SRI LANKA STANDARD 263 : 1974

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BUILDING TIMBER

(METRIC UNITS)

PART 1 - RECOMMENDATION ON SIZES

PART 2 - SPECIFICATION FOR PERMISSIBLE DEFECTS

SRI LANKA STANDARDS INSTITUTION

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SLS 263 : 1974

Gr. 9

SRI LANKA STANDARDS INSTITUTION
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Colombo 3,
Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka Standards are subject to periodical revision in order to accommodate the progress made by industry. Suggestions for improvement will be recorded and brought to the notice of the Committees to which the revisions are entrusted.

This standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract.

SRI LANKA STANDARD
FOR BUILDING TIMBER
(METRIC UNITS)
PART I - RECOMMENDATION ON SIZES
PART II - SPECIFICATION FOR PERMISSIBLE DEFECTS

FOREWORD

This standard relating to timber used for building construction has been prepared by the Drafting Committee on Building Timber. This was approved by the Civil Engineering Divisional Committee of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution, and was authorised for adoption and publication by the Council of the Institution on 21st May 1974.

This standard has been prepared in two parts. Part I deals with the recommended sizes of timber to be used in the building industry, while Part II defines and describes the defects that are commonly found in building timber. The defects have been classified into those that may be permitted within limits and that should not be allowed at all in building timber.

In the part on timber, sizes, the sections used for different purposes have been standardized, thereby effecting a reduction in the large variety of sections hitherto used. These sections are considered to be of adequate strength for the particular purpose.

The recommendations in regard to structural timber have been based on the use of timber which has a density of 640 kg/m^3 (40.0 lb/$ft.^3$) at 12% moisture content. Reference should be made to the Forest Department for detailed information on the properties of different species of timber.

In order to get the best results from using this standard, it is necessary to take certain precautions in regard to handling timber. Timber, like any other building material, needs to be properly stored until it is used. For most purposes this means keeping it stacked under cover. Storage under cover is specified in order to permit timber purchased in an unseasoned form to be seasoned at site, or to prevent timber purchased in a seasoned form from warping or absorbing moisture. The use of seasoned timber is necessary for two reasons. One is to prevent shrinkage after fabrication or erection, and the other is to reduce the hazards of decay and insect attack. Dry timber is not subject to decay and some forms of insect attack. Briefly, the timber should be stacked at least 0.5 m (or 1.5 ft) above the ground on a suitable platform with the layers of timbers separated by "stickers". These stickers should be evenly spaced, and in vertical planes. If a roofed shed is not available a stack may be constructed and provided with adequate temporary covering to shield it from the weather.

All standard values given in this specification are in **SI** units. Equivalent values in imperial units are given in brackets for guidance. These equivalents have been calculated in accordance with "SLS 116 : 1972 Sri Lanka Standard on Principles of Conversion". The preferred lengths specified in Tables **1** and **2** are based on the multimodules **3M***, **6M*** and **12M*** recommended for use in the building industry. The imperial values now in use together with the corresponding standard metric values are given in Appendix **A**.

1 SCOPE

This publication recommends sizes of timber to be used in the building industry and deals with permissible and non-permissible defects in building timber.

It is divided into two parts :

Part I - Recommended sizes of timber for use in building construction.

Part II - Recommendations regarding permissible and non-permissible defects in building timber.

2 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this publication, the following definitions shall apply :

2.1 **Bow** - Curvature such that the face is concave or convex along the grain (see Fig. 1).

2.2 **Boxed heart** - Insawn or hewn timber, cut so that the pith with any associated defective wood falls entirely within the four surfaces throughout the length of the timber.

2.3 **Brittle heart** - The defective core of a log, characterised by abnormal brittleness which occurs in certain species of timber. There is no difference in colour from unaffected wood and a sawn cross-section shows a pitted condition, but the limits of the defect are never sharply defined.

2.4 **Check** - A separation of the fibres along the grain forming a crack or fissure in the timber not extending through the piece from one surface to another cf. split. It generally results from stresses set up in the timber during seasoning. The term is usually applied to converted timber. cf. shake.

2.5 **Collapse** - Flattening or buckling of the wood elements during seasoning which results in excessive and/or uneven shrinkage and may manifest itself in the form of surface corrugations (washboard effect).

