

## Aston Martin Prototype Engineering

With the development of a new baby Aston, it has been necessary for Aston Martin Lagonda to add an additional wheel aligner to their already well-equipped Gaydon engineering facilities. The new dedicated four-wheel alignment system was chosen from Pro-Align in the form of the new Hunter DSP400 digital imaging system.

The selection of this system is inline with the similar selection of Hunter aligners at many other PAG (Premier Automobile Group) development and engineering facilities. Ford owned PAG consists of the resurgent Jaguar, Aston Martin and Volvo brands.

Although we are not able to reveal any details of the new model Aston – The Premier Auto Group are very confident of its success, by placing the new car competitively one category below the current models 'supercar' position!



## Technicians Tips

### PERFORMING RUN-OUT COMPENSATION

For years all wheel aligners have lead the operator through run-out compensation and today all good aligners give the option to either perform run compensation or to skip run-out altogether, where a 'special run out free' clamp is in use.

There are dangers with skipping run-out – so you need to be aware of these fully. With an axle wheel free, run-out compensation can be performed, but it is always advisable to check the steering/suspension/wheel bearings first. For many operations the faults found in the pre-check do themselves lead to increased sales opportunities. Failure to identify problems here will come back and bite you, initially this will be shown as a high complaint rate from the wheel alignments you do. So if you don't do run-out, you need some other way of establishing that the car is alignable i.e. no wear in the steering and suspension.

### CALIBRATION OF WHEEL CLAMPS

Using a special run-out free clamp maybe fine until it gets damaged. Most customers have the aligner checked for calibration every 6 months and I would recommend that you should consider having the clamps calibrated at the same time. If one clamp is wrong it will give the wrong reading thereafter. Of course had you performed run-out the error in the clamp and wheel rim would have been automatically allowed for.

Information from Pro-Align's Paul Beaurain

## Web and e-mail

To ensure you can all get the latest information and learn what's happening, our web site is here to help. Alignment product news, alignment accessories and details of forthcoming training courses are just some of what's available on:

[www.pro-align.co.uk](http://www.pro-align.co.uk)

Once online you can contact us through the site and link to Hunter's web site if required.

Although we are generally very happy with the traditional fax and post, modern technology is the way forward. Should you wish to communicate via e-mail we have the following three addresses for you:

[enquiries@pro-align.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@pro-align.co.uk)

[service@pro-align.co.uk](mailto:service@pro-align.co.uk)

[accounts@pro-align.co.uk](mailto:accounts@pro-align.co.uk)

If you are online perhaps you could e-mail us so we can add your e-mail address to our customer record database.

If you have any feedback on the web site, we would appreciate hearing from you. We want to know what you would like to get from it and what further items you would like to see.

For further information on any of the products and services available from Pro-Align contact us at:

Pro-Align Ltd, 30 Ross Road Business Centre, Northampton NN5 5AX

Tel: 01604 588880 Fax: 01604 592192

## Five Acres proves Wheel Alignment is profitable even in a remote location.

Five Acres Garage was founded 47 years ago and today has four sites within its group. In Hereford there is Hereford Land Rover, Hereford Saab and Hereford Rover. These town-based sites are complimented by the rural and remotely located Five Acres Garage at Five Acres near Coleford in Gloucestershire.

Five Acres site focuses on both a Nissan franchise and a busy tyre/exhaust depot MOT and general repairs. It is adjacent to the tyre depot, in which they have recently installed a new top range imaging system aligner from Pro-Align. This system, the Hunter DSP400, provides speed of measurement, and uses probably the best alignment software on the market, to assist the operator to maximise alignment opportunities.

The quality printout of the DSP400 scores highly both with Five Acres and their customers. Nick Jenkins, Director commented that wheel alignment compliments their busy

tyre depot perfectly. The DSP400 had increased throughput significantly and with the very fast pay back being achieved, he looked forward to the alignment becoming a high gross profit earner".

Nick goes on to say that " Overall with the Hunter Wheel Aligner, Jason our main alignment technician and Terry Ruck the Tyre Depot Manager (and team member for 18 years) are all proving to be an unbeatable combination!!!!"

We had an interesting challenge, at Five Acres when fitting the equipment around the existing pit that use for alignment, but as always we rose to the challenge. But when on site the most interesting and fascinated fact is that the garage located in the middle of the Gloucestershire countryside, yet alignment work is brisk and contributes so strongly to their business.

