



# Fine tune your fuel bills

**Dave King investigates the power boosting effects of Tunit diesel tuning**

“HOME, James, and don't spare the horses”, went the old rallying cry as the motorist stuck his foot down and thrashed the tortured engine into submission. That must be a familiar feeling for caravanners struggling to negotiate a hill, or the motorhome owner, who opted for the smaller engine as an “economy” measure.

I carry out around 5,000 miles of towing a year in my 2.5 litre Kia Sorento and I was hoping to find a way to improve fuel economy and hopefully gain some extra power at the same time. There are several ways to achieve this, with special fuel additives, engine mapping, chipping and external tuning modules or other equipment being the most common, all designed to improve the efficiency of the fuel burn in the combustion chamber.

Engine remapping involves reprogramming the manufacturer's electronic control unit (ECU) fitted to the vehicle; chipping is a general term that refers to replacing the EPROM chip in the ECU. Both of these methods may affect the vehicle's warranty.

An external tuning module is a unit that is fitted between the ECU and the fuel injectors and doesn't usually impact on the vehicle's warranty.

Some performance enhancing products have the potential to cause overheating and

excessive wear on the engine if they are incorrectly programmed. Before embarking upon my research I set out my list of my own, specific requirements:

- There had to be no change to the manufacturer's original ECU specification
- It had to be easy to install
- It had to be transferable from one vehicle to another
- It had to be cost effective

I carried out extensive research, eliminating many products for a variety of reasons until I eventually discovered the Tunit, an external tuning module, designed to improve both the fuel economy and performance of diesel engines.

Tunit is a retro-fit and in most cases uses supplied OEM plugs for ease of installation. There is no opening of the Engine Management (ECU) or physical alteration of any equipment. As every vehicle has different characteristics, Tunit can be adjusted manually or altered electronically by a Tunit agent using a laptop. It has a comprehensive, three-year product warranty, including a one-year engine and driveline coverage and after-sales support.

I have now had a Tunit on my Kia Sorento for over a year and overall there is an

improvement of around 11% in fuel economy overall and a noticeable power increase, particularly when towing. The engine is smoother, the handling has improved and by increasing the torque, the performance of the automatic gearbox has also improved.

It was easy to fit at the company's head office in Lancashire and took just ten minutes. First the car went on to the rolling road to test the BHP without the Tunit which was 163.8 BHP. Then the unit was fitted by disconnecting one plug from the ECU and fitting the Tunit between the ECU and the injectors, using the corresponding plugs. The car was then tuned by using a laptop and re-tested; the BHP had now risen to 185.8.

A unit costs from £460.00 and research and development has been refined over recent years and continues to date, to improve the fuel saving aspect of the Tunit as prices of road transport continue to rise. ■

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