

Terminal Tractor/Yard Spotter

Used Yard Spotter Fairfield - Tow tractors are a common piece of industrial equipment used in large buildings, arenas, warehouses, airports and manufacturing plants for moving loads horizontally. They go by different names including tow tugs and towing tractors. Tow tractors are responsible for moving multiple trailers in a train. Some are designed specifically to tow large aircraft in order to position them into and out of airport terminals and hangers. The tractive effort concept is how loads move from place to place. The complete amount of traction a vehicle utilizes on the ground. Heavier loads require more tractive effort compared to lighter loads. The unit works by lifting a part of the load while it is towing; however, the load's wheels stay on the ground. The tractive effort is increased by the unit's hydraulic mast. This has been engineered to produce downforce on the drive wheel directly under the mast. The traction created by this process enables the tow tractor to pull very large and heavy loads. Types of Tow Tractors Heavy-duty tow tractors and load carriers are two types of tow tractors. Load Carriers Many industries including airport baggage divisions, manufacturing, parcel transportation and e-commerce rely on moving items of various sizes to and from different locations. Tow tugs and load carriers easily transport single items that have been deposited on wheeled platforms and move them with ease. Load carrier tow tractor models are categorized in the material handling equipment that covers cranes, forklifts and pallet jacks. These units only transport loads at ground level and do not lift or lower items from shelving or off the ground. In order to be ready for transport, items must be secured on a wheeled platform or already on wheels to use the tow tractor. The wheeled platforms are called bogies, trollies or skates. The tow tug is attached to the trolley similar to train cars being attached to a locomotive. Typically, the tow tug features a steel coupling male-end that attaches to a female-end on the trolley's front. The back of the trolley has a male-end steel coupling that can then be used to attach multiple trollies onto a single tow tug, transporting all the trollies in a train-like formation. These machines can transport a variety of items in varying conditions. Different trolley types are on the market to facilitate better transportation customization. Most trollies types are compatible with each other, meaning they can be connected together. Different kinds of trollies can be maneuvered in a single train, creating flexible transport options. An additional benefit of operating with load carrier tow tractors as opposed to forklifts is the unobstructed view offered by a tow tractor, increasing the safety of work areas. Further, load carrier tow tractors tow their trollies behind them in a forward-only direction which decreases the safety concerns created by forklifts operating in reverse. This design is excellent for locations that have a high level of safety such as manufacturing locations and airports. It is more economical to tow multiple items when possible with a tug than using a forklift truck to transport single items. They are safe and easy to maneuver. The operator doesn't require a license, which is another benefit compared to forklifts. This is because the load is not lifted from the ground so it does not fall under the usual restrictions and licensing required of standard forklifts, cranes and other load lifting equipment. There are three kinds of load carrier tow tractor units to choose from; pedestrian, stand-in and rider-seated. Pedestrian Tow Tractors Pedestrian tow tractors go by many names including electric tow tractor, electric tug, or electric tugger. These units are walk-behind models that move wheeled loads. These machines are simple to use, extremely maneuverable and very compact. Stand-in Tow Tractors Stand-in tow tractors are the most popular design for industries that involve order picking and horizontal transport in manufacturing. Stand-in tow tractors feature a tinier footprint compared to rider-seated editions and they offer a safe driver platform. Rider-Seated Tow Tractors The rider-seated tow tractors are similar to the stand-in tow tractors with the exception they provide a seated platform for the driver. These types of load carrier tow tractors are popular where loads are transported over longer distances, such as airport baggage systems where checked baggage is transported from the check-in counter at the front of an airport to the aircraft at the terminal, often a great distance from one another. These rider-seated options help to decrease driver fatigue allowing for greater efficiency. Heavy Duty Tow Tractors In

the aviation industry, large passenger and cargo planes usually employ the concept of pushback. Pushback refers to the process of pushing an aircraft back from an airport terminal by some means other than the aircraft's own power. This pushback process is done by using specially designed heavy duty tow tractors called pushback tractors or pushback tugs. Pushback tractors are designed with a low profile design to enable them to move under the aircraft's nose in order to attach to the aircraft. Since the aircraft weight is heavy, these units need to be heavy in order to retain adequate ground friction to move the aircraft. A common tractor for moving large aircraft can weigh in up to fifty-four tons. Their driver's cab has the ability to be lowered and raised for increased visibility during reversing. The unit is called a pushback tow tractor or pushback tug but it is additionally used to move aircraft in situations where taxiing is not safe or practical including into and outside of aircraft maintenance. The pushback tow tractors come in two subtypes, the towbarless and the conventional. Conventional Pushback Tow Tractors These units use a tow bar to attach the tug to the nose landing gear on the aircraft. The tow bar is fixed laterally at the nose landing gear, but may move slightly vertically for height adjustment. The tow bar is able to pivot vertically and laterally at the end that connects to the tug. In this manner, the tow bar acts as a large lever to rotate the nose landing gear. There are a towbar and precise tow fitting that acts as an adapter between the standard-sized tow pin and on the landing gear of the aircraft. Heavy towbars have their own wheels for big aircraft and can ride on these wheels when disconnected from planes. The hydraulic jacking mechanism is attached to the wheels, allowing the towbar to lift to the correct height in order to mate with the tug and the aircraft. The same means are used in reverse during the pushback process to raise the towbar wheels from the ground. The towbar is capable of being connected at the tractor's rear or front, depending on if the machine needs to be pulled or pushed. Depending on whether the aircraft needs to be pushed or pulled, the towbar can be attached to the front or rear of the tractor. Towbarless Pushback Tow Tractors Towbarless tractors do not use a towbar; they scoop up the nose landing gear and lift it off the ground, allowing the tug to maneuver the aircraft. This allows better control of the aircraft and higher speeds; it may also eliminate the need to have a worker in the cockpit to apply the aircraft's brakes. Simplicity is the main advantage of the towbarless tugs since it is not necessary to maintain a variety of towbars. Greater control and responsiveness while moving the aircraft is achieved with this direct connection of the tug to the landing gear.