## Well done Five Acres!

**PRO-ALIGN**  
**NEWS**  
**Land Rover Worldwide**

*It's all happening with Land Rover worldwide. With the advent of the New Range Rover, the whole dealer network is preparing for its launch and its aftersales service support.*



The New Range Rover is a new breed of build, with monocoque construction and wishbone suspension. This new configuration means the geometry of the vehicle is more adjustable than previous and therefore four wheel alignment will become essential part of the aftersales servicing. In the United States, Land Rover have undertaken technical evaluations of wheel aligners and have exclusively selected Hunter 611 aligners. The Hunter was the only equipment to meet the full requirements of quality and aftersales service support. Selected as a 'required' piece of equipment, the

Hunter 611 Alignment System offers the Land Rover dealers, not only benefit of having a premium grade wheel aligner, but also have dedicated specification and the Land Rover green colour! Although the Land Rover Equipment Program (LREP) in the UK is different from the USA, Pro-Align are already in the fore with the number of wheel aligners supplied to Land Rover Dealers. However UK Land Rover dealers must research/investigate very carefully which aligner will suit their long-term needs when selecting from the LREP.

## New Mini Gets Vibration Control

BMW's car plant Oxford has undergone many changes over the last few years. Investment has been stepped-up with regard to putting in place the latest and most stringent quality checks for the preparation of production of the new Mini.

Now in the marketplace the Mini is recognised as one of the most successful recent new car launches - the Cowley based workers can justifiably be proud.

Mini One and Mini Cooper is undergoing measurement of radial force variation (RDV) to ensure the smoothest ride quality from the wheel tyre assemblies. To achieve this, it is Pro-Align's Hunter GSP9700 vibration control unit which has been used within the factory.



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# Pro-Align Training Courses Are A Success

Over a hundred Alignment Technicians nationwide have now attended Pro-Aligns' Wheel Alignment Training Courses, at their facility in Northampton, the response has been staggering.

The one day course covers all aspects of four wheel alignment, from the theory right through to the hands on measurement and adjustment.

At a recent Hunter 411/611 Course, technicians from GB Flint, West Yorkshire Police and Mantles of Letchworth all commented on how much they enjoyed their day and hadn't quite realised how much there was to wheel alignment, and its full profit and/or savings potential.

Colin & Andy from GB Flint said "We found the shim information (as well as the use and the fitting of) on the Hunter very beneficial and also the diversity of the Hunter graphics - there were screens of information we hadn't seen or used before - but we will now!"

Stuart, David & Steven from West Yorkshire Police said "we often have to re-measure the same vehicle after each shift.

Rather than undertaking a new test each time, we now understand how to recall previous jobs thus saving time and money on a retest." They also went on to comment "Since having the Hunter we have also made a good savings on tyre expenditure, - every vehicle is now aligned and maintained to manufacturers tolerances."

All agreed the course was invaluable and the lunch was very good too!

Coming to Pro-Aligns Training facility in Northampton does mean, there are no interruptions, workload pressures or background noises to distract, as there would be with on-site training. It is also an opportunity to share operational experiences with other technicians attending the course and to learn from one another.

The courses cost £245.00 + VAT per delegate and includes a file set of personalised technician



Pictured at a Pro-Align training course are trainees Paul Hall (Mantles of Letchworth), Stuart Dando, David Barley, Steven John (West Yorkshire Police), Colin Williamson, Andy Lendis (GB Flint) and Duncan Hadley. Pro-Align's Trainer Roger Fowle in front

notes, lunch and a certificate upon successful completion. But that's not all, what is important, is that our trainer will have passed on to the technician a wealth of knowledge, that Pro-

Align has gained over many years, showing them the way to become a skilled operators and a potential tool to make profit, (or savings) from alignment.

## New 'Service' on Offer 35 point service

Pro-Aligns Aftersales department is committed to providing the best customer care possible. However, even with our already high standards we are always looking at ways to improve our service to customers.

With this in mind Pro-Align has designed and launched a new Service option, which has been created in recognition that there is a need to provide customers with a preventative maintenance programme. The new '35 Point Service' option carries out such preventative maintenance to key areas such as alignment console, sensors, turnplates, wheel clamps, cables and connections both internally and externally.

This could prevent unnecessary 'machine down time' in future due to breakdown. We recommend the '35 Point Service' be conducted at least on a six monthly basis, however the frequency requirement of the '35 point service' is dependent on the environments they are in. Wheel Aligners in an environment such as Research Centres would not require the same level of preventative maintenance as if they

were used in a busy bodyshop or the heavy throughput of a tyreshop. Looking after any equipment on a regular basis will help maintain the best operational performance to the end of its useful working life. To keep your Wheel Aligner at its peak of performance, ring Colin to book your '35 Point Service' Now!

