

**OZ ROAMER**

# **4WD & AWD SUV**

## **2015 AWARDS**

**OZROAMER 2015  
AWARDS SPECIAL  
EDITION E-MAGAZINE**

**OVER 45 VEHICLES IN  
11 CATEGORIES FOR 2015**



**OZROAMER BUSINESS  
DIRECTORY**

**OZROAMER 2015 AWARDS**

**PRICE \$5.50**

by Anthony Hood



It has been a big year for the Kia Sorento Platinum - not only did it undergo a total redesign which was launched in June 2015, but the price movements meant that this previous category winner now sits in a new category. It's a bit of an unfair advantage though as the value proposition meant that the Kia Sorento Platinum was almost a shoe in for the winner of the 2015 OzRoamer 7 Seat AWD SUV over \$60,000. It has previously been a two time winner in the under \$60,000 category as well.

With the availability of a new platform in the Kia assembly shed, they've taken the opportunity to redesign the third generation Sorento. About the only carry over from the previous model is the tweaked 2.2L diesel and transmission. The body has been redesigned with more aggressive and defined lines as well as generous new proportions. The body is 95mm longer, 45mm lower and 5mm wider with an 80mm longer wheel base. Even with the lower body height, the seating has been redesigned to provide more head room in the front and second rows. This is more than evident by the fact that I didn't need to put the driver's seat all the way back to be able to get a comfortable position (all 6'5" of me).



On the inside, the redesign has continued with a smooth flowing package that is easy on the eye and easy to use. The dash has been laid out with distinct and easy to see clusters that don't overwhelm you with complicated buttons or gadgets. The steering wheel on the Platinum is a good looking affair with the trim broken up with a feature piece and all steering wheels come with controls to activate your most used functions. All variants come with dual zone A/C as well as second and third row cooling.

The Platinum comes with heated steering wheel, dual zone A/C as well as front and second row seat heating and front seat cooling. The Platinum driver's seat is electrically adjustable 10 ways and the front passenger seat 8 ways. It's almost impossible not to be comfortable.

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Other key features include auto sensing smart tailgates which open with a proximity sensor and a panoramic sun roof. Auto headlights with LED parkers, daylight running lights and led rear lights are standard and the Platinum has HID auto levelling adaptive (cornering) headlights.

An interesting factor about the entertainment system is the fact that there is no CD player available. While some may lament this, it is the way of the future and it has full compatibility with media devices via USB and 3mm jack. However the stereo isn't video capable. The Platinum is the pick of bunch with its premium sound system (10 speaker Infinity) and obviously SatNav.

Seating for the rear passengers is comfortable with adequate headroom, legroom and shoulder room. I have had 6 teenagers in the car with minimal whinging. Boot space in the new Sorento is among the 'best-in-class' as cargo capacity is huge. Load it up and drive and it will transport in economical comfort. Storage is a feature with twin cup-holders, deep centre console, large glovebox, an illuminated lower tray in the centre console and four door pockets. The second row seat also features a folding centre armrest with twin cup-holders.

Safety has had a major haul over and the Sorento achieves a 5 star ANCAP rating. All models have front side and curtain airbags, 7 seat seatbelt warning lights. The Platinum also picks up some other features including blind spot and lane change assist, lane departure warning as well as rear cross traffic warning for reversing out of places and to top it off smart cruise control. All models have front and rear sensors, reversing camera and tyre pressure monitoring system. The rear view camera provides an excellent view behind the car for hooking up trailers.

There is also a comprehensive suite of active safety technologies including Vehicle Stability Management (VSM), Electronic Stability Control (ESC), Traction Control System (TCS), Anti-skid Braking System (ABS) with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) and Brake Assist System (BAS), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC) and Downhill Brake Control (DBC).

One major improvement with the Sorento is the suspension package which was exclusively designed in Australia for Australian conditions and this was evident on the test. The Kia handles well on road taking the twisty hills around Port Douglas and Cairns in its stride and comfortably cruising along at high speeds. The short stint along some gravel and dirt was promising, with the bumps and corrugations being soaked up with minimal intrusion into the cabin and the Sorento has always been a good performer on sand.



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<b>Model</b>	Sorento Platinum
<b>Model Price</b>	\$61,155 RDAP
<b>Engine</b>	2.2L 'R' 4 Cyl
<b>Drivetrain</b>	AWD 6 speed Auto
<b>Power</b>	147 Kw @ 3,800 rpm
<b>Torque</b>	441 Nm @ 1,750 rpm
<b>Safety</b>	5 Star ANCAP
<b>CO2 Emissions</b>	192 g/km
<b>GVR</b>	3 Star
<b>Economy</b>	7.3L/100km (ADR comb)
<b>Tow Capacity</b>	Max 2000 kg <b>Tow</b>
<b>Ball Rating</b>	100 kg <b>Servicing</b>
	7 Years Capped
<b>Warranty</b>	7yr/ Unlimited km with full roadside assist



The sports mode for the transmission actually made a noticeable difference to the way the gearbox performed compared to some. Another improvement is with the NVH levels as the engine and road noise was hardly audible especially in the Platinum. Towing has been bumped up to 2 tonne with a 100kg ball weight which will require some thought to loading your trailer. The 2.2L diesel produces 147kW @3,800 rpm and 441Nm @ 1,750 rpm and is mated to the excellent 6 speed automatic transmission. This combination has proved to be responsive, robust and frugal. In short, it is spot on.

The AWD is a single ratio (high range) 4WD system with a default status that delivers 100% of engine torque to the front wheels during normal driving. For improved traction while driving in rain, snow, mud, unpaved roads and off-road – the driver can manually select 'Lock Mode'. This mode splits the torque 50/50 between the front and rear axles for better stability up to a speed of 30 km/h. The combination of powerful diesel motor, 6 speed automatic transmission, new suspension and speed-sensitive hydraulically power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering gives the Sorento impressive handling.

We have previously towed (with the Kia's heavy duty tow kit) horse floats, car trailers, camper trailers, ditch diggers, quad bikes and seadoos with the Sorento and never once did it grumble. It's off road ability is surprising if you take account of its overhangs and acknowledge its limitations, it will provide heaps of off road fun for the family. On dirt trails it performs better than you would expect for an AWD SUV and on sand it is simply awesome if you take care of the overhangs. You must remember to turn off the traction control though. We have driven the Sorento plenty of times on the dunes of Stockton beach and through the fire trails of the Watagan mountains and within its limitations, have never had a problem.

The design is reasonably stylish and comfortable, with seats seven, jam-packed with features, fantastic value and comes with Kia's 7-year warranty, capped price servicing and road side assistance. Combine that with the awesome motor transmission combination, it should be at the top of buyer's lists for an honest and practical family AWD SUV. The Sorento is the winner of the 2015 OzRoamer 7 Seat AWD SUV over \$60,000. It has previously won in 2012 and 2014 in another category as well.



#### What's Good:

- Engine Transmission combination
- Seven seat practicality
- Value for money

#### What's Not:

- AWD not 4WD
- Price increase
- Low tow ball rating

**Overall OzRoamer Rating: 90/100**

Behind the Wheel	10	Practicality	10
Comfort	9	Fit for Purpose	10
Equipment	10	Towing Ability	5
Performance	10	Off Road Ability	7
Ride & Handling	9	Value for Money	10