



2013-05-30

**Näringsdepartementet**

*Departementssekreterare*

*Björn Stafbom N-TE,*

*Catrin Tidström, N/TE (bantrafik)*

**Tal av sr Elmsäter-Svärd på "Towards Zero" Conference  
4-5 juni, 2013 i Stockholm**

**Huvudbudskap**

1. The real strength of Vision Zero is that it gives a common goal for all stakeholders.
2. You also need targets and performance indicators in order to manage road safety.
3. Important to find synergies between safety, environment and mobility for roads and railways. That is the way we can use our resources most effective.

**Tid:** 10.00-18.00

**Datum:** 4 - 5 juni 2013

**Plats:** Clarion Sign Hotel

**Språk:** engelska

**Program:**

Catharina öppnar konferensen 10.30 och avslutar den 12.50 den 5 juni

**Tal av sr Elmsäter-Svärd**

It is a real honour for me to open this important conference on – literally – such a vital issue.

On behalf of the Swedish government, may I express our appreciation for this opportunity to share and discuss how we can best promote a better culture for safer roads and railways - and for the men, women, and children that use them.

In our modern and ever-more globalised world, roads form an arterial system in the development of our economies, societies and communities as never before in history.

So all countries face this challenge, and its ever-rising costs in both human and financial terms. And we can all benefit from learning not only what has worked well, but also from what has not worked so well.

It is very good to see how many of you this aim has brought here from the traffic safety community, academia, and from private and public organisations.

Safety has long been on our own national agenda and, as you all know, road safety has been put on the global agenda by the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.

The themes of the conference are all related to strategic issues that are high on the agenda of better safety.

Any modern transport system must cope with ever increasing transport demands and volumes, whilst at the same time reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries.

We need to find smarter and cost-efficient solutions - and we need to involve everyone in society in this task of constantly working on *road/traffic* safety.

(Regarding road safety)Sweden's Vision Zero is based on a zero-tolerance of that traditional trade-off between mobility and road deaths and serious injury. It states that any loss of life and health on our roads is avoidable, and so unacceptable.

Based on this principle, Vision Zero has guided traffic safety reform in Sweden for the last 15 years. It is a long-term and on-going approach for a road transport system that recognises both human vulnerability and human fallibility.

It has helped us create a strategy for change.

Launching Vision Zero was approved by all the political parties in our Parliament in 1997. Since then attitudes towards the policy have gone from scepticism and disbelief - to an overwhelming acceptance from the Swedish public and stakeholders.

Statistics shows the impressive progress made; a 40 % reduction of fatalities over a period of 10 years.

The real strength of Vision Zero is that it gives a common goal for all stakeholders. The responsibility for road safety is properly shared by both road system designers and road users.

The holistic approach of Vision Zero promotes broad-based and long-term developments towards better safety thinking. All stakeholders are

encouraged, supported, and given the opportunity to think and act in new and better ways.

In order to best manage road safety a long term vision isn't enough on its own. Proper targets and performance indicators have also been needed. Both current and new innovative solutions must be fully implemented. They must also be truly effective – both in terms of reducing casualties as well as costs in the widest sense – to all of society.

For example: speed. Where road safety is low, speeds must be cut, and where it is high they can be increased. We can only increase speed if safety is improved. This is why road investments are often investments in safety rather than (just) mobility investments.

Alternatives to building new infrastructure should be actively looked for. Sometimes it is better to improve what we already have. Sometimes it is better to improve vehicles, and sometimes to increase enforcement. The Swedish speed camera program is one good example of (greatly) improving safety very cost-effectively.

