

The county administrative board

Its work and its role



Örebro County
Administrative Board

Publ.nr. 2006:18

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| The work of the county administrative board | 4 |
| Free elections | 4 |
| Creating the conditions for growth | 5 |
| Conserving and using our national heritage | 6 |
| Social and land use planning | 8 |
| Attractive housing | 9 |
| Nature conservation | 10 |
| Environment protection | 12 |
| Our environment objectives | 13 |
| Thriving rural communities | 14 |
| Animal welfare | 15 |
| Wildlife management and hunting | 16 |
| Fishing for all | 18 |
| Security and crisis management | 20 |
| Networks for all | 21 |
| An equal society | 22 |
| Care services | 24 |
| Traffic safety | 25 |
| Geographic information system -GIS | 26 |

Cover photo: Carina Remröd

Text: Örebro County Administrative Board

Layout: Catarina Örn, Grafiskt, Veronica Svahlin, Örebro County Administrative Board

Printing: Davidsons Tryckeri AB

Print run: 3 000 ex

In the service of democracy

In Sweden, each county has a county administrative board, a government authority that holds a unique position in Swedish democracy.

The county administrative boards are important links between people and municipalities on the one hand, and the government, parliament and central authorities on the other. It is our job to implement and clarify government policies throughout the counties. In the reverse direction, we must also supply the government with information on conditions in the counties.

With wide areas of responsibility that span an extremely broad range of social issues, the boards are also multifaceted authorities. Hence the need for all types of experts: lawyers, biologists, architects, agronomists, foresters, engineers, educationalists, archaeologists, sociometrists, vets, sociologists and economists to mention but a few!

It is the boards' special responsibility to create total solutions. Regulatory duties are the largest part of this. However, coordination, the communication of knowledge and the nurturing of various interests are also involved. Take the building of a new road as an example. Here, we must not only take into account people's expectations in respect of good communication, but also assess the impact on environmental and heritage values.

This brochure is one way of providing greater insight into the work of Örebro County Administrative Board. Further information is available from our website, www.t.lst.se. This also has the most widely used forms for grant and permit applications. We see the website as an extremely important tool in our becoming a 24-hour authority that is accessible to everyone.

Leafing through this brochure will give you an idea of what we do.

**This is Örebro County
Administrative Board!**



Sören Gunnarsson, county governor

The work of the county administrative board

It is the board's job to ensure that the decisions taken by the government and parliament are implemented with maximum impact throughout the county.

The board's main tools in doing this are:

- Advice and information.
 - Supervision (checking that a range of bodies observe relevant laws and guidelines).
 - Regulatory duties (granting of licenses, trying of appeals
- Coordination of the county's resources (through facilitating a range of meetings and activities).
 - Financial support for various activities.

against municipal decisions, data collation, etc.).

Free elections

Free elections are the basis of democracy in Sweden.

Every fourth year, we elect the politicians and political parties who are to lead our municipalities, county councils and parliament. Every fifth year,

we vote for the people we wish to represent Sweden in the European Parliament.

