



## The size and character of the Australian fleet

The Australian Road Transport Suppliers Association has entered into an agreement with the National Exchange of Vehicle and Driver Information System (NEVDIS) group to analyse and report on the registration database for heavy vehicles in Australia. ARTSA is paying for access to a restricted set of data that does not reveal individual owner details. An important element of this agreement is that ARTSA will produce a public report that informs our industry about the characteristics of the heavy vehicle fleet and of changes to total registrations in relevant categories. ARTSA is paying for the information and will do this for the information of industry and government, as we believe that it might contribute to better planning and safety outcomes. The NEVDIS vehicle database is an accumulation of the registration data from all state and territory road agencies. It has a detailed entry for every registered vehicle, which includes, for example, the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), make and model, registration code, number of axles and functional description.

ARTSA receives a modified version of the database for vehicles with a gross rating at 4.5 tonnes and greater.

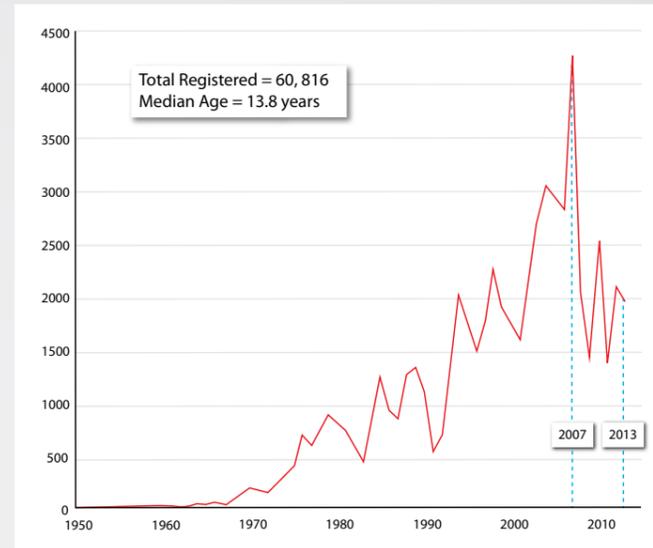
**“An important element of this agreement is that ARTSA will produce a public report that informs our industry about the ... heavy vehicle fleet.”**

Information that could identify an owner or a particular vehicle has been deleted. Therefore, ARTSA can only report on totals in particular categories. ARTSA intends to produce a quarterly report that shows total registrations in selected categories and changes from quarter to quarter in those categories. It will take us four quarters to be able to produce annual trend figures, because each quarter is likely to be affected by seasonal variations; so each quarter should be accurately compared with the same quarter in the previous years.

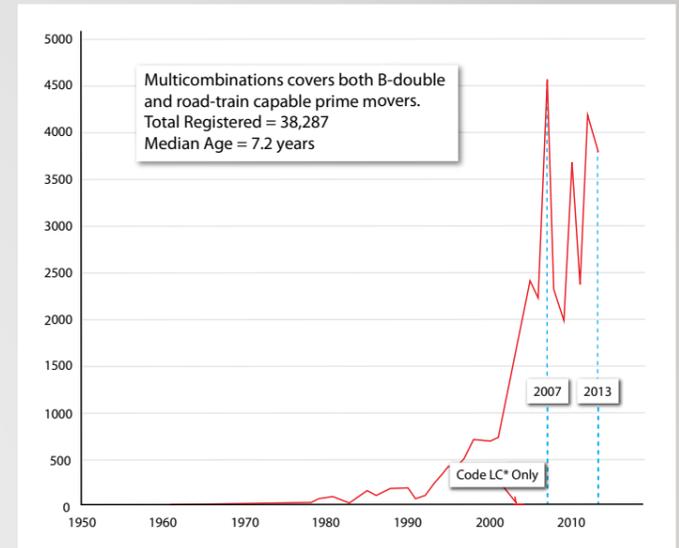
The task of analysing the database is significant because each entry needs to be analysed to check that it is truly

a heavy vehicle (rating >4.5t) and to allocate a current national registration code. ARTSA started with an original database of about 959,000 vehicles. After removing unregistered vehicles, vehicles made before 1950 and ‘cleansing’ the database, we were left with 146,142 vehicles with a gross rating in the range 4.5t – 12t and 611,934 vehicles with a gross rating >12t. The following four graphs show the age profile of prime movers and semi-trailers that will be in the first report. The total number of registered

