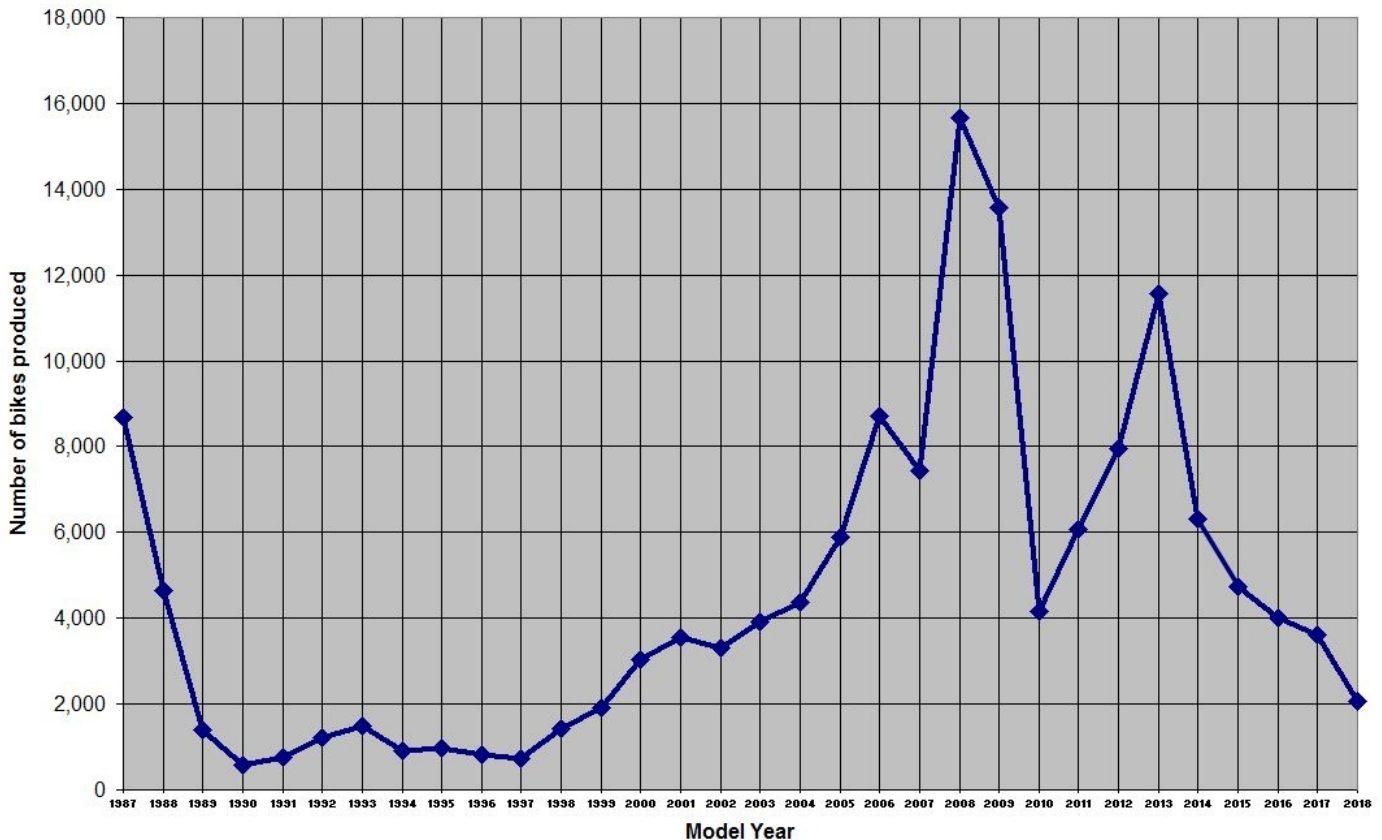


KLR650A and E Production Estimates and ID Numbers

The KLR650 has been in constant production since 1987 (see my “KLR Timeline” for photos and discussion) yet identification numbers are not exactly continuous. There are numerous gaps in production in the early years, and generally speaking, engine ID numbers don’t match frame ID numbers for all but a few years of production. And the fact that the bikes were made in Japan for a while, then Thailand, and VIN numbers have been restarted from zero three times... makes this a bit jumbled to keep track of. Thermo-Bob customers have been providing various ID numbers to appreciate the big picture, and this is what I’ve determined so far with their help. Let’s start with an easy one – the annual production estimates as of September 3, 2018 – with 2018 model year production just wrapping up.

KLR650A/E Annual Production Estimates

As of September 2018..... Watt-man.com



Pretty interesting. There was a spike of production right at the beginning, but it quickly settled down to very low numbers... I wonder if Kawasaki considered cancelling the bike. There were under 1,500 bikes made per year for a TEN year run(!) with a low of only 600 bikes in the 1990 model year. Finally, in the early 2000s, sales started taking off with a nice consistent climb each year and a small drop in 2007 as Kawasaki stopped production after 8 months so they could shut down and start early on the KLR650E. 2008 production started VERY early, in February 2007 and Kawasaki built them for 17 months! This makes the 2008 the highest-production KLR of all time with a peak of almost 16,000 bikes. 2009 was still a high-production year but supply was well above demand, and bikes languished in dealerships for nearly two years. Thus 2010 production was slashed as 2009s were still available on the dealer’s floor simultaneously. We then saw a nice increase in production of 2011, 2012 and 2013 models... 2013 was the third best-selling year of all time.. but 2014 through 2018 have seen declines.

