

Information for the “Good Skills” Journal Qostonay Fire Department

Kazakhstan I

The province of Qostonay has a total area of 196,000 square kilometers, of which 445,800 hectares are dedicated as forest fund land, and of these 216,700 hectares are covered by forests. The region of Qostonay has 11 government-owned silviculture facilities, 1 national nature preserve (Naurzum), vast steppes, and grasslands, and each year a large area of land is cultivated. There are 5 dedicated forest fire zones in the province. In these zones, the fire danger period is long, extending over 202 - 218 days per year, and the fire occurrence rate ranges from 23.4 to 485.2 fires per 1,000,000 hectares.

To effectively fight fires in forests and steppes (mountain fires and grass fires), the Qostonay Fire Department fire brigade modified the MT-LB type multi-purpose light-armored tractor head bequeathed by the Defense Ministry of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The first modification (changing military specifications to firefighting specifications and attaching a front plow) occurred in 2003. In 2006, the water cannon was moved from the side of the vehicle to the top of the cab to protect it from falling trees, heat, and soot, and the water cannon control unit was moved to the vehicle interior. Two nozzles were also mounted on the vehicle to hook up hoses.

Fighting steppe and forest fires often requires, besides a fire truck, a tire type tractor with plow (a caterpillar tractor is too slow). It also requires a vehicle that can clear a path in a forest and create a fire prevention zone. In our case, a tire type tractor with plow is not needed because of the modified MT-LB vehicle. The ram wedge mounted on the tractor head itself can be used to open up a fire prevention zone in the forest, and the water in the vehicle tank (2.6 m³) or the trailer tank (7.5 m³) can be used to fight fires. For fighting fires, this vehicle has displayed remarkable capabilities; namely, it combines proficient speed, water capacity, handling, and suspension performance. The total cost of the modification of the MT-LB vehicle was about 1.2 million tange.

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Explanation of photos: Actual movement of MT-LB type multi-purpose light-armored tractor head



