

300 Tdi engines

A modification to simplify timing belt inspection

The stories of 300 Tdi timing belts suffering from premature wear after sliding forwards on their pulleys are legion. Land Rover has issued a list of serial numbers of those engines which are most at risk (see our sidebar), but many owners are still uncertain and would like to be able to make some kind of visual check.

The problem is – you can't. The rubber timing belt is hidden underneath the metal timing cover, and taking that component off is not something which any Land Rover owner is likely to do unless he or she has good reason. So we all drive on with our fingers crossed until it's time for the belt to be checked or replaced according to the service schedule or until the worst happens.

In the middle of last year, I had occasion to carry out the 60,000-kilometre belt inspection (as recommended locally in South Africa) on my own 300 Tdi Discovery and also on a Defender 110 belonging to my friend Jim Attrill. Fortunately, the belts showed no sign of the dreaded slip and so we left them well alone. However, we did decide that there had to be a better way of reassuring ourselves of the continued good health of our timing belts in the future. We didn't intend to

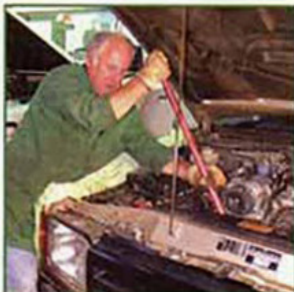
go through another weekend like the one we'd just spent!

My solution was to modify the timing cover castings before refitting them. I milled a 10 mm slot into the case periphery, and added a closely fitting steel plug attached to an adjacent bolt head. The modification is, I think, pretty clear from the pictures taken in my workshop.

More recently, and 15,000 kilometres further on, I inspected the condition of my timing belt. Plug out, take a look, no problem, plug back. It took me all of 10 minutes and no sweat at all! ■



Home Workshop indeed!



The hard work!

We published a list of the 300 Tdi engines most at risk in our November 2000 issue and are repeating that list here. Land Rover has two different modification kits, depending on the age of the engine, but stresses that not every engine will need the modification. Note that both kits need to be supplemented by a crankshaft front oil seal (ERR 7143).

These lists give the VIN numbers of vehicles likely to be affected. Note that many engines will now have been modified.

Defender

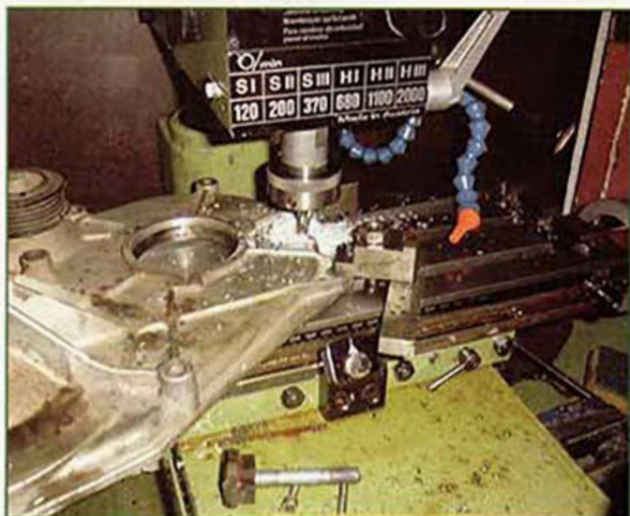
MA 939976 to VA 101256	early kit (STC 4095K)
VA 101257 to VA 129096	late kit (STC 4096K)

Discovery

MA 081991 to TA 200000	early kit
MA 500000 to VA 542370	early kit
TA 700000 to VA 711273	early kit
VA 542371 to VA 558898	late kit
VA 711274 to WA 748935	late kit

Range Rover

MA 647645 to MA 664120	early kit
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Milling a 10 mm slot into the timing case



Result on a Defender



Result on a Discovery