

DRAFT
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the _____ 2026

G.S.R.----- (E)-In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) and (2) of Section 116 read with sub-section (1) and clause (a) and (b) of sub-section (2) of Section 130 read with Section 319 of Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 and in supersession of the Merchant Shipping (Carriage of Cargo) Rules, 1995, except as respects things done or omitted to be done before such supersession, the Central Government hereby makes the following rules namely:

PART I: General Provisions

1. Short title, commencement:

- (1) These rules may be called **Merchant Shipping (Carriage of Cargoes, and Oil Fuels) Rules, 2026**.
- (2) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Application: unless specified otherwise, these rules shall apply to:

- (1) Carriage of cargoes (except liquids in bulk, gases in bulk, and those aspects of carriage covered in other rules) which owing to their particular hazards to ships or person on board, require special precautions to be taken.
- (2) All Indian vessels registered in India carrying or about to carry cargoes specified in these rules anywhere; except the vessels covered under part XIII.
- (3) All vessels other than Indian vessels when such vessels carrying or about to carry cargoes specified in these rules is within India, including coastal waters, ports or places in India.
- (4) All Indian vessels of below 500GT, provided that Administration by notification or by specific or general order or notice or circular in writing may decide to the extend or permit other effective measures to ensure reasonable and equivalent safety of such vessels taking into account the nature and conditions of sheltered voyage.
- (5) All the vessels specified in these rules shall also comply with the applicable requirements as specified in the Schedule.

3. Definition: In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Act" means the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025.
- (2) "Administration" means the "Central Government" in exercise of powers under the Act administering through Director-General of Maritime Administration.
- (3) "Approved" means:

(a) In respect of cargo stowage plans, equipment, packaging, cargo securing manuals, fumigation, identification of hazards of cargoes not listed in the relevant codes and related matters approved by Nautical Advisor to the Government of India or Principal Officer, regional Mercantile Marine Department or Deputy Nautical Advisor to the Government of India or Recognized Organization (RO) notified by the Central Government.

(b) In respect of construction and equipment under MARPOL 73/78, IBC and IGC Codes means approved by Chief Surveyor with the Government of India or Deputy Chief Surveyor with the Government of India or RO notified by the Central Government.

(c) In respect of stability and strength of ship means approved by Chief Ship Surveyor with the Government of India or Deputy Chief Ship Surveyor with the Government of India or RO notified by the Central Government.

(4) "BLU code" means The Code of Practice for the Safe Loading and Unloading of Bulk Carriers including BLU Manual adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Resolution A.862(20), as amended from time to time; incorporated as Supplement to the IMSBC Code.

(5) "Cargo Unit" means a vehicle, container, flat, pallet portable tank, packaged unit, or any other entity etc., and loading equipment or part thereof which belongs to the ship but is not fixed to the ship.

(6) "Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS) Code" means the Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing adopted by the IMO Resolution A.714 (16), as amended.

(7) "CTU Code" means the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units, 2014 which is endorsed by IMO, ILO, and UNECE, and is as amended from time to time.

(8) "Cargo Transport Unit" is a freight container, swap body, vehicle, railway wagon or any other similar unit in particular when used in intermodal transport.

(9) "Competent Authority" means Director-General for the purpose of these rules to supplement the provisions to ensure that appropriate information on cargo, its stowage and securing is provided along with specific precautions, where necessary, for the safe carriage of such cargoes.

(10) "Container Safety Convention" (CSC) means the Convention on Safe Containers, 1972, adopted by the IMO, as amended from time to time.

(11) "Container" means Container as defined in CSC, 1972.

(12) "Director-General" means the Director-General of Maritime Administration appointed under sub-section (1) of Section 7 of the Act.

(13) "Document" in this Rule, includes the use of Electronic Data Processing (EDP) and Electronic Data Exchange (EDI) transmission technique as an alternate and aid to paper documentation as detailed in Chapter 5.4 of IMDG Code.

(14) "Grain" includes wheat, maize (corn), oats, rye, barley, rice, pulses, seeds, and processed forms thereof, whose behavior is similar to that of grain in its natural state.

(15) "International Grain Code" means the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Grain in Bulk, adopted by the IMO by Resolution MSC.23 (59), as amended.

(16) "IMSBC Code" means the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code, adopted by the IMO by Resolution MSC.268 (85), as may be amended.

(17) "MARPOL 73/78 Convention" means the International Convention for Prevention of Pollution from Ships, in force, including its protocol adopted by the IMO, as amended from time to time.

(18) "Notice" means any notice, circular, order or guidelines issued by Director-General under Section 301 of the Act.

(19) "Oil Fuel" means any oil used as fuel in connection with the propulsion and/or auxiliary machinery of the vessel in which oil is carried.

(20) "Organization" means the International Maritime Organization (IMO) – a United Nation's specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution by vessels.

(21) "Pour" means quantity of cargo poured through one hatch opening as one step in the loading plan i.e. from the time the spout is positioned over hatch opening until it is moved to another hatch opening.

(22) "Port State Authority" means the nearest Mercantile Marine Department, for the purpose of these rules.

(23) "Recommendation of the Organization" or "Recommended by Organization" includes its Assembly or its Committee Resolution or its circular, as adopted by the Organization.