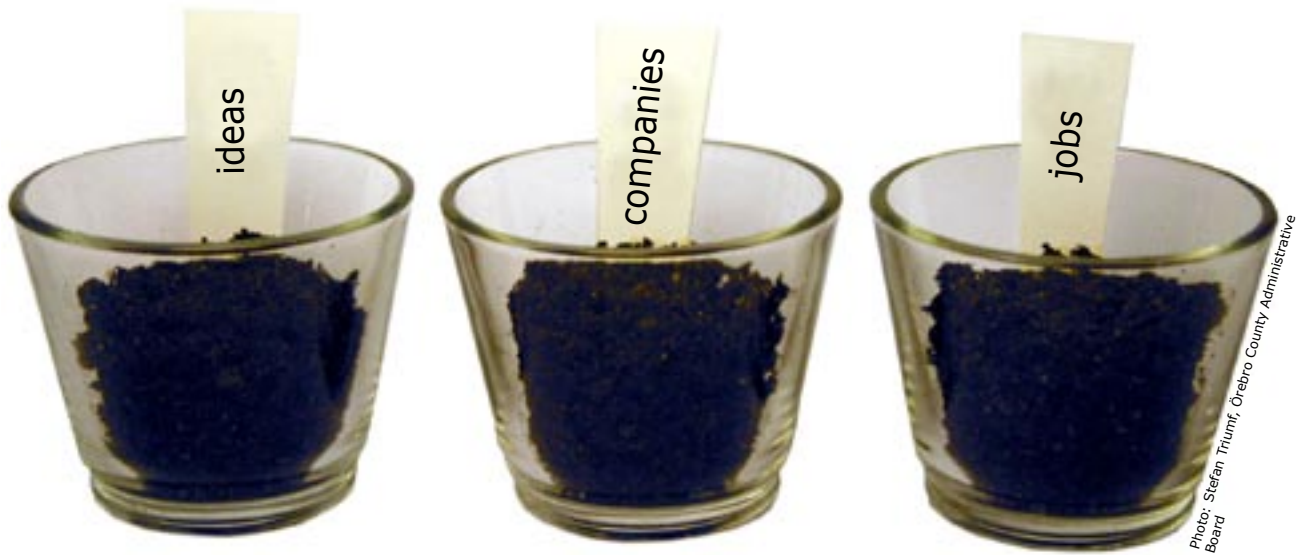
The county administrative board is one of the authorities with responsibility for ensuring that elections flow smoothly and that polling is conducted

in the correct manner. Our election administrators ensure that electoral districts are of the right size and that the municipalities' election officers receive support and training. After elections, we check all voting slips and decide if any of them cannot be accepted.

At the request of municipalities and county councils, the board can appoint a replacement whenever a politician leaves office before completion of his or her term.



Photo:
Carina Remröd



Creating the conditions for growth

The county administrative board works for sustainable growth throughout the county. By stimulating the development of trade and industry, the board helps to increase growth and create new jobs.

Using state and, in some cases, EU funds, the board can provide financial support for expanding companies and for projects that promote the development of trade and industry.

Örebro county has a regional growth programme (RGP). Its goal is to make the most of the particular conditions in the region and thus promote the type of

long-term growth that favours the creation of new companies and jobs. The county also has a regional development programme (RDP). Within the county, this covers a number of different development programmes (the RGP being one of these). The RDP's vision is: "A county that has no boundaries and in which everyone can grow." As regards regional development initiatives, the board is responsible for coordinating the work of national governmental bodies.

It is also the board's job to provide information on questions of competition and to promote efficient competition in the public and private sectors. Our goal is

"sustainable growth throughout the county".

● In brief

There are around 21,000 companies in Örebro county. Eighty percent of these are managed by men and only twenty percent by women. Around 400 of the 21,000 are "large" companies (more than 19 employees), the remainder are small.

Örebro county's particular areas of strength in the RGP are:

- *High-technology manufacturing industries.*
- *Logistics, traffic safety and transport.*
- *Catering and the entertainment and experience industries.*
- *Environment technology.*



Photo: Margareta Hildebrandt, Örebro County Administrative Board

Conserving and using our heritage

In the field of heritage conservation, the county administrative board seeks to protect the historically important elements of our surroundings. This embraces most of what has been erected, built or used in the ten thousand years linking our ancient past to our industrial present.

The board's goal is to safeguard as much as possible of the environments and sites that are an important part of our heritage. This is so that they can be enjoyed by future generations. The "heritage environment" encompasses most of what has been erected, built or used in the ten thousand years linking our ancient past to our industrial present. Historic remains are source materials that cannot be replaced once they are destroyed.

Conserving and using our heritage are important parts of the board's initiatives directed towards providing a good living environment. By supporting other bodies involved in heritage protection, we can contribute to all the county's residents being given the opportunity to understand what has shaped today's society.

