

Oshkosh Truck instrumental in O'Hare winning awards

O'Hare International Airport has a vehicle fleet of more than 500 vehicles, housed in a state-of-the-art facility, known as the Airport Maintenance Complex. Some of the vehicles it uses are Saab friction testers, Athey vacuum runway sweepers, snow blowers, and a variety of Oshkosh snow equipment. O'Hare's fire and emergency fleet, including an Air Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) vehicle with Snozzle® attachment, is housed in three separate rescue stations located in strategic areas of the airport.

O'Hare, aided by this fleet of vehicles, has been awarded the "Colonel Bernt Balchen" award three times, and has placed second five times.

"This award is prestigious to airports, and is indicative of the snow removal operation and prowess of all major U.S. airports," said Dennis Moore, specification engineer for O'Hare's Airport Maintenance.

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Dennis Moore, specification engineer
for O'Hare's Airport Maintenance

"We like to think that the snow equipment that we acquired from the Oshkosh Truck Corporation over the years was instrumental in winning these awards. I attest to their suitability for our particular operation. The fact that we have so many of your vehicles and



The P-Series truck makes its way on the runway of O'Hare International Airport.

equipment is probably the best testament of our customer satisfaction. When we are considering a new acquisition of vehicles and equipment, our long and satisfied association with your company seems to have us thinking Oshkosh first."

Presently, O'Hare has approximately seventy-three Oshkosh vehicles in its combined fleets in operation. These vehicles range from a 1972 Oshkosh pumper and a 1972 ARFF vehicle, to a 1994 Oshkosh chassis with an MB runway broom mounted on it. They also have five rollover plows mounted on a 1981 Oshkosh chassis, nine 1981 4000-gallon Oshkosh deicer trucks, and two 1991 4000-gallon trucks in operation at the "World's Busiest Airport."

Because of O'Hare's geographical size and international status, it holds an "Index E" designation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for aircraft rescue and fire fighting equipment and agents. This is the highest index an airport can obtain. This index decides the type (i.e., vehicle size, gallon specification, rescue equipment) and number of vehicles required for an airport to have in its fleet.

The FAA also regulates airport operation, and can shut down an airport under certain conditions. If a vehicle experiences downtime, causing the airport to fall below the required number of operating vehicles for their FAA index, the FAA can shut down airport operation. It is crucial that airports maintain and service quality heavy-duty vehicles at all times. Its livelihood and safety of its passengers depend on it.

Within its fleet of Oshkosh vehicles, O'Hare most recently added an ARFF vehicle with Snozzle® attachment. O'Hare took delivery of the vehicle in early 1995. Maintenance and operational training of the vehicle concluded on January 30 at O'Hare. After inspection of the unit and subsequent conclusion of FAA performance testing, the vehicle was accepted by the FAA for use at O'Hare.

Moore said he is pleased with the results of both training and testing the ARFF vehicle, and added, "I am confident and satisfied the equipment meets the requirements of detailed specifications, as written, and FAA guidelines."

The vehicle will be used by Fire Operations at O'Hare.