

Draft for new Edifact Message Type **VERMAS – Verification of Mass**

To cover the requirements of the

**IMO Guidelines Regarding The Verified Gross Mass
of a Container Carrying Cargo**

Requirements and consequences of the IMO Guidelines

1. The **Shipper** is responsible for verification of container's gross mass (VGM).
2. The VGM can only be ascertained for a completely packed container.
3. The shipper may delegate the actual verification procedure to a **3rd party**, for example a weighing facility at an inland depot or at a terminal. This does not release the shipper from his responsibility according to 1 above.
4. The terminal must not load a container on an ocean vessel as long as it has not been informed about its VGM.
5. The vessel command must not accept a container on board until they have been informed about its VGM.
6. The VGM is part of shipping documents. However, it is sufficient that parties involved in business processing are informed about verification of the gross mass. It is not required to dispense the according documents (except master).
7. Container's VGM is not necessarily available when processing of its booking starts, i.e. during processing container's status in IT systems may change from "VGM not yet available" to "VGM available".
8. An existing VGM may be revised.
9. EDI messages must be able to distinguish "VGM" and "gross mass without verification".
10. It shall be possible to update container's VGM-status and value by means of EDI messages.

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Assumptions

1. For the terminal and for the vessel command it is sufficient to receive the container gross weight clearly flagged as "verified".
2. The vessel operator and the container operator (where the shipper has booked) need in addition the electronic version of the signed shipping document. This includes the name of the responsible person in capitals.
3. The weighing facility as a subcontractor will report to the party ordering the weighing service the full details about the weighing procedure.

Purpose of the new message

To transmit the verified gross weight (the mass) of a full container.

The gross weight including the container tare and all its contents is required by the parties in the transport chain before the container is loaded onboard of a vessel.

This message will be used for process steps that are not covered by existing Edifact messages.

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Use cases for the new message

	Sender	Receiver	Purpose
1	Shipper	Shipping Line (Container Operator)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• if the VGM was not known at the time of the shipping instructions• if other messages could not be used
2	Container Operator	Terminal	Update of an earlier transmitted gross mass
3	Container Operator	Vessel Operator	Update of an earlier transmitted gross mass
4	Approved weigh station	Shipper	if the shipper ordered the weighing service
	Approved weigh station	Shipping Line (Container Operator)	if authorized by the shipper to do so
5	Inland Terminal	Shipping Line (Container Operator)	if authorized by the shipper to do so

Sender

The party who has knowledge about the verified gross weight. This can be for example:

- a) The shipper who has stuffed the container and verified the gross weight.
- b) The operator of a weighing facility who has weighed the packed container.
- c) The vessel operator or the terminal who forwards the verified gross weight to another party in the transport chain.

Receiver

The party who requires the verified gross weight. This can be for example:

- a) The party who has ordered the service of weighing the packed container.
- b) The vessel operator, or the terminal, or the vessel itself.

Content of the message

One message should contain only one container. For this container it contains:

- Reference to the uniquely defined **container**.
- Reference to a particular **transport order**, by time and place and the related parties.
- Verified gross weight in kilogram or lbs including date of verification.
- Reference to the shipper, as in the electronic version of the shipping document, including the Signature Name
- Details on the weighing procedure given by the operator of the weighing facility
- List of cargo items with their weight, if method 2 was used (to be decided whether needed)

To be decided which data elements are mandatory / optional

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USER GROUP FOR SHIPPING LINES AND CONTAINER TERMINALS

Content of the message. One message may contain *only one* container.

Reference	Data element	Remarks	mandat/optional
Container Reference	Container ID		mandatory
	Size Type		
Weight reference	Verified gross weight of the container incl unit of measurement	in KGM or LBS	mandatory
Transport Order Reference	Cargo/Container Operator	Eg. HSD, HLC, CMA	mandatory if the receiver is the Container Operator or the Terminal
	Booking Number		
	Port of Loading		
	Port of Discharge		
	Vessel Name		
	Voyage Number		
Shipper reference	Shipper	Company name	mandatory if the receiver is the Container Operator
	Name in capitals of the person authorized to sign the shipping document	Representing an electronic signature of the shipper	
	Weight Verification Method	1 or 2 as per IMO rules	
Weighing reference	The party that has verified the weight	e.g. the operator of the weighing facility	mandatory if the sender is the weighing facility
	Responsible person at the weighing facility		
	Date when the container was weighed		
	Methof of weighing	Crane, scale, with or without trailer	
	Weight Verification Method Approval Number by Competent National Authority		
	Country issuing approval number		
	Weight Verification Status	estimated, certified	
Tare + goods incl packing	List of of goods items		to be discussed whether needed
	- goods item specification		
	- goods item net weight including packing		
	Container tare weight		

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Next Steps

1. Discuss and agree the requirements between customers, shipping lines and terminals.
2. The SMDG will specify the detailed structure of the new message.
3. Discuss enhancements to other, existing Edifact messages.