

It must not happen again!

OLA - a systematic collaboration for safer road traffic

For further information

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Every fatal road accident is a catastrophe that should not be allowed to take place. Whenever a fatal accident occurs, everything must be done to try to stop it happening again.

Vision Zero places a great responsibility on system designers

According to Vision Zero, system designers have the final responsibility for safety in the road transport system. This is clearly stated in the government bill "Vision Zero and the safe roads society" from 1996.

Central points in the chain of responsibility contained in Vision Zero are:

- System designers have the final responsibility for the design, operation and use of the road transport system.
- Road users are responsible for following traffic rules, and showing due regard, judgement and responsibility on the roads.
- If road users cannot, are incapable, or unwilling to take their share of this responsibility, then responsibility is returned to the system designers to make further efforts to ensure that people are not killed or seriously injured. They are therefore responsible for the level of safety in the entire system.

System designers – a key group

The road transport system is shaped and influenced by system designers.

Who are system designers?

The Swedish Transport Administration is a system designer along with local authorities and other road managers. Vehicle manufacturers are also system designers, as well as police that monitor traffic, and emergency services that take care of accident victims. Transport companies are important system designers that through their routines can influence route planning and speeds. Purchasers of transport services are also system designers. Their demands on suppliers are very important for the level of transport safety. Politicians and civil servants that work with community planning are other system designers.

OLA – a systematic collaboration

Many companies, authorities and organisations can contribute towards a safer road transport system. OLA is a working approach where system designers work together to try to provide solutions to a common problem. Using available facts, potential solutions to one or more problems are discussed. With this approach, all

parties are offered an opportunity to present desired measures they are able to implement and as a result to contribute to improved road safety. This working approach is used at both national and regional/local level. OLA is a Swedish acronym for Objective data, List of solutions and Addressed action plans.

O - Objective data

In the first phase facts are presented and discussed. The facts can be for example:

- Accident statistics
- The Swedish Transport Administration in-depth studies of fatal road accidents
- Facts and knowledge from other actors

By studying the chain of events point by point, system designers can together offer an idea of why the accident became fatal. Some issues include:

- Is the road environment suitably designed?*
- Did the driver have a tight time schedule?*
- Was appropriate safety equipment used?*
- What was the cause of death?*

L - List of solutions/actions

In the second phase system designers present and discuss proposals and ideas for solutions - both in the short and long term. Measures can be both large and small. It is important that discussions are forward looking and focus on finding opportunities for improvement. It is not about finding scapegoats or attributing blame.

The discussion should mainly concentrate on what each system designer can do, either individually or together with another actor.

A - Addressed action plans

The third phase concerns what concrete measures system designers can initiate to improve safety. These should be presented as signed action plans from participating system designers. A declaration of intent is a description of what and when measures will be implemented and also the scope and aim of each measure. System designers are responsible for implementing and following-up their own action plans.

The OLA is documented and published on the Swedish Transport Administration website, at www.trafikverket.se/ola.

Step by step process