Metallurgical and farming communities were the prime shapers of today's Örebro county. Iron, timber and agriculture are

constant themes throughout our heritage.

Applying the Ancient Monuments Act and the Environmental Code, the board handles issues connected with ancient remains, listed buildings, churches, burial sites and heritage reserves. We also protect those heritage values that, located in the county, are



Photo: Hanna Domfors, Örebro County Administrative Board

of national interest. There are 54 such objects of national interest in Örebro county. A list of these is given on our website (www.t.lst.se) under "Heritage/National heritage".

The Board can award grants for the care of particularly important remains, buildings and sites. Environment support grants available within the framework of the EU's agricultural policy are another means via which the preservation of heritage sites is accomplished.

● In brief

In Örebro county there are:

- *Something over 8,000 known ancient monuments/remains.*
- *Forty-two listed buildings.*
- *Three national heritage listed buildings.*
- *Eighty-one protected churches/church buildings.*
- *One heritage reserve.*



Photo: Margareta Hildebrandt, Örebro County Administrative Board

Social and land use planning

The county administrative board supervises planning and building throughout the county and works closely with the municipalities in their planning activities.

Our supervision embraces the management of nature reserves and the goals that planning and building should contribute to high standards and the lasting creation of good living environments with equal opportunities for all people.

The board acts as an early-stage adviser and ensures that all the suitability assessments

in the Planning and Building Act are carried out and that planning takes common interests into consideration. We produce data on factors that planning should take into account. Examples include inventories and evaluations of the nature and heritage values of sites.

The board's supervision ensures that particular factors such as national interests, inter-municipality issues and health and safety considerations are paid due attention. The "coordination" of national bodies, for



example, other state authorities and the Swedish Armed Forces, is another of our duties. We also weigh up the various arguments when there is conflict between various common interests.



Photos: Carina Remröd

Attractive housing

The county administrative board strives to ensure that houses and their surroundings are attractive.

One of our duties here is to provide information on the government grants available for conversions and new constructions. The goal of such grants is that they should encourage ecologically sustainable building that meets the housing needs of young and old alike.

In certain cases, owners of houses that are significant to our heritage can receive renovation grants from the board. Householders can also benefit from the radon decontamination grants awarded by the board. Where it reduces energy requirements, the replacement of direct electrical or oil heating in small houses can qualify

for a grant.

The municipalities have a certain responsibility to provide housing for all their residents. Various approaches are adopted in the municipalities' plans to achieve this. Here, the board assists with advice, information and statistics to facilitate planning by the municipalities. There are special grants to stimulate building in areas where there are housing shortages.



Nature conservation



The county administrative board's nature conservation work is directed towards the protection of species and natural habitats. We protect sites that are of special value and implement direct conservation measures to improve conditions for endangered species. Besides monitoring changes in natural habitats and species, we also exercise supervisory monitoring of various types of operations that have an impact on nature.



Earthy powdercap

Photo: Mats Grimfoot, Örebro County Administrative Board

The board sets up and manages national nature reserves. Nature reserves are primarily created to protect and conserve valuable natural habitats and endangered species. However, satisfying the general public's need for outdoor areas is also a factor that is taken into account.

Natura 2000 is the EU's network of nature protection sites in Europe. Örebro county has 132 such sites. It is the board's responsibility to draw up plans for the long-term conservation of the designated habitats and species that, via the Natura 2000 sites, Sweden has undertaken to protect.

To prevent their disappearance, highly endangered species and habitats (e.g. rich fens) require particular attention. Consequently, special programmes of measures are implemented at national level. All county administrative boards are involved in this work. Örebro county is responsible for, amongst other things, the programmes protecting

the scarce fritillary and the great crested newt. The freshwater pearl mussel, the broad-fingered crayfish and other endangered animals and plants benefit from direct conservation measures.