**M, the basic module to be used in building work = 100 mm.*

2.6 **Compression failure** - A deformation or fracture of the fibres across the grain resulting from excessive compression parallel to the grain either by direct end compression or in bending.

The deformation appears as a minute fracture running across the grain, the fibres being crinkled by compression or broken transversely; this is often difficult to detect until the timber is planed.

NOTE - *Natural compression failures may develop in standing trees due to internal stresses set up by wind and rain, unequal growth etc. They are commonly associated with brittle heart and may also occur as a result of felling.*

2.7 **Cup** - Curvature such that the face is concave or convex across the grain. (See fig. 2).

2.8 **Decay (Rot)** - Decomposition by fungi and other micro-organisms resulting in softening, progressive loss of strength and weight, and often a change of texture and colour.

2.9 **Hewn Timber** - Timber finished to size by axe or adze; the ends are sometimes sawn.

2.10 **Interlocked grain** - A type in which the angle of the fibres changes or reverses periodically in successive layers.

2.11 **Knot** - A portion of a branch enclosed in the wood by the natural growth of the tree.

2.11.1 *Decayed or unsound knot* - A knot softer than the surrounding wood and containing decay.

2.11.2 *Live or sound knot* - A knot free from decay and other defects inter-grown with or firmly held within the surrounding wood.

2.11.3 *Loose knot* - A knot which is not held firmly in place.

2.11.4 *Knot hole* - A hole caused by the removal of a knot.

2.12 **Loosened grain** - A defect on a flat sawn surface caused by the separation or raising of wood layers along the growth rings.

2.13 **Moisture content** - The amount of moisture in timber expressed as a percentage of its oven-dry weight.

2.14 **Natural defects** - Defects occurring during the growth of the tree e.g. shakes, knots, sapwood, pitch pockets, tension wood, loosened grain, compression failure, worm holes and fungi.

2.15 **Non-structural timber** - Timber used in elements, which are not required to carry loads.

2.16 **Pitch pocket** - A well-defined intercellular cavity in timber, often more or less lens-shaped containing a resinous or gummy substance.

2.17 **Sap-stain** - A discoloration of timber resulting from the growth of certain fungi that derive their nourishment from the cell contents but do not cause decomposition of the timber. It is principally confined to sapwood cf. decay.

2.18 **Sapwood** - The outer layers of wood which, in the growing tree, contained living cells and reserve materials (e.g. starch), generally lighter in colour than heart wood though not always clearly differentiated. (see fig. 5.)

NOTE - The term is sometimes abbreviated to "sap".

2.19 **Sawn timber** - Timber sawn to size but not planned or otherwise finished.

2.20 **Seasoned timber** - Timber which has been dried under controlled conditions so as to minimise or eliminate the defects usually associated with timber.

2.21 **Shake** - A separation of the fibres along the grain due to stresses developed in the standing tree, or in felling cf. check, split.

2.21.1 *Cup shake* - A shake that does not completely encircle the pith.

2.21.2 *Round shake* - A shake that completely encircles the pith.

2.21.3 *Shell shake* - Part of a round shake or cup shake showing on the surface of converted timber.

2.22 **Sloping grain** - Grain which is at an angle to the longitudinal axis of the piece.

2.23 **Split** - A separation of the fibres along the grain forming a crack or fissure that extends through the piece from one surface to another.

2.24 **Spring** - Curvature such that if the piece of timber is laid on its edge, it forms a flat arch. (see Fig. 3).

2.25 **Structural timber** - Timber used in framing and load bearing structures where strength is the major factor in its selection and use.

2.26 **Surfaced heart** - Of sawn or hewn timber, cut so that the pith with any associated defective wood appears on any of the four surfaces.

2.27 **Tension wood** - Abnormal wood (reaction wood) formed typically on the upper side of branches and of leaning or crooked trunks of hardwood trees. It has abnormally high longitudinal shrinkage tending to cause warping and splitting and the machined surface tends to be fibrous or woolly especially when green.

2.28 **Termite damage** - Damage characterized by irregular honeycombing or wide channels. The galleries caused by the subterranean termite are sometimes packed with mud, whereas those caused by the dry wood termite contain frass which is granular and dry. The damage may affect standing trees, logs or stored timber mostly when in contact with the ground.

