

AIRMAX REMOTE ARTICLE – OCTOBER 2005 TYRED AND TESTED

Tyred and Tested



Airmax's Remote part of Tyre Trials

UK based telematics company Airmax Remote helps Michelin examine its Energy3 ECO tyres

Independent, "real-world", trials of Michelin tyres using Airmax Remote's telematics equipment, on a representative vehicle fleet, have proved that fleet users can make significant savings in their operational budget by specifying Michelin tyres.

In one of the biggest trials of its kind, Michelin, together with ALD Automotive and telematics company, Airmax Remote, tested Michelin's Energy3 tyres in a head-to-head trial against a leading rival brand. A total of 60 identical Volkswagen Passat 1.9TDIs were fitted as part of the trial; 30 with the Michelin tyres and 30 with a rival brand. Airmax Remote played its part by fitting all 60 vehicles with Airmax Remote's telematics units, which collected key items of data, such as mileage, fuel usage driving style (speed, revs, gear selected) and temperature, directly from the vehicle's diagnostics bus. This data was sent back, via GSM, to Michelin's engineers in Paris using Airmax Remote's hosted service. The Michelin engineers collated the data and produced an in-depth assessment of fuel usage and tyre wear, taking into account wide variations in driver styles across the trial fleet.

Each vehicle was run for 12 months or 25,000 miles, whichever came soonest, before the tyres were taken off and sent back to Michelin for analysis. The results proved that Michelin Energy tyres can provide significant savings in running costs, with initial results showing that, on average, across the fleet there was a 2.5% improvement in fuel economy. Tyre life also increased dramatically, up by 25% on average for front tyres and by 50% at the rear. In practise, this means that over a typical 60,000 miles lease, a car with Michelin Energy3 tyres would use £170 less fuel and need two fewer tyres - a saving of more than £270 per vehicle, or more than £27,000 for a 100-vehicle fleet.

Nigel Fletcher, operations director at ALD Automotive, said, *'When original fleet tyres come to be replaced, we fit Michelin wherever possible, which is in 90% of cases.'*

'We were very interested in the results of the tests in terms of the improvement to fuel economy and to the longevity of tyre life, both highly important factors in controlling fleet running costs.'

Steve Dolby, Michelin's product marketing manager, who helped run the tests in the UK as part of international trials, said: *'There might be a small premium to pay for a Michelin tyre, but that is recouped through fuel savings and longer life cycles.'*

'These tests showed that over the typical 60,000 miles fleet cycle you are likely to need two fewer tyres per vehicle – a saving of more than £100.'

Ashley Duddle, Remote's MD, commented, *'We believe this is the first trial of it's type involving a Tier 1 manufacturer and vehicle supplier. Airmax Remote's goal is to gather and analyse increasing more data from the intelligent systems within modern vehicles and provide this for the benefit of owners, driver, fleet managers and in fact any interested party.'*

