

Fortescue deploys Australia’s first operational electric excavator

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Powered by a 6.6kV substation and more than two kilometres of high voltage trailing cable, this is the first of an initial three R 9400 E electric excavators being delivered by Liebherr that will be commissioned over the next 12 months.

The delivery of electric excavators demonstrates Fortescue’s and Liebherr’s strong commitment to decarbonising heavy industry.

In line with Fortescue’s aim to eliminate emissions across its mining operations, the intention is that all electrified mining equipment will eventually be powered by renewable energy.

Fortescue Metals Chief Executive Officer, Dino Otranto, said “The commissioning of this fully electric excavator is a massive achievement by the team and is the first of its kind in Australia for the mining industry.

“It’s a true demonstration of industry collaboration where we’ve been fortunate enough to work with industry experts who have been using trailing cable for decades, and then repurpose this in our own operations as part of our decarbonisation journey.

“Already, our Chichester operations which include Cloudbreak run partially off solar enabling this first excavator to be powered using renewable electricity. Once we decarbonise our electricity grid, all these excavators will be operating on renewable electricity in the future.”

Liebherr-Australia’s Managing Director, Mining, Trent Wehr, said “This R 9400 E excavator marks a significant milestone, with our decarbonisation partnership with Fortescue now extending to electric excavators.

“The debut of Australia’s first operational electric excavator is a big achievement for our local team who will provide ongoing service and support for these machines. Our local teams are actively enhancing their skills to keep pace with the changes that accompany our expanding lineup of zero emission mining equipment, and we’re excited to see what the future holds.”

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