

## NC Windscreen Cowl Water Leak

Words & photos: Bob de Bont

*After I washed my 2011 NC Series 2 in the morning, we headed off for a drive when my passenger gave a start.*

She was surprised by a couple of drops of water on her legs when negotiating a roundabout. After researching the same issue for another Club member a while back, I knew exactly where the water was coming from.

So, who should take note of this guide? anyone who owns a NC and hasn't fixed this. **This is a known issue for all NCs** and one that should be fixed before it can cause any problems!

The water leaks through a crappy foam gasket which is supposed to seal the plastic nut used to retain the cowl cover in place.

*However, the gasket perishes with age.*



As you can see, my gasket had disintegrated... especially on the passenger side.

**What makes this leak fairly critical** is the positioning of the interior fuse box *directly under* the plastic nut, allowing some water to drip into the electrics. Water and electric wiring are never a good combination, as many NC owners in the US and UK have discovered.

Despite some people claiming that it's possible to seal the leak without removing the cowl, I found the job much easier by removing the entire plastic cowl. This allows better access, and you'll do a much better job when it comes to cleaning the area and applying the sealant.

This is a fairly quick and easy fix and should be done as preventative maintenance before any problems develop. It requires basic knowledge, simple tools and some silicon sealant.

1. Using a small screwdriver, remove the oval plastic caps on each side of the trim with, then remove the screws.



2. Remove the wiper arms by removing the rubber cap and loosening the 14mm nut a couple of threads; work the arm free from the tapered spline, then remove the nut and arm. **Hint:** I marked the windscreen at the end of the wiper with a chalk pen to align the wiper.



3. Remove the rubber weather seal along the front edge of the plastic cowl cover. The rubber seal is held in place with a number of small plastic T-shaped clips. If you gently stretch the seal lengthwise and lift at the same time, this elongates the hole and allows the seal to come off the T. Once the seal is removed, rotate the clips 90° to remove and reattach them to the rubber seal, ready to be refitted.



4. The trim comes off in two halves, and sort of slides towards the engine. There is a number of plastic tangs located under the screen, the cowl should be removed as two separate pieces as follows:
  - a. starting at the front edge of the cowl, release the clips from the firewall sheet metal
  - b. starting with the passenger side, pick up the front edge and pull it forward to release the hooks under the screen glass, then manoeuvre around the bonnet hinge



- c. disconnect the washer tube connecting the two cowl halves
- d. do the same for the driver's side cowl. I recommend you don't disconnect the washer hose as the washer bottle will drain from the connection; just lay the cowl across the engine bay



### Fixing the Leak

1. Clean out the remains of the gasket from underneath the nut and the surrounding area with a damp cloth, then allow it to dry.



2. Seal the plastic nut with a silicone sealant. Be liberal with the sealant as the cowl cover hides the area and your handiwork won't be seen.



#### Reassemble is simply the reverse with one note:

The driver's side cowl cover has a locating pin at the join; ensure it is seated in the hole in the firewall.

If you have the misfortune of breaking the oval cap, they are readily available from your favourite MX-5 parts store. ■

### When all else fails ...

I had a chuckle at the recent report for the Strathbogie run and the interference on the radios.

After the *Something To Do After Christmas Run* I decided to buy a UHF 80 channel radio so I could keep up with what was going on. So I duly purchased a Uniden and, being an ex WO Communications Supervisor, decided I didn't need to read the instructions ... after all, *what could possibly go wrong?*

So, at the start point I was talking to Bob de Bont about how to adjust the sound system on my NC. Bob, being ever-willing and knowledgeable, sorted my settings out and, as we took off on

Channel 24, the CD was selected and the volume turned up full bore.

Around three kilometres down the road the convoy pulled over, so I turned the music off and waited while the word was spread that there was interference on Channel 24 and to switch to 25.

All good; off we go again and the music gets turned back up full bore. Another few kilometres down the road, the convoy pulls over once again. Music off, and a member comes down and tells me to switch back to 24 ... that channel is clear now and the interference is now on 25. I politely asked what the interference was and was told ... **loud music!**

I quickly said "I know what the problem is. We'll be good to go now".

So, off we go again – my radio switched off, music up full bore again ... and can you believe that we didn't have any more interference on the channel?

Returning home, I decided to read the instructions and ... who would have thought that the Uniden comes from the factory with the VOX turned on?

So I know who caused the grief and, even though one may have spent 23 years in communications, it always pays to read the instructions.

Cheers

~ Richard Travers