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Des Houghton: How a \$45.6 billion gas



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We don't really need wind farms. We have huge volumes of gas under our feet

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The value of our gas assets was reset this week at an astonishing \$489.7 billion.

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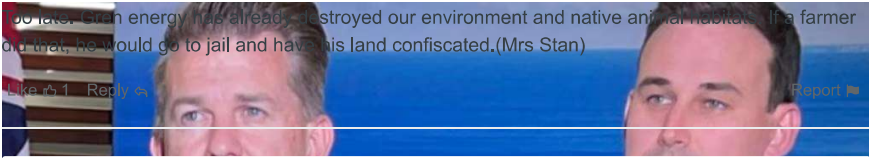
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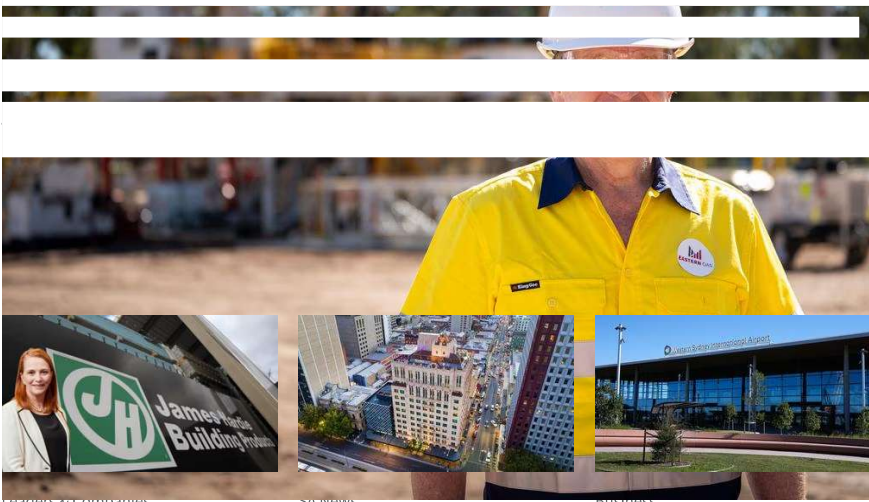
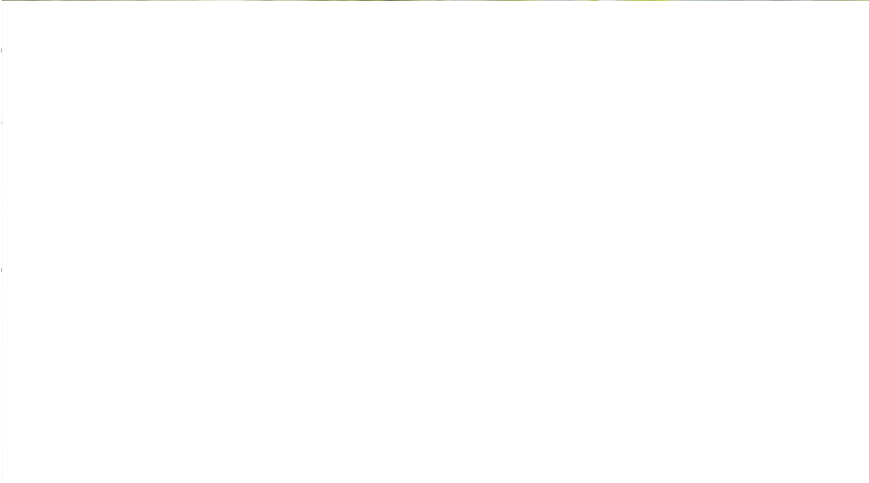
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Or will public servants allow the ideological zealots in the ALP and the Greens

power data centres is another attack on our economic sovereignty. No royalties are paid on renewables. We risk losing billions.



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Eastern Gas is using bold new techniques to turn gas exploration in this state upside down.

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The firm is initially drilling down 425m to a gas bearing coal seam up to six metres thick. Instead of simply passing through the coal, the well will then turn

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“Instead of a well passing through a relatively small section of gas-bearing coal, it can run along the seam for hundreds or even thousands of metres. This gives the well access to much more gas-bearing coal and can help producers reach gas that was previously too difficult or expensive to extract.

“Arrow Energy, for example, has used angled and more complex wells in Queensland to increase the amount of gas-bearing coal reached by each well. This reflects a broader shift away from simply drilling more vertical wells

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The new buzzwords are directional drilling. Drilling horizontally along the seam can release additional gas, turning a marginal gas resource into a

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There are 10,000 gas wells in Queensland, most conventional vertic

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Spring knows his way around a gas field. He has had 40 years in pe geoscientist, exploration leader and senior executive across Australia, North America, Europe, the Middle East, South America the Caribbean and North Africa. He began as a geophysicist with Esso Australia exploring the Cooper Basin.

He spent more than a decade with BHP Petroleum in Australia and overseas.

https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/des-houghton/des-houghton-how-a-456-billion-gas-royalties-bonanza-could-transform-queenslands-... 3/5

Four years with Maersk Oil and management responsibility for the El Merk gas development in Algeria later led Mubadala Petroleum’s global exploration portfolio in the UAE.

In 2015 Spring joined Senex Energy, partly owned by Gina Rinehart, to begin exploring opportunities in the Cooper and Surat Basins.

The ACCC’s latest “Gas inquiry interim report, June 2026” shows Queensland exports roughly 90 per cent of the gas produced in the state.

At home, gas is used to provide energy for fertiliser and explosives manufacturing and alumina and minerals processing.

The gas industry certainly attracts some characters.

Eastern Gas raised \$5.5 million and joined the ASX in February. Its biggest shareholder is Pure One Corporation, forme–rly Pure Hydrogen, which is chaired by former Northern Territory chief minister Adam Giles, one of Mrs Rinehart’s lieutenants.

Spring engaged Viv Oldfield’s company, Silver City Drilling, to do his drilling.

Oldfield, a cattleman, is Australia’s biggest private landholder and owns several properties with a total area of 78,000sq km, roughly the area of Scotland.



Des Houghton

News24 Wine & Travel Editor

Award-winning journalist Des Houghton has had a distinguished career in Australian and UK media. From breaking major stories to editing Queensland’s premier newspapers The Sunday Mail and The Courier-Mail, and news-editing the Daily Sun and the Gold Coast Bulletin, Des has been at the forefront of newsgathering for decades. In that time he has edited news and sport and opinion pages to crime, features, arts, business and travel and lifestyle sections. He has written everything from restaurant reviews to political commentary.

✉ Des Houghton

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