

FAQ's on New SOLAS VGM Requirements

GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY 06/21/2016

Commercial

1. Will the GPA be offering a service to weigh containers in order to obtain the VGM for export shipments? GPA will weigh containers as part of the in-gate interchange process. This is current practice and will not change. Weights captured on the truck scales will be available to ocean carriers and shippers.
2. Will GPA charge a fee for providing container weights? No.
3. Whom will GPA charge if a container has no VGM and cannot be loaded on its booked vessel? Which fees will apply? GPA will charge the ocean carrier as we only maintain contractual agreements with them. Additional handling and storage fees will apply as agreed in the contracts.
4. What type of agreement in writing is GPA expecting to receive from shippers allowing GPA to be their 'authorized' scaling entity and in turn in what format will GPA transmit such to the carriers? GPA is not prepared to become the verifier of container weights. We anticipate being able to provide the ocean carrier and shipper with in-gate scale weights, but not being the verifier of these weights. GPA will transmit weight information to the ocean carriers using the 322 EDI message format.
5. Does this mean that GPA will supply these weights to the container lines and the shipper will not be required to supply the VGM? This has not been determined, but GPA currently provides weights to the ocean carriers and will continue to do so. Authorization from the shipper to the ocean carrier would be necessary for allowing the ocean carrier to verify container weights on behalf of the shipper. This arrangement is between the shipper and the ocean carrier.

FAQ's on New SOLAS VGM Requirements

Information Technology

1. When will the Georgia Ports Authority test the system to ensure the information is being transmitted correctly in compliance with the SOLAS Regulations? GPA is currently in the process of testing that weight information will transmit successfully. Each ocean carrier must be tested independently, and we are communicating with each one to ensure that we can exchange information.
2. Will GPA be sending this info directly to the carriers? Will the shippers/exporters have access to the VGM from GPA? If so how? GPA currently provides weights to the ocean carriers via 322 EDI transmissions, and will continue to do so. We anticipate that shippers will be able to access this same information in our system by either signing on as a user and manually extracting, or having this information distributed to a registered email address.
3. Would the port submit the VGM to the carrier directly or to the freight forwarder? GPA currently provides weights to the ocean carriers via 322 EDI transmissions, and will continue to do so. This is not a VGM, but can become one if verified.
4. Which format of EDI will GPA accept? (Answer all formats, and choose your preference 301, COPRAR, Vermas) GPA prefers to accept EDI in the following formats: 301, COPRAR, VERMAS. We will research how to receive other formats as and if needed.
5. What will be GPA's frequency of receiving the EDI transmissions? There will be no limit as to frequency of receiving EDI transmissions. We will receive as often as needed.
6. If VGM/Weight Info is captured at your terminal, can you provide EDI? GPA currently provides weights to the ocean carriers via 322 EDI transmissions, and will continue to do so. This is not a VGM, but can become one if verified.
7. Will your terminal accept receiving VGM from shippers directly? No. GPA is setup to receive EDI transmissions from the ocean carriers, and we do not intend to change this.
8. How will the scaled weight be returned to the shipper? Container weight information could be returned to the shipper by having their ocean carrier forward it to them. We also anticipate that shippers will be able to access this same information in our system by either signing on as a user and manually extracting, or having this information distributed to a registered email address.
9. What version of BAPLIE will GPA use? GPA currently uses BAPLIE version 1.5 and 2.0. There are no plans to change versions at this time.

FAQ's on New SOLAS VGM Requirements

Operational

1. How does GPA calculate container weight? Weight is captured on weigh-bridge type truck scales. These measurement devices capture the gross weight of the tractor, chassis, container, and accessories if any are present (i.e. gensets). Tractor, chassis and accessory weights (on file) are deducted from the gross scale weight. The result is what we refer to as the "gate weight" or "operational weight".
2. Are you going to start having the scales calibrated? Each GPA truck scale (truck gates and rail gates) is inspected and certified by the State of Georgia, Dept. of Agriculture. In addition, each GPA scale is inspected and calibrated every three months by a certified scale contactor. In addition, each GPA scale is serviced as needed between quarterly inspections. Certification documents are kept on file.
3. Are shippers required to send you VGM before the container arrives at the port if GPA is going to weigh them anyway? Do shippers have the option to send VGM before a container arrives at the terminal, or is the only option for GPA to weigh containers on arrival? No. Shippers will not be required to send VGM before the container arrives at the port. We anticipate that shippers will have the option to send VGM before a container arrives at the port, though they will also be weighed at the gate on arrival.
4. If a container is not rejected at the gates without a VGM, will there be a problem stack for these containers until the carrier receives one from the shipper? We anticipate that boxes arriving without a VGM will be handled no differently than if they arrived with a VGM. GPA gate weight will be used for terminal handling purposes.
5. Will Terminal allow in-gate of container without VGM? If yes, will terminal have a VGM cutoff? Yes. Containers will be allowed to enter the terminal without a VGM. The cutoff will have to be determined by the ocean carriers.
6. Will your terminal be cross-checking your weight info if you also receive VGM from the shipper? This has not been determined, but there is a possibility that we will design our system to compare both weights if VGM is received from the ocean carrier.
7. How will a container to be handled if there is a discrepancy between VGM and GPA scale weight? This has not been determined, but most likely a container would be flagged and placed on hold if there is a discrepancy between the two weights until the proper weight has been determined.
8. How will GPA handle transshipments? Transshipments will be weighed at the POL. The GPA will use the transshipment weights on the manifest. The GPA will not re-weigh transshipment containers.