

# Manufacturers Shipped 279,144 Trailers In 1995—Up 19%—a \$5.6-Billion Record

IT'S OFFICIAL now. Truck trailer manufacturers shipped more trailers in 1995 than ever before. However, it wasn't as big a year as first thought.

The final, official figure is 279,144 complete trailers shipped during 1995, which is 3,000 trailers less than the Census Bureau reported in monthly tallies issued during the year.

Census reported 3,500 more refrigerated trailers in the final count, bringing the 1995 total to 31,715 insulated trailers. This is 17% above the refrigerated trailer total for 1994, the previous record year.

However, the dry freight van trailer final figure was 14,000 trailers below the preliminary report. The biggest drop came in the FRP share of dry freight vans, which lost about 8,500 units in the recount. Even so, the dry freight van total of nearly 170,000 trailers was 30% more than the 1994 total, the previous record year.

Of the 279,144 complete trailers shipped in 1995, 77% were van trailers. This percentage is above historical levels. In fact, the percentage of vans produced during the last four years has ranged from 75% to 77%. In the previous decade it ranged around 70% vans, with one year advancing to 75%.

For some other trailer types, 1995 was the biggest production year in 10 or 15 years. Platform shipments at almost 23,000 in 1995 were the highest since the 1970s when production went above that figure in five separate years. The record year for platforms was 1974 when 38,000 were built.

Dump trailer production of 9,552 units in 1995 was down 11% from 1994, but still exceeded all previous years except 1979 when 10,819 dump trailers were built. Tank trailers had a good year in 1995, but production was small in comparison with the 1970s and 1980s. The record year for tanks was 1974 when 8,600 were shipped. The record year for dry bulk trailers was 1979 when 3,671 were produced.

The value of trailer shipments was over \$5 billion for the first time ever. When the value of containers and container chassis is added to the complete

1995 Vs 1994 Trailer Shipments				
	1995	1994	Change	Value 1995 (Millions)
<b>Complete trailers</b>	<b>279,144</b>	<b>234,287</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>\$5,151</b>
Total vans	215,420	174,237	24%	3,770
Insulated	31,715	27,183	17%	770
Dropframe	6,481	6,681	-3%	127
Livestock	1,708	2,773	-38%	51
Dry freight	167,648	129,182	30%	2,642
Steel	4,995	5,382	-7%	74
Aluminum	152,685	113,268	35%	2,442
Less than 30 feet	17,185	14,353	20%	204
30 feet or longer	135,500	98,915	37%	2,238
FRP	9,968	10,532	-5%	127
Open tops	7,868	7,239	9%	180
Tanks (total)	5,492	4,758	15%	236
Flammable liquids	1,675	1,650	2%	74
Chemical & acid	2,405	2,131	13%	106
Asphalt	500	412	21%	16
All other tanks	912	565	61%	40
Bulk commodity	2,589	2,665	-3%	70
Pole & logging	1,596	982	63%	17
Platforms	22,797	21,459	6%	361
Lowbeds	13,054	10,708	22%	333
Dump trailers	9,552	10,710	-11%	250
Auto transporters	892	1,766	-49%	42
All other complete trailers	7,752	7,002	11%	71
Containers & chassis	54,736	60,168	-9%	427
Dollies & converter gear	4,601	2,986	54%	43
<b>Total including incomplete trailers</b>	<b>338,481</b>	<b>297,441</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>5,621</b>

trailer total, the truck trailer industry recorded over \$5.6 billion in factory sales. This is a 25% increase over the previous record year of 1994.

It is noteworthy that the average value of trailers increased in 1995 compared to the previous year. It is often difficult to pinpoint the cause of the increase in average value, since some of it reflects larger sizes or more equipment add-ons.

Trailer values increased across the board in 1995 by an average of 5% for all trailer types. Refrigerated trailers and long vans increased by 6% in average value. Short vans under 30 feet in length were up 21% in average value. An exception is in the category of steel

dry freight vans, where the average trailer sold for 2% less in 1995 than in 1994. Many of these steel vans are rail piggyback trailers.

Containers and container chassis shipments were 5,400 units under the 1994 figure, or 9% lower. The value of container and chassis shipments was 8% less than in 1994. Census reported less than 8,000 containers and almost 47,000 container chassis shipped in 1995. It is difficult to compare these figures with previous years because the prior mix of containers and chassis is not known.

Shipment levels of the major trailer types in 1995 and 1994 are shown in the table above. □