

Revised Census Figures Show 5,000 More Trailers in 1975

FROM THE STANDPOINT of trailer manufacturers, 1975 was by no means a vintage year, but recently published figures indicate that last year was not quite as bad as previously reported.

Production of complete trailers and chassis for 1975 was hiked 5,019 units when the U.S. Bureau of Census revised their trailer production figures for 1975. The 5,019 additional units bring the production figure for the year to 73,063, a 7% increase over the 68,044 units published by the Census Bureau as preliminary totals for 1975.

The largest upward revision occurred among closed-top dry freight vans. The Census Bureau originally estimated that 19,447 trailers of this type were manufactured in 1975, but changed that figure to 22,542 as further data became available. The 3,095 additional van trailers make up 60% of the complete trailers added to 1975 production figures.

The balance of the trailers added to production totals were miscellaneous units, those which cannot be classified as van, tank, platform, bulk commodity, pole and logging, low-bed, or dump. According to Bureau of Census reports, 3,209 miscellaneous trailers were manufactured in 1975, an increase of 1,924 over preliminary totals.

The revised production figures bring to 77,211 the number of wheeled units manufactured in 1975. The Census Bureau estimates that 2,936 container chassis and 1,212 dollies or converter gear were produced last year.

Container production totals were also substantially increased. Census Bureau figures jumped from the original 4,183 units to a revised total of 8,072.

Now the bad news. Trailer production for 1975 looks worse than ever when compared with 1974, because 1974 figures have been increased even more than those of 1975. Some 16,621 trailers have been added to the 1974 totals, bringing total production to 207,883 complete trailers and chassis.

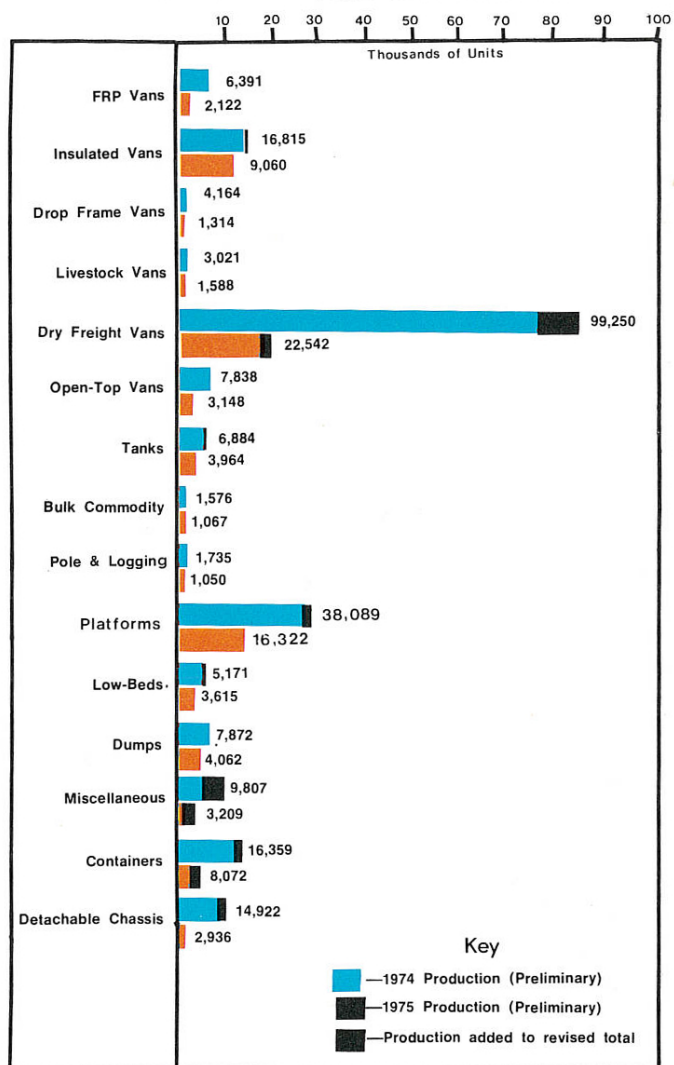
Dry freight vans again received the largest revised increase, 7,959, to bring the total to 99,250. Miscellaneous trailer production was also revised substantially — 5,525 units for a yearly total of 9,087.

Other revised categories, the amount increased, and their new totals in parentheses, are: refrigerated vans, 1,027 (16,815); tank trailers, 371 (6,884); platforms, 1,245 (38,079); and heavy haulers, 494 (5,171).

With the revised totals for 1974, official production of wheeled units — complete trailers and chassis, plus cargo container chassis and dollies or converter gear — now stands at 225,043. Manufacturers also produced 16,359 containers in 1974, an increase of 2,046 over the preliminary total of 14,313.

Computing the newly revised figures, production of

Revised 1974 and 1975 Trailer Production



wheeled units in 1975 was only 34% of what it was in 1974.

Meanwhile, trailer shipments for the first three months of 1976 are far ahead of forecast levels — and ahead of previously reported levels. In March there were 8,666 new truck trailers shipped. At the same time, the Commerce Dept. increased its report for February, 1976, by more than 1,000 trailers. The previous report for February was 7,028 trailers, but now this has been increased to 8,105 complete trailers. The 3-month total for the first quarter is now 21,991 complete trailers, plus 2,344 containers, 271 container chassis, and 352 converter dollies. This revision was announced following the TTMA convention in Florida, and sheds new light on the Alcoa forecast that was presented there, in which only 19,200 trailers were forecast for the first quarter of 1976 (see page 71).