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RAC Bescot - 20 Years Of Roadside Recovery

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The opening of Bescot marked the start of a new era of customer service for RAC and was integral to the way RAC transformed its service to customers during this period.

The operations control centre, in a prime location between junctions 8 and 9 of the M6 was designed by Italian architect Gennaro Picardi and heralded by RIBA as "a positive contribution to an otherwise bleak urban environment, an example of architecture as dynamic image making and a heroic achievement". It has also become one of the most recognisable landmarks in the UK* with many people referring to it as the 'patrolman's cap.'

John Clayton, from RAC's technical centre of excellence, was one of the first colleagues to work at the Bescot operations centre. He says: "I remember how incredibly proud we were to be working in this fantastic new building when it opened; it really felt like we at RAC were 'the eyes of the road', looking out on to the busy M6. It was a really exciting time for us in RAC as we transformed the service we offered to our members. Bescot may be an iconic landmark to millions in the UK, but to me it's just a great place to work."

Neil Thompson, director of rescue service delivery adds: "Bescot has been the jewel in RAC's crown for the past 20 years. It is the operational HQ for RAC, it houses our call center operations, our Technical Centre of Excellence and our Research Laboratory which continuously strives to find new ways to help our customers when they need our help. "

Since it opened in May 1989, Bescot has:

- Handled 46,851,000 phone calls
- Dispatched Patrols to 27,324,000 breakdowns
- Run 40,000 training sessions for Patrols and motor manufacturers
- Served over 7 million cups of tea from the canteen.
- Been open 24 hours a day, seven days a week since it opened in May 1989.

Other facts and figures:

- On average, RAC Bescot handles 6,400 calls per day and dispatches Patrols to 3,700 breakdowns

- There are currently 753 staff based at Bescot
- 800 cars per minute (on average) pass the building

ENDS

The mezzanine overlooking the M6 is available for filming.

Notes to editors

*Research commissioned on behalf of Aviva's UK Insurance Business in 2007 revealed RAC Bescot to be the third most recognisable motorway landmark.

About RAC

With around seven million members, RAC is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information - RAC is able to meet motorists' needs.

RAC is committed to providing the very highest levels of service to its members and has been ranked first for customer service by J.D. Power and Associates' UK Roadside Assistance Study for the last three years.

Aviva bought RAC in May 2005. The acquisition brings together RAC's powerful brand and customer base with the expertise and leading position in motor insurance of Aviva UK Insurance (formerly Norwich Union Insurance). Aviva is the UK's largest insurer with a market share of around 15 per cent.

RAC is part of Aviva, the world's fifth largest insurance group which operates in 28 countries.

Contacts



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