



*Swedish National
Road Administration*

”Vision Zero” - from concept to action

A safe road traffic concept

"Vision Zero" is the basis for the work being conducted on road safety in Sweden. It is an image of a desirable future society in which no one would be killed or seriously injured in road traffic.

We can no longer accept the fact that people are being punished every year by death or lifelong suffering for having made a simple mistake in traffic.

Since people sometimes make mistakes, it is impossible to prevent traffic accidents altogether. However, it is possible to alleviate the consequences of a collision through roads and vehicles becoming safer. Moreover, the risk can be reduced through greater insight into the importance of safe behaviour in traffic.

●
Five percent of any age group in Sweden is killed or injured for life in traffic.

●
Traffic injuries cost Swedish society about SEK 20 000 million every year.

●
In October 1997 the Government passed a resolution stating that as far as road traffic in Sweden was concerned, "Vision Zero" was to apply.
●

SAFER TRAFFIC IN BUILT-UP AREAS



An important strategy contained in "Vision Zero" is to separate different categories of road user. In built-up areas where pedestrians, cyclists and motorists have to share the same road space, the speed limit has been reduced through implementing various changes in the traffic environment.

ROUNDBABOUTS



An increasing number of intersections are being converted into roundabouts. These have a traffic calming effect and help limit the seriousness of any collision that might occur.

COLLISION FOR SAFETY



The safety standard of a car is put to the real test in a collision. Sweden is therefore taking part in European collision tests, Euro NCAP, which demonstrate car safety characteristics in different kinds of collision. The results function as consumer reports.



CABLE GUARD RAILS



As opposed to the conventional types of guard rail that deflect cars back out into traffic, steel cable guard rails catch hold of the car.

SAFER MOTORWAYS



Although motorways are generally considered to be safe, this does not apply to the older ones, where improvements must be made. This is primarily a matter of setting up guard rails at steep rock cliffs and replacing rigid posts and guard rails with a type that yields.

RIGHT SPEED



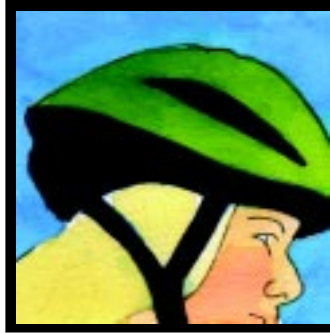
Speed limits on national roads are currently being reviewed. The aim is to adjust the speed limit to the safety standard of the road.

SEAT BELT REMINDERS



The seat belt is the single most important safety feature in the car. In a collision, the use of a seat belt reduces the risk of death or serious injury by fifty percent. All safety features in a car are based on the premise of the seat belt being used. Installing seat belt reminders in cars is a simple and effective measure.

CYCLE HELMETS



Death and serious injuries would be avoided if more cyclists wore helmets. Campaigns for increasing the use of cycle helmets are being aimed at such target groups as university students, school children and those who cycle to work.

KNIGHTS OF THE ROAD



Fast help at the scene of a collision can save lives and reduce the seriousness of injuries. Since professional drivers are often first on site, they are now being given training in first aid.



FOTO: LEIF JADERBERG

SPEED SURVEILLANCE



Speeding is the most common cause of traffic fatalities. Permanent speed surveillance cameras that motorists know about have a traffic calming effect.

SAFE TRANSPORTS



More and more companies and organisations that procure transport services are demanding that the transportation of goods and people be carried out in a safe way. This means, for example, following the speed limit, using a seat belt and that the vehicle is in good condition. The element of safety is in the process of becoming a competitive factor within the transport sector.

TRAVEL POLICY IN COMPANIES



Due to the fact that companies are including safety as a component in their travel policies, road safety on the whole is improving, as is staff insight in this regard. A company travel policy can include demands that employees abide by the speed limit, use seat belts and, needless to say, are sober when driving.

Current undertakings

INVOLVING THE ENTIRE MUNICIPALITY



The work on turning "Vision Zero" into reality is being implemented in many different ways and within many different areas all over Sweden. There are numerous examples of these undertakings. Some of the most common measures are shown here.

In several municipalities, local residents co-operate with public authorities to chart the location of traffic deathtraps and how road safety could be improved. It is those living in an area who know most about the traffic environment in their particular neighbourhood. There are many cases where pressure at the grassroots level has resulted in safer roads.

"It was slippery, my car went into a skid and drove right into the cable guard rail. The car went sliding ahead along the rail before finally coming to a stop. I landed more gently than if I had driven into a normal guard rail and I was able to drive away myself. It was lucky for me that there was a guard rail because of the steep slope on the other side. If I had ended up there, I don't know what would have happened."

Michael Lengneroth, father of four children, Lerum (Sweden)



FOTO: JOHANNES BERNER

CENTRE GUARD RAILS



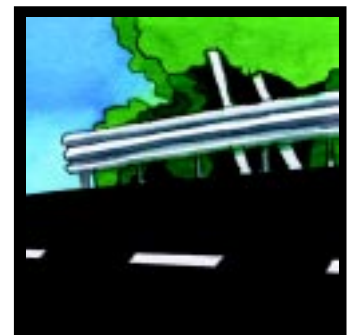
A centre guard rail prevents head-on collisions, thereby making a rural road of standard width considerably safer.

SAFE ROADSIDE AREAS



Trees, boulders, rigid posts, etc can be fatal for anyone who should happen to drive off the road. Such fixed obstacles along roads should be removed.

ROADSIDE GUARD RAILS



Guard rails are being increasingly set up along the side of the road in places where circumstances render it impossible to make the roadside area safe.

Shared responsibility through "Vision Zero"

Previously, most of the responsibility for a traffic accident was placed on the individual road user. However, according to "Vision Zero", this responsibility is shared by all those who have an effect on, or participate in road traffic:

●
Politicians who make decisions concerning community planning and traffic issues.

●
Planners who implement political decisions concerning the shape and design of society and the road transport system.

●
Road managers, like the Swedish National Road Administration and the municipal authorities, that construct and maintain roads.

●
The police who ensure that traffic rules are followed.

●
Vehicle manufacturers and dealers.

●
Organisations that strive to improve road safety in society.

●
Companies, organisations and private individuals that purchase transport services.

●
Companies, organisations and private individuals that transport goods and people.

●
All those who use roads and streets.



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