



### **Mechel's new excavators**

Mechel, one of Russia's leading mining and metals companies, has commissioned new modern backhoe excavators at its iron ore mining subsidiary, Korshunov Mining Plant OAO, and at its nickel mining subsidiary, Southern Urals Nickel Plant OAO. The new machines will increase mining efficiency, while reducing production costs.

The Liebherr excavator, with a 9-m<sup>3</sup> bucket, at the Korshunov open pit is designed for excavating ore in confined spaces from the bottom of the pit, leading to higher efficiency and fewer losses of iron ore at greater depths in the mine. In addition, Mechel will use the new excavator to improve working conditions for other mining equipment, such as trucks, drills and bulldozers, saving material resources in the process. The new machine should allow the mine to increase annual ore excavation productivity by 30%.

The Komatsu excavator, with a 4-m<sup>3</sup> bucket, went into operation at the Sakharinsk mine of Southern Urals Nickel. A similar machine will be commissioned at the Buruktal mine this autumn. The new machines are designed for efficient excavation of nickeliferous ores at lower levels in the mine.

Furthermore, on September 10 Mechel announced it had commissioned a Liebherr R-994 backhoe hydraulic excavator with an 11 m<sup>3</sup> bucket at the Krasnogorsk open pit mine of its coal mining subsidiary, Southern Kuzbass OAO.

This is the second excavator of that type put into operation at Krasnogorsk in 2007 in line with the technical re-equipment program being implemented at Southern Kuzbass. A similar machine was put into operation and successfully operates at Sibirginsk open pit mine.

Mechel says the new machine "is designed for complete coal seam extraction, especially at lower levels where space is confined. This will enable operational losses of coal to be reduced by 2% to 4%. Operation of the excavator's backhoe requires half the number of workers as compared with electric drive excavators, which enables increased labour productivity and reduced coal production costs. In addition, the backhoe technology enables operations in complicated mining and geological conditions 8 m below the excavator's standing level."

The new machines were commissioned in line with the technical re-equipment program of Mechel's mining subsidiaries. The renewal of the mining subsidiaries' equipment is part of Mechel's long-term capital expenditure program, aimed at increasing iron and nickel ore output and increasing coal output to 25 Mt in 2010. [www.liebherr.com/me/en/default\\_me.asp](http://www.liebherr.com/me/en/default_me.asp)  
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