

APPEA out of gas but lobby sector energised

CAMERON ENGLAND
BUSINESS EDITOR

THERE'S movement in the lobbying sector with the energy industry adding a couple of new names and losing a heavy hitter.

Matthew Doman, who has been the director of external affairs for South Australia and the Northern Territory for the past five years for the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association, has left the organisation for "a new consulting role in the energy and resources space".

Mr Doman, who before APPEA was the public affairs manager for eastern Australia at Santos, dealing with the contentious Narrabri project among others, was a prominent voice in the debate over proposals to drill for oil in the Great Australian Bight.

With Norwegian company Equinor dropping its bid to drill The Bight in February this year, despite having approval to do so, the prospect of any drilling in The Bight occurring in the next decade is slim, considering the long lead times for any environmental and drilling plans.

APPEA will now have no local representation, with the Adelaide office to close, media matters to be dealt with out of Canberra and the organisation's Western Australian representative Claire Wilkinson to assume responsibility for SA.

With The Bight project dead in the water and SA having both a stable and sensible



The energy industry loses a heavy hitter

Matthew Doman, is the outgoing director of external affairs SA/NT for APPEA. Picture: Matt Loxton

regulatory regime, and lacking any major contentious issues on the horizon, APPEA's resources are arguably better focused on areas such as the eastern states, where issues such as land access and fracking moratoria continue to dog the industry.

Elsewhere in the lobbying space, Mr Doman's former colleague at Santos, Damon

Hunt, now with FTI Consulting, has picked up a new client in Booking.com.

Over at Cannings Purple, which includes on its staff roster former Olympic Dam head of corporate affairs Simon Corrigan, have added the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre as a client.

The CRC has a cash commitment of \$55 million and in-

kind support worth \$72 million, with a stated mission to enable the growth of Australia's battery industry.

Graeme Hunt, who had responsibility for Olympic Dam during the development of the abandoned mega-expansion plan – before Mr Corrigan's time there – is on the CRC board and also chairs AGL.

Primary Communication, based in Sydney, added the

Australian Hydrogen Council as a client in April.

Residential and industrial smart metering company Intellihub has employed lobbyist Second Sun.

New entrants to the lobbyist register this year include Royce Communications spruiking for the Australian Tourism Industry Council, and Adrian Dolahenty, with a range of health clients.