(24) "Recognized Organization" means an organization that has been assessed and approved by the Administration to perform, on its behalf, delegated statutory certification and services under mandatory IMO instruments and national legislation and found to comply with the RO Code adopted by IMO Resolution MSC. 349(92), as amended.

(25) "SOLAS Convention" or "SOLAS" means the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, in force including its protocols adopted by the IMO and as amended from time to time.

(26) "Solid Bulk Cargo" means any cargo, other than liquid or gas, consisting of a combination of particles, granules or any larger pieces of material generally uniform in composition, which is loaded directly into the cargo spaces of a vessel without any intermediate form of containment.

(27) "Surveyor" means a person appointed under Clause (d) of sub-section (1) of Section 8, and/or Section 9 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025.

(28) "Terminal Representative" means a person appointed by the terminal or other facility where the vessel is loading or unloading, who has responsibility for operations conducted by that terminal or facility with regard to the particular vessel.

(29) "Timber Code" means the Code of Safe Practice for Ships Carrying Timber Deck Cargoes adopted by the IMO by Resolution A.1048 (27), as amended from time to time.

(30) "Timber deck cargo" means a cargo of timber carried on an uncovered part of a freeboard or superstructure deck.

(31) "Vessel" is as defined in Section 3(70) of the Act.

(32) Meaning of other terms and abbreviations: All other terms and abbreviations which are used in these rules and defined in the Act, SOLAS 1974, MARPOL 73/78, CSC, 1972 and applicable Codes for the purpose of safe carriage of cargoes, cargo units and cargo transport units shall have the meanings as defined in the Act and those applicable Regulations, Codes and Conventions.

4. Requirements for the carriage of solid bulk cargoes other than grain:

The carriage of solid bulk cargoes other than grain shall comply with the requirements of SOLAS Chapter VI and relevant provisions of the IMSBC Code.

5. Cargo Information:

(1) The ship owner, ship master of all vessels loading any cargo, shall ensure that cargo information is made available to the vessel by the shipper before the commencement of cargo operations.

(2) The shipper shall provide the master or his representative with appropriate information on the cargo sufficiently in advance of loading to enable the precautions which may be necessary for proper stowage and safe carriage of the cargo to be put into effect. Such information, in a format, prescribed by applicable recommendation of the Organization through MSC/Circ. 663, such information shall be confirmed in writing and by appropriate shipping documents prior to loading the cargo on the vessel.

(3) The cargo information shall include:

(a) In the case of general cargo, and of cargo carried in cargo units, a general description of the cargo, the gross mass of the cargo or of the cargo units, and any relevant special properties of the cargo. For the purpose of this rule the cargo information required in sub-chapter 1.9 of the Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing, adopted by IMO Resolution A.714(17), as may be amended, shall be provided.

(b) In the case of solid bulk cargo, information as required by Section 4 of the IMSBC Code shall be provided.

(c) In case of a bulk cargo not listed in IMSBC Code, the provisions of Section 1.3 of the IMSBC Code shall apply.

(4) Prior to loading cargo units on board vessels, the shipper shall ensure that the gross mass of such units is in accordance with gross mass declared on the shipping documents and ascertained in accordance with relevant notice(s) issued by the Administration, if any.

(5) In the case of cargo carried in a container, except for containers carried on a chassis or a trailer when such containers are driven on or off a ro-ro ship engaged

in short international voyages as defined in SOLAS Regulation III/3, the gross mass of the container shall be verified as per procedure detailed in First Schedule.

(6) The shipper of a container shall ensure that the mass of the container is verified in accordance with procedure as specified in First Schedule, which is in conformity with Resolution (MSC.1/ Circ. 1475). This verified gross mass shall be stated in the shipping document. The shipping document shall be:

- (a) Signed by a person duly authorized by the shipper; and
- (b) Submitted to the master or his representative and to the terminal representative sufficiently in advance, as required by the master or his representative, to be used in the preparation of the vessel stowage plan.

(7) If the shipping document, with regard to a packed container, does not provide the verified gross mass and the master or his representative and the terminal representative have not obtained the verified gross mass of the packed container, it shall not be loaded on to the vessel.

6. Oxygen Analysis and Gas Detection Equipment:

(1) Every vessel, when transporting a solid bulk cargo which is liable to emit a toxic or flammable gas or cause oxygen depletion in the cargo space, an appropriate instrument for measuring the concentration of gas and/or oxygen in the air, along with detailed instruction for use from Original Equipment manufacturer (OEM) shall be provided.

(2) For every such gas instrument provided following needs to be complied with:

(a) Crew members on such vessel, shall be trained in the use of such instrument(s) within two weeks of their joining or prior entering 'enclosed or confined spaces' or commencement of cargo operations which affect atmospheric conditions, whichever is earlier and same shall be recorded.

(b) Each such instrument shall be maintained and periodically calibrated as required by the manufacturer.

7. Use of Pesticides in Vessels:

(1) Every master of a vessel shall take appropriate precautions in use of pesticides on board his vessel, in particular for the purposes of fumigation in accordance with the concerned recommendation(s) of the Organization adopted through Resolutions MSC.1/Circ.1358, MSC.1/Circ.1264, MSC.1/Circ.1361, which are to ensure that life of his crew and persons involved in fumigation is not endangered.

