

Image: Baltimore Fire Department



## No injuries reported after coal terminal explosion in Baltimore

**A**n explosion occurred at a coal facility in Baltimore, Maryland on December 30. No one was injured by the blast which was heard across the city. The incident happened at the CSX Curtis Bay Coal Terminal.

According to officials, coal was being transported through tunnels when the explosion happened. There were no contractors inside the tunnel when the blast happened. CSX has told news outlets that the cause of the blast remains

unknown and that an investigation had begun.

All workers at the facility were quickly accounted for. No fire was caused by the explosion; however the site was evacuated so that fire crews could determine whether there was a risk of the tunnels collapsing.

Much of the damage caused by the explosion was limited to the coal facility itself, however some nearby residential buildings suffered damage including broken windows. The Baltimore City Fire Department was called to the scene at 11:30 local time but said that there was no sign of a fire and no sign of a gas leak. The fire department added that the blast was highly likely to have been a coal dust explosion and that the department would help in the ongoing investigation.

On January 5, CSX announced that all exports from the Curtis Bay Coal Terminal had been halted while engineering teams assessed the damage at the site. A spokesperson for the company said that coal shipments would be rerouted away from the terminal, one of the US East Coast's major coal port hubs.

While the investigation into the incident is continuing, the spokesperson said that initial findings suggest that coal dust accumulated at a coal transfer tower due to a jammed conveyor belt. The accumulated dust was then thought to have been ignited by an unknown source, causing the blast. ■

## Metal dust explosion kills one, injures six in Taiwan

**A**n explosion at an aerospace facility killed one person and injured six others in Taiwan on December 29. According to the website Taiwan English News, the blast happened at one of Taiwan's key defence contractors.

The incident occurred at 10:12 local time in the Xitun District of Taichung City. Reports say that the explosion was dust-related and occurred at Aerospace

Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC), one of Taiwan's two primary defence contractors.

The blast is thought to have occurred after an accumulation of aluminium alloy dust ignited. Seven people were taken to hospital where one person later died. One of the injured suffered first and second degree burns while the five other injured people sustained minor injuries, Taiwan English News reports.

AIDC produces aircraft such as the AIDC F-CK-1 Ching-kuo (pictured) – Image: Wikimedia



AIDC manufactures and maintains fighter jets and aviation components. The company said that an investigation is underway. ■