

= Lakselv Airport , Banak =

Lakselv Airport , Banak ( Norwegian : Lakselv lufthavn , Banak ; IATA : LKL , ICAO : ENNA ) is an international airport located at Banak , 1 @. @ 5 kilometers ( 0 @. @ 9 mi ) north of Lakselv , in the municipality of Porsanger , Finnmark county , Norway . Co @-@ located with the military Station Group Banak , the airport is owned and operated by the state @-@ owned Avinor . The airport is also branded as North Cape Airport , although the North Cape is 180 kilometers ( 110 mi ) away . The runway is 2 @, @ 788 meters ( 9 @, @ 147 ft ) long and aligned nearly north ? south . The airport is served by Widerøe with flights to Tromsø and Alta , and seasonally by Norwegian Air Shuttle to Oslo , in addition to international charter services . The airport had 71 @, @ 763 passengers in 2012 . In addition to serving Porsanger , the airport 's catchment area includes Karasjok and Lebesby .

The airfield was constructed with triangular runways in 1938 . It was taken over by the Luftwaffe in 1940 , who expanded it and laid down two wooden runways . It was taken over by the NoRAF in 1945 , but abandoned in 1952 . It opened in 1963 and was largely funded by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ( NATO ) . Scandinavian Airlines operated out of the airport to the other primary airports in Finnmark and to Tromsø and Oslo . The runway was extended in 1968 . From 1990 , flights were taken over by SAS Commuter and the direct flights to Oslo were halted . From the mid @-@ 1990s there have been occasional charter flights out of Banak . Widerøe took over SAS ' services in 2002 .

= = History = =

= = = First airport = = =

An airport at Lakselv was first proposed out of military considerations . Despite a Norwegian neutrality policy , there was a fear that Norway could be occupied by foreign powers to take advantage of the country 's strategic position . The military therefore wanted to construct airfields throughout the country to increase the air force 's mobility . Especially Finnmark was regarded as a key location , given the increased Soviet militarization on the Kola Peninsula . Increased military funding was granted from 1937 , and the following year , a triangular runway was built at Banak .

During the German occupation of Norway during World War II , Banak was taken over by the Luftwaffe . They were planning an attack on the Soviet Union from Finnmark and decided to designate Banak as their main air base in Northern Norway . By September 1940 , the main runway was extended to 1 @, @ 000 by 200 meters ( 3 @, @ 280 by 660 ft ) with a wooden surface . In addition , three hangars were built , allowing the air base to house bombers . The main function of the air station was to attack the Arctic convoys . By 1943 there were two parallel runways , both 1 @, @ 800 meters ( 5 @, @ 900 ft ) long . The air station was blasted in October 1944 during Operation Nordlicht , the German retreat from Finnmark .

The Royal Norwegian Air Force took control over the airfield in 1945 and started reconstruction . In 1945 , the air force operated scheduled flights from Bardufoss Air Station via Banak to Kirkenes Airport , Høybuktmoen ; at Bardufoss a corresponding flight was offered to Oslo . The service lasted only the one season . Later the runway was used to serve air ambulances . During the late 1940s , part of the wooden runway was removed and used for other construction projects .

Interest in Banak rose with the Czechoslovak coup d'état of 1948 and fears of Soviet intervention in Norway . Finnmark , located on the Norway ? Soviet Union border , became of particular interest for the military . Although specific plans were articulated , no construction was carried out . Norway 's entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ( NATO ) in 1949 had a dramatic effect on the military strategy and Banak . Norwegian authorities and NATO regarded Finnmark as a tripwire ? it was to be sacrificed and delay attacking forces in case of a Soviet invasion . The airfield was closed in 1952 , but the runway remained , with a short section of an unmaintained wooden runway and otherwise consisting of a grass strip . It was occasionally used by small aircraft .

== Re @-@ establishment ==

Interest from military leaders for an airport at Banak returned in 1955 . For the air force the main concern was that they could not reach the eastern @-@ most parts of Norway from Bodø Main Air Station . This resulted in several Soviet infringements of Norwegian air space . Alternative locations were considered , such as Kautokeino , where there had been built a radar . NATO supported a reconstruction of Banak , partially raised by increased focus on flanking maneuver strategies , and also to serve as a part of the nuclear program . NATO was ready to provide funding in 1957 , but by the Norwegian authorities wanted to delay its construction , citing lack of personnel to man the station and that it would not be usable in times of war . The government decided in 1957 to not allow nuclear warheads to be stored in Norway during peacetime , thus eliminating NATO 's strategic need for Banak . The airport was therefore removed from the investment program .

By 1959 the United States was concerned that the militarization of the Kola Peninsula would become the prime point of a Soviet attack on North America . A new discussion about location arose , with Alta and Kautokeino as the main alternatives . Banak was estimated to cost 4 @. @ 9 million Norwegian krone ( NOK ) , NOK 2 @. @ 8 million less than Alta , had better instrument landing and weather conditions and allowed a longer runway . The main advantage of Alta was that it would be better suited for civilian traffic . The government and Parliament approved construction of Banak in 1959 on condition that it receive NATO funding . Construction was estimated at NOK 8 @. @ 9 million , which would include a 2 @, @ 000 @-@ meter ( 6 @, @ 600 ft ) runway , but lack of funding meant the airport would not meet all of NATO 's air base standards . The project was approved by NATO on 1 June 1960 and by Parliament on 5 August .

