



UNDERSTANDING THE FIRE SCENE

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A vehicle fire scene is just as complicated as a structure fire scene, and must be managed accordingly



Unlike structures, the 'Fire Scene' in vehicle fires is the vehicle itself





Unlike structures, a vehicle fire scene is portable

Rarely, does a fire investigator have the opportunity to examine the vehicle, at the location where the fire occurred

First responders to a vehicle fire are concerned for the safety of the driver and public and want to extinguish the fire as soon as possible



That evidence must be preserved, to allow a fire investigator to do their job and determine the cause of the fire





In most cases the fire investigator never examines the vehicle at the scene of the fire, as the vehicle is usually moved by the time the fire investigator is instructed



The fire investigator has to consider any system that may have caused the fire, such as:

Tyres, wheel bearings and brakes

Fuel delivery and emissions control systems

Failure of engine components

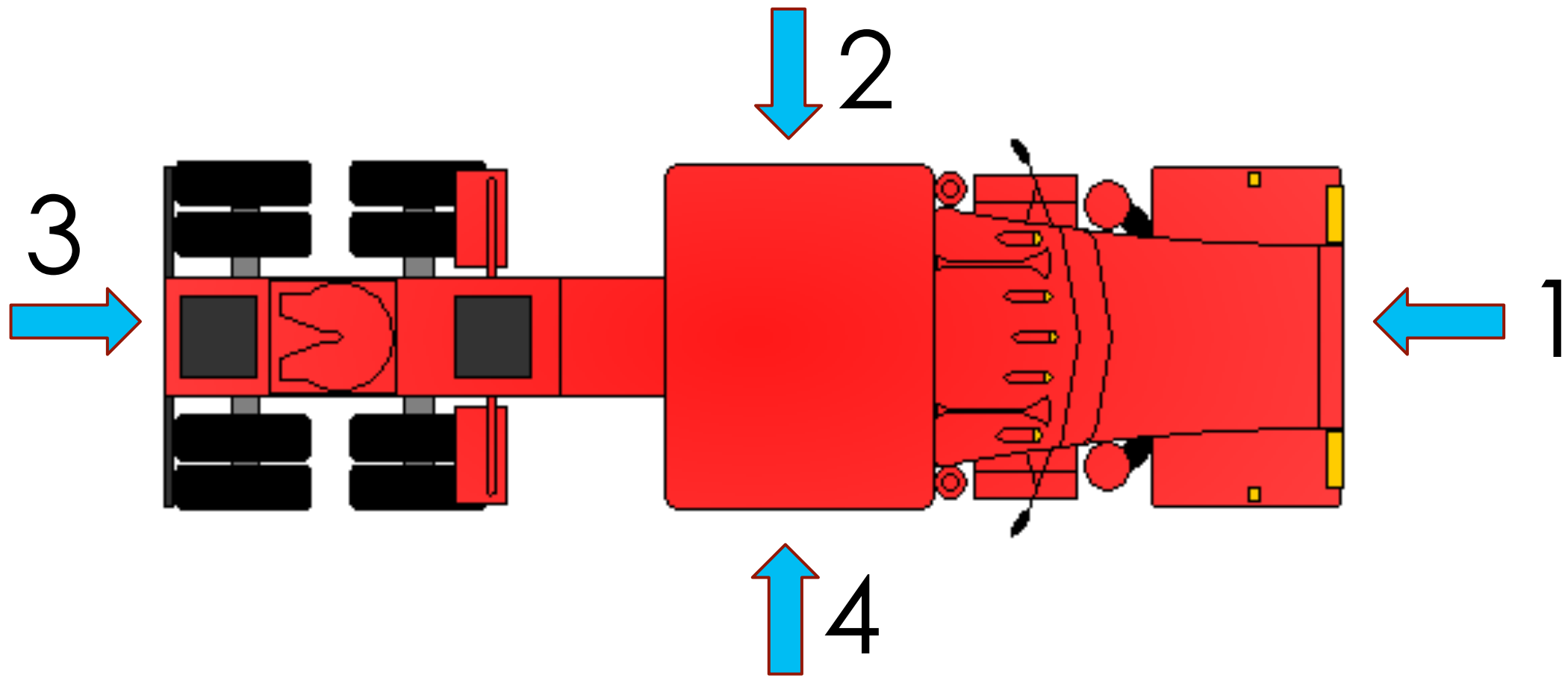
Electrical systems

Hydraulic systems



When the fire investigator examines a vehicle, the examination should be done in a methodical manner.

First there is the walk round the vehicle





So, how do you assist the fire investigator?

1. Take plenty of photographs while the vehicle is on fire
2. Have the driver prepare contemporaneous notes about the lead up to the fire, as soon as possible
3. Post fire, try to avoid having recovery crews place debris into the cabin of the vehicle



Cardinal Sins



NOT TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS WHILE THE VEHICLE IS ON FIRE



NOT HAVING THE DRIVER MAKE CONTEMPORANEOUS NOTES



ALLOWING RECOVERY CREW PLACE DEBRIS INTO THE VEHICLE'S CABIN



ALLOWING NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONS TO TOUCH THE VEHICLE POST
FIRE



When the unexpected happens



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will give you the answers