

= Norsk Air =

Norsk Air was a Norwegian airline based at Sandefjord Airport , Torp . At its height from the mid @-@ 1980s and onwards it operated scheduled flights to Stavanger , Bergen , Trondheim and Copenhagen , and for shorter periods also other Norwegian and international destinations . The airline had 156 employees and 150 @,@ 000 annual passengers in 1989 . The company was established as a sole proprietorship by Øyvind Skaunfelt as Vestfoldfly in 1961 , after purchasing Thor Solberg 's aviation school at Tønsberg Airport , Jarlsberg . In addition to an aviation college , the company operated various charter services using mostly Cessna aircraft . The company split into a flying school and an airline in 1972 , with the latter taking the name Norsk Flytjeneste . Three 50 @-@ passenger Douglas DC @-@ 6 were subsequently bought and were among other places flown with aid charters to Bangladesh . Both the DC @-@ 6 and later charter flights with business jets proved unprofitable and were quickly terminated .

The company turned to regular charter services to Bergen and Stavanger in the 1980s , and from 1984 served the routes with scheduled flights , using seven @-@ passenger Beechcraft 200 King Air . In 1985 the company was converted to a limited company and bought by Kosmos . It subsequently acquired four 30 @-@ passenger Embraer EMB 120 Brasílias ? as the second European airline . It introduced several new routes , including international flights to Denmark and the United Kingdom , and took the name Norsk Air . The company bought Norving 's Skien Airport , Geiteryggen division in 1987 and started operations from a second base . Kosmos failed in 1988 and Norsk Air was eventually given for free to Widerøe in 1990 . Skien operations were discontinued the following year and the airline changed name to Widerøe Norsk Air . It remained a subsidiary until being amalgamated in 1996 .

= = History = =

= = = Vestfoldfly = = =

The airline was established as Vestfoldfly by Øyvind Skaunfelt in 1961 . He had been working at Thor Solberg 's aviation school at Tønsberg Airport , Jarlsberg , and offered to purchase the school and airplanes when Solberg retired . Two years earlier , Sandefjord Airport , Torp had opened a civilian sector and Skaunfelt decided to establish his company there . In May 1961 , he received government permission for commercial flying . He started a newspaper route to Oslo Airport , Fornebu , and could also carry three passengers in his single @-@ engined Cessna . The route continued onwards from Sandefjord to Tønsberg , Larvik and at Skien Airport , Geiteryggen . Vestfoldfly also started offering scenic trips and charter . During the summer , the airline also flew seaplanes south along the coast to Kragerø , Risør and Arendal . Other activities involved crop dusting of forest for Felleskjøpet . The airline also provided a target service for the military . Four aircraft were permanently used to tow a target about 1 @,@ 000 to 2 @,@ 000 meters (3 @,@ 300 to 6 @,@ 600 ft) behind the aircraft , and military personnel would practice shooting at the target .

During the 1960s , Vestfoldfly never received a concession for a regular , scheduled flight from Sandefjord to Oslo . The reason was that the Skien @-@ based Fjellfly held the concession for the routes from Oslo to Sandefjord , Tønsberg and Skien . Fjellfly never used its landing rights at Sandefjord , but nevertheless still hindered Vestfoldfly from starting a competing route . Skaunfelt eventually split his activity in two , demerging the aviation school and renaming it Den Norske Luftfartsskole , which remained in operation until 1999 . The other activity was renamed Norsk Flytjeneste . In 1969 , Norsk Flytjeneste and Jotun , a large Sandefjord @-@ based industrial company , established Penguin Air Service , where Norsk Flytjeneste owned 25 percent of the shares . Penguin Air Service company bought a six @-@ seat Piper PA @-@ 31 Navajo and started charter services for Jotun . In 1975 , Bugge Supplyship also joined the joint venture and a second aircraft was bought . Most of the traffic was for the oil industry to Stavanger .

