

Standard and Triumph Vehicle Registration Statistics

Part 1 – Vanguard 6

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This is the first in a series of articles on the number of new Standard and Triumph vehicles registered in Australia. In the absence of factory production or import data, new registration statistics gives an insight into the number of these cars originally sold.

A discussion last year with John Shepherd on the number of post war Dolomites sold in Australia caused me to go to the State Library in Sydney to collect information from the Bulletins of monthly new vehicle registration statistics issued by the then Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics (now known as the Australian Bureau of Statistics). While there I collected information on the registration of all Standard and Triumph vehicles from 1959 to June 1976 when the Bureau ceased providing a break-down of registrations by model. Information prior to 1959 is available but I have not yet extracted it.

The Bureau's data was compiled from information provided by the state and territory vehicle registration authorities. The data has some limitations but is interesting nonetheless. It is broken down by month, state or territory and into cars, station wagons, utilities and panel vans. Within cars there is separation of cars 'which are not sedans' which for Triumph cars usually means convertibles.

In all vehicle types the RAC horsepower is further used to segregate the data. This is both useful when no model name is given and sometimes confusing. It helps separating Vanguard 4 (17hp) from Vanguard 6 (20hp) when both were sold for a period of time. But there are anomalies I cannot explain – eg some TR4s are shown as 17hp and some 18hp. These may result from clerical errors by staff in the state registration bodies.

There was no classification of coupes and these were combined with sedans of the same RAC hp. Thus GT6 sales were hidden within Triumph 2000 figures. The data also does not allow accurate identification where the replacement model is of the same RAC HP – eg TR5 and TR6 registrations are intermixed.

This first article covers the Vanguard 6. The first Vanguard 6 (a utility) was registered in October 1960 with six sedans, one station wagon and a further 10 utilities registered in December 1960. Sales peaked the following year in 1961 with 1,896 registrations. Registrations of Vanguard 4 ran in parallel with the 6 through 1961 and into 1962 with the last two 4 cyl cars being registered in August 1962. The last Vanguard 6 registered was a sedan in Queensland in January 1966. I can only wonder why this car sat around for so long, more than a year after the penultimate sedan was registered and five months after the last utility was registered in August 1965.

The following table shows the total number of Vanguard 6 registered by year and body type :

Type	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	Total
Sedan	6	659	677	333	34	0	1	1710
Station Wagon	1	541	163	133	45	1	0	884
Utility	11	627	601	458	233	8	0	1968
Panel Van	0	69	14	2	1	0	0	86
Total	18	1896	1455	956	313	9	1	4648

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The utility was the most popular body type comprising 42% of total registrations. In contrast, panel vans were slow sellers.

Some club members may have heard claims the Victorian State Electricity Commission purchased a large number of Vanguard 6 utilities from mid-1963. The number is said to be 1,000 with the order keeping the utility in production until mid-1964. The registration statistics do not support SECV buying this number of utilities. The following table shows registration of Vanguard 6 utilities by state and year.

State	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	Total
NSW	1	280	213	142	65		701
Vic	10	171	151	130	80		542
Qld		62	48	40	23	1	174
SA		51	35	49	20		155
WA		31	125	102	29	5	292
Tas		32	26	23	16	2	99
ACT			3	2			5
Total	11	627	601	488	233	8	1968

Only 542 Vanguard 6 utes were registered in Victoria over its entire model life and only 80 in 1964. If the SECV did in fact buy 1,000 utilities, they were excluded from new vehicle registration statistics.

The existence of 1,000 SECV utes is also not supported by known Commission numbers. Registration statistics show 1,968 utilities and 86 panel vans, a total of 2054 commercial vehicles. If a further 1,000 SECV utes did exist, this would have taken the numeric component of commission numbers past 3000. However the highest Vanguard 6 commercial chassis commission number known to Alan McMillan is AZW1774CC. Does anyone know of a commission number higher than AZW2054CC?