

# VBG GROUP 60 YEARS

Herman Krefting was a conscientious citizen and very interested in traffic safety. This led him to found Vänersborgskopplingen, the origin of the VBG GROUP, in 1951. Today, 60 years later, the VBG GROUP is an international group with world-leading positions in trailer couplings and sliding roofs and with

**The 50s** The origin of the VBG GROUP, Vänersborgskopplingen, is founded in 1951 and starts production in Vänersborg of a newly designed and patented truck coupling that same year. The man behind the company and the patent is the engineer Herman Krefting. With the new coupling he wants to help improve traffic safety and lower costs for the hauliers. Despite limited funds, the business grows rapidly.



## 1951

Herman Krefting (1907–1993) founds the company Vänersborgskopplingen on 3 January.



**The 60s** The expansion continues. New product areas are added in the form of car towbars and fifth wheels for semi-trailers, based on the company's own design and of high quality. New workshops and industrial premises are built in Vänersborg to meet the rapidly growing demand. New models of trailer couplings are launched and become huge sales successes, with Finland as the first export market.

## 1963

Car towbars are added to the product range.



## 1965

A fifth wheel for semi-trailers is developed.

**The 70s** An expansion in Scandinavia begins with sales companies in Norway and Denmark. The operation in Vänersborg is moved to the current main plant. In order to ensure the company's survival, Herman Krefting creates foundations to which he transfers a large portion of his shares.



## 1970

Move to new plant.

### The 1950s

## 1955

Automatic, the first automatic coupling, is introduced on the Swedish market.

## 1959

The company is reincorporated to Släpvnagnskopplingar AB.

### The 1960s

## 1961

Turnover > SEK 1 M.

## 1966

A ball towbar for passenger cars is launched and becomes a great success.

Advertising photo for VBG's towbar. The growing interest in caravans created a great demand for car towbars.



The first direct mail unit describing Herman Krefting's newly designed truck coupling.



### The 1970s

## 1977

The company changes its name to VBG Produkter AB.



The VBG 700 offered superior driver comfort and quickly became Scandinavia's most widely used trailer coupling.



# 1951–2011

a rapidly growing global business in machine elements. The head office, and a large part of the production, is still in Vänernborg, and interest in traffic safety is still an ingrained part of the Group's identity and a driving force in the development of new products.

**The 80s** The company is taken public. The purpose is to strengthen the company's finances in conjunction with a vigorous expansion, requiring considerable capital for e.g. production capacity increases. Sales to new non-Nordic markets such as the UK, Benelux and Australia take off and the number of new products increases rapidly.



**1987**  
Parent Company VBG Produkter AB gets listed on the Stock Exchange's OTC list.

**The 90s** The car towbar division is divested and the scope of the business is narrowed down towards trailer couplings with ancillary equipment. By the acquisition of Ringfeder in Germany, the VBG Group gains a world-leading position in trailer couplings for heavy vehicles, and via Ringfeder machine elements a company with large operations in the USA.

**1990** **armaton**  
Acquisition of Dayton-Walther's fifth wheels and Armaton's dropside pillars.

**1991** **ONSPOT**  
Acquisition of Onspot's automatic tyre chains.

**RINGFEDER**

**1997**  
New share issue and acquisition of Ringfeder trailer couplings and machine elements.

**The 00s** Strategic decision to divest the fifth wheel business. Business operations are divided into two business areas: VBG GROUP TRUCK EQUIPMENT and RINGFEDER POWER TRANSMISSION. Complementary acquisitions are carried out in both business areas. The manufacture of trailer couplings and sliding roofs is concentrated in Sweden and the Czech Republic. Companies are established in India and China.

**VBG GROUP**

**2006**  
The Group changes identity. Turnover > SEK 1 billion.

**2009** **GERWAH**  
Acquisition of Gerwah with products for mechanical transmission.

**2011**  
VBG GROUP turns 60 on 3 January.

## The 1980s

**1986**  
Turnover > SEK 100 M.

**1988**  
Road trains are a common type of vehicle in Australia with a total length of over 50 metres, here equipped with VBG couplings.



## The 1990s

**1995** is the International Asthma and Allergy Year, and its patron, Queen Silvia, awards scholarships from the Herman Krefting Foundation for Allergy and Asthma Research on a visit to Vänernborg. The photo shows the Queen and King Carl Gustaf together with Mrs. Greta Krefting.



## The 2000s

**2007**  
Establishment of company in India.

**2005**  
Acquisition of Edscha and Sesam sliding roofs.

**Edscha**  
Trailer Systems

**SESAM**



## The 2010s

**2011**  
Establishment of company in China.