

Australia

Paul Stephenson, OATS Limited



Australia, the largest country in Oceania and sixth largest in the world, is comprised of six states with a population of 26.1 million. The largest cities are Sydney (4.63 million), Melbourne (4.3 million) and Brisbane (2.2 million). It is a highly developed country with a high-income economy, ranked 13th in the world, and a good standard of living.

Australia is a large exporter of wheat, wool, iron ore, gold, coal, LNG and wine. Coal supplies 62% of its energy needs, with wind, natural gas and solar all at 10%, hydropower at 6.4%, and bioenergy at 1.4%. Total energy from renewable sources (2020) was 28%.

The country is a net importer of oil and refinery feedstock. The domestic production shortfall was about 547,000 b/d in 2020. In 2020, Australia overtook Qatar to become the largest LNG exporter at 3.7Tcf. It has 21 LNG liquefaction facilities with a capacity of 4Tcf/year.

In January 2021, total registered vehicle population was 20.1 million, of which 71.7% were petrol and 26.4% diesel fuelled. This includes heavy commercial equipment. Electric vehicle registration increased by 62.3% to just over 20,000 units. Toyota is the biggest-selling brand (22%), followed by Mazda at 9.3%, Hyundai 7.1%, Ford 6.5% and Mitsubishi at 6.4%. SUV 's are the most popular type of vehicle chosen, to make up nearly a half of all models sold by class at 47%, passenger cars at 21%, light commercial vehicles 24%, and commercial vehicles making up the rest of total sales at approximately 5% in 2021. The average vehicle age in Australia is 10.6 years.

Road trains — prime movers hauling two or more semi-trailers are important freight carriers due to a lack of rail infrastructure. Some road trains are comprised of semi-trailers with up to 22 axles. Iconic brands such as Kenworth, Western Star and Freightliner predominate with Volvo, Mercedes-

Benz and Scania making inroads. The medium-duty commercial truck segment is dominated by Isuzu, Toyota, and Fuso, although Volvo, Mercedes-Benz, DAF, IVECO, Scania, UD Trucks and Mack also compete.

In line with its ADR 80/3 emissions standard (effectively Euro V), Australia sells 10ppm sulphur diesel and 50ppm sulphur unleaded gasoline. Euro VI has been deferred with no end date for IC engines, or incentives for private purchases of alternative-powered cars. However, as of May 2022, Western Australia has just announced a 60 million Australian dollar funding support for the uptake of electric vehicles whilst Queensland has just released a 55 million AUD incentive.

Predicted to reach 1.4 billion litres of sales by 2023, the Australian lubricants industry has followed many other countries by closing or repurposing loss-making refineries. Only two government subsidised refineries remain — Ampol's 109,000 bpd Lytton, and Viva Energy's 120, 000 bpd Geelong.

Like other developed countries, Australian cars tend to use low-viscosity oils, the most popular being SAE 0W, or 5W-30. SAE 0W-20 is increasing in use, whilst heavy-duty equipment still favours higher-viscosity engine oils like SAE 15W-40 and 10W-40. SAE 10W-30 and 5W-30 are becoming popular because of the drive to improve fuel consumption and reduce emissions in this segment.

Because Australia imports much of its on/off-road, mining, and heavy-duty equipment, the use of all major lubricant standards such as API, JASO, and ACEA are recommended and specified. Approximately 45% of car lubricant recommendations now specify OEM-branded fluids, followed by API SM and SN specifications at 11% and 10% respectively. The heavy-duty market uses API and ACEA specifications as well as OEM-branded fluids.

The days of large, high powered saloon cars seems to be over for this country as Australia's car market changes and Thailand becomes their dominant supplier. Cars manufactured in this latter country have ensured the demise of a once thriving automotive industry when a free trade agreement was enacted in 2005 between the two countries. Thailand's import tariffs on engines larger than 2000cc capacity attract a 30% excise, whilst Australian made vehicles, mainly of 3000cc and greater capacity attracted a 50% excise. Small quantities of these larger capacity Australian made cars were exported, which made them uncompetitive, and combined with higher wages, ensured a downward spiral and the ultimate demise of Australia's automotive manufacturing industry. Even Toyota cars manufactured in Australia could not compete against their own factory in Thailand as they both produced and sold the same Aurion and Camry models in both countries which are manufactured at lower tariffs and labour costs.

LINK

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