

Coal mine fire building at North Goonyella

JOHN NINNESS on September 28, 2018 at 7:59 pm

BREAKING NEWS: An underground mine fire is reportedly increasing in intensity at the North Goonyella Mine near Moranbah and an explosion is highly possible. Unofficial reports tonight say that there is a high probability of the fire growing and an explosion is highly probable based on existing gas analysis data. The North Goonyella Mine has been prone to heatings and spontaneous combustion events for some years and a range of recovery actions have been taken several times in the past.

A team of disaster management experts including the Queensland Mines Inspectorate, Professor David Cliff (University of Queensland – Mine Fire Expert), gas chemists and Union Officials have been monitoring the potential of a serious explosion.

Unconfirmed reports say that the mine was sealed with an automated dozer and that it may be six months at least before the mine is re-opened. If the mine was to explode then a recovery may be unlikely. AMSJ have also been advised that all contractors at the



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ed that site based officials observed dark smoke coming from high probability of an underground fire. Staff were withdrawn earlier this month however today an exclusion zone has been for an explosion in the mine.

Mackay's Daily Mercury has reported that Isaac Regional Council have confirmed the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) have taken action after residents noticed an "unpleasant odour" from the mine.

The site, which employs around 230 staff, recently announced that the met coal would be extended until 2026. Peabody also announced that it had ordered a new Caterpillar Longwall including roof support, face conveyor for a 300m face, shearer and tram stage loader for site. The system was due to be installed in 2019.

Afternoon the Queensland Mines Inspectorate also confirmed the situation in a bulletin below:

WHAT HAPPENED?

On 26 September 2018, Peabody Energy, operator of North Goonyella coal mine made a data driven based decision to remove all personnel from the underground mine. This was in response to elevated gas readings at the location of the longwall block that it had recently been mining.

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Between 2 and 26 September Peabody made attempts to manage suspected heating of coal, to enable re-entry to the mine and continue mining operations.



On 27 September, smoke was observed rising from the main exhaust fan. This indicates combustion of coal underground.



continues to be emitted from the underground workings.

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North Goonyella underground coal mine is located in the Bowen Basin, approximately 40 km from Moranbah. The mine produces metallurgical grade coal and employs approximately 300 workers.

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- On 2 September, the mine operator took the precaution of removing all persons from the vicinity of surface entries to the mine.*
- A surface exclusion zone has been set within the mine lease area to ensure the safety of all persons.*
- Operations, including recovery activity, have been suspended within the exclusion zone due to an unacceptable level of risk to persons, identified by the mine operator.*
- The mine continues to take measures to attempt to bring the situation under control.*
- The Mines Inspectorate is working closely with the mine operator.*
- There is a risk of uncontrolled fire underground and the potential for a subsequent explosion. Any potential explosion is considered to present no risk to the public, provided persons remain outside the exclusion zone.*

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