Notice to Shippers

Date:
04/05/2016

Subject:
Update on SOLAS Verified Gross Mass

Dear valued Customer,

As from 1st of July 2016 the amended SOLAS regulation regarding Verified Gross Mass (VGM) will come into effect. After that date, if the ship operator and terminal operator do not have a VGM for a container, it would be in violation of SOLAS to load that packed container onto a ship.

We notice that there are still some discussions within the shipping industry about the upcoming changes. Let us therefore give you some further guidance and clarify DAL's position on some aspects.

Responsibility for the VGM submission

The shipper shown on the bill of lading is responsible to provide the VGM. He can also delegate this responsibility to a third party, including the terminal operator or the carrier. In any case the shipper remains responsible to ensure that the carrier and terminal operator receive the VGM sufficiently in time to prepare the vessel stowage plan and the shipper will be responsible for any costs arising from missing VGM's.

DAL is not obliged to cross-check the VGM data received by the shipper and will also not verify whether the correct method/certification has been used by the shipper.

Determination of the VGM

The shipper can determine the VGM by using the following methods:

- Method 1: Weighing the container after it has been packed.

- Method 2: Weighing all cargo and contents and adding the container's tare weight. Depending on the national implementation the shipper might be obliged to use a certified method approved by the competent authority of the state in which packing of the container was completed.
  When calculating the VGM following Method 2, the shipper should use the tare weight displayed on the container door.

Required VGM data

The shipper needs to provide the following mandatory VGM data to DAL:

- Container number
- Booking number
- VGM [in kg]
- Name of responsible person (in capital letters if transmitted electronically)
- Signature (not required if transmitted electronically)
- Weighing date

Additional data required for containers to be loaded at TPT terminals in South Africa:

- Weighing Method
- SAMSA accreditation number (where Method 2 is utilized)

VGM cut-off times

The deadline for the VGM submission may vary from port to port, based on the specific requirements from terminals, authorities and vessel operators. DAL will therefore not publish any general VGM cut-off times.

DAL will set the VGM cut-off time as close as possible to the loading date of the container. Our local DAL agents will communicate the cut-off times to all individual clients and will also notify you timely about any missing VGM's.

VGM reporting from shipper to DAL

DAL will be able to receive the VGM data from the shipper as follows:

- VERMAS (EDI) message, direct client interface
- Shipping portals (INTTRA, DAKOSY)
- www.dal.biz - Online Services
- E-Mail attachment

Implementation date

With the implementation of the new SOLAS regulation on 1st July 2016 no container without a VGM shall be loaded onboard a ship. However, since containers planned for loading might be stuffed and transported from hinterland destinations to the seaports much earlier, the shippers might also be obliged to determine and report the VGM well before July.

For transshipment containers, the stow plans of the oncarrying vessels will be made up based on the VGM data provided by the precarrying vessel. Consequently all packed containers planned for loading in the transshipment port as from 1st July 2016 should already have a VGM, determined by the shipper at the stuffing location and reported to the DAL agent at the first port of loading.

DAL plans to have all systems ready for the VGM reporting as from 1st June 2016 to ensure a smooth implementation of the new rules and to avoid any shortshipments due to missing VGM data. As a consequence, we would recommend to already apply the new VGM procedures for all packed containers planned for loading as from 1st June 2016.