

Trailer Shipments Fall 40%; Value Decreases One-Third

Shipments of complete truck trailers fell 40% from the near record levels of 1979, according to year-end totals published last month by the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Census.

Value of the shipments was \$1,672,800,000, down 33% from the previous year's shipments valued at \$2,490,200,000. Value of the shipments represents the net sales value (f.o.b. plant). It is based on prices charged to dealers, distributors, and factory branches. Dollar figures have not been adjusted for inflation.

Comparing 1980 trailer shipments with those of 1979 reveals that:

Van trailers were off 45%. Manufacturers shipped a total of 75,172 vans, compared with 138,484 the year before. Of these, 13,228 were insulated (down 33%), 934 were semi-insulated (off 35%), 4,290 were drop frame vans (down 34%), 809 were livestock vans (a 16% decrease), 50,778 were conventional dry freight vans (a 51% drop), and 5,133 were open top vans (down 19%). The value of total van shipments was \$977,975,000 down 38% from 1979. The average price of a van trailer as it left the plant was \$13,009.

Tank trailers were down only 6% from 1979. Total tank shipments were 8,059, compared with 8,586 the year before. Tanks for flammable liquids comprised 3,704 of these (a 3% increase above 1979 shipments), and 1,508 were coded for chemical and acid use (down 24%). The remaining categories of tanks (2,847) dropped 5%. Last year's tank shipments were valued at \$232,697,000, a 13% increase from 1979. The average tank in 1980 cost \$28,874.

Bulk commodity trailer shipments were 1,718 during 1980, down 53% from the year before. Shipments were valued at \$44,392,000, a 42% decrease. The average cost of a bulk commodity trailer last year was \$25,839.

Pole, logging, and pipe trailers accounted for 1,175 of total trailer shipments, down 23% from the 1,543 shipped in 1979. Last year's shipments were valued at \$14,399,000, a 4% decrease from 1979 shipments. A unit leaving the factory last year carried an average price tag of \$12,254.

Platform trailers dropped 44% from 1979 shipments. Manufacturers shipped 18,924 platforms in 1980, compared with 33,822 the year before. Platform shipments were valued at \$164,475,000, down 38% from 1979. Platform trailers averaged \$8,691 each in 1980.

Low-bed heavy haulers enjoyed a 16% increase in units shipped, but the price fell 6% from 1979. Manufacturers shipped 7,803 heavy haulers last year at a total price of \$96,682,000. Average price was \$12,390.

Dump trailers dropped from 10,819 in 1979 to 6,586 last year, a 39% decline. With a total value of \$101,167,000, the value of shipments was down 36%. An average dump trailer last year cost \$15,361.

Automobile transport trailers totalled only 243 last year, falling 81% from 1979. They carried a \$5,679,000 price tag, down 81% from the previous year. Average price was \$23,370.

All other trailers comprised 5,598 of 1980 production, up 21% from the 4,623 shipped the previous year.

Containers numbered 11,849 last year, a 29% increase above the 9,154 manufactured in 1979. Shipments were valued at \$79,066,000, a 7% increase.

Container chassis slipped 3% on the year with shipments of 14,202. Shipments in 1979 were 14,700. Last year's shipments were valued at \$71,986,000, down 2% from 1979. Average price for a chassis was \$5,068.

Dollies and converter gear plunged 58%, from 8,000 in 1979 to 3,313 last year. Shipments were valued at \$13,987,000, off 51% from 1979.