



FONASBA
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CONTAINER WEIGHING SURVEY
SEPTEMBER 2016 UPDATE RESULTS

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SUMMARY

- Survey launched in September 2016 to gauge the impact after three months of the SOLAS VI.2 amendments on container traffic
- 29 countries responded:
Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Kenya, Libya, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden and USA
- The following is a summary of the comments:



OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

- The movement of containers worldwide has not stopped!
- The issues that have arisen are reasonably minor and often related to EDI issues, mandatory information missing from the VGM certificate, communications issues between shippers, ports and terminals, late receipt of VGM certificate data and similar
- The three month grace period allowed by IMO has proven useful in tying up loose ends and streamlining procedures
- The value of FONASBA members in leading the implementation process has been proven

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Algeria:** The weighing is being undertaken in the ports and nothing abnormal has been reported to date
- **Argentina:** A number of EDI issues have arisen, usually between the shippers and the port and a number of weight variances have been noted on weighing at the terminal. No delays or rejected containers have been reported as all issues are being sorted out as they arise. Implementation is being monitored over the first six months of operation, following which a review will be undertaken.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Australia:** Electronic Pre-Receipt Advice (PRA) notices are being monitored to avoid any obvious mistakes such as typographical errors. One instance of an incorrect PRA has been noted to date and the container was required to leave the terminal until the error was rectified. Some variations between VGM and actual weight have also been noted. Some terminals are planning to offer weighing at the entry gate. AMSA will undertake a review of VGM compliance at the end of the transitional period.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Belgium:** Good cooperation was reported with the Belgian authorities during the transition period. Information provided by NAVES, international and national trade associations and carriers have proven to be effective. Some issues arose with regard to responsibility for a number of commercial matters, such as setting cut-off times for accepting containers and the format of VGM document, but these have now been resolved. Compliance rose steadily from 80% at the start to 95% now. Electronic submission of VGM data is used by 90% of shippers. There is some evidence of inaccuracies in VGM ascertained under Method 2, perhaps due to the lack of a legal framework in Belgium, which is expected to be implemented in October.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Brazil:** Implementation has proceeded smoothly in most areas, the only issues being EDI-related problems at the terminal and getting weight information from the shippers on time. To date, a number of terminals have not fully resolved their EDI issues.
- **Cyprus:** Due to strenuous but effective action by the Cyprus Shipping Association working in conjunction with other stakeholders and the authorities in advance of implementation and well developed preparations in place ahead of time, “it is reported that the new SOLAS amendments were implemented in Cyprus on 1st July 2016 without any serious problems or issues whatsoever and without any disruption to the industry”

