

## Class 2h ~ Street name advertisements

Vol. 1 of the previous *South African Road Traffic Signs Manual (SARTSM)* made provision for advertising on street name signs. Street name advertisements were therefore incorporated into the existing SAMOAC (April 1998). In the meantime volumes 1&4 of SARTSM have been replaced by Volumes 1&4 of the *Southern African Development Community Road Traffic Signs Manual (SADCRTSM)*. Since SADC does not allow advertising on any road sign the information on both street name advertisements and [Suburban ads \(Class 2i\)](#), which formed part of SARTSM was not incorporated into SADCRTSM. However it is still possible to include street name advertisements in the revised SAMOAC since the National Road Traffic Act makes provision for advertising on traffic signs in terms of Regulation 290.

Street Name Advertisements provide advertising opportunities in exchange for street name signs provided by the outdoor advertising contractor. The reasoning behind this sign type is that adequate street names will improve traffic safety. In a crime ridden country such as South Africa street name signs also play an important role in assisting the police service, reaction units and emergency services. This is especially true of the South African townships which never had decent street name signs. It seems as if many local authorities do not have sufficient funds to provide adequate street name signs. Street name advertisements can therefore play an important role in fulfilling this need.

However, there is also a negative side to this sign type. In many cases the advertising panel dominates the street name in terms of both colour and size while advertising messages may be difficult to interpret in terms of information overload and small text. All these factors may impair traffic safety. The important sign condition that the colours red, amber and green should not be displayed at signalised intersections is also not adhered to in most cases which may interfere with the safe functioning of traffic signals thereby contributing even further to unsafe driving conditions.

When making provision for street name advertisements in the revised SAMOAC by implementing Reg. 290 of the National Road Traffic Act the following should be taken into consideration:

- Street names should be more prominent in relation to advertising panels. A minimum size for street name panels and text should be required.
- The information on the advertising panels should be limited to enterprise or product names and logos, arrows indicating the direction to the enterprises and the distance to an enterprise. A limited size for any lettering should be required.
- The condition that the colours red, amber and green shall not be displayed at signalised intersections should be applied more strictly and if this cannot be done, none of these signs should be displayed at such intersections.

- The inclusion of less expensive advertising panels combined with ordinary suburban street name signs should be considered. Due to the visual impact of street name advertisements this advertising type is not allowed in areas of maximum control, which includes most suburban residential areas. In order to allow the display of street name advertisements relevant suburban communities will have to agree to have their neighbourhoods classified as areas of partial control which will open the door for various other sign classes as well – or a more visually pleasant advertising structure/panel will have to be found to make street name advertisements more acceptable to urban areas of maximum control.



Too much advertising information!

The name of the enterprise in the top images is too long while contact information and route descriptions should not be allowed. This stylish advertising structure contributes to streetscape aesthetics. Street names can be clearly observed since both panels are well detached from the main panel.

Only one enterprise should be allowed per advertising panel, without describing the location of such enterprises (right).

*Class 2h ~ Street name advertisements*





Less stylish advertising structures on rather unattractive slender poles – not all that beneficial to pleasant streetscapes (top). One of the street name panels is incorporated into the main panel with the other panel also very close to the advertising message, making street names less discernable. The advertising panel on the left provides a good example of the brevity of information required. However, the green and amber colours cannot be allowed at a signalised intersection. The message in the central image is also uncomplicated, but the lower part of the text on the advertising panel cannot be read clearly. The advertising message on the third sign is more complicated and distracting while the use of street names in this message may be confusing.



A variety of street name signs in residential neighbourhoods (above). Again long slender poles are not all that attractive while a more prominent visual frame on some of these advertising panels may contribute to variety and appeal.



Street name signs without any street names (above). A street name sign advertising a Spar shop in a totally different neighbourhood than the Spar shop on the other side of the street by indicating the street address of the more distant shop (right). This may lead to confusion.

Compiled by Frans Jordaan