(2) In-transit fumigation should only be carried out based upon recommendations of the Organization adopted through Resolution MSC.1/ Circ. 1264, and in compliance with the notices issued by the Administration, if any.

8. Stowage and Securing: When stowing and securing any cargo on board vessel, the master shall comply with the provisions specified in the relevant Code for acceptability, stowage, and securing of cargoes.

- (1) Cargo, cargo units and cargo transport units carried on or under deck shall be so loaded, stowed, and secured, as to prevent as far as practicable, throughout the voyage, damage or hazard to the vessel and the persons on board and loss of cargo overboard.
- (2) Cargo, cargo units and cargo transport units shall be so packed and secured within the unit as to prevent, throughout the voyage, damage or hazard to the vessel and the persons on board.
- (3) Appropriate precautions shall be taken during loading and transport of heavy cargoes or cargoes with abnormal physical dimensions to ensure that no structural damage to the vessel occurs and to maintain adequate stability throughout the voyage.
- (4) Appropriate precautions shall be taken during loading and transport of cargo units and cargo transport units on board ro-ro ships, especially with regard to the securing arrangements on board such vessels and on the cargo units and cargo transport units and with regard to the strength of the securing points and lashings.
- (5) Freight containers shall not be loaded to more than the maximum gross weight indicated on the Safety Approval Plate fixed thereon under the CSC, 1972, as amended.
- (6) All cargoes, other than solid and liquid bulk cargoes, cargo units and cargo transport units, shall be loaded, stowed and secured on board vessel throughout the voyage in accordance with the approved Cargo Securing Manual. In ships with ro-ro spaces as defined in SOLAS Regulation II-2/3.41, all securing of such cargoes, cargo units and cargo transport units in accordance with the approved Cargo Securing Manual, and shall be completed before the vessel leaves the berth.
- (7) Cargo Securing Manual specified in this rule, shall be drawn up to the standards at least equivalent to the guidelines developed by the IMO Resolution MSC.1/Circ.1353 as amended.

9. Material Safety Data Sheets: Vessels carrying oil or oil fuel, shall be provided with Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), based on Recommendations of the Organization adopted through Resolution MSC.286(86), prior to loading such oil as cargo in bulk or bunkering of oil fuel.

10. Prohibition of the blending of bulk liquid cargoes and production processes during sea voyages:

- (1) The physical blending of bulk liquid cargoes during sea voyages is prohibited. Physical blending refers to the process whereby the vessel's cargo pumps and pipelines are used to internally circulate two or more different cargoes with the intent to achieve a cargo with a new product designation. This prohibition does not preclude the master from undertaking cargo transfers for the safety of the vessel or protection of the marine environment.

(2) The prohibition specified in the Rule 10(1) above, does not apply to the blending of products for use in the search and exploitation of seabed mineral resources on board vessels used to facilitate such operations.

(3) Any production process on board a vessel during sea voyages is prohibited. Production processes refer to any deliberate operation whereby a chemical reaction between a vessel's cargo and any other substance or cargo takes place.

(4) The prohibition specified in Rule 10(3) above, does not apply to the production processes of the cargoes for use in the search and exploitation of seabed mineral resources on board vessels used to facilitate such operations and which shall be in accordance with IMO Resolution A.673(16), as amended.

Part II: Special Provisions for Solid Bulk Cargoes:

11. Acceptability for Shipment:

(1) Prior to loading a solid bulk cargo, the master shall be in possession of approved comprehensive information on the vessel's stability and the distribution of cargo for the standard loading conditions.

(2) The method of providing such information shall:

(a) Conform to the requirements prescribed by the applicable notice issued by the competent authority time to time; and

(b) Conform to SOLAS Regulation II-1/5-1; and Guidelines for the preparation of intact stability information (MSC/Circ.456); and the revised guidance to the master for avoiding dangerous situations in adverse weather and sea conditions (MSC.1/Circ.1228); and

(c) Approved loading instrument is accepted as a supplement to stability information provided in hard copy.

(3) Concentrates or other cargoes which may liquefy shall only be accepted by the master of the vessel for loading when the actual moisture content of the cargo is less than its transportable moisture limit (TML). Notwithstanding this sub-rule, cargoes having moisture content in excess of the TML may be carried on a specially constructed or fitted cargo vessels for confining cargo shift, as approved by the Administration for Indian vessels and in case of foreign flag vessels it is to be approved by the respective Flag Administration.

(4) The information in respect to solid bulk cargo as required by Rule 5(3)(b), amongst others, in the case of concentrates or other cargo that may liquefy, shall include information in the form of signed certificate on the Moisture Content and TML of the cargo, issued by entity / laboratory approved by the Administration.

(5) The master shall take special precautions for safe loading and carriage of bulk cargoes which possess chemical properties that may create a potential hazard and are not covered by the IMDG Code.

12. Carriage requirement:

(1) Every vessel loading solid bulk cargoes other than grain shall comply with the requirements of the IMSBC Code and loading and unloading procedures stipulated in the BLU Code and BLU Manual of IMSBC Code applicable to the type of cargo being carried.

