

SCINTILLATING

Gavin Hughes from the Welsh borders covers an annual motoring figure of over 60 thousand miles and until recently, he was doing that in a 210bhp

Saab 2.0 T Aero, getting around 20mpg in rapid motoring, and paying an awful chunk of tax on the company car benefit. Although he very much enjoys his motoring there's seemingly a price to be paid for such fun – and that price was getting to be a bit too much!

So, when it came time to change cars, Saab enthusiast Gavin took a good long look at the new 1.9 Alfa Romeo designed 150bhp engine 9-3 TiD and after a test run decided to take his first big step into diesel motoring. But he always had in mind warming up the performance a bit as soon as he had his hands on the car as the cost would easily be covered by the fuel savings. So it didn't take him long to make his way to the Tunit HQ to see what they could do for his nearly new Vector Sport, with just 2,000 miles recorded on its clock.

I was there to see the whole installation and tuning process and I can tell you that it really was literally only a matter of a few minutes before the Tunit conversion was installed and ready for action. It genuinely was a mere plug and play process – one easily done by any owner on a DIY basis or quickly at one of the many nationwide Tunit distributors – and the ready-made wiring harness was soon tucked away neatly in the engine compartment and the Tunit box of tricks tidily located in the front of the battery box. The unit for the Saab, like many of the latest Tunits, is now designed for easy laptop tuning, with the key variables



all displayed on-screen. A new manual adjustment with nine individual settings makes the Tunit even more user friendly and the vital adjustments can thus be made in a matter of moments – either on the dynamometer in the garage or even out on the road if desired.

First job was to establish the output of the engine in standard tune. It's rated at 150bhp and the test results were right bang on the nail at 151bhp, with peak torque measuring at 234 lb ft on the Tunit rolling road dynamometer. The Tunit technicians then ran through a series of variations facilitated by the multiple adjustability of the Tunit module and were soon hitting figures in the 170bhp plus region.

The Saab's Euro IV rated engine is fitted with a DPF filter that regenerates at about every 4,000 miles and at no time during full-throttle test runs was there

any suggestion of even the merest whiff of dark smoke from the exhaust – and therefore no telltale give-away that this was a converted engine. Or that the up-rated fuel input was anywhere near to excessive, as in some cruder and simpler conversions. After a good few dynamometer runs that Gavin was most interested to witness, the Tunit boys settled for a very satisfying 28bhp boost to 179bhp, with a proportionate boost in peak torque up to 269 lb ft.

FIRST RUN

Gavin eagerly took the wheel for a brief test run and, as soon as he settled behind the wheel and fired up the engine, he remarked that the engine sounded smoother and quieter. A brief prod of the accelerator in the heavy afternoon traffic confirmed to him that something very different was happening under the

SAAB

No question regarding the savings made this month, as we tune up a Saab 9-3 TiD to allow it to give its owner's old 20mpg 2.0 T Aero a good race.

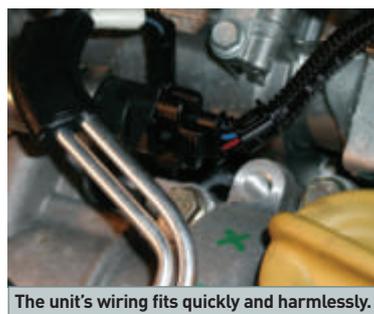


The Fiat JTD engine in the Saab TiD is ideally suited to the Tunit chip. The engine is used by Saab, Alfa, and Vauxhall!

And if he had any quiet moments during the journey back I'm sure that he reflected on the huge savings in tax and fuel costs and what little sacrifices, if any at all, that he was making in dropping out of that Aero and into the Tunit diesel – which, with a 20 per cent torque advantage and only a ten per cent power deficit, is now probably every bit as fast as the gas-guzzling Aero in the world of real motoring.

FAVOURSED ENGINE

This JTD engine, as Alfa and Fiat call it, although badged TiD in established



The unit's wiring fits quickly and harmlessly.

Saab terminology, is one of Tunit's favourites. It always responds well in their hands and they rate it as one of the most bulletproof diesel engines around – so the new engine plus the Tunit treatment gives a great boost to the previously rather sedate 9-3. But there's more good news: Vauxhall Vectras and new Astras are now available with the

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Nine manual settings can be easily utilised.

same brilliant engine in 120bhp (8v) or 150bhp (16v) form – and naturally the Tunit formula works equally well for either of these Vauxhalls, as it does for all JTD engine Alfa GTs, 147s, 156s and any number of Fiats! The conversion is only one of a huge range in the Tunit portfolio, all costing a modest £400 + VAT, and available either direct from Tunit or through a country-wide network of distributors.



For more information on these, and a full no-hassle explanation of the benefits of the Tunit treatment for your car, call them on 01257 274100 or see their comprehensive web site located at www.tunit.co.uk where full details are displayed.

bonnet. He could barely wait for the open road and as soon as it arrived he gave the Saab its head, excitedly gasping, "This is something else!" Of course you would expect a noticeable difference with an extra 18 per cent off of power and torque released – but he was now carrying two passengers and an extra 140-150kg that added around ten per cent to the car's gross weight. So we can imagine that his grin became even wider as he later departed for home with an effective extra ten per cent of added performance over what he had just sampled on that test run!

But his final words were again on how sweet and free-revving the engine now felt, along with its significant extra urge, and he was further pleased to have discovered that removal of the Tunit conversion would be only a five minute job if he needed to take it off at any time.