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014



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# REVIEW SENSATYRE

A tyre pressure monitoring system worth its salt.

BY TIM STANNERS



01

**T**yre pressure and temperature go hand in hand when it comes to your tyres' longevity as well as driving safety. Run your pressures too high and you'll cause uneven wear in the centre of the tread. Run them too low, and not only will they wear on the outer edge, you'll also risk damage to the sidewalls and, in the most extreme circumstances, the additional flexing of the tyres and subsequent heat build-up can cause the tyres to delaminate and potentially cause blowouts.

To understand how tyre pressures change under different operating conditions is difficult if you need to

get in and out of the car to manually check your tyres with a pressure gauge. To overcome this, we've been running the Sensatyre tyre pressure monitoring system (TPMS) from Hannibal Safari Equipment for around 12 months.

The Sensatyre TPMS provides an easy-to-use digital interface whereby a quick glance at the screen will tell me the operating pressure on all four tyres (or all six if I'm towing the camper trailer). At the press of a button, I can also see the operating temperature. It works through the use of remote sensors which are installed on the inside of each wheel and which transmit both internal tyre pressure and temperature

to the main digital unit mounted inside the vehicle. It also allows for high and low pressure warning alarms to be set (and easily adjusted), as well as a high temperature alarm.

So, to prove the old four and six PSI theory, I set the Sensatyre to work on a recent trip to the Simpson Desert.

Dropping the tyre pressures once we hit the dirt sent the Sensatyre system into a spin with alarms and flashing lights resulting from the adjustable low pressure alarm being triggered.

**01** Outback driving can be notoriously tough on your tyres, particularly with temperature increases.

We quickly dropped the low pressure alarm setting to 22 PSI, with the tyres set to a lower than normal 26 PSI. Keeping our initial speed to around 60 kilometres per hour, we watched the tyre pressures increase to around 32 PSI with a temperature of 43 degrees – a pretty good combination of pressure, temperature and speed.

Increasing our speed on the hard-packed dirt road to around 90 kilometres per hour sent the tyre temperatures skyrocketing to 72 degrees, resulting in a pressure increase to 41 PSI – way above the rule of thumb.

With the only controllable variable at that point being our speed, we slowed down and watched as both temperatures and pressures dropped.

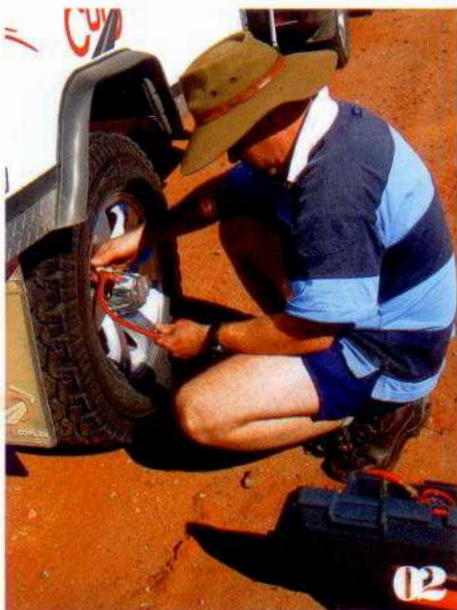
Had we continued to increase our speed, without adding additional air to the tyres, I have no doubt we may well have risked a high temperature tyre failure and potentially become another statistic.

Keep in mind, there are a number of external factors which contribute to tyre operating pressure and temperature ... including ambient air temperature, road surface, road temperature and vehicle

load; as well as speed. Therefore, having a TPMS installed and being able to detect a slow leak or other potential hazard through pressure and temperature readings and warning alarms should be up there on the list of desirable modifications to ensure vehicle safety, while also enhancing tyre life and potentially providing better fuel consumption.



Prices start at \$399. For more information on the Sensatyre TPMS, check out [www.hannibalsafari.com.au](http://www.hannibalsafari.com.au).



01

The kit was fitted with the internal sensor straps, but Sensatyre kits can also work through the valve stems or valve caps.

02

The Sensatyre kit can accommodate monitoring for up to 14 tyres, in case you've got a semi-trailer.

03

The monitor can be mounted anywhere in the cab.