The board exercises supervision of operations that have a direct impact on nature. This is so that account is taken of habitats and known populations of protection-worthy animals and plants. Supervision is exercised via the hearing of applications for permits and via consultations on, for example, the digging of drainage ditches, the routeing of roads and the erection of radio masts.

The board monitors the distribution and condition of various habitats and species. Flora monitoring is an example of this – working with volunteer amateur botanists, we monitor endangered plants.

● In brief

In Örebro county there are:

- Two national parks.
- Around 130 nature reserves.



Common terns

Photo: Mats Grimfoot, Örebro County Administrative Board



Toad

Photo: Mats Grimfoot, Örebro County Administrative Board



Red water lily

Photo: Roger Lundberg



View across Komoramossen

Photo: Kjell Store, Örebro County Administrative Board



Environment protection

The county administrative board has several important duties in protecting the county's environment. Our overall goal is sustainable development, i.e. development that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. Thus, for example, the price of economic growth must never be a ruined environment.

The Environmental Code requires that permits must be granted before starting or modifying a wide range of environmentally hazardous operations. Hearing permit-related cases and establishing the conditions on which operations may proceed is the job of the board or of the environment court.

The board is also a supervisory authority under the Environmental Code. This entails checking that companies abide by the terms of their permits and have as little negative impact on the environment as possible. We exercise supervision over many large, environmentally hazardous operations and over all water operations (e.g. power stations and dams). The municipalities exercise supervision over other operations. So that supervision is uniform and efficient throughout the county, the board is responsible for coordinating and guiding the municipalities' work in this field.

Good environmental initiatives

Photo: Carina Remnöd

require good knowledge of the environmental conditions in the county. The board monitors the latter through studies. These cover water, air, soil and biological diversity (i.e. the occurrence of species in various environments). The knowledge that we collect is for everyone. Much of it is published on the internet. Knowledge is a cornerstone of all the county's environmental initiatives.

Surveying and cleaning contaminated sites, establishing water conservation areas and liming acidified lakes and watercourses are other examples of tasks falling within the board's environmental duties.

● In brief

- *Almost 50% of the county's carbon dioxide emissions are generated by road traffic.*
- *More than half of the county's 1,640 lakes over 1 hectare in size are acidified – primarily because of acid precipitation.*
- *Around 500 of the county's acidified lakes are limed to protect fish and other water life.*
- *In the county, approximately 190 environmentally hazardous operations and around 90 extraction sites are so large that they require permits under the Environmental Code.*
- *Around 3,000 sites that are contaminated, or suspected of being contaminated, have been identified in the county.*



Photo: Carina Reimröd

Our environmental objectives

Backed by a very high degree of consensus, parliament has established national environmental goals that are to permeate all types of operations. It is the job of the county administrative board to adapt the national environmental objectives to the conditions in the county.

These environmental objectives form the basis of all environmental initiatives and have a certain “generation perspective”. The overall goal is that we should be able to pass on a good and healthy environment to our children and grandchildren. Nature and natural resources are to be managed well and our heritage must be protected, preserved and developed.

In close collaboration with municipalities, county councils and other important organisations, the board has established regional environmental objectives. For the objectives to be credible and have significant impact, participation is important. Consequently, the board coordinates initiatives to reach the objectives and monitors the results of these initiatives.

● In brief

In the coming years, the county's environmental initiatives shall primarily focus on:

- *Reducing the impact that traffic has on the environment.*
- *Saving energy and switching to renewable fuels.*
- *Adapting physical planning to the environment.*
- *Reducing the release and spread of toxic substances.*
- *Protecting our water.*

Thriving rural communities

In Örebro county, the county administrative board puts great effort into maintaining thriving rural communities. These shall have active agriculture that is characterised by food and energy production as well as an open landscape.

Our goals are that: the county's agriculture should become even more environment friendly; ecological cultivation should increase; and, our valuable pasturelands should be conserved. Amongst the most important means for reaching these goals are the various subsidies and payments that are available for agriculture. Subsidies should encourage farmers to produce the types of food that consumers wish to purchase and eat.