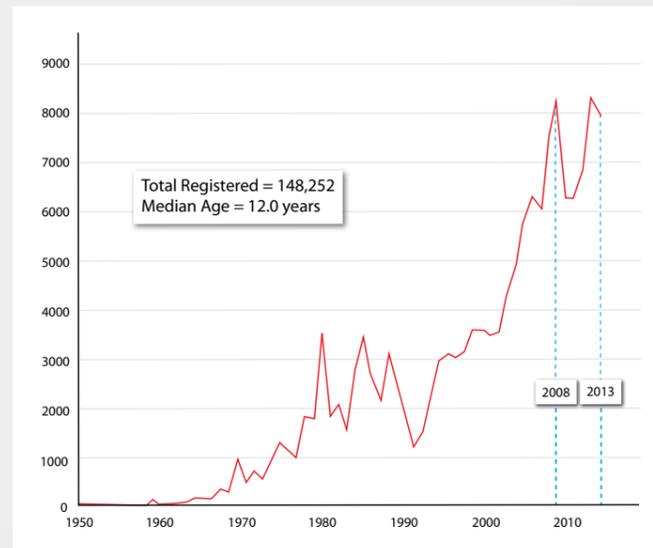
Prime Movers for Single-Trailer Applications  
All Jurisdictions – Rego Codes SP\*



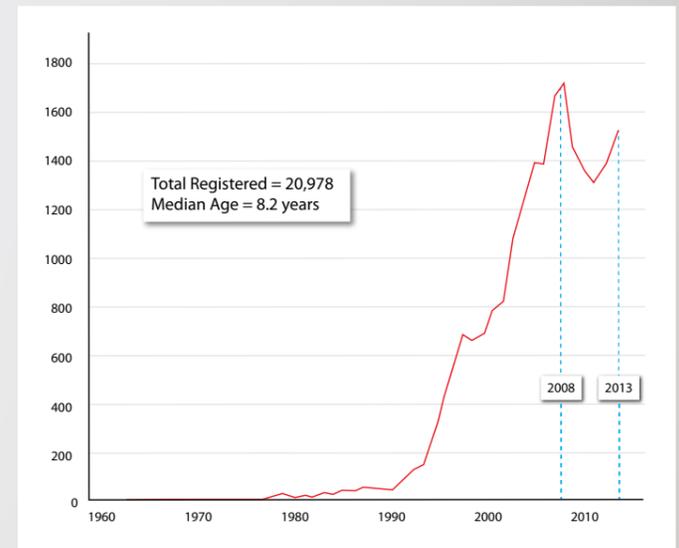
Multicombination + Long Combination Prime Movers  
– All Jurisdictions – Rego Codes MC\* + LC\*



Semi Trailers – All Jurisdictions – Freight Carrying Rego Codes TS\*



Lead Trailers – All Jurisdictions – Rego Code TL\*



vehicles and the median age of those vehicles is reported. Note that the totals cover all numbers of axles (as identified by the \* in the registration code), although separate totals for each number of axles can be produced. The median age is reported because this is a more reliable indication of fleet age than the average. Median age is the age at which there are equal numbers of older and younger vehicles. Unlike the ‘average’ it is not greatly affected by a small number of very old vehicles. Notice that the median age of the prime movers registered for single-trailer service is 13.8 years, which is older than the median age of semi-trailers, which is 12.0 years. The median age of multicombination prime movers is about half that of prime movers for

single semi-trailers. This probably follows from the substantial uptake of B-double prime movers in the Australian fleet. B-double prime-movers are now the work horses in our industry and they tend to be relatively new. The lead-trailer fleet, which defines the size of the B-double trailer sector, is also substantially newer than the semi-trailer fleet. The first public ARTSA report will be on the ARTSA website at the time this article is published. Finer detailed searches can be conducted upon request. Please see the notes attached to the report before relying upon the graphs shown here. Statistics are always subject to interpretation.

Dr Peter Hart, Chairman