

Armstrong Siddeley Station Coupe 1952

The 2-litre Armstrong Siddeley Hurricane and Lancaster models, named after two of their most successful aircraft, were some of the first new cars to arrive here after the war. Sydney importer Buckle Motors had such success with them, it convinced the factory to take a complete change of direction and produce a utility version.

The Armstrong Siddeley "ute", intended primarily for the Australian market, came in two models a single cab/long tray model, the Utility Coupe, and a dual cab/short tray version called the Station Coupe. This featured an extended cab and a somewhat restricted back seat. Both came with a larger 2.3-litre engine.

Lyel Murrell of Galston has completed a five-year ground-up restoration on his 1952 Station Coupe, which has travelled 115,000 kilometres. Murrell suggests the Armstrong Siddeley's advanced chassis lent itself perfectly to its varied role as a commercial vehicle.

About 1750 Armstrong Siddeley utilities were produced and Murrell says around 1250 are thought to have come to Australia. The five-seat dual cab Station Coupes made up around 60 per cent of the production mix and about a dozen are thought to exist here today.

Power source is a 2.3-litre OHV six-cylinder fed by a single Stromberg carburettor driving through a robust four-speed manual gearbox. Just a few were imported with pre-selective gearboxes as available on the Lancaster sedan and Hurricane coupe the first in Sydney ordered by Sir Anthony Hordern of department store fame.

Purchase price for the Murrell Station Coupe was £1262, which included an all-steel body. Generally more spartan than their sedan equivalents, the utilities came with genuine leather only on the front seat facings.

The Armstrong Siddeley utility's success was to be short-lived. The arrival of the much cheaper home-grown FJ Holden utility saw it fade into oblivion midway through 1953.

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