2.29 **Twist** - Spiral distortion. (see Fig. 4).

2.30 **Wane** - The original rounded surface of a tree remaining on a piece of converted timber.

2.31 **Worm or borer hole** - A hole or tunnel, irrespective of size, caused by insects or their larvae.

2.32 **Defects due to other causes** - Defects occurring from the point of felling onwards, e.g. checks, splits, shakes, decay, sloping grain, wane, worm holes, termite damage, sap stain, cup, bow, twist spring, collapse and compression failure.

PART 1

RECOMMENDATION ON SIZES OF TIMBER FOR USE IN BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

3 DIMENSIONS

The dimensions of different timber components shall be as given in Tables 1 and 2. These dimensions are applicable only to seasoned timber.

TABLE 1
Sizes for Structural Timber

Components	Sawn (unplaned)* mm (in)	Finished(planed) mm (in)	Preferred lengths m(ft)
Ridge plates	175x25(6.9x1.0)	--	2.70;3.60;4.20;4.80.
	175x50(6.9x2.0)	--	(8.9;11.8;13.8;15.7)
Rafters	75x50(3.0x2.0)	--	2.70;3.60;4.20;4.80.
	100x50(3.9x2.0)	--	(8.9;11.8;13.8;15.7)
Wall Plates	100x50(3.9x2.0)	--	not less than 2.40
	100x75(3.9x3.0)	--	(7.9)
Purlins	50x50(2.0x2.0)	--)	
	75x38(3.0x1.5)	--)	
	100x50(3.9x2.0)	--)	3.30;3.60;4.20;4.80
	125x50(4.9x2.0)	--)	(10.8;11.8;13.8;15.7)
	150x50(5.9x2.0)	--)	
	175x50(6.9x2.0)	--)	
Reapers	50x25(2.0x1.0)	--	Minimum of 1.80m
	50x13(2.0x0.5)	--	(5.9ft)with 0.60m (2.0ft) increments
Eaves boards (valance boards)	200x25(7.9x1.0)	200x22(7.9x0.9)	3.30;3.60;4.20;4.80
		200x19(7.9x0.7)	(10.8;11.8;13.8;15.7)
Principal rafters	125x25,32,38	--)	
	(4.9x1.0,1.3,1.5)	--)	
	150x25,32,38,50	--)	
	(5.9x1.0,1.3,1.5,2)	--)	3.60,4.20,4.80
		)	(11.8;13.8;15.7)
	175x25,32,38,50	--)	
	(6.9x1.0,1.3,1.5,2)	--)	
Tie beam	125x25,32,38	--)	
	(4.9x1.0,1.3,1.5)	--)	
	150x25,32,38	--)	3.60,4.20,4.80
	(5.9x1.0,1.3,1.5)	--)	(11.8;13.8;15.7)
	175x25,32,38	--)	
	(6.9x1.0,1.3,1.5)	--)	
Braces	75x50(3.0x2.0)	--	1.80,3.60
	100x50(3.9x2.0)		(5.9,11.8)
Ceiling bearers	100x50(3.9x2.0)	--	1.20,2.40,3.00
	75x50(3.0x2.0)	--	3.60,4.20
	50x50(2.0x2.0)	--	(3.9,7.9,9.8,11.8,13.8)

* *Depths of the saw marks should be such that they could be accommodated within the limits of tolerance permitted in clause* **4.1**.