Construction was carried out simultaneously at Banak , Alta Airport and Kirkenes Airport , Høybuktmoen , which combined would give Finnmark three primary airports . All three airports opened on 4 May 1963 , while Tromsø Airport opened the following year . Services were at first operated by Scandinavian Airlines System ( SAS ) . At first the airline used 56 @-@ passenger Convair CV @-@ 440 Metropolitan aircraft , which flew flights south to Oslo in combination with flights to Alta and Kirkenes ? from 1964 also to Tromsø . The general route scheme of flying multi @-@ legged flights from Oslo to Finnmark would remain until 1990 .

== Operational history ==

To allow increased military use of the air station , the airport received an upgrade in 1967 and 1968 costing NOK 17 @. @ 8 million . This included an extension of the runway with 600 meters ( 2 @, @ 000 ft ) , a taxiway and various military hangars and structures . Following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 , Norway decided to further strengthen the Finnmark defenses , which among many measures included a further extension of the runway at Banak . From 7 April 1969 , SAS introduced the 85 @-@ passenger Douglas DC @-@ 9 @-@ 21 jetliner on the Finnmark service ; the last Metropolitan flew on 1 April 1970 . The 330 Squadron , which operates the Westland Sea King search and rescue helicopters , was established at Banak Air Station in 1973 . SAS ' traffic increased throughout the 1970s , resulting in SAS gradually increasing the frequency of its services , and later also using larger DC @-@ 9s . The McDonnell Douglas MD @-@ 80 was first flown on the Finnmark route on 11 July 1986 .

SAS Commuter was established in 1988 and started operations in Northern Norway in May 1990 , making Alta its central hub for Finnmark . Lakselv Airport had been proposed by among others Finnmark County Council as the hub , but SAS and others found Alta better suited . For Banak this meant that the Oslo services were terminated and smaller Fokker 50 aircraft were flown to Alta and Tromsø , and passengers could continue to Oslo with direct flights from there . The runway was extended in 1992 and 1993 , including widening to 45 meters ( 148 ft ) and receiving new runway lighting . Lakselv Airport started using the brand " North Cape Airport " in 1996 , in an attempt to increase tourist traffic to the airport . Honningsvåg Airport , Valan in Nordkapp was already using the name , but the latter had a short runway only suitable for regional aircraft , and Banak is the closest

airport serving jetliners . The Civil Aviation Administration followed up by investing NOK 21 million expanding the terminal to allow international passengers and Stolt Seafarm started export of fish via the airport . From 1997 , LTU started charter services from Düsseldorf to Lakselv , and Condor operated flights from Barcelona . Finnair started in June 2001 a scheduled service from Lakselv via Rovaniemi to Helsinki three times a week . North Cape Golf Club , located immediately next to the airport , opened in 2001 .

All SAS Commuter services in Northern Norway were taken over by Widerøe in October 2002 . Norwegian Air Shuttle took over the routes to Alta and Tromsø from 1 April 2003 , but already by the start of operations announced they would retire their fleet of Fokker 50 aircraft , resign from short @-@ haul routes and become a low @-@ cost airline . Widerøe won the subsequent tender and started operating to Lakselv from 1 January 2004 . SAS Braathens introduced low @-@ frequency summer services from Oslo from 2006 , which was kept for three seasons . SAS cited too low ridership from foreign tourists as the reason for the closure . Widerøe took over SAS Ground Services ' operations at Banak in 2008 . Norwegian introduced a new summer seasonal route from Oslo to Lakselv from 2011 . Outgoing charter services started in 2012 to Burgas and Antalya . Scandinavian Airlines operated one charter flight from Tokyo and back in 2011 .

= = Facilities = =

Lakselv Airport is equipped with a cafe and a duty @-@ free shop . The airport is manned with customs and police during international flights . It is located three to five minutes from Lakselv and 74 kilometers ( 46 mi ) by road to Karasjok . Taxis and an airport bus are available ; there are 172 paid parking spaces . The runway is 2 @,@ 788 by 45 meters ( 9 @,@ 147 by 148 ft ) and aligned 17 ? 35 ( roughly north ? south ) . It is mostly asphalt , although parts are concrete . There is instrument landing system category I in both directions . In 2012 , the airport had 71 @,@ 763 passengers , 3 @,@ 699 aircraft movements and 330 tonnes of cargo .

= = Airlines and destinations = =

Widerøe is the main airline operating at Banak , with daily flights to Alta and Tromsø using Bombardier Dash 8 aircraft . During the Weekdays , Norwegian Air Shuttle operates a twice @-@ weekly service to Oslo using their Boeing 737 aircraft .

= = Military = =

Station Group Banak , formerly Banak Air Station , comprises the airfield 's military activity . It is organizationally part of Bodø Main Air Station . The 330 Squadron has a detachment at Banak , which is responsible for operating the Westland Sea King for search and rescue missions in the Barents Sea . The air station is regularly visited by the General Dynamics F @-@ 16 Fighting Falcon for use in the shooting range at Halkavarre . The Garrison of Porsanger is located close to Lakselv .

= = Accidents and incidents = =

On 12 June 1985 an F @-@ 16B with two people on board experienced control problems north of Banak . The pilot ejected and survived while an officer died .

On 23 March 1992 an F @-@ 16A lost power at 5 @,@ 500 meters altitude ( 18 @,@ 000 ft ) . The pilot survived after aiming the aircraft at an unpopulated area and ejecting at an altitude of 1 @,@ 400 meters ( 4 @,@ 500 ft ) .

On 29 June 2005 an ICP Savannah micro aircraft crashed only a few minutes after its departure from Banak , with two flight instructors on board . Both instructors were killed in the accident .