



**Carsten Fich**  
CEO Naviair

# INVITED FOREWORD

Continuous changes and demand for cost efficiency have become the reality for any business, and this is especially true in our world of aviation. But I as a CEO still have the responsibility to support and develop the organisation to secure the wellbeing of Naviair employees.

Naviair has a long tradition of supporting any employee who faces any kind of life crisis or health problem that may cause a shorter or longer sick leave. We offer anonymous access to counselling. A physiotherapist and relaxation therapist are present every day, and the CISM team is well-educated and appreciated. We offer numerous free-to-use health programmes, an attractive canteen, social events and fitness facilities. All of this is in addition to a modern and healthy work environment, including facilities to rest and socialise. These human values have spread into the corporate culture of Naviair, an attractive company that genuinely cares for people.

But how do we frame and secure these provisions for wellbeing in conjunction with the ongoing changes, demand for cost efficiency and the rising complexity of our ATM systems? I have no clear answer, but what I do know today, and have experienced as a rather new CEO in Naviair, is that strong trust between management and employees and a well-established just culture have formed an informal atmosphere. How is this relevant? I believe in a free and open dialogue at all levels of the organisation to ensure that we can discuss safety, human performance and job satisfaction whenever changes and challenges are on the table. Then we will be more successful having dedicated involvement from the employees.

This brings the words “shared responsibility” into my mind. For operational staff, it is a personal and professional obligation to be fit for every shift according to rules and company policies, just as management are expected to discuss and provide satisfying working conditions. We must, for example, balance effective resource planning and the conditions important for operational staff. We learned a few years ago that our ability to offer healthier and more predictable shift planning, easier shift changes, and the best possible vacation planning raised job satisfaction to a new level.

However, I also see that European ANSPs are challenged when it comes to sufficient operational staff to meet the demands relating to capacity and delays. When units are low on sufficient staff, shift planning may be stretched to the limit and some personal flexibility may be reduced for a longer period. We must even be competitive to maintain our workforce. An everyday ‘walk the talk’ effort creates the necessary relationships, confidence and engagement.

When running a 24-hour operation, such factors will influence how the employees perceive wellbeing, job satisfaction and work-life balance. This is our everyday challenge and responsibility, when delivering an efficient and safe service. Getting it right leads to both better self-care and better human performance.

Be well. 

Carsten Fich was born in 1960 and educated as a Civil Engineer in Copenhagen in 1985. He holds a PhD from the Technical University Denmark from 1989. For many years, he was engaged in developing the Metro system in Copenhagen as Director and Head of Operations. From 2006 to 2015, he was the CEO of the Nordgroup, where he was leading the company’s transition from public ownership to privatisation. In the period 2016–2018, he was the CEO of Reconor and private advisor/board member. Since 2018, he has been the CEO of Naviair. Carsten lives in the countryside in Roskilde near Copenhagen with his wife. He has two grown-up daughters.