



## Changing Seatbelts in an RV8

Nic Houslip found the seatbelt fitment in his RV8 is now mostly NLA. It appears that the manufacturer (Bendix Restraint systems) no longer makes them. Having fitted a pair of Securon inertia reel seat belts in his MGBGT a few years ago he contacted Securon directly to see if it would be possible to source a replacement. Sadly, a direct replacement is not available but with help from the people at Securon they have defined a seat belt assembly that will fit in the car, although some minor changes (not to the belt) will have to be made. Securon have an advantage that the inertia locking system is fully adjustable so the reels can be fitted at any angle. Here Nic describes the task of fitting the belts.

The most difficult part of the installation concerns the part that is known as the **Buckle**. This is the receptacle where the belt plugs into, which in the RV8 is down beside the transmission tunnel and the seat. Space is limited here and in the case of my RV8 the clearance on the driver's side is smaller than the passenger side. It is so small that to accommodate the marginally thicker buckle assembly I found it necessary to remove the plastic cover that hides the seat recliner mechanism, mostly the spring.

The cover on mine was cracked anyway and it seems not be visible under most circumstances so I removed it. To get this off, first start by removing the driver's seat. To get at the 4 bolts securing the seat, first raise the back to almost upright, sit in the car and move the seat as far back as it will go, then look under the front of the seat, at the front, in the U shaped runners you will see the two bolts that secure the seat to the floor. Remove these. Now sitting in the seat again move the seat as far forward as it will go. This



may be tough as the seat squab rubs on the centre console, but persevere and pull the squab away. Now you can reach the two bolts that secure the seats at the rear, again in the U shaped runner. You will need to raise the seat back a little more to be able to see them. Remove the bolts and then you can lift the seat out carefully; it's quite heavy so assistance might be an advantage.

You can now see the whole of the seat and footwell and if you have Henry the vacuum cleaner to hand, take the opportunity to tidy up. Like the microwave in the kitchen there's bound to be something there you didn't expect. My BGT yielded £1.24 in small change when I installed the belts in it!

You can see the slightly modified buckle installed in the picture alongside, its location, as can be seen from the impression on the centre console leather, is with a few millimetres of the original. Having removed the original buckle, salvage the parts that secured it as some are needed.

The four parts shown at the top and the shoulder bolt are saved, and should be assembled in the order shown.

Now you will need to make the slight changes here. Open the packet of bolts and screws and select the small bracket marked 77 that has two elongated holes, slightly enlarge the one of the holes with a round file. Do this toward the end so that the bolt will fit through and bears on as much of the hole as you can manage at one end. Now bolt it to the buckle as in the picture above using the bolt that has the thickest head in the kit and a nut with a washer. Tighten securely and assemble the parts as above and fit into place but don't fully tighten it yet, allowing the buckle to fall downwards. This will be tightened later after the seat is back in place.

Remove the single Pozidrive screw in the centre of the plastic cover and remove it, this is discarded - although you may wish to keep it safe in case of a return to originality. The spring is used to return the seat back too upright when the lever is pulled and might need a spray of WD-40 for good measure.

Before you refit the seat, undo the end of the seat belt that is bolted to the outer rail - see picture below. You do not need any of these parts, but again it's probably best to keep them.



Next step is to prepare the fittings to attach the new seat belt as picture below.

Using the new parts from the kit, assemble them as in the picture above, the longest bolt (7/16 UNF) and needs a 11/16" AF Spanner (17mm will also fit). The wavy washer is for anti-rattle and the spacers are used to keep the fixing in the right position. The fibre washer just keeps everything in place. Note that the bolt tightens through the shouldered sleeve and the solid one, the eye in the end of the belt is free to move.



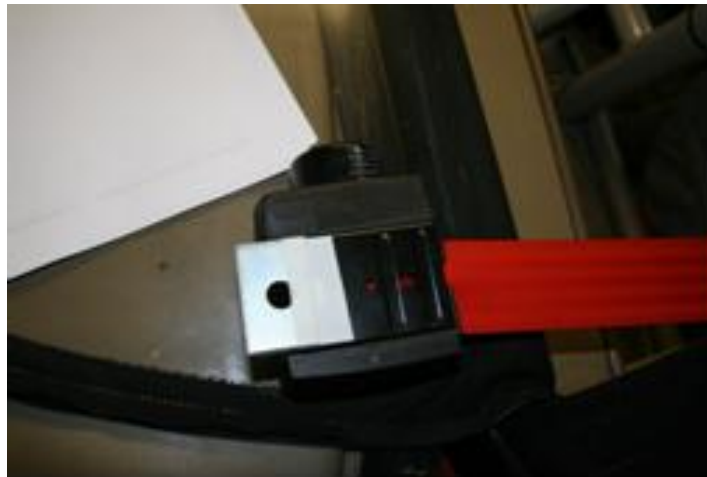
The **next job** is to remove the existing reel and its fixing bracket from the one single fixing point in the inner wing. Prize off the black plastic cap and remove the bolt and retract the belt into the reel, to do this it will have to be held level, as on the underside, not the top, which is sloped.