(2) The master shall ensure that bulk cargoes shall be loaded and trimmed properly to reasonable level, as necessary, to the boundaries of the cargo space as to minimize the risk of shifting and maintain adequate stability throughout the intended voyage.

(3) When bulk cargoes are carried in "tween-decks" of general cargo vessels, the hatchways of such spaces shall be closed for cases where the loading information indicates an unacceptable level of stress on the bottom structure if the hatchways are left open. The cargo shall be trimmed at reasonable level and either extend from side to side or secured by additional longitudinal divisions of sufficient strength. The safe load-carrying capacity of the "twin-decks" shall be observed to ensure that the deck-structure is not over stressed or overloaded. The Master shall be guided by the relevant sections of the IMSBC Code in respect of cargoes carried on tween-deck vessels or general cargo vessels.

13. Loading, unloading and stowage:

(1) The shipper, ship owner, ship master and the ports involved in the safe loading and unloading of solid bulk cargoes other than grain listed in the IMSBC Code shall strictly comply with the relevant responsibilities, duties and authority specified in the BLU Code and detailed procedures in the BLU Manual.

(2) The cargoes that are not listed or detailed information is not available, the shipper, ship owner, ship master and the concerned Port shall approach the Administration without any delay.

(3) To enable the master to prevent excessive stresses in the vessel structure, all vessels engaged in shipment of such cargoes shall be provided with a booklet, duly approved by the RO, written in a language with which the ships Master and Officers responsible for cargo operations are familiar with. If this language is not in English, the vessel shall be provided with the booklet written also in the English language. The booklet shall as a minimum include:

(a) Stability data, as required by SOLAS Regulation II-1/5-1;

(b) Ballasting and de-ballasting rates and capacities;

(c) Maximum allowable load per unit surface area of the tank top plating;

(d) Maximum allowable load per hold;

(e) General loading and unloading instructions with regard to the strength of the vessels structure including any limitations on the most adverse operating conditions during loading, unloading, ballasting operation and the voyage;

(f) Any special restrictions such as limitations on the most adverse operating conditions imposed by the Administration issued by a relevant notice, if any

(g) Where strength calculations are required maximum permissible forces and movement on the vessel's hull during loading, unloading and the voyage.

(4) Before a solid bulk cargo is loaded or unloaded, the master and the terminal representative shall agree on a plan, drawn up in accordance with BLU Code, which ensures that the permissible forces and moments on the vessel are not exceeded during loading or unloading, and shall include the sequence, quantity and rate of loading or unloading, taking into consideration the speed of loading or unloading, the number of pours and de-ballasting or ballasting capability of the vessel. The plan and any subsequent amendments thereto shall be lodged with the nearest authority of the Port State.

(5) The master and terminal representative shall ensure that loading and unloading operations are conducted in accordance with the agreed plan.

(6) If during loading or unloading any of the limits specified in the cargo plan as mentioned in Rule 13(4) are exceeded or likely to become so if the loading or unloading continues, the master has the right to suspend operation and has the obligation to notify accordingly to the authority specified in Rule 13(4) with which the aforesaid plan has been lodged. The master and the terminal representative shall ensure that corrective action is taken. When unloading cargo, the master and terminal representative shall ensure that unloading method does not damage the vessel's structure.

(7) If any damage occurs, that could impair the structural capability or the watertight integrity or the vessels essential engineering systems, then the damage is to be reported to the RO or the Authority of the Port State in case of outside India.

(8) The master shall ensure that vessels personnel continuously monitor cargo operations. Where possible, the vessels draft shall be checked regularly during loading or unloading to confirm with vessel's deadweight, and cargo figures supplied. Each draft, deadweight including cargo loaded observation shall be recorded in a cargo log-book or other equivalent vessel's log-book. If significant deviations from the agreed plan are detected, cargo or ballast operations or both shall be adjusted to ensure that the deviations are corrected.

(9) The Competent Authority in consultation with ship owners, ports, shippers and other entities may issue notice detailing procedures and guidelines, from time to time, to implement and enforce the provisions of IMSBC Code that includes BLU Code and BLU Manual effectively.

Part III: Carriage of Grain:

14. Requirements:

(1) In addition to any other applicable requirements under these rules, a cargo vessel carrying grain shall comply with the requirement of the International Grain Code and hold a 'document of authorization' as required by the International Grain Code.

(2) For a vessel loading grain, the master of the vessel shall satisfy to the Port State Authority or its authorized official that the vessel complies with the requirements of these rules and the provisions of International Grain Code in its proposed loading condition.

(3) A vessel without a document required under Rule 14(1), shall not load Grain until the master demonstrates to the satisfaction of Competent Authority, or the Port State Authority of the port of loading, that the vessel in its proposed loading condition shall comply with the provisions of International Grain Code during the entire voyage.

Part IV: Carriage of cargoes other than solid bulk cargoes:

15. Carriage of timber cargoes:

(1) Every vessel carrying timber deck cargo and timber inside the hold shall comply with the provisions of Timber Code and shall comply with recommendations of the Organization as adopted by Resolution MSC/Circ.525 and MSC/Circ. 548 as amended and such other recommendations of the Organization, issued from time to time.