**The most striking example of reducing costs for safety is adapting our Swedish 2+1 (lane) roads as an alternative to build new full scale freeways. For the same levels of safety level, we are getting a cost reduction of more than 90 %.**

**So we have been able to reduce the number of deaths on the Swedish roads more cost efficiently than we did some years ago. In 1995 the cost for saving one life on the road was over 1 billion SEK. Today a more innovative strategy means the cost per life saved is down to 50-100 million SEK.**

**We have learnt that that elements and design of roads that created the effects, would have cost us just 1 % more on the road investment from the beginning.**

**So safety doesn't need to be a big cost issue – particularly if we do things right from the beginning.**

Basically what we are doing in Sweden is modifying an existing infrastructure which -if we had done things right from the beginning - shouldn't now be necessary. These lessons mean developing countries (where road accidents kill the most) can fast-track to smarter solutions, and not repeat our past mistakes.

Another key element is enhancing standards of vehicle safety on our roads.

**We have invested a great deal in vehicle research that is the basis for some of the inventions in vehicle safety. And we have invested much effort – rather than huge sums of money - on stimulating the Swedish market to buy and use the safest possible cars.**

The same approach to safety can be applied on other means of transport. In rolling out this thinking on our railways, we have also seen big improvements in rail safety.

The challenges to improve railway safety are somewhat different. Railway operations are performed only by professional actors which are required by law to manage safety in a systematic way. Safety is also inherent in the rail transport system. For the users of the system, i.e. passengers and staff, the Vision Zero has almost been realised in Sweden. Risks for these person categories should not primarily be measured by numbers of fatalities or injured persons. We must develop indicators related to unsafe occurrences and to the functioning of the safety management system and the safety culture of the organisations.

However, the railway operators have by tradition in the past disregarded from the many third party fatalities, mainly trespassers and suicides, which occur regularly. These victims are violating rules and the incidents have often been considered to be outside the responsibility of the railways. This is certainly not the case. The incidents cause human suffering as well as great disturbances in rail traffic and must be included in the Vision Zero.

There are around 100 fatalities a year on the Swedish railways of which more than 70 per cent are suicides. Therefore the objective set by Government is to reduce all fatalities on the railways, not only those caused by accidents. We believe that there are cost effective measures that can reduce the number of deaths on the railways.

**I think the railway operators can learn from the systematic work on road safety to improve safety by using targets and performance indicators. At the same time the professional actors within the road system can adopt the systematic approach to manage safety that has been successful in the railway sector. The recently published ISO-standard (39001) on road traffic safety management can then prove to be a useful tool.**

So using the long term goal of Vision Zero and short term targets drives the innovation needed to build a (modern,) safer, national transport system and those that use it, by rail and road.

Local government is, naturally, also fully involved. Municipalities are investing heavily in urban areas to create more liveable environments for their citizens.

Modifying existing areas in this way has many aspects, of which safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and road and rail users is *just/an important* one.

**A truly holistic approach brings all those aspects – and all those responsible together. To find those vital synergies between safety, environment and mobility – and the best solutions for them now and in the future.**

This is the same spirit and approach that has brought so many of us together here in Stockholm today.

So I'm sure you all agree with me in wishing us all the very best for the next 2 days - and for the future too.

Thank you.

#### **Paneldiskussion:**

#### **Bakgrund**

Konferens för att inspirera och stimulera ett bättre säkerhetsarbete inom väg och järnväg.

How do we realise Vision Zero in road and railway safety?

Ever greater increases in road and rail traffic have, in the past, resulted in ever greater casualties. Recent initiatives by governments, academia and industry across the globe, however, show that this trend can be reversed.

The aim of the Towards Zero Conference is to provide a new impetus to the promotion of road and railway safety at the strategic level. The main focus will be on best practice, innovation and future challenges. Policy makers, together with high-level representatives from industry and international academia, will share their experience,

aim to find common goals, and discuss the way forward.

The Towards Zero Conference is organised by the Swedish Transport Administration in collaboration with the Minister for Infrastructure, Catharina Elmsäter-Svärd, and the Swedish Transport Agency.

**Panellister**

Se program

**Deltagare från Sverige**

Gunnar Malm, Director General, The Swedish Transport Administration

Claes Tingvall, Director of Traffic Safety, the Swedish Transport Administration

Staffan Widlert, Director General, The Swedish Transport Agency

Jonas Bjelfvenstam, Director General, The Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI),