In 1958, Birgitta Lindman, a 23-year-old Swedish stewardess, landed the cover of *LIFE* magazine’s jet special issue about airlines. She beat hostesses from 53 other airlines to make the coveted cover.

In May 1969, 31-year-old Norwegian Turi Wideroe became the first female pilot for a Western airline. She was the daughter of aviation pioneer Viggo Wideroe and had previously flown seaplanes for Wideroe Airlines (which SAS acquired in 1997). Turi became a celebrity in the US, and in 1971 she was presented with the prestigious Harman International Aviation Trophy at the White House, along with the Apollo 11 astronauts who had landed on the moon. A year later, some 200 million people saw the documentary *What Makes Turi Fly?*

The first female SAS captain, Swedish Lena Lindeberg, was appointed in 1995. And on April 20, 1998, the first SAS flight with an all-female crew departed Stockholm for Dublin.

In 1977, SAS added the unique ‘Exercise in the Chair’ program to its in-flight entertainment. The worldwide response and media attention to the airborne physical fitness program was far greater than SAS could possibly have expected, and created new waves of goodwill for SAS worldwide.

In the early 1980s, under the helm of new president Jan Carlzon (who was head of SAS for a record 12 years), the airline embarked on a new mission: to become the businessman’s airline. SAS was to become more customer-orientated, or as Carlzon himself put it, the best airline in the world for the frequent business traveler. First Class was dropped on all European routes, and instead, SAS introduced EuroClass on all European routes in 1981, which gave the airline an edge over its European competitors. By paying full-fare economy prices, EuroClass passengers received separate counters and lounge access, more legroom, free drinks and upgraded meals. The “legality” of SAS EuroClass was, however, questioned by SAS’ competitors and reached its height when police boarded an SAS plane in Madrid and started to remove passengers who they had decided were getting too much for too little money. The action rewarded SAS with priceless media coverage all over the world.

Air France, in particular, objected to SAS’ new class and it even looked as if all air connections between France and Scandinavia would be shut down as the two airlines fought it out. In the end, the French and Scandinavian foreign ministers came to a resolution which favored SAS’ new class.

In 1983, SAS introduced special seminars, dubbed “charm schools” for the 11,000 employees, with the aim to improve customer service.

EuroBonus, the SAS frequent flyer program launched in 1992, has become the world’s most awarded. In 1997, when the prestigious Freddy Award was launched, EuroBonus took home the coveted “Program of the Year” award, and continued to win it for six consecutive years. To date, EuroBonus remains the most awarded frequent flyer program in the industry.

**SAS in history in brief**

Scandinavian Airlines’ reputation as an industry pioneer is well deserved.

- In 1958, SAS stewardess Birgitta Lindman landed the cover of *LIFE* magazine’s special issue about airlines.
- In May 1969, Norwegian Turi Wideroe became the first female pilot for a Western airline. A year later, some 200 million people saw the documentary *What Makes Turi Fly?*
- In 1977, SAS added the unique ‘Exercise in the Chair’ program to its in-flight entertainment.
- In 1992, SAS launched EuroBonus, the most awarded frequent flyer program in the industry.
Scandinavian Airlines
SAS – four airlines in three countries


Scandinavian Airlines System, SAS, is 50% government-owned and 50% publicly held and traded on the stock market. The Swedish government owns 21.4%, the Danish and Norwegian 14.3% each.

SAS International
Stockholm-based Scandinavian Airlines International comprises two main operations: intercontinental routes to the US, Middle East and Asia; and sales operations in Europe, Asia and North America. Sales operations are divided into three sales regions: Asia Pacific, Americas and EMEA.

SAS International serves 11 destinations: Bangkok, Beijing, Chicago, Copenhagen, Delhi, Dubai, New York, Seattle, Stockholm, Tokyo and Washington DC. The aircraft fleet consists of seven Airbus A340-300s and four Airbus A330-300s.

Chief Executive Officer – Lars Sandahl Sørensen

SAS Danmark
Copenhagen-based Scandinavian Airlines Danmark is responsible for the SAS Group’s European traffic to, from and via Denmark, and for developing Copenhagen as the SAS Group’s main hub.

Copenhagen airport has approximately 50% transfer traffic. SAS Danmark is also responsible for sales of the Group’s airlines and partners in the Danish market.

SAS Danmark serves 50 destinations in 23 countries, and has a fleet of 52 aircraft, mainly Airbus 321, Airbus 321 and MD82/87.

Chief Executive Officer – Susanne Larsen

SAS Norge
Oslo-based Scandinavian Airlines Norge is responsible for SAS Group’s traffic to, from and via Norway. The airline was founded in 2004 by the merger of Scandinavian Airlines in Norway and Braathens, and was named SAS Braathens until July, 2007, when it was rebranded SAS Norge.

Scandinavian Airlines Norge is the market leader in domestic routes in Norway, and a significant operator in terms of business destinations in Europe and leisure destinations in southern Europe.

SAS Norge serves 56 destinations with an aircraft fleet of 56 Boeing 737s. In addition, SAS Norge has six Fokker F50s and two Avro 70s.

Chief Executive Officer – Anders Ehrling

SAS Sverige
Stockholm-based Scandinavian Airlines Sverige is Sweden’s largest airline and is responsible for all SAS Group’s traffic to, from and via Sweden. SAS Sverige is also responsible for coordinating the SAS Group’s and partners’ sales activity in Sweden.

The airline flies to 52 destinations in 18 countries. SAS Sverige’s fleet comprise 42 aircraft of the types MD-80 and Boeing 737.

Chief Executive Officer – Anders Ehrling

Scandinavian Airlines in brief
As of 2004, SAS Scandinavian Airlines consists of four different companies throughout Scandinavia.

• SAS International is responsible for all intercontinental traffic and non-Scandinavian sales operations.
• SAS Danmark is responsible for European traffic to/from Copenhagen and Danish domestic routes.
• SAS Norge is responsible for European traffic to/from Norway and Norwegian domestic routes.
• SAS Sverige is responsible for European traffic to Sweden and Swedish domestic routes.
• 50% government owned and 50% publicly held.
• Government ownership: Denmark (14.3%), Norway (14.3%) and Sweden (21.4%).