

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the Increase in Victoria's Road Toll

Melbourne—Wednesday, 23 September 2020

(via videoconference)

MEMBERS

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Mr Bernie Finn—Deputy Chair

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Dr Catherine Cumming

Mr Craig Ondarchie

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Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips

WITNESS

Dr Matts-Åke Belin, Director, Vision Zero Academy, Swedish Transport Administration.

The CHAIR: I declare open the Economy and Infrastructure Committee's public hearing for the Inquiry into the Increase in Victoria's Road Toll. I wish to welcome any members of the public who are watching via the live broadcast. My name is Enver Erdogan and I am the Chair of the committee, and I would also like to acknowledge fellow members of the committee present with us here today: Mr Mark Gepp; the Deputy Chair, Mr Bernie Finn; Mr Tim Quilty; Mrs Beverley McArthur; Mr Lee Tarlamis; Mr Rod Barton; and Mr Andy Meddick.

All evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege, as provided by the *Constitution Act 1975*, and further subject to provisions of the Legislative Council standing orders. Therefore the information you provide during this hearing is protected by law. However, any comment made outside the hearing may not be protected. Any deliberately false evidence or misleading of the committee may be considered a contempt of Parliament. All evidence is being recorded. You will be provided with a proof version of the transcript following the hearing. Transcripts will ultimately be made public and posted on the committee's website.

Can I please remind members and witnesses to mute their microphones when not speaking to minimise any interference. We welcome your opening comments but ask that they be kept to a maximum of 5 to 10 minutes to allow plenty of time for discussion and questions. If you have any technical difficulties at any stage, please disconnect and contact the committee staff using the contacts provided.

Could you please begin, Dr Belin, by stating your name for the benefit of our Hansard team, and then begin your presentation. Over to you—and good morning to you as well.

Dr BELIN: Good morning. My name is Matts Belin. Thank you for this invitation. First, I will say that it is a great honour. You know that Victoria and Melbourne are great to my heart, because my family and I stayed a whole year in 2006 in Melbourne when I was at Monash University, so thank you for this invitation.

I work for the Swedish Transport Administration, and I am responsible for something that we call the Vision Zero Academy. I also have one foot in academia. I am adjunct professor at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. I have been deeply involved in this Vision Zero in all phases—the policy information phase and the implementation. Also we have been working with this for more than 20 years, so we can start to assess the effectiveness of a strategy like Vision Zero.

I must start by saying that of course Vision Zero is a long-term goal, and it is very much based on the ethical imperative that we cannot accept that people get killed or seriously injured when they travel from A to B. But for us who have been deeply involved in it, it is much more than that; it is a new strategy. It is a policy innovation, and it is very much different from how we traditionally worked with safety.

In the traditional approach the problem that we tried to solve was the problem with accidents, but in a Vision Zero approach the problem that we try to solve is the problem that people get killed and seriously injured. The reason why people get seriously injured is because of the harmful kinetic energy. The harmful kinetic energy is actually equivalent to what the corona is for COVID-19, so that is what we try to control—this harmful energy, I would say.

In the traditional approach we tried to create a perfect human being who was always doing the right thing and tried to get them to survive in the very harsh and inherently unsafe road transport system. But in Vision Zero we tried the opposite; we tried to create a safe system for all road users, normal people. We do not think that we can create the perfect human being who will always do the right thing.

In the traditional approach the ultimate responsibility for safety is put on us as individual road users, so we are ultimately responsible for our own safety. But in a Vision Zero strategy the ultimate responsibility is put on us as system designers. Of course the road users still have a responsibility, but when something goes wrong it goes back to us as system designers. We need all the time to develop our system and try to work with safety from

that point of view. So those are my initial remarks to get you to have a sense of how I think about these issues. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Dr Belin. That was quite interesting. I do have a number of questions, but I might pass to the Deputy Chair, to ask the first question.

Mr FINN: Well, I am delighted to hear that you have come to the view, Dr Belin, that many of us have—and that is, that there is no perfect human being. We often see that in our own profession. I am just wondering how you put the philosophy that you espouse into actually saving lives on our roads. That is, I suppose, the first and foremost priority that we are looking at, and I am just wondering how we practically go about putting that philosophy into practice.