TABLE 2

Sizes for non-structural timber

Components	Sawn(unplaned)* mm(in)	Finished(planed) mm(in)	Preferred lengths m(ft.)
Ceiling boards	115x22(4.5x0.9) 150x16(5.9x0.6)	100x19(3.9x0.7) 140x13(5.5x0.5)	1.80,2.40,3.00 (3.9,7.9,9.8)
Ceiling Beadings	38x13(1.5x0.5) 50x13(2.0x0.5)	-- --	1.80(5.9)and upwards
Cornice mouldings	50x50(2.0x2.0)	--	1.8(5.9)and upwards
Window Frames:			
Jambs & heads	100x50(3.9x2.0) 100x63(3.9x2.5)	95x44(3.7x1.7) 95x57(3.7x2.2)	
Mullions	100x63(3.9x2.5)	95x60(3.7x2.4)	
Sills	125x50(4.9x2.0) 125x63(4.9x2.5)	120x44(4.7x1.7) 120x57(4.7x2.2)	2.10,2.70,3.00 (6.9,8.9,9.8)
Stops	40x16(1.6x0.6)	38x13(1.5x0.5)	
Window Sashes	36(1.4)thick 44(1.7)thick	32(1.3)thick 40(1.6)thick	
Door Frames:			
Jambs & heads	100x50(3.9x2.0) 100x63(3.9x2.5) 40x16(1.6x0.6)	95x44(3.7x1.7) 95x57(3.7x2.2) 38x13(1.5x0.5)	1.20,2.70,3.30 (3.9,8.9,10.8)
Door sashes	36(1.4)thick	32(1.3)thick	

**Depths of the saw marks should be such that they could be accommodated within the limits of tolerances permitted in clause 4.1.*

4 TOLERANCE

The tolerances for dimensions of timber specified in Table 1 and 2 shall be as given below.

4.1 Sawn (unplaned)

Nominal Dimension mm(in)	Maximum permissible variation mm(in)
Up to 25 (1.0)	-0 +2 (0.08)
Over 25 (1.0) to 50 (2.0)	-2 (0.08) +3 (0.12)
Over 50 (2.0) to 150(5.9)	-3 (0.12) +6 (0.24)
Over 150 (5.9)	-6 (0.24) +6 (0.24)

4.2 **Finished (planed)**

Nominal Dimensions mm (in)	Maximum permissible variation mm (in)	
Up to 25 (1.0)	-0	+1 (0.04)
Over 25 (1.0) to 50 (2.0)	-1 (0.04)	+2 (0.08)
Over 50 (2.0) to 120 (5.9)	-2 (0.08)	+3 (0.12)
Over 150 (5.9)	-3 (0.12)	+3 (0.12)

5 DENSITY OF TIMBER

The density of timber used for building purposes should not in general be less than 640 kg/m^3 (40.0 lb/ft^3) at 12 per cent moisture content.

PART II

SPECIFICATION FOR PERMISSIBLE AND NON-PERMISSIBLE DEFECTS IN BUILDING TIMBER

6 DEFECTS NOT PERMITTED

The defects listed below shall not be permitted.

6.1 **Structural Timber**

Boxed heart*
Cup
Collapse
Compression failure
Decay
Shell shakes
Splits
Surfaced heart
Termite damage
Loose knots

6.2 **Non-structural Timber**

Curvature in the case of door and window sashes.
Decay
Termite damage
Loose knots
Sapwood and wane
Worm holes

* *Boxed heart is permitted in wall plates.*

7 EXTENTS OF PERMITTED DEFECTS

7.1 Extents of permissible defects in structural timber shall be as given below :

7.1.1 *Checks* - Checks totalling one-half the width of the face at right angles to the face being examined shall be permitted.

a = effective depth.

The magnitude of a check shall be taken as its "effective" depth i.e. the depth as measured from the bottom of the check to the face on which it occurs in a direction at right angles to that face. A feeler gauge of 0.13 mm (0.005 in) thickness shall be used in measuring the depth. The effective depth of all checks occurring within the middle half of the face being examined shall be added together to assess the magnitude of the total defect. The permissible magnitude is expressed as a fraction of the width of the face at right angles to the face on which the defects occur.

7.1.2 *Knots* -

(i) *Live knots or sound knots* - One third the width of a face, to a maximum of 100 mm (3.9 in) in diameter; one such knot per 1 m (3.3 ft) of length shall be permitted.

