

Suzuki S-Cross Impresses

by Ian Lynas

Recently I was reacquainted with an S-Cross, perhaps a model within the Suzuki family that tends to be overlooked since the arrival of the new Vitara.



This compact crossover which has been around for some time has a lot going for it as I discovered.

My test example was powered by a 1.6 litre DDiS diesel engine which not only rewards with reasonable performance but with excellent fuel economy; according to the official figure quoted by the manufacturer on the combined cycle-62.8mpg and that relates to the ALLGRIP which I tested.

There should be little bother in obtaining 50mpg plus on a regular basis; all down to how heavy the driver is with the right foot.

The emission figure for this

combination of engine and drive is 118g/km.

The TCSS transmission is relatively new, introduced late last summer and it is an automated manual system with a hydraulically controlled clutch and gear change. On the move it feels just like a conventional automatic.

What I discovered that gear changing is slightly faster than a conventional manual transmission and operation is also available via paddles mounted behind the steering wheel.

This member of the S-Cross family does deliver quite a sporting drive and with added grip when conditions are far from ideal it is a very reassuring car to be behind the wheel of.

There is a small price to pay re economy; this automated transmission is heavier and loses out by about 1.4mpg to the manual. Not a great price to pay for such convenience.

The TCSS transmission has a creep facility which allows the S-Cross to move at a slow speed about 5mph when in traffic or to assist during parking. This facility is cancelled when driven on an incline of more than five per cent or if the system is below normal operating temperatures.



When the S-Cross is driven on a decline the clutch system detects increasing speed, it will automatically engage the clutch to deliver engine braking.

Now to ALLGRIP, this is simply the company's new four wheel drive system. The four wheel drive system employed in the S-Cross embodies this technology.

There are four modes, auto, sport, snow and lock and you simply select the mode you require using a simple push and turn dial on the centre console.

AUTO majors on fuel economy and uses two wheel drive by default and switches to four wheel drive if wheel spin is detected.

The SPORT mode is optimal for twisty roads and makes maximum use of four wheel drive in response to accelerator inputs. At low and mid-range engine speeds, the system alters the accelerator/torque characteristics to optimise engine response and cornering performance.

When selected, an engine speed increase of 500rpm will be noticed by the driver and in response to higher acceleration inputs, the ALLGRIP system will automatically divert 20 per cent more torque to the rear wheels.



The SNOW mode is optimal for snowy, unpaved and other slippery surfaces, using four wheel drive by default and it optimises control in accordance with steering and accelerator inputs in order to enhance traction and stability on low-friction surfaces. LOCK is designed for extricating the car from snow, mud or sand. The S-Cross is highly practical with a generous 430 litres of luggage space, a well appointed cabin with comfy seats. This is the ideal choice for someone who desires the safety that a four wheel drive vehicle brings, but in a compact body.