# MERCEDES-BENZ APPROVE THE GSP97MB



Pictured above from left: Hunter New York Regional Manager Leon Planka; Hunter Technical Manager International Sales Pat Callanan; Hunter Product Manger Dave Scribner; Mercedes-Benz USA Senior Staff Engineer Armin Nickel; Hunter Director of International Joe Fuller holding the Mercedes-Benz approval letter; and Daimler Chrysler AG Quality Assurance for Workshop Equipment Rainer Hirn.

Mercedes-Benz have approved the Hunter GSP97MB Vibration Control unit for use in all its Car and Service Centres world-wide. According to Mercedes-Benz the GSP97MB solves vibration problems with no comparable equal. The GSP97MB recommendation was documented by Mercedes-Benz's QMW 1.0 Quality Report q 40.1/1-10, after extensive testing at the company's Stuttgart-based RD/GSR Passenger Car Tyre Development Section.

The GSP97MB will automatically diagnose any wheel/Tyre related vibration problems and provide easy-to-follow instructions for solving them - all without performing any extra steps or taking the wheel off the Balancer. A workshop can locate and eliminate virtually every cause of vibration relating to the tyre and rim and hence offering customers 1005 quality control & satisfaction.



## 'World Leading' Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre Thatcham, Purchases 'World Leading' Hunter Wheel Aligner



This autumn saw the opening of the new Thatcham Research Workshop facilities, but research into equipping the new Research Workshop started way back in 2000. Stuart Anstie, Team Leader, was asked to evaluate and select a wheel aligner for inclusion in the centre. Over a 12-month period following his initial view of the Hunter at Automotex in November 2000, he investigated all the options open to him. Having looked at a number of systems on the market, he felt the Hunter 611 offered several unique features making it ideally suited to Research & Development work carried out at the centre.

Stuart commented 'I felt the ride height measurement and SBDA (Suspension & Body Dimension Audit) facility on the Hunter opens up a new dimension in wheel alignment. For us it assists greatly in our research programme, allowing us to record the parameters for the body of the vehicle both before and after crash testing'.

When asked how he and his colleagues found using the Hunter he said 'it is a very user friendly system and the software and databases are excellent'. He also praised the Pro-Align fast clamps saying 'they were the best he had ever used'

Stuart concluded by saying 'many of the Hunters unique programme features could be of great benefit to the body repair industry, in particular the SBDA, since it clearly illustrates the quality of the body repair'.



# OE Matching

What is it?

An increasing number of motor manufactures are now OE matching (Original Equipment Matching) tyre and wheel assemblies. OE Matching is a clever process designed to assist the car driver in getting the smoothest ride from his new car.



Every tyre has some degree of out of round when under load - this is measured as **force variation**. High degrees of force variation will give vibration inputs each time the wheel rotates from the high to the low spot.

The clever bit of OE matching is the ability to also measure the wheel rim, which itself will have out of round tolerance errors, and then position the tyre in a particular position to balance these two variables for the least vibration input.

Put simply the high/stiff spot in the tyre is positioned opposite the low spot on the wheel rim.

The result is, it gives the driver of the new car a smooth ride.

The problem

A problem occurs, when the original equipment tyres become due for replacement. There are only a few UK tyre shops able to OE match new tyres to the rims in the UK today (although this is changing fast, as more tyreshops understand the benefits of matching rim and tyre and can see the advantage of an improved service to customers). Pro-Aligns' Hunter GSP9700 vibration control centre is still the only economic machine to both balance and measure force variation from factory level to tyreshop level.

So you too can capitalise on this corner of an increasing market, by having a Vibration Control System in your own workshop from as little as £50 week on finance -subject to status, from Pro-Align.



## Professional Self-Centring Fast Clamps

What ever make of wheel aligner you have there is one sentiment that truly applies. The starting point for a good alignment is a quality wheel clamp.

With this in mind Pro-Align have a selection of wheel clamp options for their new aligners - but these clamps can also be retro-fitted to the following aligners:

- ▶ FMC/John Bean ▶ Beissbarth ▶ Bear ▶ Balco ▶ Facom ▶ Corghi

Pro-Aligns fast clamp is a run-out free clamping device - meaning that providing a wheel rim is in good condition direct alignment readings can be obtained with out first performing run-out, this can save a considerable amount of time.

Designed to fit the very latest expensive alloy wheels up to a diameter of 22" (external rim diameter). These clamps will also accommodate the direct fitting kit for Mercedes Benz/BMW/Porsche wheels.

If you wish to find out more then give us a call.