

= Cargolink =

Cargolink AS is a Norwegian railway company . Owned by the automotive distribution company Autolink , Cargolink has operated both autorack and container trains since November 2008 . Cargolink has a fleet of ten diesel locomotives , five shunters , 100 autoracks and 60 container cars . Combined autorack and container trains are operated up to five times per week along the Sørland- , Bergen- , Rauma- , Røros- and Nordland Lines , as well as services through Sweden .

Autolink , the largest distributor of automobiles in Norway , has traditionally bought train services from CargoNet . In 2007 , they signed a contract with Ofotbanen , and at the same time bought 40 % of the company . However , Ofotbanen was in financial difficulties , causing a dispute between the two owners . The result was that Autolink formally established Cargolink in March 2008 , without the knowledge of Ofotbanen , and terminated the contract with Ofotbanen in July . Cargolink received an operating licence in September and service started in November .

= = Operation = =

Cargolink has a fleet of five shunters at their port in Drammen , in addition to three Di 6 diesel locomotives and three TRAXX electric locomotives for main haulage . While the shunters are owned by Cargolink , the diesel locomotives are leased from Dispolok of Germany and the electric locomotives are leased from Hector Rail . It also has more than 100 closed autoracks for automobile transport , and 60 container cars . 70 new autoracks are under delivery from Sweden .

On contract from Autolink , Cargolink operates autorack trains throughout large portions of the Norwegian railway network , from the seaports in Drammen and Oslo . Services are provided along the Sørland Line to Stavanger , along the Bergen Line to Bergen , along the Dovre Line to Trondheim , along the Rauma Line to Åndalsnes , and along the Nordland Line to Mosjøen , Mo i Rana and Bodø . It also operates through Sweden to reach Narvik and Malmö Each route has up to five weekly departures in both directions with combined autorack and container trains . The company transports 55 @, @ 000 cars annually on 600 trains , giving a revenue of NOK 65 million . Autolink is responsible for about three @-@ quarters of all new @-@ car distribution in the country . On the weekly return trips from Northern Norway , Cargolink uses the empty cars to transport aluminum from Elkem Mosjøen .

= = History = =

= = = Autolink and Ofotbanen = = =

Autolink has traditionally owned a large pool of autoracks . These have been operated by the Norwegian State Railways , and subsequently their subsidiary CargoNet . On 31 January 2007 , Autolink bought 40 % of the private railway company Ofotbanen , and at the same time signed a haulage contract with them . This made Autolink Ofotbanen 's largest customer , and second largest owner . In March , Autolink ordered additional 70 new autoracks for NOK 175 million .

Ofotbanen have since their establishment had financial difficulties . The contract with Autolink had helped , but in July 2008 , Autolink canceled their contract with Ofotbanen . Two weeks later , Autolink announced that they would establish their own railway company , which they had been working with since March . They stated that the deal with Ofotbanen was discontinued because the majority owner ? Rail Management , in turn owned by Mons Bolin ? would not allow additional private placements of capital , nor sell their shares to Autolink . From 29 July , all automotive trains stopped running , and no cars were transported for ten days . The same day , all board members in Ofotbanen representing Autolink withdrew from their positions .

The matter ended in court , with a case to determine whether Autolink should be allowed to take control of four train radios that were located in locomotives owned by Autolink , but operated by Ofotbanen . In a shareholder agreement between Autolink and Rail Management , the ownership of

the train radios had been transferred to Autolink , but the agreement has clauses that specified that Autolink could not start a competing railway company . Stating that Autolink had been disloyal in regard to the contract , Ofoten District Court ruled on 17 July 2008 against Autolink 's demand for an interim order to transfer the ownership of the radios to Autolink . The court ruled that an interim decision could not be made due to the complexity of the contracts , and that a normal lawsuit would have to be carried out to determine the matter . There was agreement that Autolink , on 13 February 2008 , had bought five shunters from Ofotbanen for NOK 12 million , of which NOK 9 @. @ 5 million was paid by Autolink deleting debt .

Ofotbanen lost their license from the Norwegian Railway Inspectorate on 7 October 2008 . This was because Ofotbanen had not documented necessary accounts for 2007 , nor provided evidence of necessary liquidity . On 24 October , the company was declared bankrupt . Rail Management subsequently established the new company Ofotbanen Drift , and stated that the cause of the bankruptcy was that Autolink had not let them make a private placement of NOK 10 million .

= = = Establishment = = =

Work on establishing the new company was initiated by Autolink in March 2008 , with the company formally established on 27 March . It received an operating license from the Norwegian Railway Inspectorate on 18 September 2008 . Five shunters that were operated by Ofotbanen , but owned by Autolink , were transferred to Cargolink . In addition , ten Di 6 diesel locomotives have been leased from Vossloh , with options for later purchase . Operations started on 2 November , with 22 engineers based in Drammen . Since the company has an all @-@ diesel fleet , management is working to reroute trains to Trondheim and Northern Norway along the Røros Line instead of the Dovre Line . CargoNet and Ofotbanen had been using the Dovre Line because it is electrified , giving lower operating costs despite its elevation , 350 m (1 @, @ 150 ft) higher than the Røros Line . After initial trial runs with only three locomotives , full service was introduced later in November .