Dr BELIN: Yes. That is the problem of course. When the Swedish Parliament adopted this Vision Zero in 1997—it is more than 20 years ago actually—that was only a piece of paper. It is a totally different story to go from a policy to reality to practice. Fortunately we have been able to do that in Sweden in many respects, and we have done lots of new things, I would say, that are based on this Vision Zero.

Let me just be a little bit more concrete and take a very concrete example: if you take drink and driving, for example, Sweden has a long, long tradition to work with drink and driving. Actually already in 1940 Sweden had set up a special threshold for how much alcohol you are allowed to have in your blood when you drive. In that time it was .08, and it was Swedish doctors who came up with the method to measure alcohol in the blood. Then we have changed that from .08, and now it is down to .02. We have worked a lot with that and actually been inspired by you, so now we have random controls and that sort of thing. It works very well from one respect, because when we check the alcohol in the traffic you will find that it is only two per 1000 who are influenced by alcohol. So that means that 99.8 of the traffic is sober, and that is fantastic. It is a really fantastic achievement, but when you go into in-depth studies we still have 25 per cent of fatal crashes that are alcohol related. So we do not have a social norm problem, but we have still a safety problem.

Therefore I used to say that probably one of the most effective countermeasures now we have for alcohol-related crashes is a middle barrier, because a middle barrier does not care if you are influenced by alcohol, if you are fatigued or if you are distracted. It will prevent you from harming yourself and others. And of course we cannot put up middle barriers everywhere, so what we try to do now is to focus much more on some kind of technology installed in the vehicles that will prevent people from being able to drink and drive—Alcolock and that sort of thing. So we think that we are moving this old behaviour problem from being a behaviour problem to being a design problem, actually. Of course it will take time for this to happen, but that is a concrete example of how this philosophy actually has a great impact on how we work with safety, I would say. So that is one example.

Mr FINN: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I would like to pass over to Mr Mark Gepp and then Mr Rod Barton. Mr Gepp, please go ahead.

Mr GEPP: Thanks, Chair. And thank you, Doctor, for your time with us today. We hope you come back to Melbourne soon for a visit when you possibly can. Doctor, I am really interested in many of the aspects of your work, but particularly you just touched on technology in vehicles. I have a question around that, then I have got another question. I noticed in 2018 you had quite a significant spike in road fatalities in Sweden—I think a 28 per cent increase—so I would be interested to hear why you think that spike occurred and what measures you have put in place to arrest those issues.

My question around technology as well was: we have a phenomenon in this country—and I am sure it is the same in Sweden, or I would be interested to hear if it is the same—where we put our most inexperienced drivers, that is our young people, in the oldest vehicles because they are the cheapest available for young people to purchase and then drive, and those vehicles, I would suggest, are probably at the lower end of the technological sphere in terms of safety, so I was wondering if that is an issue that you have encountered in Sweden and whether you have adopted any measures to counteract that.

Dr BELIN: Yes, there are lots of interesting questions, I think, that you have touched upon there. What we have experienced in Sweden—and that goes for many jurisdictions now who have been working with Vision

Zero and Safe System kinds of policies for a while now—is that you reach a kind of plateau. Plateauing is very common among humans. Everyone knows when you try to lose weight you reach a plateau and it becomes very difficult to increase your performance and so on. But the reason why you get to a plateau could be two things. One thing is you do not do enough. You have the right solutions, you have the right interventions, but you do not do enough. When you look at Sweden, there are also factors that explain why we did not do enough. I think there is the problem from a Swedish context or a Swedish perspective that we became a little bit caught by our own success, because when we started this journey in the late 90s we had about seven fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, and now we have less than three fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants. That is really world leading from that perspective. But when we started this journey, we had one of the safest road transport systems already at that time, so people thought that it was not possible to make it better. But we have shown now that even top performing countries can actually reduce the number by more than 50 per cent, and that is fantastic.

