

WHY PENRITE HAS LIGHTER OILS

Vehicles are as different from one another as people. There are various makes and models, older and newer engines, operating under a wide range of conditions from highway to the daily school run.

There is no environment for a “one size fits all” solution, which is why Penrite has such a large range. We aim to produce the oil that suits the particular vehicle in our climate and for its operating conditions. Engine technology has made huge advances, and this has meant we needed to have lighter oils to suits these engines to ensure we kept pace with the market.

But why have we had to do this?

Engine technology is the driver – which is itself is driven by environmental legislation around the world. Even engines such as the 2003 Ford 4.0L and Holden 3.8L do not have much in common with the versions that were out 10 years ago. Clearances have tightened, oil flow improved (via higher volume pumps), materials changed etc, so the old traditional Penrite grades became less suitable. Think of V8s. These were always HPR 30 and HPR 40/50 territory. Put those grades in now, and the engine will struggle and potentially be extremely rattly. The Viper V10 – 8.3L of grunt – HPR 10 or Synthetic 5 are the products of choice. They fill those with Mobil 1 10W-30!

So, was it a big change to our philosophy to release major engine oil grades of a “5W” and “10W” type. But was it necessarily a change in the “oils for Australian conditions” philosophy? The answer is “no!”. Oil does not get thicker as it gets hotter – it always gets thinner. Basically, we have accepted the manufacturer’s recommendation for the viscosity of the oil at start up, which in Australia means the oil flows readily when the key is turned. This gives maximum wear protection and minimum fuel consumption. But by going for a wider range oil with a high viscosity index, we have been able to slow the rate of oil thinning to provide a product that is always a little heavier than what the manufacturer has specified, when it is needed – at high temperature.

It all started with HPR Pedigree – now known as HPR 15. It is a SAE 15W-60. Why? Because the opposition products and OEM recommendations of the day were SAE 15W-40 and 15W-50. So we went one higher.

So taking HPR 10 as the next step, SAE 10W-30 and 10W-40 are normal “10W” grades. So HPR 10 went to a SAE 10W-50. Again SAE 5W-30 is a normal “5W” grade, so we released HPR 5, SAE 5W-40. Our recommendations in the Recommendations Guide and on the Product Information sheets reflect this. Don’t forget, the SECOND number in a multigrade oil is a better indication of its ultimate viscosity than the first “W” number. A 10W-30 is a thin oil – a 10W-50, in relative terms, is not. A 10W-50 is actually heavier than a 15W-40 at operating temperature, and in fact the crossover point is about 5-10°C – a typical start up temperature in Australia.

So the products we have released we have done so for very good reasons, and they are recommended the way they are in the Recommendations Guides, for those same reasons.