety Section
Marine Department
1 June 2016