If you add all the bikes together from the chart, it appears there have been around 145,000 KLR650As and Es made so far.

So now let's move to the actual numbers. There's a lot of data in the table below, so take your time. Note that it is divided into a "Frame ID" section on the left – usually known as the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) on your title – and the "Engine ID" section on the right. This section will help you if you've purchased a used engine and want to determine what model year it was originally installed in.

KLR650A/E Production Estimates Sep 3, 2018, Watt-man.com											
Does not include B or C models											
		FRAME ID ("VIN")						Engine ID			
Model	Model Year	10th digit of VIN	11th and 12th digit of VIN	13th-17th digits of Frame VIN - Min	13th-17th digits of Frame VIN - Max	Implied KLR Production	Implied Total KLR Production	Engine ID Number - Min	Engine ID Number - Max	Known as...	
KLR650A	1987	H	AO	1	8,676	8,676	8,676	1	7,410	AEO Engines (A T-Bob owner in Germany has an AGO Engine...)	
	1988	J		8,701	13,345	4,645	13,321	7,411	10,975		
	1989	K		13,601	14,991	1,391	14,712	11,046	14,400		
	1990	L		16,001	16,572	572	15,284	16,401	18,200		
	1991	M		18,001	18,750	750	16,034	21,401	22,120		
	1992	N		21,901	23,119	1,219	17,253	23,101	24,800		
	1993	P		26,001	27,489	1,489	18,742	25,001	26,600		
	1994	R		30,001	30,903	903	19,645	26,601	27,555		
	1995	S		32,001	32,983	983	20,628	27,601	28,600		
	1996	T		40,001	40,826	826	21,454	32,001	33,700		
	1997	V		42,001	42,727	727	22,181	34,001	34,800		
	1998	W		45,001	46,437	1,437	23,618	35,601	37,500		
	1999	X		50,001	51,916	1,916	25,534	37,901	40,350		
	2000	Y		57,001	60,038	3,038	28,572	41,201	45,200		
2001	1	70,001	73,565	3,565	32,137	45,680	49,850				
2002	2	1	3,316	3,316	3,316	35,453	50,201	54,500			
2003	3	3,323	7,226	3,904	39,357	3,323	7,226	AEA Engines			
2004	4	7,245	11,613	4,369	43,726	7,245	11,613				
2005	5	13,001	18,890	5,890	49,616	13,001	18,890				
2006	6	19,201	27,918	8,718	58,334	19,201	27,918				
2007	7	28,001	35,443	7,443	65,777	28,001	35,443				
2008	8	101	15,773	15,673	81,450	35,731	51,673				
2009	9	15,801	29,374	13,574	95,024	51,701	65,274				
KLR650E	2010	A	DA	29,521	33,679	4,159	99,183	65,421	69,839	AEA thru AEAD Engines	
	2011	B		34,207	40,268	6,062	105,245	70,367	76,428		
	2012	C		40,279	48,220	7,942	113,187	76,439	84,380		
	2013	D		48,228	59,785	11,558	124,745	84,388	95,985		
	2014	E		65,063	68,195	3,133	127,878	101,264	104,396		
				74,008	77,174	3,167	131,045	110,210	113,376		
	2015	F		78,779	83,501	4,723	135,768	114,981	119,703		
	2016	G		84,420	88,422	4,003	139,771	119,917	123,920		
	2017	H		88,801	92,404	3,604	143,375	124,176	127,773		
	2018	J		93,129	95,185	2,057	145,432	128,450	130,483		
				White boxes above are published numbers from Kawasaki.							
				Yellow boxes above are the lowest / highest VINS I've seen, based on group submissions.				Grey boxes above are my estimates, based on group submissions. I'm pretty sure that my values for 2008 and newer are dead-on correct.			
				Green boxes above are based on Kawasaki muffler bolt recall publications							

FRAME ID (VIN):

First, the 10th digit in the frame VIN is always unique to every model year. So when in doubt, the 10th digit is the definitive answer. Secondly, note that the 11th and 12th digits changed from “AO” on Japanese-made bikes to “DA” when production switched to Thailand. (The AEO to AEA engine change did NOT happen in the same year).

Now let’s move to the 13th to 17th digits in the Frame VIN, which most people focus on. From 1987 to 2001, frame VINs climbed from 1 to 73353 but there are surprising gaps in the numbering sequence. For instance, the VIN of the last model year 2000 was just under 60000 yet the first model year 2001’s VIN was 70001, skipping over 10,000 bikes. I’ve seen some people jump to the conclusion that by the end of 2001 total KLR production at that point was 73,000 bikes, but the numbers above suggest it was closer to 31,000. In fact, I still struggle with the statement that even “8,600 bikes were made” in 1987 but only “7,500 engines” in the same model year which of course does not make sense – clearly, Kawasaki didn’t sell some of the of bikes without engines. This leads me to believe that there might even be large jumps in VIN within a given model year that weren’t built (for instance, maybe there aren’t any 1987 KLRs with a VIN of 5500-7000). I just don’t know yet.

