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'Patton' e-mail man resigns SEIC post

By Ed Crooks

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David Greer, the deputy chief executive of Sakhalin Energy Investment Company, has resigned to "pursue other business opportunities."

A motivational e-mail from Mr Greer urging staff to "lead me, follow me or get out of my way", which leaned heavily on the words of General George Patton, was leaked this month.

SEIC runs Royal Dutch Shell's \$22bn Sakhalin 2 gas and oil project off Russia's eastern coast, which aims to deliver its first cargo of liquefied natural gas by the end of next year.

Although the scheme is 80 per cent complete, two 1,000km-plus gas and oil pipelines along the length of the island and a gas liquefaction plant are still being built.

Shell said the e-mail, leaked to the website www.royaldutchshellplc.com, which provides a forum for criticism of the company, gave no grounds for any inquiry.

It paid tribute to Mr Greer for his 27 years of service, including his time on secondment at SEIC, and wished him well.

A discussion of the memo on the FT.com website drew many comments supportive of Mr Greer, including one which said: "I've been in this business for more than 20 years and he is the best manager I've seen."

The leadership of SEIC is expected to change once gas is delivered, to reflect the role of Gazprom, the state-controlled Russian gas company, which now has a majority stake.

Ed Crooks, London

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