



## JUMBO DRILLING RIG - UNDERGROUND FIRE

### INCIDENT

A twin-boom development jumbo drilling rig caught fire in an underground metalliferous mine and was extensively damaged. The fire required the evacuation of all personnel from the underground workings.

The fire was well established when discovered by the dayshift machine operator on arrival at the workplace, and was finally extinguished 29 hours later by the mine's rescue team.

No injuries were sustained.

### CAUSE

The 1000volt electricity supply to the machine's trailing cable (and 24volt from the machine's batteries) had not been isolated after use during the preceding dayshift.

While the machine was unattended during the following nightshift, a 10kg rock fell and deflected into the driver's cabin, causing damaged to the dash console and fire to ensue from internal 24volt wiring.

The rock may have been dislodged following a blast that was fired two levels above.

### COMMENTS AND PREVENTATIVE ACTION

Mines Safety and Inspection Regulation 10.41(1)(a) states:

***'The operator of a trackless unit in an underground mine must ensure that the unit is not parked or left unattended unless the engine or power supply has been switched off'***

The requirement (and long-standing industry practice) applies equally to trackless units fed by trailing cable, and must be commonly understood and practised by relevant supervisory operating training and maintenance staff.

Less obvious is a recommendation to take the additional precaution of switching off the vehicle's engine battery isolator.

AS4242-1994 applies to extra-low voltage wiring systems installed on earth-moving equipment and ancillary equipment used at minesites.

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