

Class 2i ~ Suburban ads

By means of this sign type municipalities receive name signs for their suburbs in exchange for advertising opportunities on signs which can actually be seen as road traffic signs.

Vol. 1 of the previous *South African Road Traffic Signs Manual (SARTSM)* made provision for advertising on suburban name signs. These signs, called *suburban ads*, 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 In the meantime volumes 1&4 of SARTSM have been replaced by Volumes 1&4 of the *Southern African Development Community Road Traffic Signs Manual (SADCRTSM)*.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 both suburban ads and street name advertisements ([Class 2h](#)), which formed part of the old SARTSM, was not provided for in 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.

According to the existing SAMOAC (April 1998) the advertising panel is placed directly underneath the name panel, both facing in the same direction. However, there may be a problem with such an approach. In many cases the name of the suburb is dominated by the advertisement on the advertising panel – although the current SAMOAC (April 1998) states that ‘the advertisement shall be smaller and less conspicuous than the suburb name sign.’ In order to prevent a suburb name being dominated by advertising contents and to ensure that both name and advertising panels come to their right it might be a good idea to attach the advertising panel to the back of name panel as the only option. However, in the case of streets with more than two lanes this will place the advertisement out of sight of the oncoming traffic.

According to the old South African Roads Traffic Signs Manual a height of 0,4 m is provided for both panels, but no definite length is specified. It is assumed that the length may vary according to the length of the suburb’s name. However, it is suggested that a maximum length is laid down in order to give better substance to the conditions regarding this sign type.

An input was received from an interested and affected party that the shape, size and height of suburban ads should vary according to local authority requirements. This request should be considered carefully since it may lead to suburban name signs being totally overshadowed by advertisements.

As is the case with street name signs suburban names may also play an important role in the war against crime by assisting the police service, reaction units and emergency services in reaching a crime scene quickly.



<http://www.outdoornetwork.co.za>

The name 'Vorwerk' is more conspicuous than the suburb name both in terms of letter size and colour (top left). The information in the bottom line of the advertisement is too small and cannot be read by any motorist on a four-lane road travelling at a speed of 70-80 km p h. The same can be said about the two bottom lines on the 'Crayon kids' advert (top right). It may also be a good idea not to provide contact information on advertising panels since this may distract the attention of drivers unduly. The only exception may be the provision of emergency numbers on the backside of suburban name panels. However, the text on the above example is too small and needs to be made more conspicuous by leaving out the municipal logo and enlarging the information panel. In order to make advertising messages more digestible to motorist one may consider going even further by limiting advertising messages to enterprise and product names and logos.

The suburban names on the two bottom signs by *Outdoor Network* come to their right by being displayed on a green background and a name panel which is larger than the advertising panel (right). Definite conditions need to be laid down to ensure that name panels will always be more conspicuous than the advertising panel.

Compiled by Frans Jordaan