

Fitting a seat heater to an MX-5 ...

■ Words: Don Nicoll ■ Photos: Don Nicoll & John Osmotherly

First question:

Why would you bother?

Second question:

What about damaging the seat or setting off the side airbag or mucking up the electrics which control the seat belt warning device?

But when the co-pilot says she would just *lurve* a seat heater for those runs in the winter months and John Osmotherly (John Oz for short) from Power Technologies offers you a unit at cost, in return for an article about the whole process, what do you say?

"Maybe" came to mind, but John's assurances that all would be well in the cabin eventually changed that to a "yes".

So, back in late April (perfectly timed to come just after our trip to the chilly high country over Easter!) the NC and I rolled up at Trimworld Automotive in Coburg where I was introduced to the owner, Rod Clarke, and finally got to meet John Oz. Cameras were produced to record the event and the guys got to work.

... any model, but this happens to be an NC

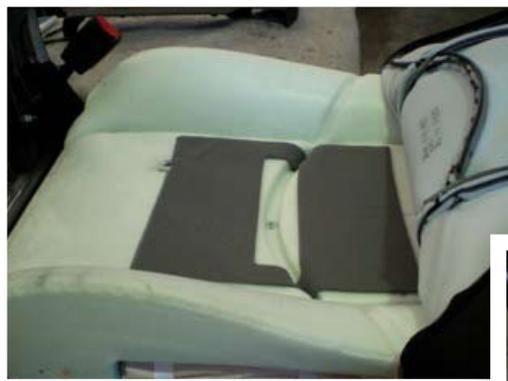
The seat shape, comfort and feel have not been changed by the addition of the seat heater. Because the foam attached to the back of the leather cover was so thin (Mazda saving weight?), the Trimworld guys added extra foam around the edge of the heater pads so that I cannot feel the outline of the pads.

The airbag never went off, which was a bonus. I learnt that it can't, providing the ignition is turned off while the unit is disconnected from the actuator system. This means the airbag unit and the seat belt warning unit have to be connected when testing that the seat heater works. The seat belt warning device has actually improved! How? Well, now you can rest a Melways on the seat without the former persistent beeping from the unit, but it still tells you when the co-pilot has forgotten to fasten their seat belt.

So, would I recommend it to others? If you like a warm bum in winter or a very happy co-pilot, then definitely yes. All my concerns proved baseless and I thank John Oz for being true to his word and also for being very generous in his

page); the ones here are just a few of the major steps.

Now, I just have to entice the co-pilot out of her seat! ■



The whole procedure was very professional and the finished job was indistinguishable from the original with the exception of a small button which was located on the plastic cowl near the seat rake handle. This button controls the high and low heat setting and can be fitted anywhere in the cabin, but the location chosen involved the least amount of fiddling. It is easy to pick up power from the fuse box in the passenger foot well behind the wheel arch and run wires along the base of the door opening (under the plastic kick plate), to link up with the seat belt warning device and the airbag actuator under the seat.

offer. As you can see on the opposite page John has offered others in the Club a similar deal until the end of August. All the photos we took of the process have been loaded to photo gallery on the Club's website (accessible from the "technical"



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