
Fraport and Lufthansa co-testing remote-controlled aircraft tug at Frankfurt Airport

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Fraport AG has joined forces with Lufthansa to co-test a remote-controlled aircraft tug.

Fraport Ground Services at Frankfurt Airport has been using the electric vehicle manufactured by Mototok International for several months.

Key test partner Lufthansa is supplying aircraft for the pushback, a procedure during which the e-tug pushes the aircraft backwards out of its parking position and on to the taxiway. The Mototok Spacer 8600 is designed for use with the entire A320 family and the Boeing 737. An employee working for Fraport Ground Services operates the tug by remote control.

Electromobility has many advantages: The e-vehicle is just a third of the size of many conventional tugs, and it can be stationed and charged in a fixed parking position. This means that it is available for use at all times and avoids long travel distances between individual positions.

Using e-vehicles will help to limit emissions considerably in the future as they can manage between 30 and 50 pushback procedures without having to be charged. With this initiative, Fraport is making a commitment to bring state-of-the-art, future-proof and sustainable ground handling services to Germany's largest air traffic hub.

Martin Bien, Senior Executive Vice President of the Ground Services department at Fraport AG, offered an explanation: "The test run once again underscores Fraport AG's role as a driver of innovation. We believe that this technology will help us to make our process planning more effective and flexible".

Lufthansa welcomes the initiative as well. Jörg Mnich, VP Group Commercial Airport Infrastructure, said: "Lufthansa has been supporting the development of new ideas and technology in aviation, like this innovative aircraft tug, for a great many years. Projects like this are crucial to pave the way for faster ground handling services in the future, to ensure a stable flight schedule and, ultimately, to give our customers the reliability they require".