

Vehicle Licensing Statistics

Guidance on make / model data



Vehicle Licensing Statistics: guidance on using make / model tables

This note provides some guidance about the make / model tables and how the statistics should be interpreted.

1. Relevant tables

The tables containing detailed make / model information are VEH0120 and VEH0121 (licensed and SORN stock by quarter and year, time series from 1994); VEH0124 and VEH0125 (licensed stock by year of first registration at the end of the year, time series from 2010); VEH0160 (new registrations by year, time series since 2001).

2. Source of the data

All the information provided has come from the DVLA database of registered vehicles. This is a complete list of all vehicles that are licensed or have a SORN (Statutory Off Road Notice) applied to them. The database includes make, model, body type and date of first registration, amongst other things. All the information is as printed of the V5 document for the vehicle.

Further information about the DVLA database, what data it holds, and the definitions used for these tables can be found in <http://assets.dft.gov.uk/statistics/series/vehicle-licensing/notes.pdf>.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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The vast majority of new vehicles are registered through the DVLA's AFRL system which takes the data directly from manufacturers. The DVLA do not change this information at all, so any mistakes in the final data are usually as a result of errors made by the manufacturer.

The remaining vehicles are registered by individuals or manufacturers with the DVLA using V55 forms. Any mistakes in the final data for these vehicles are as a result of errors made by either the individual completing the form or the DVLA operator when

keying the information into the system.

3. Make and model names

The entry for each vehicle on the database does not contain the text of the make and model. Instead, vehicles are registered using a set of standard codes. Each manufacturer has defined what level of detail should be captured by these codes. A standard list which can be used to convert the code into a textual name has been published at:

www.joinedupsystems.net/Context.aspx?ContextId=20312.

Prior to 1963, these codes were created by manufacturers and they tended to record less detail than for modern vehicles. Usually just a generic commercial name was used.

Since 1963, the manufacturers created the model codes in conjunction with the DVLA, initially, and the various trade associations (SMMT, MCIA, AEA) later on. The main stipulation of the codes is that they should only be created for models which have been made available for sale in the UK and that the name is 25 characters or shorter (this limit was increased to 30 characters for new models in 2010).

A number of a small-volume car manufacturers do not take part in SMMT's code scheme. In these cases, although vehicles are registered with the correct make code, they usually do not have any model code at all.

4. 'Missing' or 'incorrect' model names

It should be noted that the make and model names as given in the tables is exactly the same as recorded by DVLA and (in the vast majority of cases) will be identical to what appears on the V5 document.

As outlined in section 3, there are some conditions under which individual vehicles either have no model name or it is seemingly incorrect:

Modern vehicles which are on general sale in the UK have DVLA model names as defined by manufacturers. This usually does not include Mark (Mk., or version) numbers so in most cases it is usually impossible to distinguish between vehicles of the same model name but of a different Mk. number. Similarly, manufacturers may not choose to use the full model name within the description.

Vehicles from before 1963 are less likely to have a specific model name or any model name at all. Model names would only have existed if the manufacturer created one at the time.

No model codes exist for **imported vehicles** of models which have not been on general sale in the

UK (or are sold in the UK under a different make or model name). In these cases the DVLA operator will either try to find the nearest, sensible, match to the name as written on the V55 form, or will record the vehicle in the 'model missing' box. The former is often done when keepers want something to appear on the V5 document for insurance purposes. The nearest match would usually be a shorter, more generic term for the vehicle.

Small-volume manufacturers who do not take part in SMMT's coding scheme will often register their vehicles without model names. This is also very common for **commercial vehicles**.

Multi stage build vehicles (especially motor caravans): if these vehicles are converted by body builders in the UK they are likely to have model information relating to the base chassis but if they are imported to the UK as a finished vehicle they are unlikely to be coded.

Any vehicle of a given model name which cannot be located in the data tables will most likely be included in the 'model missing' categories.

5. 'Correcting' the DVLA database

The flaws of the data highlighted above are not errors in the database, but are inherent in the registration system. Therefore it is not possible to either identify specific models from any the 'missing' categories or applying any changes to the model names on the database.

If a vehicle owner believes that there is a specific error on the V5 document for their own vehicle, they should contact the DVLA directly to have this corrected.

6. Simpler access and interface to the data

The specific tables discussed here have been made more accessible, with a simple search tool, at <http://howmanyleft.co.uk>. Although this is not an official DfT website, it is based entirely on DfT data and the developer has combined some of the models together where they have the same name but different model codes.