Now fit the rectangular plate in the kit to the mounting surface of the belt reel as below with a piece of duct tape. You might be able to fix it without doing this, but it prevents the plate from rotating out of place as you tighten the bolt. The dimples in the plate should engage with back of the reel, this provides reinforcement for the



The new reel now needs to be adjusted, as per the instructions, but if you look at the domed assembly on the side you will see a large arrow on the end, this must point vertically UP at whatever angle the reel is mounted. In my case no adjustment of this was needed, but on the side of that is a small knob with screwdriver slot and an arrow moulded in. This also has to point vertically UP, and will need to be rotated with large screwdriver or a coin. Look carefully at this slot, it has angled and straight sides to the slot so that you can only rotate it in one direction. Turn it so that the arrow is up when the reel is held in the approximate position it will be mounted and check that you can pull the belt out freely. If not tilt it slightly until you can pull it out and adjust the small knob accordingly.



See picture below with adjustments in correct position.

Before you try to fix the reel in place, because it is tricky, you will need the hood up, with window unzipped, then working through the rear window aperture, pull enough belt out and fold it on itself and jam it in between the guides to stop it retracting and making installation difficult, as in the picture below.

Doing so makes it so much easier to install as you won't have the belt tugging at you while fitting the reel. Select the parts as the picture below

metal of the reel. Do NOT omit this part, however difficult it might be. It ensures the strongest mounting.



### Now comes tricky bit

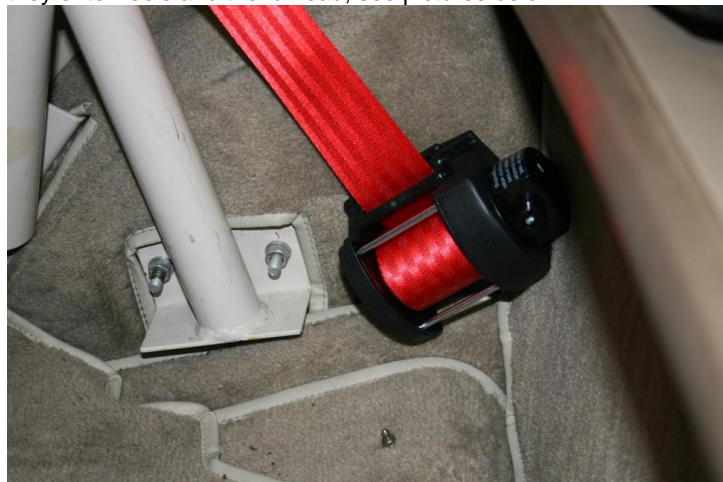
With the fixing bolt, washer and metal plate on the reel, lean in through the rear window aperture and attach the reel to the fixing point. I found a great help was to put one of the nuts in the kit into the 11/16" socket to stop the bolt head from going too far in and with the socket on a short extension I was able to manoeuvre the reel and socket into place and to get the bolt started.

Now replace the front seat and lift the buckle to its correct position [the old one will have left an impression on the leather to guide you and tighten the bolt from behind the seat while holding the buckle at the correct angle. This might mean moving the seat forward, so again an assistant will be a great help.

Now pull the belt out that was jammed in the reel and thread through the fairlead on the shoulder of the seat and check the run of the belt down to the buckle and back to the fixing point on the cill. There should be no twists and the runs should be smooth. If you end up with a twist you can fold the belt and pass the folded belt through the slot in the tongue that goes into the buckle to turn it over and make sure that the run from the fairlead goes over the top of the tongue and comes out and across your lap. Again if there is a twist just remove the fixing to the call, which is possible with seat in place, pushed forward] to get the twist out.

It's time for a well-deserved cuppa now, but don't forget that you have to do the whole operation again on the passenger side, although you can do the job without removing the passenger seat and it won't take you nearly as long.

When done correctly the runs of the belt should be straight where they enter reels and the fairlead, see pictures below.



The finished job should look like the last picture. I chose red for the belt material as my car is Nightfire Red and the beige looked a little bland. I think it brightens up the interior.

The curious wooden structure on the roll over bar is a mount for my GoPro camera, useful for recording events on track days.



Above: the colours that are currently available from Securon.

### Securon

As Securon is a trade only company, they do not sell to the public; their agent is KCP Car and Commercial Ltd, Bury St Edmunds. You will need to order a pair of Securon 514-15, being sure to state Colour required as well

[http://shop.kpcarandcommercial.co.uk/epages/100080302.sf/en\\_GB/?ObjectPath=/Shops/100080302/Categories/Imprint](http://shop.kpcarandcommercial.co.uk/epages/100080302.sf/en_GB/?ObjectPath=/Shops/100080302/Categories/Imprint)

Call them on 01284 750777, they are helpful and efficient. Belts I ordered late morning arrived the following morning before coffee.



### Alternative – seat belt refurbishment

Worn or faulty original seatbelts can be refurbished, repaired or replaced by a specialist called **Quickfit Seat Belt Service** in Stanmore in Middlesex (northwest London). On their website they say "all seat belts are manufactured under European standard R16 and under ISO9002 quality control procedures and are either tested to, European standard R16 for Modern seat belts, or British standard BS3254 for period style seat belts for vehicles up to 1973. We are able to fully refurbish, repair and re-web almost any style of seat belt completely in line with all relevant UK and EU guidelines. For security reasons not all seat belt parts can be repaired or even refurbished, this is due to them being single use items".

This specialist was mentioned by Jonathan Buckley in [RV8NOTE391](#).

See the Quickfitsbs website at: <http://www.quickfitsbs.com> for further details and their contacts

### Disclaimer

The information is given in good faith. The author and the club cannot accept any liability for any errors, or omissions that may have occurred nor for any injury or damage caused by such errors or omissions or by following these instructions.

Seat belts are a primary safety related item and if you do not feel confident that you can achieve a safe secure installation, please do not proceed, but find a competent person to carry the work out for you.