

# **For shippers, surcharges without explanation**

**19 July 2016**

Shippers from all over the world are now confronted with extra surcharges, longer lead times and changed cut-off times imposed by other stakeholders in the maritime supply chain. These charges are applied without any sensible explanation and regardless of shippers being compliant before or since July 1st or being not compliant at all.

The Global Shippers Alliance (GSA), representing the logistic interests of manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers from Asia, the European Union and the United States, regrets that regulations and related investments that contribute to a safer and more secured supply chain are now being misused by some partners for their own benefit.

## **Charges**

GSA is asking all stakeholders concerned to withdraw any unjustifiable charges immediately and to use the three month grace period, as requested by IMO, to refine all procedures and communications regarding the VGM. Based on the guidelines issued by European members of GSA, together with other associations, shippers have been successful in aligning the implementation of the weighing of containers regulation across several countries in North America, Asia and Europe. These efforts contributed to the fact that the transition to the new container weighing resolutions went, contrary to the expectations, smoothly.

## **Investments**

Industrials not only have taken a cooperative approach to these VGM-regulations but also have undertaken all necessary actions and investments to provide carriers with the accurate verified gross mass. Undoubtedly, the other stakeholders in the chain had to do exactly the same. However, GSA sees no justification for these stakeholders to look for return on their investment by applying any VGM-charge for complying shippers. First of all, the objective of the new regulation was put in place to decrease risk with respect to safety in maritime shipping. Increasing the cost of the supply chain, on top of the investments already done by the shippers, is not the purpose. Second, with the implementation date already known long time ago it is not acceptable that justifiable charges (if any) are made known after July 1st. unless shippers want to see their supply chain disrupted, they have no other choice than to accept these tangible and intangible charges.