(2) Vessels that are provided with and making use of their timber load line should also comply with the requirements of the applicable regulations of the International Load Line Convention, as amended, and shall load timber cargo under-deck and on-deck, as per the approved stability booklet conditions.

(3) A vessel loaded with timber deck cargo, shall demonstrate compliance with Rule 15(1) and 15(2) to the respective Port State Authority or concerned Port State Control officer if outside India.

16. Carriage of Cargo Transport Units (containers):

(1) The Master of a vessel shall ensure that new or existing containers loaded, stowed and carried for sea transportation have a safety approval plate conforming to the specifications set out in the appendix of the CSC, 1972, as amended.

(2) The Master of the vessel shall ensure that every such container shipped on board has been provided with shipping documents prescribed in Rule 5(6) and is secured as per the approved cargo securing manual.

(3) It is the responsibility of the owner or master of the vessel to ensure that the compliance with the provisions of IMDG Code for the dangerous goods carried in the containers are verified.

(4) The Master or the owner shall ensure that containers received on board are well maintained and relevant endorsement is highlighted on the safety approval plate.

(5) The master of a vessel when loading Cargo Transport Units (CTU) on his vessel, shall ensure that shipper provides documents showing compliance with the CTU Code, 2014 with special reference to its packing.

(6) For ensuring compliance of containers, with provisions of CSC, 1972, Administration may authorise other agencies, including ROs for inspection and testing as per CSC, 1972, and subsequent approval, including issuance of safety approval plate, upon verification of compliance with the applicable requirements.

Part V: Miscellaneous Provisions:

17. Inspection, survey and certification fee: Fee for departmental surveyors shall be levied as per schedule of fee prescribed via notice by the Director-General from time to time.

FIRST SCHEDULE

Method for Verifying Gross Mass

This Schedule gives effect to the requirements specified in the Regulation 2 of Chapter VI of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), as amended, it mandates that no packed container shall be loaded on board a ship unless the verified gross mass thereof has been obtained and duly communicated to the master or his representative and to the terminal representative; it is hereby provided that the verification of gross mass of packed containers shall be carried out in accordance with the methods enumerated in this Schedule. Any subsequent amendments to the abovementioned provision shall be deemed to be incorporated into, and form part of this Schedule automatically, without the need for any further amendments.

I – Definitions:

1. Calibrated and certified equipment means a scale, weighbridge/weighing appliances, lifting equipment or any other device, capable of determining the actual gross mass of a packed container or of packages and cargo items, pallets, dunnage and other packing and securing material, that meets the accuracy standards and requirements of the State in which the equipment is being used.
2. Cargo items: Cargo item has the same general meaning as the term "cargo" in the International Convention for Safe Containers, 1972, as amended, and means any goods, wares, merchandise, liquid, gases, solids and articles of every kind whatsoever carried in containers pursuant to a contract of carriage. However, ship's equipment and ship's supplies, including ship's spare parts and stores, carried in containers are not regarded as cargo.
3. Gross mass: Gross mass means the combined mass of a container's tare mass and the masses of all packages and cargo items, including pallets, dunnage and other packing material and securing materials packed into the container.
4. Package: Package means one or more cargo items that are tied together, packed, wrapped, boxed, or parcelled for transportation. Examples of packages include, but are not limited to, parcels, boxes, packets and cartons.
5. Shipping document: Shipping document means a document used by the shipper to communicate the verified gross mass of the packed container. This document can be part of the shipping instructions to the shipping company or a separate communication (e.g. a declaration including a weight certificate produced by a weigh station).
6. Shipper: Shipper means a legal entity or person named on the bill of lading or sea waybill or equivalent multimodal transport document (e.g. "through" bill of lading) as shipper and/or who (or in whose name or on whose behalf) a contract of carriage has been concluded with a shipping company.
7. Tare mass: Tare mass means the mass of an empty container that does not contain any packages, cargo items, pallets, dunnage, or any other packing material or securing material.
8. Terminal representative: Terminal representative means a person acting on behalf of a legal entity or person engaged in the business of providing

wharfage, dock, stowage, warehouse, or other cargo handling services in connection with a ship.

9. Verified gross mass: Verified gross mass means the total gross mass of a packed container as obtained by one of the methods described.

II – General:

1. In the case of cargo carried in a container, the gross mass shall be verified by the shipper, either by:
 - (a) weighing the packed container using calibrated and certified equipment; or
 - (b) weighing all packages and cargo items, including the mass of pallets, dunnage and other securing material to be packed in the container and adding the tare mass of the container to the sum of the single masses, using a certified method approved by the Directorate General of Maritime Administration in which packing of the container was completed.

For ease of reference the methods specified shall be referred to as 'method 1' and 'method 2' respectively. Shippers from India shall adopt either of the methods for verifying the gross mass of the containers.

2. After verifying the gross mass by either of the specified methods, the shipper shall inform the verified gross mass of the container (except for containers carried on a chassis, or a trailer when such containers are driven on of a ro-ro ship engaged in short international voyage) to the master of the vessel, or his representative, to enable preparation of the stowage plan, sufficiently in advance of the loading. The master or his representative and the terminal shall specify the time frame before which the information is required to be provided by the shipper. The information regarding the reporting time frame of the Master/terminal shall be available in the public domain and be easily accessible by all concerned including the shippers.

