

LHD headlamp conversion on an RV8– RV8NOTE313

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LHD headlamp conversion on an RV8

Most RV8s were produced in right hand drive (RHD) form as the major markets were Japan and the UK, both of whom drive on the left. However, many of the Japanese RV8s have been put up for sale in recent years due to the cost of passing the very stringent tests their regulations impose on older cars. Moreover, the recession in the UK has increased the number of RV8s for sale in the UK and the strong state of the Euro and has made them attractive to continental buyers. So as more continental buyers want to register their RHD RV8s in mainland Europe a key requirement for compliance is that the headlights should dip to the right and meet the various cut-off and light scatter regulations. Frank Labruier of Luxembourg has an RV8 he bought in the UK and has come up with an economical and elegant solution. Frank apologises for his 35 year old school English but in fact it is very good, so the following is Frank's explanation, with a few very minor amendments from Bob Owen. (Nov 09)



RHD lens of the right side headlight fixed to the car before conversion.

My 35 year old school English is very poor. Nevertheless I will try to explain how I managed



Headlight seen from the back.



Headlight seen from the back.

to convert the RHD headlights to LHD on my MG RV8 I bought some months ago in Britain.

Following the report by Peter Garton in the October issue of Safety Fast! I found it was necessary to convert the headlamps for registering an MG RV8 on the Continent. First I tried to change just the lenses, which I bought at



Headlight seen from the front side



Headlight completely dismantled

a Bosch dealer, but the Luxembourg MOT testers refused to pass it as the light was not directed on the road like it should be. Indeed, the light was not at a horizontal level on the road, but slightly oblique. So it seems that there is also a difference between the RHD and LHD reflector/bulb holder assemblies. It was not possible to turn the reflector unit relative to the bulb holder to get a horizontal level for the main beam as the small side-light bulb would not then line up with the hole in the reflector. Porsche offered me two new and complete LHD headlamps, but the price was VERY discouraging.

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Bulb holder cut into two pieces



Bulb holder welded back together again, displaced by a few millimetres. Top and bottom of the side light bulb holder has been shortened by some millimetres



LHD lens (above) of the right side headlight fixed to the car after conversion which shows the difference between RHD lens (below).



So I asked my friend Vanny Curridor from Strassen (Luxembourg) for advice. He owns a car body shop and is used to working on British cars. His proposition was very simple. Don't buy the very expensive Porsche units, don't modify the reflectors, just modify the holders for the side-light bulbs.

He dismantled the complete unit and managed to relocate the side-light bulb by cutting the holder and then welding it back together again

displaced by a few millimetres. With the side-light relocated, it was possible to turn the reflector slightly until the main beam was horizontal but still have the side-light lining up with the reflector hole. A very cost effective solution.

The Luxembourg MOT testers checked the beam pattern; everything was perfect and I passed and received an MOT.

I attach some photos I made during the work. Perhaps they are helpful for you to understand what I've tried to explain.