By informing and advising

farmers, the board seeks to promote the positive development (environmental, economic and social) of rural economies and rural communities. We provide funds for newly starting agricultural operations, environmental investments and projects that develop rural communities.

To raise the environmental awareness of farmers, we offer them environment-related competence development. To preserve biological diversity, the board checks that farmers

take animals and plants into consideration in their agricultural operations. Consequently, damaging or effacing important micro-habitats (e.g. open ditches and the natural, uncultivated patches that dot our arable land) is forbidden.

Every year, the board receives money from the EU. This is distributed amongst farming operations as remuneration for keeping the landscape open and for taking care of the pasturelands, stone walls and avenues of trees that are inherent elements of our countryside and heritage



● In brief

- There are around 2,400 farmers.
- There are 9,300 dairy cows split between 200 farms.
- There are also 4,500 suckling cows and 14,000 ewes.
- There are around 50,000 pigs in Örebro county. They are distributed between some 60 farms.
- There are hens on 190 of the county's farms.



Photo: Carina Remröd

Animal welfare

The main principle of Sweden's animal protection legislation is that every person who keeps animals is responsible for ensuring that the animals are treated well and protected from sickness and unnecessary suffering. There are also rules governing how animals are to be looked after.

The board is responsible for promoting animal welfare and protection throughout the county. For both farmers and animal welfare inspectors, we provide

information and training. Our work also includes ensuring that animal holding areas are of such a design that they do not restrict an animal's natural behaviour. To this end, and to check that requirements are satisfied, the board examines drawings of stables and all similar facilities.

Municipalities have local responsibility for direct supervision of animal welfare. They also carry out checks on how owners look after their animals. In its turn, the board examines how well municipalities fulfil their supervisory obligations.

If neglected animals are seized

by the police, it is the board that decides whether it is possible for the animals to find good homes with other owners, or if the animals are in such poor condition that they have to be put down.

Both directly and through coordinating all the necessary work and measures, the board participates in fighting any serious animal disease (e.g. foot and mouth) that may break out in the county. In more normal conditions, it is through the county vets that the board safeguards animal welfare and seeks to prevent the spread of disease.



Photo: J.P. Lahell



Photo: Lars Jarnemo, Naturfotograferna

Wildlife management and hunting

The county administrative board's wildlife management initiatives are directed towards maintaining vigorous populations of all the animal species that occur naturally in our countryside.

One of our most important jobs here is managing elk and red deer hunting. Besides seeking to match population sizes to food resources, this further entails checking the extent of animal damage to forests and crops as well as monitoring the number of traffic accidents involving wild animals.

The board is also involved in the management of large predators.

To gain an idea of pack growth and territory location, we organise, amongst other things, counts of wolves and lynxes.

When wild animals on which there is a hunting ban cause severe damage, the board can give permission for culls or provide grants for preventive measures. For example, grants are available for setting up electric fences to keep predators away from sheep. If, nonetheless, damage is suffered, the board can compensate the victims.

To prevent damage by geese and cranes, we have engaged a consultant to provide advice and help implement bird-scaring measures.

● In brief

Wildlife management and hunting in Örebro county:

- Every year, hunters shoot 3,500 elk in the county.
- Around 70% of the county's "hunting" area is made up of large elk reserves.
- Outside the managed elk reserves, the board administers licences around 1,000 registered elk-hunting grounds.



Fishing for all

The county administrative board is active in issues involving commercial fishing, water use, leisure fishing and fish conservation.

Fish conservation covers all measures directed towards the long-term and sustainable use of our fish stocks. Examples include the regulation of overfishing, the restoration of watercourses and their surroundings, the improvement of poor quality waters and the stocking of fish and crayfish.

To avoid the risk of spreading non-native species and fish diseases, fish and crayfish cannot be released into wild waters without the board's permission.