3. With regard to shipper informing the terminal, the IMO Circular No. MSC.I/Circ. 1475, dated 9 Jun 2014, pertaining to guidelines regarding the verified gross mass of a container carrying cargo, at para 6.3.1 it is specified that the shipper may meet its obligation under the SOLAS regulations by submitting the verified gross mass to the shipping company. It shall therefore be the responsibility of the shipping company to inform the terminal in the matter. The shipper may submit the verified gross mass to the terminal representative upon delivery of the container to the terminal, if required.

4. The shipper shall ensure that the shipping document containing the information about the gross mass of the container is signed by a person duly authorized by the shipper. The name and designation of the person signing the shipping document shall be clearly legible along with the contact details (phone nos. and email id.), to enable the person to be contacted at any time during the course of the shipment of the container. The information may be submitted in electronic format (EDI) using Class III Digital Signature for verification of the authenticity of the document.

5. The shipper of the container shall also ensure that the requirements of CTU Code 2014, are adhered to while packing/stuffing the container.

III – Method 1:

1. Shippers adopting method 1 for verifying the gross mass of the container shall ensure the following:
 - 1.1 Verification of gross mass of the container shall be carried out at a location away from the port/terminal to avoid congestion at the port/terminal area. The container shall preferably be weighed at the container stuffing point/container freight station/ICD, or en-route to the port/terminal.
 - 1.2 The weighbridge/weighing appliances used for ascertaining the gross mass of the container shall comply with the requirements specified in Section 'V' of this schedule.
 - 1.3 The verified gross mass of the container obtained at the weighbridge/weighing appliances shall be provided by the weighbridge/weighing appliances operator in a tamper proof document to the shipper. It shall be the responsibility of the shipper to upload the relevant information specified in Annex-1 of this schedule on a dedicated secure website that can be accessed by all concerned including the master of the vessel, or his representative. (The tamper proof document of the weighbridge/weighing appliances operator is only required to be provided by the shipper, on specific request of the master, or his representative). The information shall also be forwarded by the shipper through electronic means to the master or his representative, immediately on the verification of the gross mass of the container.

IV – Method 2:

1. Shippers adopting method 2 for verifying the gross mass of the container need to be aware that method 2 may not be suitable for all types of cargoes. Certain cargoes like scrap metal, bulk cargo, etc. may impose substantial challenges and costs if method 2 is adopted for such cargo.
2. Shippers intending to adopt method 2 for verification of gross mass of container are required to have their certified method approved by the Directorate General of Maritime Administration. For obtaining this approval, shippers shall comply with the following:
 - 2.1 The certified method of the shipper shall be part of a Quality Management System [QMS] complying with the requirements of ISO 9001:2008/2015 standards, or such updated standards that is applicable from time to time.
 - 2.2 The shipper shall maintain calibrated weighing scales duly certificated by department of legal metrology. List of such certified weighing scales proposed to be used in the certified method for verifying the gross mass of the container shall be maintained.
 - 2.3 It is the responsibility of the owner of the container to ensure that the tare weight of the container is correctly marked on the container. However, the shipper shall have mechanism to re-verify the weight of the empty container, if required to ensure that the weight of the empty container conforms to the tare weight marked on the container. For such re-verification whenever required, a combination of

electronic scale and pulley/chain-block, or other relevant methods are also acceptable, during re-verification, if any noticeable deviation is observed between the actual weight of the empty container and the tare weight marked on the container, such empty container shall not be accepted for stuffing the container without ensuring that the tare weight marked on the container reflects the actual weight of the container.

2.4 The shipper shall demonstrate the ability to display the information regarding the verified gross mass of the container and other relevant information as specified in Annex-1 of this Schedule on a dedicated secure website. The shipper may establish its own website, or have tie-up with other dedicated secure website so that the information can be accessed by all concerned including the master of the vessel, or his representative.

3. For obtaining approval to adopt method 2, the following procedure shall be followed:

3.1 Shipper shall submit the details of the certified method proposed to be used for verifying the gross mass of the container along with details of all other relevant documents as specified in Annex-2 of this Schedule to the jurisdictional Mercantile Marine Department (MMD) along with applicable fee for processing the issue of approval.

3.2 The jurisdictional MMD shall have the premises of the shipper inspected to verify that the certified process, associated instruments etc., confirm the ability of the shipper to comply with the requirements for adopting the procedures specified in method 2.

3.3. On successful completion of the inspection, the jurisdictional MMD shall forward the report specified in Annex-2 to the Directorate General of Maritime Administration for consideration of the grant of approval to the certified process of the shipper.

3.4 List of companies/shippers that are approved by Directorate General of Maritime Administration for using method 2 for verifying the gross mass of the container shall be displayed on the website of the Directorate General of Maritime Administration.

V – Dedicated Secured Website:

1. The dedicated secure website shall have its server, associated backup systems etc., located within India so that it is subject to Indian cyber security laws and other associated laws to ensure the integrity and security of the data.

