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Sakhalin Energy's Greer Steps Down

- By [Max Delany](#)
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APDavid Greer

David Greer, the Sakhalin Energy deputy CEO running the giant Sakhalin-2 oil and gas project, has left the company unexpectedly just weeks after a leaked e-mail he wrote revealed the pressure that managers working there were facing.

Greer's departure comes as Shell is adjusting to ceding control of the \$20 billion project to Gazprom after sustained state pressure.

"I can confirm that David Greer has left the company to pursue other business interests," Sakhalin Energy spokesman Ivan Chernyakhovsky said Thursday. He did not elaborate on Greer's future plans.

"He decided to leave the company and left the company," Chernyakhovsky said. "We wish him well in his future after working at Sakhalin Energy for 3 1/2 years."

Chernyakhovsky said any suggestion that the departure of Greer, a 27-year Shell veteran, was connected to the leaked e-mail was "pure speculation."

Shell spokesman Maxim Shub could not say when Greer had offered his resignation, saying only that the announcement was made Thursday.

Greer could not be reached by cell phone Thursday evening.

Sakhalin Energy's technical director, Jaap Huijskes, has been appointed as the new project director for the remainder of the Phase-2 development, a source inside Shell confirmed.

A motivational e-mail written by Greer to staff working on the project, originally leaked to an anti-Shell web site, [Royaldutchshellplc.com](#), was the subject of a front-page story in the Financial Times earlier this month.

It also emerged that Greer had borrowed heavily in the e-mail from a speech made by U.S. General George Patton on the eve of the D-Day landings in World War II, with phrases such as "Lead me, follow me or get out of my way."

Greer's memo, written shortly after Gazprom officially took control of the Sakhalin-2 project this spring, took the form of a bombastic pep talk.

Citing bad body language and comments at a biannual meeting, the e-mail said that senior managers at Sakhalin Energy were running "the risk of becoming a team that doesn't want to fight and lacks confidence in its own ability."

Last December, Shell and its Japanese partners ceded majority control of the project, Russia's first to process and export liquefied natural gas, to Gazprom after a sustained 1 1/2-year campaign of state pressure over purported environmental violations.

Ian Craig, head of Sakhalin Energy, the project operator, is due to be replaced by a Gazprom manager once the project comes on line. LNG shipments to Asia are due to begin next year.

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