WINE LAW

INFORMATION

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VOLUME: PRESCRIBED QUANTITIES AND DECLARATION FOR LIQUOR PRODUCTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The legal requirements regarding above-mentioned were regulated under Trade Metrology Act (77 of 1973) regulations of 1977. The way the volume declaration had to be indicated, was linked to the position and character height of the trade name.

New regulations were published in 2007, which provide that prescribed quantities and the requirements for marking of prepackages shall be in accordance with South African National Standard (SANS) 289.

SANS 289 prescribes the sizes wherein liquor products may be packaged and requires the following items to be shown on prepackaged products:

(a) Identity of the product.
(b) Name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer, distributor or importer.
(c) Net quantity of the prepackaged product.

In our opinion, however, under paragraph 1.2.2 of SANS 289, as the items referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) above are subject to specific requirements of the Liquor Products Act (60 of 1989) and its subordinate legislation, the requirements of SANS 289 in respect of these items do not apply to liquor products. After discussions, the relevant authority has officially exempted liquor products from these requirements (indication of product identity and name and place of business) and has indicated that SANS 289 will be amended accordingly in due course.

Thus, for liquor products, SANS 289 only applies in respect of prescribed quantities and requirements relating to the volume declaration. For the other aspects mentioned, the Regulations of the Liquor Products Act apply – see Wine Law 10 of 2008 (SA labelling requirements) in this regard for wine.

2 PRESCRIBED QUANTITIES

Liquor products may only be packaged in the sizes as set out below:

Liquor product	Prescribed quantities
Wine, including sparkling wine, imported champagne, vermouth, wine cocktails and flavoured grape liquors	187 mL, 200 mL, 250 mL, 300 mL, 340 mL, 375 mL, 400 mL, 500 mL, 750 mL, 1 L, 1,5 L, 2 L, 3 L, 4 L, 4,5 L, 5 L and integral multiples of 1 L above 5 L
Potable spirits including liqueurs, cream liqueurs and spirit cocktails	Any quantity up to and including 50 mL, 200 mL, 250 mL, 300 mL, 375 mL, 500 mL, 750 mL, 1 L then 150 L and integral multiples of 1 L above 150 L
Other, including spirit coolers and alcoholic fruit beverages,	Any quantity up to and including 100 mL then 250 mL, 275 mL, 300 mL, 330 mL, 340 mL, 375 mL, 450 mL, 500 mL, 660 mL, 750 mL, 1 L and 1,5 L

3 NET QUANTITY DECLARATION

SANS 289 requires as follows:

3.1 What

In the case of a liquor product the net quantity may only be expressed by volume (not, for example, by mass).

3.2 Where

The net quantity must be shown on any label of a liquor product, except a label on a surface clearly intended as a base. A surface blown, embossed or moulded on is also regarded as a label.

Where a package contains a number of items, which have themselves been prepackaged in accordance with the requirements set out herein, the outer container need only make known the number of items and their individual quantity. In cases where the items have different quantities, the outer container shall make known the number of items of each quantity and their respective quantities.

3.3 How

(a) The volume declaration shall appear in easily legible **boldface** type or print that contrasts conspicuously with the background and with other information on a package. However, when the net quantity is blown, embossed, or moulded on the surface of the package it need not contrast with the background.

(b) If the net quantity of the liquor product is less than 1 000 millilitre the unit used must be **millilitre(s)** (or **mL** or **ml**) or **centilitre** (or **cL** or **cl**).

If the net quantity of the liquor product is equal to or more than 1 000 millilitre the unit used must be **litre(s)** (or **L** or **l**).

The script letter ℓ for litre is acceptable within the SADC region but might not be accepted in countries outside the region.

(c) The decimal indicator, if applicable, shall either be a comma or a period (full stop). For example: "**1,5 L**" or "**1.5 L**". The latter is better in terms of current international practice. Neither a period (full stop) nor the letter "s" shall be used after any of the symbols.

(d) A single space must be used between the number and the unit of measurement. Thus, for example, "**750**" followed by a single space and then "**mL**".

(e) The letters and numerals used in the volume declaration shall have a minimum height as set out below:

Net contents	Minimum height of numbers and letters in mm
50 mL or less	2
More than 50 mL, but not more than 200 mL	3
More than 200 mL, but not more than 1 L	4
More than 1 L	6

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