Frame VIN numbers were started over in 2002 when production moved to Thailand, and numbering seems to be much more consistent since then, with very small gaps between model years. We’ll get to this in a minute, but engine numbers matched frame numbers from 2003 through 2007 only.

Then Kawasaki started Frame VIN numbers over again in the 2008 model year, and continued to use the “DA” reference for Thailand production, but the other big difference was the 7th digit in the Frame VIN: it was changed from an “A” to an “E” to reflect the model designation change.

Finally, the table contains a color code (white, yellow, green) to document my data source.

ENGINE ID:

Engine ID numbers have now been restarted twice, so let’s look at the big obvious difference: 1987-2002 engines are identified as “AEO” engines, 2003-2013 engines are identified as “AEA”, and 2014-16 models are identified as “AEAA”, “AEAB”, “AEAC” and “AEAD”. So if you have an engine sitting in your shed that ends in “28001” and want to know the model year, a 1995 engine ID would read “KL650AEO28001” whereas a 2007 engine ID would read “KL650AEA28001”.

The AEO numbers do climb each year, but they are all over the place. Here is what I mean: I’ve seen February ‘88 bikes with lower engine numbers than January ‘88 bikes even though the Frame VINs are higher. Plus, the engine numbers are almost always lower than the frame numbers in most years, but in 1992 for instance, engine numbers are suddenly higher than frame numbers. Go figure.

I believe the engine numbering gaps can be explained with the "B" and "C" models of the KLR which were sold in this timeframe. For instance, between the last 1995 and the first 1996 A-model, their engine numbers jumped from 28,600 to 32,001. And I've been contacted by Thermo-Bob owners with 1995 KLR650C models whose engine numbers fit in that gap. It appears that A, B and C model KLRs all received the same engine. I'm currently under the impression that B's were sold from 1989-1992 and C's from 1995 to 2002. That seems to make sense, because those particular years show big gaps in engine numbering between model years in my table.

OK, back to A-model discussion. 2002 is a unique year, because production had been moved to Thailand and thus frame numbers started over at 00001, yet the engine numbering sequence continued from the previous year, now being over 50,000 higher than the frame VIN.

Then in 2003, with the choice made to match engine and frame ID numbers, the first 2003's engine was KL650AEA03323 – so that would tell me there's no such thing as an engine with KL650AEA00001 through KL650AEA03322. Those would have gone on the 2002 bikes, but did not.

The AEA engine numbering system has been quite consistent. They perfectly match frame VIN from 2003 through 2007, but in 2008 the frame VINS started over but Kawasaki simply continued with the engine numbering sequence. So the 2008 bikes are between 35,630 and 35,900 ahead of the frame: the 2009's all seem to be 35,900 ahead of their frame: the 2010's are either 35,963 or 36,160 ahead of their frame: all 2011 and 2012 bikes are 36,160 ahead of their frame: the 2013's I've seen are either 36,160 or 36,200 ahead of their frame: the 2014 "Non-New-Edition" are all 36,201 ahead of their frame, the 2014 "New Edition" (NE) and 2015's are all 36,202 ahead of their frame VIN. Then the delta started to decrease. All 2016's are all 35,498 ahead of their frame VIN, early 2017's are all 35375 ahead, late 2017's are 35369 ahead, and the 18's appear to mostly be 35297 ahead.

Since Kawasaki was approaching 99,999 on their AEA engine series with the last 2013 KLRs, they changed the 9th digit of the engine ID number to an "A", in this case meaning "the number after 9"... or 10. Thus an example of an early 2014 KLR's engine number is KL650AEAA1800. I tend to read that as replacing that last A with "10" and thus seeing the engine ID as 101,800. This, as pointed out in the paragraph above, is 36,201 above the frame VIN that the engine went in. The AEAA's only went in the 2014 Non-NE versions. When Kawasaki started 2014 NE production a few months later, the frame and engine numbers jumped up so that the first NE had an AEAB engine (the "B" meaning "11"). The earliest NE I've seen had engine AEAB0267, thus I see that as engine ID 110,267. We've seen the engine numbers climb through the AEACs and they're now in the AEADs.

These four engine families aren't really different internally for the most part; it was just a renumbering thing. The most pronounced change to the KLR650 engine actually occurred back in '96, with changes to the engine block, balancer sprockets and chain system, alternator and countershaft sprocket retention method. In 2008 Kawasaki did make the doohickey stronger but it still fits poorly and the spring which tensions it is typically out of tension by 5,000 miles. So yes, it's 'different'.

I hope this helps you improve your knowledge about the quirks of production, or help you identify a bike or engine in your possession. If you have any input that disagrees with the numbers in the chart, don't hesitate to go to www.watt-man.com and click on 'contact us' on the Products Page.

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