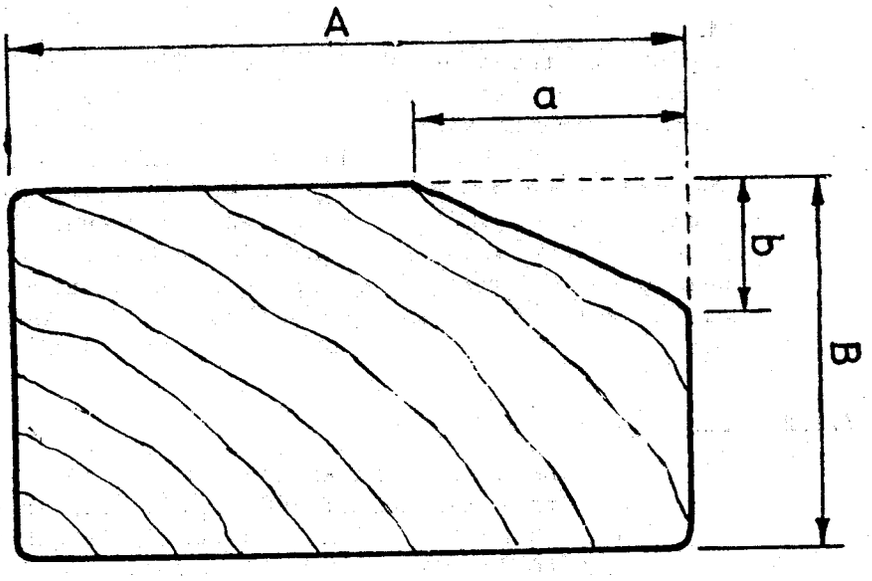
(ii) *Decayed or unsound knots, loose knots and knot holes:-*

One quarter of the width of a face, to a maximum of 75 mm (3.0 in) in diameter one such defect per 2.50 m (8.2 ft.) of length shall be permitted.

The size of a knot hole shall be taken as the maximum diameter of its visible cross-section irrespective of where it occurs. Where only a portion of the cross-section is visible, the maximum dimension of that portion shall be measured. Where the knot or the knot hole can be seen in longitudinal section as well as in cross-section, the longitudinal section shall not be measured. Each knot in a cluster shall be measured as described above, and the sum of these measurements taken as the diameter of an equivalent single knot.

7.1.3 *Sapwood and Wane* - One third the sum of the width and thickness shall be permitted.

The extent by which the width of a face is reduced owing to wane or sapwood shall be called the width of the wane or sapwood on that face. The extent of wane or sapwood is found by adding together the maximum width of wane or sapwood on any two adjacent faces, and expressing their sum as a fraction of the sum of the widths of the two faces concerned. (see figure).



$$\text{Extent of wane or sapwood} = \frac{a + b}{A + B}$$

7.1.4 *Sloping grain* - Slope of grain shall not exceed 1 in 8. Slope shall be measured over the worst face and over a distance of not less than 200 mm (7.9 in).

7.1.5 *Worm or borer holes* - Shall be permitted as described below :

(i) Pin and needle holes up to 2 mm (0.08 in) in diameter, unlimited if well scattered and not in groups.

(ii) Shot holes 2 mm (0.08 in) to 3 mm (0.12 in) in diameter, 8 per 0.1 m^2 (or per 1 $ft.^2$).

(iii) Large holes 3 mm (0.12 in) to 6 mm (0.24 in), 4 per 0.1 m^2 (or per 1 $ft.^2$).

(iv) Larger holes greater than 6 mm (0.24 in) in diameter shall be doubled and treated as knot holes. Worm holes shall be measured in the same manner as knot holes.

7.1.6 *Sap stain* - Unlimited if free from decay.

7.1.7 *Bow and Spring* - Bow and spring (h/1 see Figs. 1 and 3) shall not exceed 1 in 200 in axially loaded members. In sections larger than 50 x 25 mm (2.0 x 1.0 in) use for other than axially loaded members bow and spring shall be limited to 1 in 100.

7.1.8 *Splits* - End Splits may only be permitted in wall plates to the extent that the longest split shall not exceed 75 mm (3.0 in) at each end. Further, there shall not be more than 2 splits at both ends.

7.1.9 *Combination of defects* - Each of the defects listed above shall be considered as reducing the strength of a piece to the lowest permissible value if present to the maximum extent allowed, even if no other type of defect is present. When two or more defects each of an extent less than the maximum permitted are present at the same place in a place, the piece may be liable to rejection depending on whether the timber is likely to be weakened to a greater extent than would be caused by a single defect of maximum size. When two or more defects of the maximum possible size are present, the piece shall be rejected.

7.2 **Extent of permissible defects for non-structural timber** - In the case of non-structural timbers, appearance rather than strength is the principal criterion. This, being a subjective consideration, does not lead itself to formulation of rigid specifications. However, for the guidance of users of this standard, a few notes regarding the defects are given below.

