

Dangerous incident  
IncNot0035537

An excavator at an open cut coal mine was operating during production when a fire occurred.

The on-board fire suppression system was activated allowing the worker to safely egress the machine without injury.

Further cooling via water cart was required to fully extinguish the fire. The fire occurred in the engine bay of the excavator, with the specific cause still to be determined.



Mine operators must conduct a thorough investigation, by a competent person, to determine the root cause of any fire that occurs on mobile equipment. The investigation should include:

- fuel source and heat sources
- surface temperature value
- cause of the fire
- controls to prevent reoccurrence, such as reducing engine component surface temperatures and segregating fuel sources from areas of high temperature
- training workers to identify fire risks, such as fuels or oil leaks or worn hoses
- review of the fire risk assessment for the item of plant.

Mine operators should report the issue to the equipment manufacturer.