2. Dedicated secure website desiring to participate in this programme shall demonstrate to the Directorate General of Maritime Administration the ability for displaying the information on real time basis to all concerned along with details of shippers, weighbridges/weighing appliances, terminals, carriers, etc. participating in their system. The website may in addition provide service of electronically transmitting information to the master or his representative.

3. The dedicated secure website shall comply with the requirements of information security management systems, or such updated standards that is applicable from time to time, as follows:

3.1 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 [Information technology Security techniques Information security management systems-Requirements]

3.2 ISO/IEC 27002:2013 [Information technology Security techniques Code of practice for information security controls]

3.3 ISO/IEC 20000 [Information Technology-Service management].

4. The dedicated secure website shall have a firewall system designed to prevent unauthorized access to, or from the network conforming to the requirements of the latest industry standards.

5. The dedicated secure website shall be in possession of a valid Quality Management System [QMS] certificate confirming compliance with: ISO2008/2015 standards, or such updated standards that is applicable from time to time.

6. The dedicated website shall also demonstrate its ability to retain information for a period of 3 years on the website. In addition, the website shall be able to retain information for a further period of 2 years in external stowage devices, which can be accessed whenever required.

7. The information provided in the public domain by the dedicated secure website shall only be as specified by the Directorate General of Maritime Administration from time to time.

8. The dedicated secure website shall provide without any cost, the information regarding gross mass of containers and other relevant information to all Government Authorities like Mercantile Marine Department, Directorate General of Maritime Administration, Customs and Central Excise department, Port Authorities, Security Agencies, etc. In addition, the dedicated secure website shall also provide periodical/annual reports to the Directorate General of Maritime Administration including other information available in the database of the website whenever required by the Directorate General of Maritime Administration without any cost.

9. List of dedicated secure websites accepted by the Directorate General of Maritime Administration for providing the service shall be displayed on the website of the Directorate General of Maritime Administration.

10. Terminals/ports/weighbridge operators, etc. are encouraged to develop dedicated website, either singularly or collectively, so as to provide required information about the verified gross mass of the container to all concerned. In such instances, they shall comply with the requirements specified at Section E.

VI – Weighbridge / Weighing Appliances:

1. The weighbridge/weighing appliances participating in the programme shall be electronic type weighbridge/weighing appliances.

2. The weighbridge/weighing appliances shall be calibrated and be in possession of a valid certificate from the department of legal metrology.

3. The weighbridge/weighing appliances shall be in possession of a valid Quality Management System [QMS] certificate confirming compliance with: ISO2008/2015

standards, or such updated standards that is applicable from time to time, within a period of 6 months from the date of issue of this schedule.

4. The weighbridge/weighing appliances shall have adequate capacity to weigh the loaded container along with the trailer/truck/lorry, if required.
5. The weighbridge/weighing appliances shall have tamper proof mechanism that prevents tampering with the calibration.
6. The weighbridge/ weighing appliances shall provide information about verified gross mass in a tamper proof document.
7. The weighbridge/weighing appliances shall verify the calibration with standard weights at frequent intervals and the details of such verification shall be recorded. The details of the verification shall be available during inspection by authorized personnel.
8. Noting the current practices of weighing of containers across India and to facilitate trade as well as to ensure that the spirit of the Convention is adhered to, weighbridge/weighing appliances operators desiring to participate in the programme need to approach the dedicated secure website along with copy of their valid calibration certificate from the legal metrology department, copy of the Quality Management System [QMS] certificate complying with the requirements of ISO 9001:2008/2015 standards (or such updated standards that is applicable from time to time) and copy of tamper proof document proposed to be issued by the weighbridge/weighing appliances for acceptance. Format of the check list that shall be utilised by the dedicated secure website for acceptance of the weighbridge/weighing appliances is provided at Annex-3.

VII – Permissible Tolerance Limits:

1. Globally, matters relating to weights and measures including maximum permissible errors in weights etc. are dealt by the International Organization of Legal Metrology [i.e. Organisation Internationale de Métrologie Légale an inter-Governmental treaty organization established in 1955 to promote the global harmonization of matters pertaining to legal metrology. In India, the Department of Legal Metrology under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public distribution is the nodal department with regard to the matters pertaining to weights and measures.
2. The Legal Metrology Act, 2009 was enacted in India to establish and enforce standards of weights and measures and other aspects pertaining to legal metrology. Under the provisions of Legal Metrology Act, 2009, several rules have been notified including the Legal Metrology [General] Rules, 2011. The said Act and rules specify the various aspects with regard to calibration, certification, and the maximum permissible errors. The maximum permissible error of the verified gross mass of the container obtained at different locations is therefore required to be governed by the provisions of the Legal Metrology Act and its rules. However, to facilitate the case of compliance, during the initial stages of implementation, a variation up-to± 1000 kgs may be considered as acceptable between the weights obtained at different locations. However, it is reiterated that this figure of 1000 kgs is only for facilitation purpose. In case of

disagreement between parties, the provisions of the Legal Metrology Act and its rules shall be applicable.

