

A LIGHT MATTER by Randy Rumsby

Recently I read an article in one of the more popular motoring magazines about headlights, which provoked some thought about just what I was missing in the way of adequate lighting for the road. Prior to reading the article, the only headlights I was aware of were the three-dollar variety from the corner gas station.

Now my car, and more than likely yours, is equipped with the good (?) old sealed beams, which incidentally were invented over thirty-three years ago, and haven't been improved since because of antiquated state laws limiting development.

One answer to your lighting needs is the addition of supplemental driving and fog lamps, usually of the quartz-halogen variety, which come in many shapes and sizes. The driving lamp throws a long, narrow beam to pick up objects at long distance while the fog disperses light in a broad, flat beam to illuminate the sides of the road and cut through fog, smoke and haze without causing reflected light back towards the car.

The one big problem in mounting either of these lights in a Lotus is finding a place to put them. While our cars are quite aerodynamic, there wasn't any provision made for mounting of auxiliary lights, so I decided on a much more simple alternative; the mounting of quartz-halogen headlights. These headlights from Europe are far more powerful than our sealed beams, yet control the light better as well. This is pretty impressive when you consider that the quartz lights put out roughly five times the candlepower of our sealed beams, as much as 200,000 candle-power for the quartz light vs. 37,500 for the sealed beam.

The quartz-iodine or quartz-halogen lights do come in the seven-inch size necessary for Lotus and will fit the existing headlight socket without modification. They are a composite unit, meaning that the bulb and reflector are separate, an advantage in that you can carry a spare in the glove box. Electrical connections are the same as the sealed beams, but some brands may have a different arrangement, so be sure to check the wiring diagram before purchasing.

Bulb life is about the same as the sealed beam, although replacement cost is higher and will vary from six to ten Dollars, depending on your source. This shouldn't be a reason for concern, as both should last a number of years.

One last concern is the matter of legality. While there is new federal lighting legislation in the works, the quartz lights are still illegal in most states, Which may mean a change back to sealed beams if you get nailed in a Highway Patrol vehicle check.

The following is a list of the more popular Quartz-iodine or Halogen conversions and sources to buy from:

Name	Model	Country Of Origin	Source
Carello	JODH	Italy	Continental Motor Parts 3 or 4 locations in Los Angeles

Cibie	7" hi-lo conversion	England	Vilem B. Haan 10305 Santa Monica Bl. W.L.A. 90025
Lucas	Quartz-Iodine	England	Vilem B. Haan
Marchal	7" Iodine	France	Wilco Accessories P.O. Box 1128 Rochester, N.Y. 14603
Wipac	7" Iodine	England	MG Mitten 36 South Chester Pasadena, Calif. 91101