

## PRESS RELEASE

### **SABAH PORTS SDN BHD IMPLEMENTS VERIFIED GROSS MASS (VGM) FOR CONTAINERS**

---

In compliance with the International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) verified gross mass rule, Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd (SPSB) will fully enforce the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulation VI/2 on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. Under the new ruling, shippers are required to provide the verified gross mass (VGM) of a container as a requirement before it can be loaded on to a vessel for shipping. IMO, United Nations specialised agency responsible for developing shipping regulatory framework, has enforced the regulation as a pre-emptive measure to reduce injuries and loss of life at sea.

SPSB has since carried out the enforcement of SOLAS in accordance with the global implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016, set by IMO as the effective date for ports worldwide to adopt the ruling. SPSB has taken steps to further prepare its ports by scheduling a trial implementation period on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016. To ensure a smooth transition, SPSB has actively held dialogues with the Sabah Ports Authority, shipping agents, forwarders and trade associations to ensure all parties are fully aware of the commitment. To further facilitate compliance, a template of the prescribed VGM form has been made available at the company website for port users.

"SPSB fully supports the implementation of SOLAS as this is beneficial towards enhancing the safety of container handling at our ports. SPSB's aim is to eliminate workplace accidents due to overweight containers in particular those designated for loading onto container vessels. SPSB has put in place stringent safety practices as part of the port's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in accordance with the requirement of SOLAS. We welcome the decision on the implementation of SOLAS as it creates additional security and safety measures for the container vessels and port employees especially those involved in the shore side operations. As such, we seek the cooperation of our container exporters to ensure full compliance of the SOLAS for the safety of all parties concerned" said SPSB's Chief Operating Officer, Mohd. Sahid Hj. Nawab Khan.

In view of the SOLAS implementation, SPSB has also subjected shipping agents to a 24 hour rule which states that laden containers must enter the port 24 hours prior to vessel arrival to provide ample time for vessel stowage planning. Previously, the cut off period, otherwise known as Load Closing Time, was 12 hours.

Among SPSB's 8 port line up, Sapangar Bay Container Port, Tawau Port, Sandakan Port and Lahad Datu Port are involved in container operations. These port will provide weighing facilities for the VGM to cater for shippers who may either chose to weigh containers at SPSB or with a certified external party.

**ISSUED ON 1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2016**  
**BY CUSTOMER RELATIONS DEPARTMENT**  
**SABAH PORTS SDN BHD**

**Contact Person:**

*Julia Ismail*

*Acting Manager, Customer Relations*

*Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd*

*Tel: 088- 483399/013-8866506 /088-489911 (fax)*

*Email : julia@spsb.com.my*