The county offers excellent facilities for a wide range of leisure fishing – we have 1,900 lakes and over 500 watercourses. Fishing licences open the way to most of these. The free fishing rights in lakes Hjälmaren and Vättern are extensive.

The board has a number of duties in respect of leisure fishing. For example, we administer the county's liming operations, stimulate fish conservation (by drawing up appropriate plans and undertaking biological restoration of limed

waters) and give advice and financial support in and for urgent fish conservation measures. The board also decides on the setting up of fish conservation areas, the granting of permission for the stocking of wild waters and the appointment of fisheries inspectors.

There is commercial fishing in lakes Hjälmaren and Vättern. Licensing questions, fishing gear permits and decisions on the EU's structural support for fishing are the board's main occupations as regards commercial fishing. We also maintain certain catch statistics and, in collaboration with the other affected boards, organise and carry out fisheries inspections in both the previously mentioned lakes.



● In brief

In Örebro county there are:

- *One thousand nine hundred lakes.*
- *Over 500 watercourses.*
- *Traditionally a large number of leisure time fishers.*
- *Commercial fishing operations in lakes Hjälmaren and Vättern.*



Photos: Roger Lundberg



Photo: Carina Remnöd

Security and crisis management

Today's society faces many risks. Serious accidents, environmental and natural disasters, significant power failures and other incidents that put a severe strain on society require preparedness and a first-class ability to handle different types of situations.

It is the board's job to coordinate crisis management in the county. During major incidents, an important element in this is the coordination of information inside and outside the county. We also seek to foster close collaborations between municipalities, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency and other bodies.

The board has general responsibility for the rescue services of all the county's municipalities. This entails giving advice, supplying information, promoting exchanges of expertise and supervising the rescue services.

The municipalities' rescue services are in charge of leading rescue operations. To facilitate coordination in extremely grave incidents, the board can take over leadership responsibility. We are also

responsible for rescue operations in the event of accidents involving nuclear equipment and plant.

In consultation with the municipalities, we decide which installations are to be subject to the regulations on hazardous operations. To create, in the long term, a less vulnerable society that can shrug off various types of stresses and disruptions, the board promotes "preventive initiatives". This involves, amongst other things, meetings with electricity, telephone and water regulation companies as well as with enterprises that transport hazardous goods or handle hazardous chemicals. These meetings result in risk and vulnerability analyses.

During peacetime crises and situations of general alert, the board coordinates the relevant social servi-



ces and bodies. For this reason, we work closely with, for example, the Swedish Armed Forces, the police, the county council, the municipalities and other organisations at central, regional and local levels.

● **In brief**

- There are 27 hazardous operations in Örebro county
- The county has 23 fire stations and 9 rescue centres.
- In 2004, our fire brigades responded to 2,264 calls. One hundred and thirty (6%) of these were to house fires and 265 (12%) to traffic accidents.

Networks for all

Roads and railways are vital in modern society. An increasing number of people are now also using electronic highways at work and play.

The board plays a part in influencing the shaping of both traffic and data networks. We also participate in the drawing up of plans for tomorrow's infrastructure. Improved road systems, disabled-friendly facilities and traffic safety are other important elements of our work.

Many factors have to be taken into consideration when planning roads and railways. Both these latter can have an impact on our flora, fauna,

environment and heritage. Noise, soil and water resources may also be affected. Our role is to assess all the possible consequences.

The board coordinates the broadband expansion plans of the municipalities and can also give grants for municipal investment.

● **In brief**

Cargo lines and European and national highways provide a backbone for excellent rail and road connections in Örebro county. The roads give rapid access to our neighbouring counties and the railways facilitate environment-friendly travel and goods transport.





An **equal** society

Equality of the sexes is a question of democracy and entails men and women having equal opportunities, rights and obligations in all areas of life. Sweden's parliament has established the country's equality goals. It is the responsibility of each county administrative board to ensure that they are reached.