And then, in late 2008 and 2009, we got the sense in our culture that we were caught by our own success, so to speak. There were lots of institutional changes in Sweden, and we started to merge lots of different government offices together. For example, at that time we had the Swedish road administration, which was overall responsible for safety, and we had the railway administration and so on. So they started to merge these organisations together, and in that process I would say that Vision Zero disappeared. It was not really on the top of their agenda; there were other things that were more important. Unfortunately then also the resources started to change, and it was the same also within the police. The police had a huge, huge change to their organisation in Sweden. We can see the random breath control, for example, went from 2 million per year to 500 000, which is where I think we are now. So there were lots of these sorts of things happening at the same time, and I think it was because we had been so successful. So it is very important to maintain somehow, even if the numbers are going up and down; you have to maintain some kind of systematic work all the time. So that is one reason.

Then the second factor for why you get into a plateau is actually that you are doing wrong things—that you are diminishing returns from your strategies—and then you have to change the way that you do your business. Of course we have to reconsider this sort of thing again in Sweden and start to think, ‘What are the most effective ways?’. And one thing that we have talked a lot about is that we need to make safety more integrated into sustainable transport. For example, when they are working with urban planning in large cities and so on today, these urban planners do not really think about safety, I would say. Most of them are very keen on the environment and increased cycling and so on, but they need also to integrate safety into that planning.

So I think it is these two strategies, but I can also mention for you that due to these institutional changes no-one was really dedicated to safety or Vision Zero. In 2016 the Swedish government decided to renew their commitment to Vision Zero, and they started to give tasks to, for example, the Swedish Transport Administration, which I work for, to start to work with this again. So now we are starting to rebuild some of the things that we had lost during this process, I think. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Mr Barton, and then we will go to Mr Quilty, if you have a question.

Mr BARTON: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, Doctor. Just following up on what Mark was leading towards, one of the things we know here in Australia is you are more likely to be killed in an accident or have a serious injury if the vehicle is more than 10 years old, and we have got quite an old fleet here in Australia, which is a little bit surprising. Do you have strategies to encourage getting new cars into the fleet, and do you also have a policy of regular roadworthy certificate inspections to make sure people are maintaining their cars along those lines?

Dr BELIN: Thank you, Rod, because you have brought me back to one of the questions that I forgot that Mark talked about about vehicles and vehicle safety and this sort of thing. I think that the most important thing—because it is the same in Sweden—is that those who are most in need of this new technology, the safety equipment, are not using it because they are in old cars. So it is the same problem, you know. That is why it is so important to have a system perspective on road safety. It is not only about safe vehicles or a safe fleet in the future; you have to work with the whole system, because at the same time if you have a barrier and you are in an old Volvo or in a new Volvo, the barrier will be effective also for the old Volvo. So the whole-system perspective is extremely important, especially in the short and middle term, because it will take time for these high-end, very safe cars to really get down to those who really are in need of this new technology.

We do not think that we will get poor people to buy these new cars, so first of all we need to make sure that those new cars that are being sold on our market are the best cars, the safest cars, that we can have. Sweden is a small country and we are part of the European Union, so we cannot regulate the car safety anymore on a national level. We have to make sure that these things happen at least in Brussels, but in Brussels it takes time. It takes an awfully long time. The industry and the bureaucrats are sitting in rooms like us now, and they are dealing with the safety standards, and when they are doing that, it will be the lowest standard that everyone can agree upon. As safety experts, we know that some of that will just comply with safety standards and some of these cars will be very safe, but as a consumer you do not know. You cannot see the difference on the car if these cars are a very low standard or a high standard. As a matter of fact, there are some car manufacturers now that sell cars in Europe with a very high safety standard. The same car is sold in Mexico with a very low standard, but, as a consumer, you do not see it. Therefore we have been very active to make sure that this kind of information is out there.

So early in the 90s we started to work with what you have probably heard about, this European New Car Assessment Programme, where you actually give cars with a low safety standard a 1 star and then a 5 star to those that are—this is a way to make sure that consumers have this kind of information and also make sure the car manufacturers know that we check their cars. There was lots of resistance in the beginning when we started this program but now we have got lots of support, especially from those car manufacturers now that are really on the top. They see this as something to promote their products and so on, so they really are supporters of this system.

But this kind of information is not so much directed to us as individual consumers. Individual Swedish citizens, you call them Svensson. Svensson is a very normal Swedish name, you know. It is not for Svensson; it is more for rental car companies and others—those who have fleets—or organisations and so on. For them it is very important to have this kind of information. Our strategy is actually to start there and make sure that all new cars at least are the safest cars we have. But we cannot wait for that; we have to work the whole way. We also need to work with the old fleet, absolutely.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I will go to Mr Quilty, then Mr Meddick.

