



Press information

THE NEW VOLVO FH SERIES – HANDLING

Superior handling with the new Volvo FH series

Handling and road manners were in firm focus when Volvo Trucks developed the new FH series. Optimisation of both front and rear suspension systems, increased roll stability and better cab suspension all help to give the new Volvo FH superior ride and handling. With the unique individual front suspension, the new FH becomes even better.

Optimisation of geometry, improved front and rear suspension design, enhanced cab anti-roll properties and well-balanced damping for cab and chassis alike. These are the factors behind the 50 percent improvement in roll stability compared with the previous FH series, according to Stefan Axelsson, manager of handling and ride at Volvo Trucks.

Greater precision

Improvements to the chassis and cab also mean that the new Volvo FH has better directional stability. All told, the combination of anti-roll and directional stability gives the driver an enhanced feeling of precision and control, making progress on the road less tiring.

“The new truck feels stable and predictable on the road. We’ve also succeeded in giving it excellent steering feel – the steering wheel provides accurate and sensitive feedback on the truck’s movements. The steering wheel’s new neck-tilt function also means that any driver, whatever his or her build, can enjoy a really comfortable seating position,” relates Stefan Axelsson.

Steering and anti-roll stability have a direct effect on the driver and an indirect effect on the haulier’s profitability.

“A better truck means the driver is less tired, which leads to a more relaxed driving style. An alert driver is safer and will get the job done better, irrespective of whether it is about driving the truck or meet the customer at the end of the route,” says Stefan Axelsson.



Individual front suspension – a world-first

The new Volvo FH series is also the world's first heavy truck with individual front suspension, IFS, coupled with rack and pinion steering – two new features that have a radical effect on ride and handling.

“IFS means that the front wheels have individual suspension – one wheel's movements will not affect the other. The result is steadier, more stable progress on the road,” says Martin Palming, product manager at Volvo Trucks.

Individual front suspension has long been fitted to passenger cars and, for some time now, even to buses. IFS increases both comfort and stability – see the technology behind the system in the film: <http://www.youtube.com/VolvoTrucks>.

Crisper road feel

Rack and pinion steering is also a technology brought over from the world of passenger cars. A steering shaft equipped with gears transmits the driver's steering wheel input more directly to the wheels than with a conventional steering gear. The benefit for the driver is crisper road feel.

Together these two new features give the new Volvo FH unique ride and handling characteristics.

“This truck sets the benchmark as regards directional stability as well as ride and roadholding in curves. It's quite simply an amazing sensation to drive a fully laden rig with such exactness and security. With truly impressive precision, the truck follows the line you set through the curve, without needing any additional steering wheel movement to keep it on course,” says Martin Palming about the new technology that will initially be available on left-hand drive trucks.

The best on the market

The biggest benefit of IFS and rack and pinion steering will be for drivers who often cover long distances, primarily on twisting or narrow roads, where the new system comes into its own.

“IFS is for those who want to add that little bit extra, those who want nothing but the very best,” says Martin Palming.

“The Volvo FH without IFS will be number one on the market as regards ride and handling. The Volvo FH with IFS will simply be the icing on the cake. We've put a lot of emphasis on getting there,” says Martin Palming.

The new Volvo FH will be launched on the European market in spring 2013.



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Link to images:

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