



Press Information

Celebrating 60 years of saving lives with seat belts but more can be done

This year marks the 60th anniversary since the first Volvo drivers pulled Nils Bohlin’s innovative three-point seat belt over their shoulders in 1959. Today the seat belt is still seen as the world’s most important traffic safety innovation ever and is estimated to have saved more than one million lives. However, even with these facts in hand, too many truck drivers neglect to use this simple device. “This is clearly a waste of lives,” declares Anna Wrige Berling, Volvo Truck’s newly-appointed Traffic & Product Safety Director. “The record shows that there would be so many fewer casualties if all drivers used their belts.”

In 1959, the Volvo engineer Nils Bohlin developed the modern three-point seat belt. Although the design was patented, the company decided the patent was to be left open, making it available to all vehicle manufacturers to use for free. This rather unconventional decision was made in the greater interest of public safety, to ensure that everyone, independently of whether they drove a Volvo or not, could be safer in traffic. This decision proved to be very beneficial to the world.

“There is no safety system that comes even close to the seat belt in terms of saving lives, and the three-point safety belt has protected more people in traffic accidents than any other safety device,” says Anna Wrige Berling.

A life-saving innovation – but not always used

In many parts of the world seat belt usage among heavy truck occupants is still far from 100%, unfortunately.

“The Volvo Trucks Safety Report for 2017 showed that half of all truck drivers killed in traffic accidents would have survived if they had been wearing their seat belt,” explains Anna Wrige Berling.

So what are the reasons it’s not used? Some truck drivers mistakenly believe that there is no need for a belt in a truck, due to the size of the vehicle.

“The facts are clear: Using the belt is very important also in trucks. For example, in rollover accidents, the belt can help protect the driver from being jammed between the truck and the ground,” continues Anna Wrige Berling.

The Zero Accident vision

Volvo Trucks has a vision of zero accidents and believes that truck manufacturers, traffic authorities, infrastructure planners, other experts, and drivers around the world need to work together to achieve a safer traffic environment.

“We are sharing our traffic safety findings widely and have offered our knowledge and expertise to universities, research laboratories and partner organizations. Whenever traffic safety is discussed, we want to participate. This helps us learn even more about the issues, the potential solutions and how to design the trucks of the future,” concludes Anna Wrige Berling.

Anna Wrige Berling brings in-depth knowledge of traffic safety issues to her new position. She has extensive experience from working with both active and passive safety issues within the Volvo Group’s product development, advanced engineering and research organizations.

During 2008-2013, Anna led the Volvo Trucks Accident Research Team, which since 1969 has investigated traffic accidents on site and compiled traffic safety data for use in future product development. She has represented Volvo in external traffic safety forums and has had a prominent role in the communication of Volvo’s safety offering to the transportation industry.

Most recently Anna has been managing the area of Traffic Situation Management within automated driving at Volvo Trucks. She holds a Master of Science in Engineering Physics from Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden.

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LINK to [high resolution images](#).

LINK to [roll-over film](#) on YouTube.

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<p>Volvo Trucks provides complete transport solutions for professional and demanding customers, offering a full range of medium to heavy duty trucks. Customer support is secured via a global network of 2,100 dealers and workshops in more than 130 countries. Volvo trucks are assembled in 15 countries across the globe. In 2018, more than 127,000 Volvo trucks were delivered worldwide. Volvo Trucks is part of Volvo Group, one of the world’s leading manufacturers of trucks, buses, construction equipment and marine and industrial engines. The Group also provides complete solutions for financing and service. Volvo Trucks’ work is based on the core values of quality, safety and environmental care.</p>
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