Mr QUILTY: Thanks. So in Sweden you have different speed limits for different types of vehicles and I notice the maximum speed limit you have is 120 k on your best roads. The Safe System approach has always allowed speeds over 110, although Australia has never had speed limits over 110—or Victoria at least has never had speed limits over 110. Why do you set speed limits over 110, and also what are the merits of setting different speed limits for different types of vehicles?

Dr BELIN: So what we try to do in Sweden now is connect the safety design of the road to the speed limits. If you look back a little bit historically, when we were setting the speed most countries had been focused on setting a speed that seemed for the drivers to be the right speed, because they wanted to feel some kind of support for the speed limits. When they did that, most countries set it to 85 percentile. So where most people voluntarily comply with the speed—85 per cent of the traffic—that has become the speed limit. The reason why you were setting that speed—and that happened in Sweden also in the 1960s—was that you really wanted to get rid of those who were speeding very fast. That is the idea with the 85 percentile.

But in Sweden with this Vision Zero, as I started to say, it is about controlling for harmful energy. Basically you have two options and you really try to connect the speed limit with the design of the roads and the design of the vehicles. So for example, in urban areas you have conflicts between unprotected and protected road users and you are planning for that. We know from these risk curves and others that if you get hit by a car at 50 kilometres, the risk that you can get killed is more than 80 per cent, but if you get hit by a car at 30 kilometres, the risk is less than 10 per cent, so a small change of speed has a dramatic impact on safety.

So we as system designers, then, if we start to mix traffic, we have to make sure the speed—not the speed limit, the speed—is actually survivable if something happens, I would say. That kind of idea has started spreading around the country, and actually it was in the urban settings that we saw lots of new initiatives to work with Vision Zero. So if you need a higher speed, because you might need a higher speed because of mobility and so on, then you have two options: either you separate so you do not start to mix the unprotected and cars in high-speed environments, or you reduce the speed with traffic calming and so on—you start to plan with that sort of thing. So that is the main idea—and that goes for everything.

We know now, for example, that if you are in a new car and you have a head-on collision, at up to 80 kilometres you will survive in that kind of crash. But at about 80 kilometres the risk will increase exponentially if something happens. We have a strategy, though, that if we need a higher speed than 80 kilometres, then we have to do something about the road environment. We cannot allow head-on collisions on these roads. And if you do not prioritise that, then you have to reduce the speeds, so you connect the speed limit to the design of the road. We have done lots of things now to adjust, both to make investment in the road environment but also to reduce the speed, all over the country now, to make that happen. Therefore the speed limit itself is not the problem. If you are smart, if you are going to design your road, then you can allow a higher speed. And on some of our roads now it is a very safe design. It is not a large part of the system, it is a small part of the network, where we allow 120 kilometres per hour. But on our two-plus-one roads, for example, in most cases we allow 100 kilometres per hour. So it is a technical issue for us much more now than a public issue, I would say.

Mr QUILTY: Looking at the figures in the report we had supplied, when you start tracking points of speeding you had 43 per cent of people complying on national roads, and the 2018 figure was 45 per cent of people driving within the speed limits. That would suggest that there has not been a lot of improvement there but that you nevertheless brought the death rate down. So you would agree that speeding in itself is not the biggest factor in road deaths, it is road design, and I think we have already covered that.

Dr BELIN: It is a trade-off there, I would say then. The trade-off for us is not about safety or non-safety; we are beyond that now. That is what Vision Zero says. The trade-off is about, 'Okay, do you want investment for mobility, or do you want less mobility?'. That is the trade-off for us now in most cases. So it is not the speed limit itself, it is a trade-off: 'Do you need more mobility? Do you need higher speed? Then you need to have a better design of your road and you have to take care of it. If you do not do that, then you have to reduce the speed. So that is the idea, I think, behind us.

Mr MEDDICK: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Dr Belin, for your contribution here today. I too want to just come back to this subject of speed. If I understand your answers previously there, speed is a factor in collision, it is a factor in the fatality and accident rates and all those sorts of things insofar as you create a road design based around the fact that you want to move certain amounts of traffic from point A to point B at a particular speed. So in order to make that speed safe, you have to have a road design that will allow that to happen. Is that a fair assumption?

