

TUNING & SERVICING

"I AM OFTEN ASKED "HOW DO I GET MORE POWER FROM MY T2", A STATEMENT OFTEN HEARD IN THE COMPANY OF RENAULT 5 TURBO OWNERS"

There is no easy and cheap answer I am afraid and which ever way you tackle it you will have to spend money. The first golden rule is not to spend a fortune on an old clapped out engine. Wait until it is on its last legs or you will terminate it sooner with the extra stress you put on it. Most owners will agree that the 160 bhp on tap is enough for them and to use the car effectively takes some time and a certain amount of skill. How many have ever explored those uncharted territories with handling at the limits of adhesion, especially in the wet, those that have, know that the car can bite back. A tired car or one that has been driven hard, neglected or is just plain old will be down on performance. A tappety engine which when adjusted, goes tappety again, will signify cam wear and a low oil pressure will mean a tired old engine, possibly with a worn crank and camshaft, it should be coaxed not thrashed or tuned.

A smoking turbo will cost you dearly unless it is replaced and excessive oil usage will signify ring wear or that a turbo oil seal is on the way out. An excessive amount of oil in the intercooler will also give you a warning of impending doom. Using a synthetic light oil can help you bring the older engine to its end, if it is

tired already. So what do you do first about tuning your car. The secret is a balance between reliability and usable power, anyone can adjust the wastegate actuator rod and fuelling and get 250 bhp, but after a couple of miles it will be no more, so beware unless you know what you are doing the results can be permanent damage. Dialling in boost without other modifications is foolish. It is a complete package which is best planned technically and financially in advance, using original Renault parts where possible. The secret lies in protecting the engine from the extra heat and stress created when it is tuned, you can run more boost by keeping the charge temperature down with colder air introduced in the bigger intercooler and increasing fuel to prevent lean running, this should help prevent detonation which will occur if more boost is dialled in. The potential for tuning these cars is amazing with 210 up to 350 bhp achievable at a relatively modest cost in comparison to what you would have to spend on other cars.

Now everyone seems to have been sold a 210 bhp or 185 bhp engine car and everyone with a standard car thinks it produces 160 bhp. Wrong, I would like to bet that there are only a very, very, small number of proper 210 conversions in the U.K. actually giving 210 at the flywheel, as that is where it is measured. The same applies to the 185 bhp cars, there are very few out there. A standard 160 bhp car well serviced, well run in and at its peak is a swift car. The torque figure produced in fact is a much more important value than any bhp.

Most so-called

210 cars do not have steel liners or a 4 into 1 exhaust system fitted, do not have the large uprated intercooler or large heat shield which is necessary to accommodate the 4 into 1, many have a standard exhaust system and no combustion chamber head-work and are possibly not running the right distributor matched to the high lift cam. Even more power will mean a look at the compression ratio, reducing it to a correct 7:1, many of our cars tend to be 8:1 or 8:2. So in my book the conversion is not complete unless it is done in full. Just a listen to the tick over, it is another give away of the state of tune, as the larger bhp cars will not run smoothly much under 1400 or 1500 rpm. They also come on cam at a different rev range from the standard cars. A basic 210 bhp car probably gives you 190 bhp at the wheels, if you are lucky.

The so called 185 bhp cars often produce a figure of 160 bhp or less in reality and the

