

Guidance Note

Understanding the markings on treated timber

December 2015



South African Wood Preservers Association

South African Standards SANS 1288, SANS 457-2/3 and SANS 753/4 specify the marking requirements for any preservative treated product that claims to comply with the respective Standards. The following information must be contained in the marking:

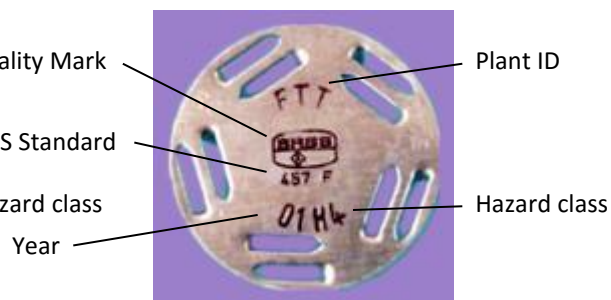
- **A unique plant identifier or trademark.** This is usually a name or acronym that identifies the treatment plant where the timber was treated. A register of treatment plant trademarks is maintained by the third party product certification body with whom the treatment plant is certified, i.e. the SABS or SATAS
- **Product certification mark.** This is the quality mark of the third party product certification body (SATAS or SABS) that certifies the treatment plant who produced the treated timber.
- **SANS standard designation.** This number is usually found below the quality mark and indicates the SANS standard the treated timber complies with, e.g. SANS 1288, SANS 753, SANS 754 or SANS 457. In the case of SANS 457 hardwood poles the additional letter refers to the class or grading, i.e. S – Structural /agricultural, F – Fencing and V – Vineyard.
- **A hazard class.** There are six hazard classes, each of which identify the level of treatment applied. For more information refer to the SAWPA Guidance Note - Understanding the hazard classes.
- Date or year of manufacture of poles

For poles and round wood the information is most commonly applied on 25 mm metal tags or anti-split end plates, and for sawn and machined timber or boards, ink stamps are used. The information may be presented in a number of layouts but most commonly done as set out in the following diagrams:

25 mm metal pole markers



Anti-split end plates (50 mm >)



Ink stamps for sawn and machined timber

Treated stress graded timber (face marking)



Treated non structural, e.g. profiled decking (end marking)



Number of pieces marked (*at the time of leaving the treatment plant*)

Round wood

- Poles, Half rounds: each pole shall be marked, preferably on the top end.
- Laths and droppers: One in a bundle, but in the case of loose laths and droppers at least 10%

Sawn/profiled:

- Stress graded (excl brandering and battens): Every piece exposed on the top and sides of the pack shall be marked on the face or edge. In the case of a consignment of loose pieces, each piece shall be marked.
- Other (including brandering and battens): In the case of a pack consisting of loose pieces, or smaller packages of units or bundles of pieces, at least every piece exposed on the top and sides of the pack shall be marked. In addition at least one piece in every package or bundle situated within a large pack shall be marked.

If treated timber is not marked as above, it is not produced according to the requirements of the relevant South African National Standard and by implication does not comply with the compulsory specification, VC 9092.

For more information on preservative treated timber, contact SAWPA at 011 974 1061 or sawpa@global.co.za, or visit our website at www.sawpa.co.za