7.2.1 *Checks* - Those which are small and not likely to increase in size in service may be permitted.

7.2.2 *Knots* - Extent permitted entirely depends on the use.

7.2.3 *Sloping grain* - For timber to be used for door and window frames and shutters, slope shall not exceed 1 in 8. May be permitted to any extent in panelling.

7.2.4 *Curvature* - (i) Bow - Should not exceed 1 in 600.

(ii) Spring - Should not exceed 1 in 600.

7.2.5 Splits should not normally be permitted.

APPENDIX A

TABLE - A1

Imperial measure sizes most closely corresponding to the recommended Metric sizes of structural timber

Component	Standard Metric Sizes (Imperial sizes in inches)	Standard Metric Sizes (Imperial sizes in inches)
Ridge Plates	175x25(7x1)	--
	175x50(7x2)	--
Rafters	75x50(3x2)	--
	100x500(4x2)	--
Wall plates	100x50(4x2)	--
	100x75(4x3)	--
Purlins	50x50(2x2)	--
	75x38(3x1 1/2)	--
	100x50(4x2)	--
	125x50(5x2)	--
	150x50(6x2)	--
	175x50(7x2)	--
Reepers	50x25(2x1)	--
(Batterns)	50x13(2x 1/2)	--
Eaves boards (valance boards)	200x25(8x1)	200x22(8x7/8) 200x19(8x3/4)
Principal rafters	125x25,32,38	--
	(5x1,1 1/4, 1 1/2)	--
	150x25,32,38,50	--
	(6x1,1 1/4, 1 1/2,2)	--
	175x25,32,38,50	--
	(7x1,1 1/4,1 1/2,2)	--
Tie beams	125x25,32,38	--
	(5x1,1 1/4,1 1/2)	--
	150x25,32,38	--
	(6x1,1 1/4,1 1/2)	--
	175x25,32,38	--
	(7x1,1 1/4,1 1/2)	--
Braces	75x50(3x2)	--
	100x50(4x2)	--
Ceiling bearers	100x50(4x2)	--
	75x50(3x2)	--
	50x50(2x2)	--

TABLE A2

Imperial measure sizes most closely corresponding to the recommended Metric sizes of non-structural timber

Component	Standard Metric Sizes (Imperial Sizes in inches)	Standard Metric Sizes (Imperial Sizes in inches)
Ceiling boards	115x22(4 1/2x7/8)	100x19(4x3/4)
	150x16(6x5/8)	140x13(5 1/2x 1/2)
Ceiling beadings	38x13(1 1/2x1/2)	--
	50x13(2x1/2)	--
Cornice mouldings	50x50(2x2)	--
Window frames :		
Jambs & Heads	100x50(4x2)	95x44(3 3/4x1 3/4)
	100x63(4x2 1/2)	95x57(3 3/4x2 3/4)
Mullions	100x63(4x2 1/2)	95x60(3x2 3/8)
Sills	125x50(5x2)	120x44(4 3/4x1 3/4)
	125x63(5x2 1/2)	120x57(4 3/4x2 1/4)
Stops	40x16(1 5/8x5/8)	38x13(1 1/2x1/2)
Window Sashes	36(1 3/8) thick	32(1 1/4)thick
	44(1 3/4) thick	40(1 5/8)thick
Door frames :		
Jambs & Heads	100x50(4x2)	95x44(3 3/4x1 3/4)
	100x63(4x2 1/2)	95x57(3 3/4x2 1/4)
Stops	40x16(1 5/8x5/8)	38x13(1 1/2x1/2)
Door Sashes	36(1 3/8) thick	32(1 1/4) thick

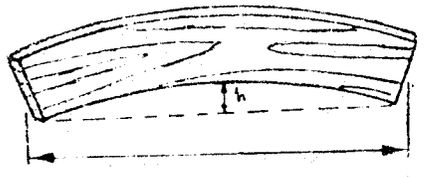


Fig. 1 - Bow

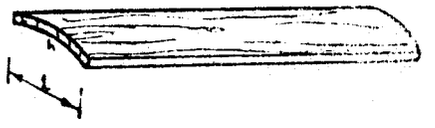


Fig. 2 (a) - Cup

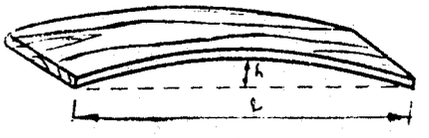


Fig. 3 - Spring

Fig. 2 (b)