Dr BELIN: Yes.

Mr MEDDICK: Right, so speed is a factor in fatalities and crashes et cetera.

Dr BELIN: Absolutely.

Mr MEDDICK: Yes, okay, I just wanted to clear that up in particular, that particular point. The second thing about that is—I am interested in it from a couple of factors—you would be aware from your time in Australia, for instance, that we have, in the main, vast distances in comparison to some places in Europe between a point A and a point B and that we have major highways, as such. We also know that the longer that people spend behind the wheel without the right breaks, for instance, the more their attention factor reduces. Our own TAC, our own Transport Accident Commission and all the studies that they have done over the years, have told us that the effects in an accident when you lose concentration at higher speeds are vastly more catastrophic as a result. No-one wants to see anyone lose concentration at any speed, because that can cause an accident and it can cause a fatality, but the actual damage that is done at that higher speed is just quite natural because of that kinetic force that you are talking about—the stored energy that is released is far greater at a higher speed than it is at a lower speed and therefore the consequences are much more horrendous.

I am wondering also, though, about enforcement. We have not really covered that off. What are the types of fines that are available for exceeding the speed limit and are they a factor in people sticking to the speed limit in particular areas?

Dr BELIN: The way that we try to solve some of these problems now is that we know that some of these behaviour issues are very critical. We know that concentration is very critical. So what Vision Zero tries to do is realise that, okay, for example, if we should ban everyone who is texting, we know that it is important to have your eyes on the road and so on, but to ban it and enforce it, is that a sustainable solution to this problem? That

is what we question with a Vision Zero kind of strategy. We do not question the problem itself; we question the way to solve this problem. So we work much more in the long term, of course.

In the short term the police and the police enforcement are very critical but we need to create a long-term strategy, and that strategy starts today. We have to start making investment right now for the long term also. So the thing with concentration and texting and so on, we think that there is something wrong in the discussion with the industry about these issues, because everyone has these things now. Absolutely everyone has mobile phones, and now we are putting the whole responsibility again on us as individuals to make sure that we do not use them or that we use them in a good way. Most of us will do that; we will comply with it and so on. If we also have dedicated police enforcement, then we will increase the number of people who will comply with the regulation, but is this a long-term sustainable solution to the problem? Because now with these technologies you can put an app in so that if you drive faster than 10 kilometres, you will not be able to text and so on. And even if you are texting and you go right into a barrier, then the accident will happen, yes, but it will not end up in a total catastrophe.

So it is a totally different mindset to solving this problem, I think, that we have tried to work with. It is both a short-term and a long-term perspective on things. We work on a daily basis with the police and so on, and we have what we call traffic safety cameras. We have right now one of the largest traffic safety camera programs in the world, for example. We are doing it quite differently from what you do in Melbourne, I would say, but it might take a little bit too long to get into that difference between these systems. Anyhow, we need to work with this sort of thing also, of course, but we have to add these more long-term strategies and long-term solutions to these problems, I would think.

Mr MEDDICK: Thank you for that. I think I know what you were meaning there. You were talking about disabling technologies to really engineer the problem out of existence so that it takes it out of the individual's hands then. So with your mobile phone and texting, for instance, when you get in the car the phone automatically knows that you are in the car and therefore disables certain types of technology available through that phone. You cannot be driving at 100 k's and texting—it just will not allow it—and that sort of thing. To engineer them out speaks to that engineering phrase of a hierarchy of control, so the best way to stop something happening is to eliminate it in the first place.

Dr BELIN: Yes, exactly, and we have to remember that this is good. This is not an evil thing; this is really good for our society. In Sweden, as one example from maybe 15 years ago, we talked about putting up telephones along our motorways, because we know it is very important if you are in a crash and you have an injury that you get emergency assistance as soon as possible. Now in Sweden—two years ago, I think it was—nine out of 10 phone calls to SOS were through mobile phones. Now it is probably 10 out of 10, I think. So it has helped us; this is road safety actually also. So we have to be aware when we are talking about this sort of thing that we see the opportunities this kind of technology also brings us, but we have to make sure that we control the distraction thing and, as you said, we need to bring industry much more into this discussion, I think.

