

## Getting Ready for July 1 SOLAS VGM Weight Requirements

by Rich Roche - Monday, June 20, 2016



The new SOLAS VGM weight requirement is rapidly approaching its July 1 effective date.

Mohawk has introduced a submission form that can be used in any country to report VGM. The form can be found [on our website](#) and is designed to be submitted via email, fax or as a hardcopy to Mohawk. The data from the form will be transferred to EDI for transmission to the carrier and terminal per the SOLAS regulation. This form has also been adopted by the National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America for all 1000+ member companies to use.

### Still Under Development

With less than two weeks to go before implementation of the new SOLAS VGM requirement, processes are still being defined or developed. The two original methods of weighing may now be augmented with yet another method or two, which are being offered for consideration by the U.S. Coast Guard. In their recent [Marine Safety Information Bulletin](#) to the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the U.S. Coast Guard states that U.S. exporters are already in compliance and should not have to change their process of tendering the gross weight of the cargo. The U.S. Coast Guard also states that there may be

other acceptable methods of providing Verified Gross Mass (VGM), which include the marine terminal weighing containers on behalf of the shipper.

## Enforcement

The IMO has acknowledged the U.S. Coast Guard letter with a [letter of their own](#), asking that the ratifying countries exercise three months of leniency in enforcement, while the industry comes together in support of this new regulation. They also acknowledge the need for flexibility in procedures, documentation, communication, and sharing information as the process continues to evolve.

## Soft Start?

While these clarification letters seem to grant us all more time to perfect the process, they do not postpone the effective start date of July 1. We strongly urge all of our clients to develop an internal process to submit VGM data either directly or through Mohawk's services by July 1. You should plan to submit either your own Method 2 weights and tare, or contact us to arrange Method 1 scaling. Exporters may also find our form useful for submitting VGM data. We urge importers to verify with your suppliers that they will be in compliance with their own country's local regulations on VGM submission. Our form can be used internationally as well. Please feel free to forward our [form](#).

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