

# BUY SAFE: AVOID COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS

Using counterfeit bearings and other components can have damaging consequences to your business.

In recent years, the global fight against counterfeit bearings and other machinery components has intensified. Seizures of fake bearings have hit the news and major bearings brands have stepped up efforts to work with the authorities to identify and prosecute companies that sell counterfeits.

Fake products are usually of poor quality, produced at low-cost and may not meet standards for product reliability. Installing counterfeit bearings, which are often made of inferior materials, have imprecise measurements and contain surface defects, can put your business at risk.

It can lead to catastrophic machinery failures, costly production downtime and property damage. At worse, it can result in injuries or even death in the workplace. Dealing with counterfeit bearings can also pose legal consequences.

As bearings are an important component in power plants, vehicles, elevators, hospital equipment, mining equipment, production facilities and many more, it is

important to use only authentic, high-quality bearings.

At SLS, we only supply authentic bearings and components by our brand principals. In addition, we offer proper installation and maintenance by our experienced technical professionals who are certified and officially trained by our brand principals.

To ensure that the product you are using is genuine and safe and to protect your company's brand reputation and your customers, it is prudent to only buy bearings from authorised and reputable distributors.

If you suspect you have inadvertently bought counterfeit bearings or other products, or know of any suspicious activity, please contact your sales or service engineer representative to report this.

# AUTHENTIC FAKE TIC

## **5 tips** to avoid counterfeit products

1. Buy your products only from authorised distribution partners
2. Avoid buying from unauthorised internet resellers or third-party resellers
3. Ask for proof of authenticity
4. Contact the manufacturer directly should you suspect your product of being a counterfeit
5. Use apps from brand manufacturers such as SKF's Authenticate app or Schaeffler's OriginCheck app to verify the product's authenticity

TIPS

## **Beware** of using counterfeits

Supplying, using or installing fake bearings can:

- Cause property damage
- Disrupt production
- Cause injuries and serious accidents
- Lead to criminal prosecution
- Lead to legal consequences as counterfeits are considered as intellectual property theft
- Harm your company's reputation and erode customer confidence
- Harm revenue streams and lead to financial losses

BEWARE

*\*We would like to thank the following brand principles for providing us with helpful information for this feature: SKF, Schaeffler, Timken and Optibelt.*

## Use of apps to authenticate products

Bearings manufacturers SKF and Schaeffler have both launched mobile apps which allow users to check the authenticity of products. The apps provide a quick and convenient way to identify counterfeits, saving considerable time.

### SKF Authenticate

#### What is it

SKF Authenticate is a smart phone app that lets buyers get an expert assessment of their bearings purchases in order to verify that their product is genuine.

#### How it works

Launch the app, shoot images of the sales slip, box and bearing, provide supporting information about your company and submit this information to SKF through the app.

SKF experts will review the information, authenticate the product and reply to you within 24 hours.

#### Why it's useful

SKF's app acts as a verification tool that is quick and easy to use.

#### Where can you get it

Download the app for free from the Apple App Store or Google Play.



### Schaeffler OriginCheck

#### What is it

Schaeffler's OriginCheck app lets buyers check a product's authenticity on the spot.

#### How it works

Users use the app to scan traceable data matrix codes (DMC) according to the GS1 standard to check the product. These two-dimensional codes contain encrypted information that allows the product to be identified. If the DMC check leads the product to be suspected as a counterfeit, buyers can then use the app to submit further information including photographic documentation (photos of the product, packaging and markings) to Schaeffler so that proper clarification can be obtained.

#### Why it's useful

The app lets users carry out initial checks quickly and easily as immediate notification is received on whether the DMC code can be found in Schaeffler's database.

#### Where can you get it

Download the app for free from the Apple App Store or Google Play.



## Tips on identifying counterfeit bearings

Here are some tips from **Timken** on how to identify counterfeit bearings. Possible red flags include:

- Poor quality cardboard and printing
- Poor packaging
- Packaging that is not to the corporate standard
- Lack of a brand name on the packaging's exterior
- Lack of sufficient product information and does not conform to corporate marketing standards
- Suspicious characters, numbers and letters that do not correspond with archived identification
- Shrink-wrapped product that has the ends fused together or that does not contain warning disclaimers
- Manufacturer country does not match the shipment country
- Unrecognisable or unauthorised importer
- The supplier is not an authorised distributor
- There is more than one manufacturer in the shipment
- Incorrect valuation is assigned to the shipment
- Trans-shipments

## Identifying features

Buyers should take note of identifying features of the product to determine whether it is authentic.

For example, Timken has recently launched a new brand security label in October 2017 with the following features that will help to identify whether the product is genuine:

- Full two-colour label design featuring a globe
- Individualised 10-digit serial numbers beneath the Timken logo
- Customer border at the outside edges of the label
- Black on black Timken® logo has a slight raised texture and resist copying
- Additional features found in currency

## Beyond bearings: using genuine parts and components

Besides bearings, it is also important to use other genuine parts and components, such as power transmission belts.

For example, Optibelt's power transmission belts have been designed to maintain its high performance characteristics throughout its product life, by maintaining its tension behavior and even provides tension on drives with multiple belts. This lifetime and tension characteristics far exceed fake or non-genuine products.

If a user uses a non-genuine Optibelt product, it could lead to a huge cost. For example, the shorter belt life could lead to extended machine downtime and increased tensioning requirements could lead to higher maintenance costs for the belt drive. In addition, the faster loss of tension of the fake belt could lead to increased motor and machine bearing loads, resulting in higher bearing temperatures, loss of grease and shorter bearing life.

### *How do you know whether you are using a fake product?*

**Optibelt** has provided some tips on how to identify whether you're using a non-genuine Optibelt product:

- Poor performance of new belts
- Short life time for the belt drive
- Mixed performance of a belt drive with multiple belts, with some performing well, but others failing prematurely
- Non-standard product and label features
- The belt has a strong chemical odour or an oily feel
- Poor performance overall of the belt

*For further information, please contact us.*

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