Mr MEDDICK: Thank you so much. Cheers.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much. I might pass on to Mrs McArthur, who has been patiently waiting.

Mrs McARTHUR: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Dr Belin. Congratulations to Sweden on all your innovative ideas, including how you have managed COVID. We are all in awe. We like the stick here rather than the carrot. Anyway, I would just like to move the discussion on to road building and the innovative techniques you might have used to ensure that your roads are built better, last longer and are safer. Also we have a conglomeration here of authorities and instrumentalities. But do you have one authority that oversees what standards all roads will comply with and introduces new methods of road building and road safety? We have got three levels of government here: of course local governments look after local roads, states look after state highways et cetera and feds fund half of them. So it is the issue of the responsibility and accountability for roads but also the importance of how you build them and maintain them.

Dr BELIN: When I used to talk about the process of Vision Zero in Sweden, it sounded like a very smooth and easy process—everyone was happy, we just adopted things and then we delivered these things, you know—but that was not the case. There have been lots of conflicts, I would say. But they have not been so much conflicts among Vision Zero and the politics or Vision Zero and the citizens; they have, I would say,

always been in favour of this. Of course some groups have advocated against it; for example, maybe when we have tried to reduce speed and that sort of thing the car motor organisation would be against it, but at the same time the cycling organisation would be in favour of it and so on. In general I think that most people agree upon it, but professionally it has been a huge discussion.

So when we talk about safety culture, for example—that we need a society with a higher safety culture—I would say that for us it has been a discussion more of professional culture and a safety culture within these professional organisations. There was lots of resistance against Vision Zero, I would say, in the beginning, and there are two kinds of professional roles that have advocated against it. It has been actually the road safety experts—those who have invested lots of their time and energy in the idea that it is all about behaviour modification. They saw a threat in Vision Zero and they started talking about: ‘But how about the individual road user behaviour and the responsibility?’. They were quite against it, at least in the beginning, but then also were the roadbuilders and the political economists and others, who really have difficulty talking about reducing it to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries. They have an idea that fatalities and serious injuries are the kind of price that we have to pay for our mobility, so they need to find some kind of trade-off with safety and mobility. That is very much built into some of our methods and tools that we work with in the transport field in the cost-benefit analysis and so on, and Vision Zero has really challenged this a lot, I think.

Also I think that if you are a road builder, at least in a Swedish context, the most interesting thing you can do is build tunnels, bridges and motorways, and when we came up with this two-plus-one road, they felt that this was a cheap, not-so-good solution to the problem. They thought that we should build motorways because they are good for mobility and they are good from a safety perspective, but in the beginning, in the implementation process in the late 90s, it cost us about 1 billion Swedish crown per saved life if we should solve this problem with motorways. But when we came up with the innovation of this middle-barrier, two-plus-one road, it cost us 30 million per saved life, so it was an extremely cost-effective way to solve a safety problem. There have been lots of discussions within the organisation about these things and the priorities and that sort of thing, and I think that has been a huge struggle. As a matter of fact, it needed lots of political support to make changes to this organisation. Then it is the same in Sweden that we have at least different agencies on different levels and so on, but I think that the key thing here is not to see this organisation; the key thing is to get into that culture, to get into this traffic engineering and road engineering culture, and start to talk about this sort of thing—of priority—and see how safety fits into these priorities. So I think that is where you have to start.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Dr Belin. I am acutely aware of the time constraints. If any members of the committee have further questions, are you happy for us to email you those, Dr Belin, because obviously you have been very informative and insightful for the whole committee?

Dr BELIN: Yes, of course. Yes.

The CHAIR: We have got our next witness waiting as well, so on behalf of the committee I wish to say thank you very much for the insightful contribution. It has been a pleasure, and keep up the good work. I understand you are the director of the Vision Zero Academy at the Swedish Transport Administration department, and it has been a real good pleasure. I have really learned a lot from you, especially about the road design factors that you have discussed with us all today. So again, thank you very much, and I can understand you have done a really good job in thinking over some of the questions put to you, with English being your second language. You have done a really good job, so thank you very much on behalf of everyone.

Dr BELIN: Thank you very much.

The CHAIR: The committee will now take short break before the next witness.

Witness withdrew.