(This is a cross section of the piece of timber at 2 (a))

Fig. 4 - Twist

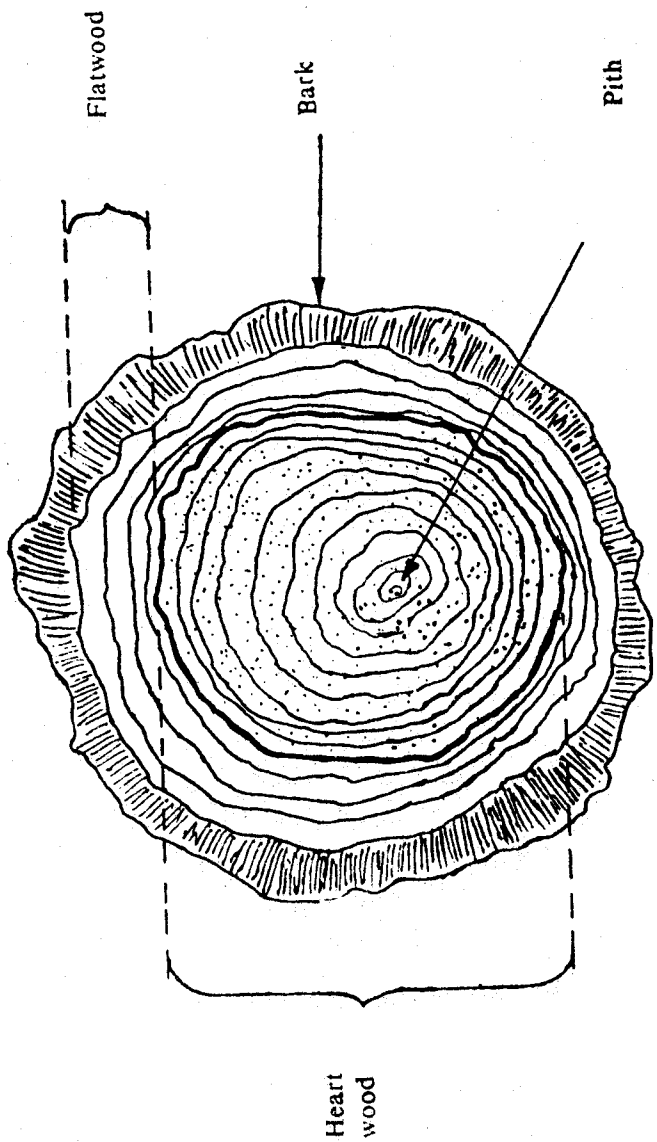


Fig. 5 - Cross Section of log.

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SRI LANKA STANDARDS INSTITUTION

The Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI) is the National Standards Organization of Sri Lanka established under the Sri Lanka Standards Institution Act No. 6 of 1984 which repealed and replaced the Bureau of Ceylon Standards Act No. 38 of 1964. The Institution functions under the Ministry of Science & Technology.

The principal objects of the Institution as set out in the Act are to prepare standards and promote their adoption, to provide facilities for examination and testing of products, to operate a Certification Marks Scheme, to certify the quality of products meant for local consumption or exports and to promote standardization and quality control by educational, consultancy and research activity.

The Institution is financed by Government grants, and by the income from the sale of its publications and other services offered for Industry and Business Sector. Financial and administrative control is vested in a Council appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

The development and formulation of National Standards is carried out by Technical Experts and representatives of other interest groups, assisted by the permanent officers of the Institution. These Technical Committees are appointed under the purview of the Sectoral Committees which in turn are appointed by the Council. The Sectoral Committees give the final Technical approval for the Draft National Standards prior to the approval by the Council of the SLSI.

All members of the Technical and Sectoral Committees render their services in an honorary capacity. In this process the Institution endeavours to ensure adequate representation of all view points.

In the International field the Institution represents Sri Lanka in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and participates in such fields of standardization as are of special interest to Sri Lanka.

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