OCEMA and Six East & Gulf Coast Ports
Agree On Used Common Terminal Weighing Approach to VGM

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Washington, D.C. June 28, 2016 – The 19 ocean carrier members of the Ocean Carrier Equipment Management Association ("OCEMA") have joined with six major East and Gulf coast ports, including the South Carolina Ports Authority, Georgia Ports Authority, North Carolina State Ports Authority, the Port of Houston Authority, The Port of Virginia and Virginia International Terminals, and the Massachusetts Port Authority, to agree on use of a common streamlined "Terminal Weighing Approach" to providing verified gross mass ("VGM") at port locations. On May 19, 2016, OCEMA and the Ports filed an agreement with the Federal Maritime Commission with regard to the cooperative effort. The Agreement became effective on Friday, June 24.

OCEMA and the six Ports have issued a joint policy statement, which outlines the steps to be taken for VGM compliance under the Terminal Weighing Approach. The Terminal Weighing Approach aims to ensure fluidity at major East and Gulf Coast ports and provide shippers, carriers, and terminals with a simple means of compliance with the SOLAS VGM requirements.

Under the TWA concept, marine terminals would weigh a container on certified terminal scales, pursuant to the equivalency declared by the U.S. Coast Guard. This weight could then be used to fulfill the U.S. exporter's IMO SOLAS VGM requirement. The approach would provide flexibility for U.S. export shippers at participating ports.

OCEMA has incorporated the common Terminal Weighing Approach in its OCEMA Best Practice for the Acceptance and Transmission of VGM for U.S. Export Cargoes as an additional accepted method of submitting VGM at the participating U.S. port locations. It is also being incorporated in a new OCEMA standard tariff rule.

OCEMA's Chairman, Frank Grossi, Executive Vice President, COSCO, stated, "The April 28, 2016 Coast Guard equivalency declaration opened new doors to VGM compliance. The six major East and Gulf Coast operating ports and 19 carriers in OCEMA have moved quickly to adopt this approach which is terminal, shipper and carrier friendly. This is a game changer as it will cover almost 40% of U.S. containerized exports. We urge other U.S. terminals to adopt the TWA approach in a way that facilitates the smooth flow of U.S. export movements."

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