== Norsk Flytjeneste ==

In 1972 , Norsk Flytjeneste purchased two 50 @-@ passenger Douglas DC @-@ 6Bs from Braathens SAFE and leased one from Sterling Airways . They were used for domestic and international charter . The largest contract was from the Norwegian Church Aid , who contracted Norsk Flytjeneste to fly aid to Bangladesh . However , the airline failed to make money on the DC @-@ 6s , mostly because of the high operating costs , and sold them after a year . The company followed up with purchasing a ten @-@ seat Cessna Citation business jet that they offered in the charter market . However , the market was not large enough , and the jet was sold .

The main market for the charter services was Stavanger Airport , Sola , mainly serving transport of personnel in the oil industry . By the 1980s , Norsk Air had up to four daily round trips between the two cities . In 1983 , the airline received concession to start a regular scheduled service to Stavanger . A ten @-@ seat Beechcraft Super King Air was bought and services started on 12 January 1984 . Services to Bergen Airport , Flesland started on 10 July . Soon there were four daily round trips to both cities , supplemented by charter trips operated by Penguin . Starting on 26 March 1984 , Norsk Flytjeneste experienced competition on the routes from Sandefjord to Bergen and Stavanger , when Busy Bee , on contract with Braathens SAFE , started flights using 50 @-@ passenger Fokker F27s . However , they operated only one round trip , with the same aircraft serving Sandefjord ? Stavanger ? Haugesund ? Bergen .

In 1984 , Norsk Flytjeneste started negotiations with the Sandefjord @-@ based conglomerate Kosmos , who were seeking to invest in a local airline . Kosmos had decided to start a diversification strategy to spread their risk . Norsk Flytjeneste was at the time not making money on its routes , but Kosmos was willing to carry the loss as an investment . The airline was sold to Kosmos on 15 April 1985 . At the time of the take @-@ over , Norsk Flytjeneste had four Cessna 310s and one Piper Navajo . The airline 's seven @-@ passenger Beechcraft 200 and C90 King Airs were already owned by Kosmos . The company was changed from a sole proprietorship to a limited company . Kjell Riege from Kosmos was appointed managing director while Tor Lundstrøm continued as chief pilot .

== Norsk Air ==

On 30 July 1985 , Norsk Flytjeneste opened their first international route , to Copenhagen Airport in Denmark . The concessions had a limitation on not using aircraft with more than ten seats . However the limitation was lifted later in the year . Under Kosmos ' management , Norsk Flytjeneste started an aggressive expansion . Applications were made for concessions from Sandefjord to Gothenburg in Sweden , and from Oslo via Hamar and Røros to Trondheim . Norsk Flytjeneste also needed larger aircraft , and the airline evaluated several types , including the Embraer EMB 120 Brasilia , the 30 @-@ passenger Saab 340 and the Fokker F27 . The company chose to order four 30 @-@ passenger Brasilias . During the negotiations with Embraer , the company realized that Norsk Flytjeneste was a difficult name for foreigners , since the Brazilians could not pronounce " Flytjeneste " . When the new aircraft were delivered , the airline rebranded as Norsk Air .

The company also joined the joint venture Commuter Service along with other Norwegian regional airlines , Coast Aero Center , Mørefly and Trønderfly . The intention was to create a cooperative company which could compete in a more diversified market . The group 's lawyer stated that the organizational structure among regional airlines was 15 years out of date and that the group would take market shares in a growing market , especially by starting new niche direct services .

Norsk Air was the second airline in Europe to order the Brasilia , after Air Excel . Three were financed with loans from Banco de Brasil and the last was leased . With the introduction of the Brasilias in 1986 , the airline started a route from Sandefjord to Trondheim Airport , Værnes . From 1985 to 1986 , the airline 's costs doubled , but not their income . In 1987 , Terje Røsjode , former bank chief for Christiania Bank in Sandefjord , took over as managing director . The Brasilias had state @-@ of @-@ art technology , and although airlines purchase new aircraft to reduce their maintenance costs , this was not the reality for Norsk Air because they did not have sufficient

competence to maintain the aircraft . In particular , they lacked sufficient electronic expertise , due to the increase of electronic components in the aircraft . All the other aircraft were sold .

