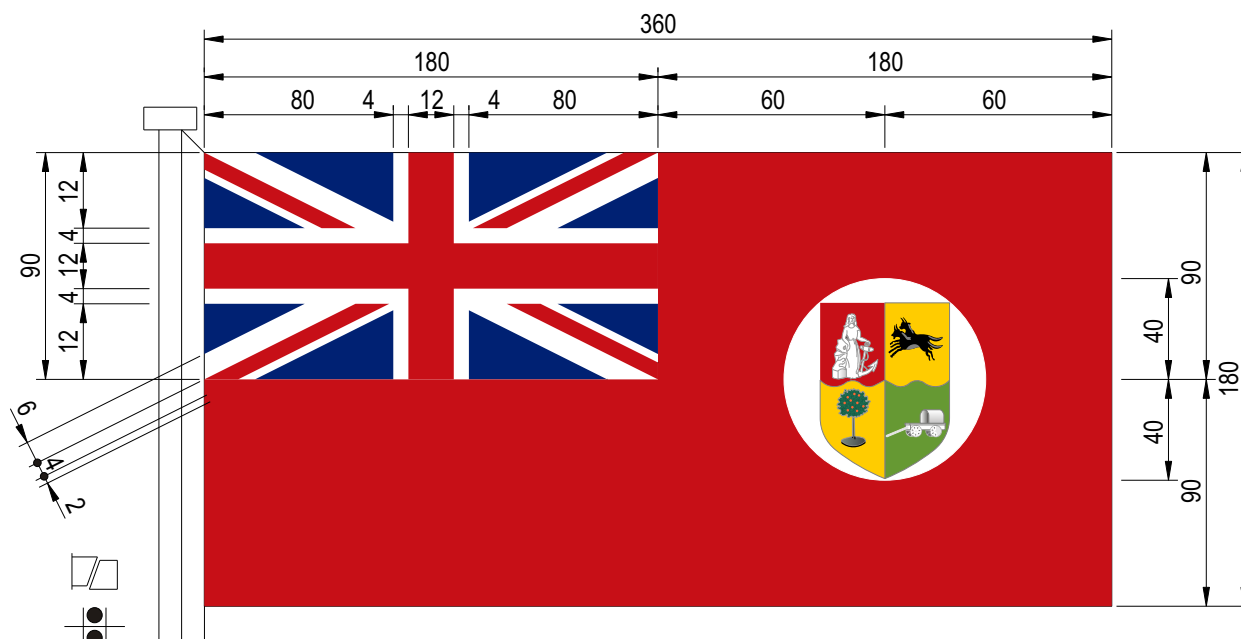


# SOUTHERN AFRICAN VEXILLOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION FLAG SPECIFICATION SHEET

## South Africa

Colonial Merchant ensign 1912 - 1951



DATA		COLOUR SPECIFICATIONS					
		Colour	Pantone	C	M	Y	K
Usage:	Merchant ensign	Red	186c	0	91	76	6
Ratio:	1 : 2	Royal Blue	280c	100	72	0	18.5
Adopted:	28 Dec 1910						
Abolished:	25 Mar 1912						
Designer:	-						

### HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM

The Admiralty warrant dated 28th December 1910, which authorised a distinctive red ensign for South Africa, made no provision for the shield of the national arms to be placed on a white roundel. This created practical problems since the first quarter of the shield was also red. As a result, on 25th March 1912, the Admiralty informed the Colonial Office that a footnote in the Admiralty Flag Book had been amended to read that "In the case of the Red Ensign the shield is displayed on a white ground in the fly".

Despite the introduction of the South African national flag on 31st May 1928, this red ensign, restored to its rightful role, continued in use until 1951 as the flag of the South African Mercantile Marine. In terms of the provisions of Section 65 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1951 (Act No. 57 of 1951), it was then replaced in this role by the national flag (see SV - ZA - 01.2 - 1).



Sources: *The Union Jack over Southern and Central Africa 1795-1994*, by FG Brownell, SAVA Journal 3/94