



KPI Information Update IU-91-2016 **(Verified Gross Mass (VGM) Of The Packed Containers)**

The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974, Chapter VI, Regulation 2, had been amended by Resolution MSC.380(94) in November 2014 which will enter into force on 1st July 2016. New paragraphs 4 to 6 are added stating the methods that may be employed by the shippers to weigh the packed containers, the responsibility of the shipper to include Verified Gross Mass (VGM) of the packed containers into the shipping documents and obligation of the master to refrain from loading packed containers if the shippers fail to provide the ship with the Verified Gross Mass (VGM) of the packed containers prior to loading. MSC.1/Circ.1475 provides guidance regarding the Verified Gross Mass (VGM) of packed containers. In its 96th session in May 2016 the Maritime Safety Committee issued MSC.1/Circ.1548 that remains effective until 1 October 2016 by which it has noted concerns of Member States regarding practical aspects of compliance with the aforementioned SOLAS amendments, in particular, relating to trans-shipped containers and communication of VGM information, in an initial period following their entry into

force. The Committee agreed that Administrations and port State control authorities should adopt a practical and pragmatic approach when verifying compliance with the requirements of SOLAS regulations VI/2.4 to VI/2.6, for a period of three months after 1 July 2016, with a view to permitting packed containers that are loaded on a ship before 1 July 2016 and are trans-shipped 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 to VI/2.6 and providing flexibility to all the stakeholders in containerized transport to refine, if necessary, procedures for documenting, communicating and sharing VGM information.

Notwithstanding the above, the Committee emphasized that the stability and safe operation of ships, including the safe packing, handling and transport of containers, is not limited to the provision and use of VGM information and is also covered by a number of SOLAS regulations, including SOLAS regulations VI/2.1, VI/2.2 and VI/2.3, and other IMO instruments, amongst others.