On 1 July 2016, all Shippers worldwide are required to comply with the new requirements set out in the Safety Of Life At Sea (SOLAS) regulations governed by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). These regulations are law in most countries across the globe on that date.

SOLAS – Safety of Life at Sea, is important international law that applies minimum standards for safe shipping operations.

What this means is that you as a Shipper must ensure your compliance to the requirement to make a compliant weight declaration (a Verified Gross Mass – VGM) prior to submitting any seafreight shipment for export.

In summary, the IMO international regulations state that Shippers….

*Effective 1 July 2016:*

*It is a requirement to declare the Verified Gross Mass (VGM) of a packed container before any shipments are received for loading on board vessels. The VGM must be declared by the shipper or the shipper’s authorised representative (it cannot be declared by any other party).*

* *In effect, without the Shipper’s declaration of a Verified Gross Mass (VGM), containers will not be loaded on board any vessel;*

***NO VERIFIED GROSS MASS DECLARATION = NO LOADING ON SHIP***

*The SOLAS regulations state only two methods are approved by which a Shipper may obtain the verified gross mass (VGM) of a packed container.*

1. *The shipper may weigh the packed and sealed container using calibrated and certified equipment that meets nationally recognised and regulated standards.*

*Or*

1. *The shipper may add the weight of each package loaded into the container, add the packing and securing material and add the tare weight of the container. The method itself needs to be certified and approved by a national regulatory body in the country of export.*

***An estimation of weight is not permitted****.*

As the 1st July 2016 is drawing near, we need to get confirmation from yourselves as a Shipper and Supplier of product to (insert your Company name), that you understand the new requirements and will be in a position to comply by the 1st July 2016. We have received advice that any non-compliance by Shippers will result in containers not being shipped – it is an offence for any shipping line to carry non-compliant full containers.

We look forward to receiving your confirmation.