In 1986 , the company established a duty @-@ free shop at Torp . By 1987 , Norsk Air was losing NOK 20 million per year . The company established a route from Sandefjord to Gothenburg @-@ Landvetter Airport and to London Stansted Airport , but neither were profitable , and were quickly terminated . Norsk Air started a route from Fagernes Airport , Leirin to Oslo and Bergen on 4 November 1987 . The route turned out to be unprofitable , and was terminated on 1 June 1988 , after the company had lost NOK 5 million on the route .

To develop the company , Kosmos and Norsk Air bought the Kirkenes @-@ based airline Norving , that also operated flights from Skien Airport , Geiteryggen ? about one hour 's drive from Sandefjord ? to Bergen , Trondheim and Stavanger . Norving had seven types of aircraft , but was losing large amounts of money , although the Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications covered their losses on some state @-@ subsidized regional routes . The purchase of Norving caused an internal organization conflict between the two organizations . The operations from Skien were merged into Norsk Air , while the rest of Norving was sold . The latter went bankrupt in 1993 . Norsk Air also showed interested in purchasing Widerøe , but none of the large owners were interested in selling .

= = = Widerøe Norsk Air = = =

Kosmos was bought by the Skaugen Group in 1988 , and on 21 October , Kosmos ' Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Bjørn Bettum and Chairman Otto Grieg Tidemand were fired . The Skaugen Group decided to integrate Kosmos ' shipping and oil @-@ related activities into their group . All other investments , including Norsk Air , were to be sold or closed . At the time , Norsk Air had 140 employees . Norsk Air 's CEO , Mr. Røsjodet , made contact with Bård Mikkelsen , who was CEO of Widerøe , to try to convince them to purchase Norsk Air . Widerøe was at that time solely occupied with flying on the subsidized regional routes . The company was interested in having some non @-@ subsidized routes to better benchmark its operations . The two largest owners , Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) and Braathens SAFE , did not want to purchase Norsk Air , but the third @-@ largest owner , Fred . Olsen & Co. liked the idea , and bought SAS ' and Braathens SAFE 's 62 @-@ 3 percent stake in Widerøe to make the deal possible . Other possible purchasers who had negotiated with Norsk Air were Sterling Airlines , Partnair and Jan Einar Johansen , former owner of Scandi Line .

By 1989 , the airline had 156 employees and 150 @, @ 000 annual passengers . On 9 February 1989 , Norsk Air 's board decided to start the termination process if a sale was not made . The employees agreed to cut their wages 10 percent and not take sick days during the sales process . One of the main difficulties in the sales process was that Widerøe could not afford to purchase Norsk Air 's hangar at the airport . Widerøe intended to continue operations at both Torp and Geiteryggen for a year to see where to establish its base . In fear that the airline would move to Skien , the municipalities of Sandefjord and Stokke , who owned the majority of the airport , agreed to purchase the hangar , which had been built for NOK 20 million in 1987 , for NOK 11 @. @ 5 million . Half the hangar would be rented to Widerøe for NOK 500 @, @ 000 per year . This was insufficient to cover the NOK 1 @. @ 2 million in annual interest costs .

Widerøe took over Norsk Air free of charge on 1 May 1989 , and changed the company 's name to Widerøe Norsk Air . The company was kept as a subsidiary to avoid cross @-@ subsidization of the subsidized routes . Widerøe started negotiations with Busy Bee , and agreed to lease the Fokker 50 used by Busy Bee to Sandefjord , in exchange for Busy Bee terminating the route in 1990 . Widerøe Norsk Air also decided that it was not profitable to fly from both Skien and Sandefjord , and terminated all Skien services . Starting on 28 October 1991 , the airline also started a route from Sandefjord via Kristiansand Airport , Kjevik to London . This route was terminated one year later . In 1993 , Widerøe sold its Fokker 50 to Norwegian Air Shuttle . On 1 May 1996 , Widerøe Norsk Air was merged with Widerøe and ceased to exist . After the merger , Widerøe phased out the Brasilias and replaced them with de Havilland Canada Dash 8 aircraft .

= = Destinations = =

The following is a list of destinations served by Norsk Air in regular scheduled services . It includes the city , country , airport and the period in which the airline served the airport . Hubs are denoted with a dagger () .