



## Toyota Hilux to the Rescue

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Transporting Search & Rescue teams to inaccessible parts of the coastline calls for vehicles that are as tough as they are reliable - which is why the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) has turned to Toyota Hilux 4WD Double Cabs to do the job.

"The drivers really do appreciate them," says Lyall Plant, who is the Rescue Equipment Manager for the Government agency, based in Southampton.

The Hiluxes are now replacing the 30 Vauxhall Bravas previously used by the Coastguard. "I took a Hilux on loan to assess against a range of other vehicles suitably classed for the tough range of tasks our coastal officers undertake," says Lyall, who is responsible for a fleet of 345 MCA vehicles around the country.

"The Toyota provided the best value for money, but it was chosen mainly for its performance, carrying capacity and level of fit-out.

"The capacity is important for us to allow space for the rescuers as well as the mudsheets, winches, ropes, helmets, stretchers and medical supplies they need to do their essential rescue job."

The vehicles are supplied on a fleet maintenance contract by Automotive Leasing. They are painted in the Coastguard's distinctive blue and yellow livery, and are fitted with off-road tyres and blue warning lights. Two further Hiluxes fitted with towbars have been supplied through local dealer Marshall Rolfe.

"Reliability is all-important, because the vehicles are out almost every day," adds Lyall. "The areas they cover are small, so their mileage is low, but they have a hard life and we expect to get at least eight years' work out of them. I'm particularly pleased with them as they've been performing up to my expectations and are very economical to run."

So what sort of action have these Toyota workhorses seen so far?

"The rescue operations might sound exciting, but because there are so many incidents to attend to it quickly becomes another everyday job for the rescue teams!" says Lyall.

The Toyota Hilux 4WD Double Cab is designed to make best use of loadspace while providing space for up to five people to travel in comfort. With a maximum payload of 880kg, power comes from a 2.4-litre turbocharged diesel engine, driving through a five-speed transmission with high and low ratios and limited slip differential for go-anywhere capability.

"People in distress rely on the Coastguard, and these teams have to be able to rely on their vehicles," says Mark Hall, General Manager of Toyota Fleet. "The Hilux 4WD is as rugged as they come, but also provides the elements of comfort and safety they require. Toyota is pleased to be able to support an emergency service on which so many lives depend."

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