VIII – Miscellaneous:

1. In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 5.5 of Chapter VI of the SOLAS Convention, the verified gross mass of container exceeding the maximum gross weight indicated on the container safety approval plate (CSC Plate) shall not be loaded on ships under any circumstances. No tolerance in this regard is allowed.
2. The decision of the Master of a vessel whether to accept or reject a container shall be final.
3. Dedicated secure website and weighbridges/weighing appliances participating in this programme may be audited/inspected by authorised personnel.
4. Weighbridge/weighing appliances participating in the programme and providing incorrect verified gross mass of container may be debarred.
5. Dedicated secure website accepted for participation in the programme and not carrying out the specified responsibilities may be debarred.
6. Container owners not marking the correct tare weight on the container may be displayed on the website of the Directorate General of Maritime Administration.
7. The names of the shippers defaulting in the declaration of the verified gross mass of containers may be displayed on the website of the Directorate General of Maritime Administration.
8. Instances of mis-declaration of verified gross mass of container are to be reported to the Directorate General of Maritime Administration.

ANNEX-1**INFORMATION ABOUT VERIFIED GROSS MASS OF CONTAINER**

Sr. No.	Details of Information	Particulars
1*	Name of the shipper	
2*	Shipper Registration/License No. (IEC No/CIN No) **	
3*	Name and designation of official of the shipper authorized to sign document	
4*	24 x 7 contact details of authorized official of shipper	
5*	Container No.	
6*	Container Size (TEU/FEU/other)	
7*	Maximum permissible weight of container as per the CSC plate	
8*	Weighbridge registration no. and Address of Weighbridge	
9*	Verified gross mass of container (method-1/method-2)	
10*	Date and time of weighing	
11*	Weighing slip no.	
12	Type (Normal/Reefer/Hazardous/others)	
13	If Hazardous, UN No, IMDG class	

Signature of authorised person of shipper:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Remarks:

* Indicates mandatory fields

** Shippers not having IEC No. or CIN No. may provide information as follows:

Company – PAN No.

Individuals:

Indian National – AADHAR No

Foreign National – PASSPORT No and Country of issue of passport.

ANNEX -2

SCRUTINY SHEET FOR ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL OF SHIPPER FOR ADOPTING METHOD -2

Sr. No.	Requirements	Compliance	Remarks
I	BASIC REQUIREMENTS		
1	Name of the Shipper		
2	Names of the Owners/Directors/Proprietor/Partner/Trustees etc., of the organization		(Documentary evidence to be attached)
3	Date of Registration of the Organization [Company/Society/Partnership etc.,]		1. Copy of certificate of incorporation of the organization to be attached. 2. Copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association/other equivalent documents to be attached [as applicable]
4	Name of the Director/Official authorized to sign documents		
5	Fees: Demand Draft/online payment for Rs. _____/- in favour of the Jurisdictional MMD.		For Assessment and Issue of Certificate
6	Registered Address or Location of the organization Telephone/Fax/E-Mail		
7	Address for Communication 24x7 Telephone/Fax/E-Mail		

8	Layout of the premises (Stuffing location) with relevant documents		Copy of the layout plan to be attached
9	Ownership details of the premises	Lease deed valid upto: _____ Whether Lease deed has enabling provision for renewal of lease for a further period.	If owned: copy of the ownership documents to be attached If leased: copy of the leased deed duly registered with the appropriate authority to be attached
10	The organization premises to have the necessary permissions from the concerned local authorities (Municipal/Panchayat/Industrial etc., as applicable)		Shop and Establishment registration, Municipality licence, etc., as applicable to be attached
11	Quality Management System Certificate complying with the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 standards	Valid till _____	Copy of certificate to be attached
12	Details of calibrated electronic weighing equipment		Certificates from Legal Metrology Department to be submitted
13	Lifting Hooks for slinging the empty container		Safe working load to be specified
14	Chain block		Safe working load to be specified
15	Premises to have adequate space for weighing the individual items including pallets, etc.		
16	Ability to issue tamper proof document containing information specified in Annex-1		Copy of the tamper proof document to be submitted
17	Ability to display information on independent website/tie-up with independent website		Agreement of tie-up with independent website to be submitted
18	Ability to digitally transmit container VGM data to website, terminal and Master of the vessel		

Recommendations/Comments of MMD Surveyor:

List of enclosures:

Surveyor of MMD

Comments of the Principal Officer:

ANNEX-3

INFORMATION ABOUT WEIGHBRIDGE

Sr. No.	Details of Information	Particulars
1	Name of the weighbridge Operator	
2	Address of weighbridge	
3	Weighbridge Registration/License No. issued by Department of Legal Metrology	
4	Details of the weighbridge – Type: Mechanical / Electronic Make Model Serial No.	
5	Weighbridge calibration certificate issued from Department of Legal Metrology and Certificate No. and date of issue with validity	Certificate No. Date of issue Validity
6	Weighbridge QMS certificate confirming compliance with ISO 2008/2015 or such updated standards that is applicable from time to time.	Certificate No. Date of issue Validity
7	Does the weighbridge have adequate capacity to weigh the loaded container along with the trailer/truck/lorry, if required?	
8	Does the weighbridge have provision to provide information about verified gross mass in a tamper proof document?	

Signature of authorised person of weighbridge operator

Name: _____
Date: _____

