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GREEN'S MAMBA

The latest in a long line of successful supercharged conversions from tuning gurus RGMotorsport is ready to hit the streets – and the off-road trails. RGM's force-fed new Dual VVTI Toyota Prado 4,0-litre V6 thumps out 326 kW and 540 Nm, making it one of the most powerful 4x4 on the market, bested only by flagship SUV models from Audi, Merc, BMW and Porsche.

Thanks to the company's long and impressive record with aftermarket supercharging (since 1992 they've engineered about 465 supercharger conversions across a wide variety of vehicles), reliability and drivetrain integrity are a hallmark. In fact, so confident are RGM in the conversion, that it carries their up to 3-year/100 000 km warranty.

"We use the latest technology and in-house 3D computer-aided design and fabrication techniques to increase power output while maintaining reliability," says Rob Green, RGM's managing partner. "Excessive intake temperatures are often a problem on forced induction vehicles in South Africa, and our hot ambient combined with high altitude can potentially cause havoc to engine internals. Aftermarket installations are particularly susceptible to temperature-related reliability issues - not to mention lag for similar reasons - which is why we've put so much time and effort into perfecting supercharging."

RGMotorsport's answer to providing performance and reliability lies in their watercooled charge-cooler which has been developed and perfected through years of research and development at Gauteng's rarified altitude. The air from the Vortech centrifugal 'charger is forced through the cooler, which is essentially an encased radiator mounted on top of the intake manifold and utilizing heat exchangers mounted behind the front grille. This reduces the temperature of the intake air before it enters the engine, which has a dramatic impact on efficiency by increasing the density. Denser, cooler air equals more power and reliability.

And it translates directly into performance. In-house tests returned impressive results: in the 0 – 100 km/h dash the supercharged Prado shaved nearly four seconds off the elapsed time, improving from 12,4 seconds for a standard Prado 4,0 V6 automatic to a giant-killing 8,6 seconds at Reef altitude. Replicating the test with a 1 100 kg Jurgens caravan in tow, the 0-100 km time tumbled from 19.6seconds to 13.4 seconds - nearly as quick as the standard vehicle with no added weight!

A sophisticated 'piggy-back' computer allows the ignition timing and fuelling for each vehicle to be remapped individually on RGM's state-of-the-art four wheel drive dynamometer, giving the customer not only maximum performance but the best possible fuel economy without sacrificing engine life. Even when towing a caravan the RGM supercharged Prado used about 0,75 //100 km less than the standard model. RGM is confident that this will also be reflected in everyday conditions – assuming the driver doesn't thoughtlessly use all the reserves of power - thanks to being able to stay in a higher gear for longer and make the most of the increased torque.

Driveability and smoothness are not sacrificed either, with the big six cylinder pulling effortlessly from as low as 1500 rpm. This is especially evident when towing or driving up a steep mountain pass.

A complete conversion costs R90 000 - including an underbonnet installation which is a feast for the eyes. The standard of fit and finish would make a Formula One team proud.

RGM can also improve vehicle dynamics to cater for the increase in performance by fitting one of their brake upgrade or custom suspension options. And of course, a range of products are available for most petrol and diesel version of Hilux and Fortuner.

To view a video on some of the behind the scenes research and development which went into this conversion and to see the supercharged Prado in action against a standard one on Tarlton's drag strip go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZqV1o0iizU>.

For more on RGMotorsport and what it has to offer owners of BMWs and other fine vehicles, visit www.rgmotorsport.com, email info@rgmotorsport.co.za or phone 011 792 8352. For sales enquiries after hours contact Reghard Roets on 082 324 8232 or Alan Fine on 084 484 6770.

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