



Regional Container Lines

Definition for VGM (Verified Gross Mass)

VGM = Total Weight of Cargo, Loading Aids, Dunnage and Tare of Container to become effective July 1st, 2016.

Purpose for VGM (Verified Gross Mass)

This requirement was deemed necessary in order to ensure Shippers provide the accurate and reliable total weight of the container to the carrier for safety reasons. Many accidents occurred, causing injuries to people and assets, as a result of inaccurate weight declarations.

Basic requirement

The Shipper has to provide to the ocean carrier the Verified Gross Mass (Weight) of the Container, including cargo weight, weight of all loading equipment and materials, dunnage and the tare weight of the container) along with a Signature (can be electronic) identifying the person responsible for the declared weight. This information has to be provided to the carrier, most likely before delivery to the carrier's port terminal.

Implementation

All countries which are members of the IMO (International Maritime Organization), a United Nations Agency, will have to implement VGM.

Weighing Methodologies

1. Weigh the packed/laden container.
2. Weigh all packages, packaging and dunnage material and add the tare weight of the container.

Responsible Parties

The shipper shown on the B/L is responsible for providing the VGM declaration, signed/identified by company and individual person. This declaration can be provided in paper or electronic form.



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Container Tare Weight

The container's tare weight is shown on the door of the container. Some shipping lines have container weight information available on their websites.

Weight Tolerance

VGM weight tolerance is under consideration. Numbers mentioned but not confirmed are 5% with maximum of 500 Kgs.

Terminal Constraints

Legally and theoretically the container can be weighed at the terminal. However, not all terminals will have the infrastructure to perform this service, especially when considering the huge volume of containers passing through a terminal. Having the weighing performed at the port could lead to substantial congestion and delays.

Weight Declaration on Shipper's Shipping Instruction

The purpose of the VGM is to advise the ocean carrier/terminal of the total container weight, including container tare weight, for safety purposes, most likely latest at the time container is being delivered into the carrier's custody at the port terminal. Therefore, the VGM reported to the carrier doesn't not have to match the weight shown in the B/L. The VGM is used by the carrier to prepare the vessel's stowage plan.

Standard Process Flow

1. Shipper to consolidate and send VGM to Carrier and Terminal directly or via shippers' appointed vendor through following either one of following means :
 - a. Portnet
 - b. EIR (Equipment Interchange Receipt)
 - c. Shipping Order or Shipping Instruction
 - d. Container Load Plan
 - e. 3rd Party Weighing Certificate
 - f. VERMAS (IMO EDI Facility)
 - g. Other local official documents based on local practice
2. In case of 3rd Party has been officially appointed by local authorities to carry out weighing and issue weight certificate, this 3rd party can consolidate and send VGM to Carrier and Terminal via VERMAS or manual Excel Sheet for uploading.

3. After container being weighed at weight bridge, below possible scenarios may arise :
 - a. For VGM verified with discrepancies less than 5% or 500kgs, container can proceed to CY stack. Tolerance level is subject to change depending on local practice.
 - b. For VGM verified with discrepancies more than 5% or 500kgs, container could be diverted to waiting area or returned to shipper's premises. Tolerance level is subject to change depending on local practice.
 - c. For those manual declarations without any rectification with or without weighing at Weight Bridge, container could be diverted to waiting area or returned to shipper's premises.
4. All official documents must be duly signed by authorized personnel from shipper's company except those declaration via Portnet
5. For locations without VGM implementation e.g. Iran, Export customs documentations declared by shipper will be the only source to be used for updating VGM. Manual calculation using gross cargo weight plus container tare weight has to be carried out at these locations.
6. For containers involved in item 3b and 3c, Carrier has to decide on the acceptance with discrepancies and inform Terminal and Shipper for loading or withdrawal after analyzing risk and vessel capacity during Pre-Loading Planning.
7. VGM data flow between Terminal and Carrier :
 - a. If shippers declared VGM directly to Carrier, Carrier needs to consolidate and send to Terminal for Pre-Loading Planning via EDI, Excel Uploading, Baplie or Manual report.
 - b. If shipper declared VGM directly to terminal with copy to Carrier, Terminal needs to consolidate and send to Carrier for Pre-loading Planning via EDI, Excel Uploading, Baplie or Manual report.
8. VGM data will be flowed into booking and Easy Load List in RCL Dolphin System for usage in subsequent processes. RCL can also provide same VGM data manually or EDI to Partner and Non-RCL Carrier.
9. Shipper is responsible for any cost involved in withdrawal processes caused by VGM discrepancies.
10. After loaded, gross cargo weight stipulated in SI plus container tare weight must not exceed 5% or 500kgs of verified VGM.

11. Failing which, no BL will be issues until shipper clarifies the discrepancies and revise shipping instruction.
12. For SOC and Partner TS Shipment, VGM ex 1st leg MLO vessel/voyage should be verified at POLs. This verified weight can be processed through following ways for 2nd leg RCL connecting vessel/voyage :
 - a. Portnet data from discharger to Loader.
 - b. IMO VERMAS from MLO to RCL.
 - c. EDI data transfer.
 - d. Manual report using excel sheet.
13. For SOC and Partner Local shipment, VGM verification processes should be carried out as per local practice at RCL POLs similar to RCL processes mentioned above.
14. In case of any non-compliance to VGM verification processes, SOC and Partner will deal with own shipper directly before proceeding for loading RCL vessel/voyage.

Disclaimer note and remark:

The information is merely for general guidelines, to the best knowledge of RCL. Different ports have different operating requirements with may differ from these general guidelines. RCL bears no responsibility for any inaccurate information which is provided on good faith for purpose of facilitating containers' operations .