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Denmark:** Again close cooperation between the Danish Shipbrokers' Association, and all parties in the export chain, both in Denmark and in neighbouring countries has resulted in a smooth implantation. Apart from a few minor issues with calculations under Method 2 “we have no reports that there have been any serious operational obstacles”.
- **France:** The three-month grace period has been invaluable as a survey of the industry in September revealed that in some ports/terminals only 50-80% of containers arrive with VGM certificates. The reasons stated include delays in shippers providing certificates, EDI issues and ascertaining accurate weights for LCL and consolidation cargoes. An extension to the grace period may therefore be sought.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Germany:** Members “have not reported any issues following the introduction of the VGM regulation”.
- **Great Britain:** Implementation proceeded smoothly, aided by concentrated action by ICS and other bodies to inform all parties. A three-month grace period was agreed by Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). The majority of containers are being weighed at the port, either at the gate (e.g. Liverpool) or by calibrated spreaders on transtainers or forklifts (e.g. Felixstowe). No evidence of shut-outs or rejected boxes due to weigh discrepancies. MCA will begin monitoring compliance with effect from 1st October.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Greece:** Allowances of 500 kg for boxes of less than 20 tonnes gross weight and 2.5% of the gross weight for boxes over 20 tonnes gross weight are allowed in the grace period but so far no variances between the certificate and tested weights have been reported. “So far there are no issues with implementation of the resolution”
- **Hungary:** Still no national rules of regulations on implementation, which is slowing action by trade. Some containers routinely weighed before VGM but terminals and some big exporters now investing in own weighing equipment.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Israel:** All containers arriving at the port are weighed, a charge is levied. Only problem is two units on one chassis. Containers also being weighed before rail transport. Implementation went well, due to the efforts of the Chamber and the close-knit Israeli export/shipping community, enhancing cooperation on this issue.
- **Italy:** Overall, implementation went well. A grace period of twelve months was granted for Method 1, during which checked weights can vary by +/- 500 kg. A similar period of six months was granted for Method 2 users to allow for certification of procedures. Majority of ports except Genoa undertake in-port weighing, a charge applies. Genoa requires all containers to arrive with a certificate to avoid gate congestion. Italy is pressing for harmonisation of regulations and practice EU-wide to avoid traffic diversion due to different requirements.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Ivory Coast:** The Regulation amendment was enacted on 1st July 2016. Government supporting upgrading of weighing equipment and the introduction of a platform for EDI exchange. System testing currently underway. Large number of entries to platform currently incorrect due to manual inputting after weighing. Action being taken to allow direct electronic input. Paper certificates were expected to be phased-out by 1st August.
- **Japan:** All proceeding smoothly with no major issues noted in Japanese ports. Issue may arise overseas with containers transhipped in Japan due to difference in information requirements but this is being investigated.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Kenya:** Shippers fully aware of the Regulation requirements, current issues arising from the inaccuracy of the weighing equipment, requiring manual adjustments to be made. Checking of weights at the Nairobi inland terminal indicated significant numbers of incorrect VGM certificates. Kenya Port Authority now engaging with all sections of the transport chain to identify and rectify all outstanding issues.
- **Libya:** Procedures in place for presenting VGM data. Most weighing takes place inside the port, no facilities exist for electronic submission of data. Still awaiting official advice from Libyan Port Authority with regard to levels of control, penalties/fines for infringement, procedures for Method 2 etc.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Malta:** Implementation went well, now just rectifying minor issues of procedure including containers arriving without a certificate (container rejected), scanned copy of VGM certificate presented (original required before entry) handwritten certificates (allowed until 12th September but no later) and discrepancy between pre-advice weight and VGM certificate (authorities advised, action taken against responsible party).
- **Netherlands:** Very little to report. A few minor issues due to incorrect VGM data being sent to the port. VRC engaged in providing guidance to shippers ahead of implementation to ensure all parties were fully aware of their obligations. A few agents reported having to invest in revisions or updates to their systems to accommodate revised reporting obligations.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES



- **Nigeria:** Apapa and Tin Can Island ports have certified weighing equipment (cranes and weighbridges) Federal Ocean Terminal requires certificate on arrival. Lack of clear direction from authorities on detail has lead to some confusion, e.g. on weight discrepancies. Also need action to identify certified weighing stations outside the ports to assist shippers.
- **Peru:** National Port Authority were pro-active in providing clear technical and other standards and APAM organised briefings and provided other information to shippers, exporters and other relevant parties. As a result, implementation in Peru has proceeded without any major problems.

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- **Portugal:** The SOLAS requirements are fully implemented in Portugal. Some issues of non-compliance have been identified, for example some VGM certificates do not include all the required information, and AGEPOR is working with the relevant national authority to rectify same soonest.
- **Senegal:** DP World, as operator of the container terminal in Dakar, has issued detailed instructions to shippers, agents and others on the procedures for ascertaining the VGM of export containers. VGM data provided by the shipper is sent directly to the line, containers arriving without a certificate are weighed at the port.
- **Slovenia:** No problems reported. Containers are weighed at the rail terminal or on a certified scale, if pre-weighing is not possible, it is carried out on arrival at the port.

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- **South Africa:** No instances of containers not meeting the SOLAS requirements have been reported. Some ports are investigating calibrated lifting equipment
- **Sweden:** To date no national authority has taken responsibility for overseeing compliance and thus there is no oversight of certificate issuance or any means of regulating those shippers using Method 2. As a result, there are concerns that some Method 2 declarations may not be accurate.
- **USA:** Weighing by Federally-mandated scales is now in place at many ports under the terminal weight approach (TWA), a charge is applied. All VGM data is being sent to the carrier by EDI. A private company is offering weighing for containers destined for New York and New Jersey terminals.

CONTAINER WEIGHING UPDATE



INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

- UPDATES FROM OTHER MEMBERS?
- ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR?
 - COMMENTS FROM IMO?