Acting on the above national goals, we generate, coordinate and spread knowledge. We also monitor the county's equality initiatives.

It is the board's job to ensure that the equality perspective permeates all social development. This covers everything from policies for transport, environment and rural communities to initiatives in schools and the labour market. The board supports other bodies involved in social development and helps them to find different ways of working. They, in turn, can then apply the equality goals when implementing their programmes, plans and measures.

Males have long occupied most positions of power. Consequently, male views have conditioned social development in many ways. The board strives for an equal society where sex and nationality are immaterial to the individual's



Photo: Sofia Kjörk, Örebro County Administrative Board

rights and opportunities.

For democracy to work satisfactorily, it is important that both women and men play full roles in politics, business, organisations, governmental agencies and other public bodies.

The board provides information and support that helps the county's employers and union organisations readily comply with the provisions of the Equal Opportunities Act. In this way, we contribute to the possibility of achieving not only equal pay for equal work, but also equal career opportunities, equal opportunity for personal development at work and equal opportunities for both mothers and fathers to stay at home with their children.

Equality also entails zero tolerance of sexual harassment and other gender-based offences. The board actively participates in various projects designed to eliminate the victimisation of women.



Photo: Sofia Klörk, Örebro County Administrative Board



Photos: Carina Remröd

Care services



The county administrative board is the supervisory authority for social services. Amongst other duties, it must ensure that Örebro county's municipal and private care providers comply with the relevant laws and regulations.

Municipal social services have a special responsibility to ensure that children, the elderly, the disabled and addicts receive the help and support they need in situations where they themselves are unable to cope independently. Exercising our supervision involves not only inspecting, for example, homes for the elderly and sheltered accommodation for

addicts, but also examining the treatment received by those who use care services.

Furthermore, the board provides the county's inhabitants and the municipalities' social service staffs with information and guidance on care-related issues. Anyone wishing to start a private treatment facility must first apply to the board.

Traffic safety



The road to your driving licence starts at the county administrative board. Besides issuing the provisional licences you need to start taking lessons, we also approve your instructors.

So that you can feel safe while out on the roads, the board reviews the cases of people whose driving falls below the required standard. We can issue warnings and take driving licences away. People who abuse drugs or commit certain other crimes can also lose their licences.

The board is highly active in creating the conditions for safer commercial traffic. We decide on the granting and revoking of licences to run bus and haulage companies. The introduction of speed limits, stop requirements and other traffic regulations on certain roads is a further part of our work.



Photos: Carina Remröd

Geographic information system - **GIS**

A large part of the information handled within the county administrative board has a geographic connection. Thus, a GIS provides invaluable support in our daily work.

GIS digitally handles information that has a geographic connection. It also enables us to easily store, search, analyse and present information. The information in a GIS map is partly made up of geographic objects (e.g. houses, forests and roads) and partly of information tied to these objects.

GIS supports our administrators when, for example, they wish to rapidly locate areas with important heritage and habitat values and discover what type of information is available on these. Using GIS, we can easily generate information on, for example, any properties in the vicinity of a contaminated site. Furthermore, municipalities can use GIS in their planning work.

Our website, www.t.lst.se, has GIS services directed towards the general public. The “Sweden’s

county maps” service is a simple viewer that contains maps with general information about all counties, municipalities and built-up areas. Via the “GIS data from the county administrative boards” service, you can download the GIS data produced by the county administrative boards and preview “map layers” and their appertaining data.

● In brief

The county administrative board’s officers use data from other state bodies such as the Swedish Maritime Administration, the Geological Survey of Sweden (SGU), the Forest Conservation Board, the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute and the Mining Inspectorate of Sweden.



Photo: Carina Remröd



Örebro County
Administrative Board

www.t.lst.se

Offices: Stortorget 22

Postal address: 701 86 Örebro

Tel: + 46 (0)19-19 30 00

E-mail: lansstyrelsen@t.lst.se