



# Territory business boss shock resignation

The boss of one of the Territory's biggest corporations has suddenly quit, just more than one year after he took on the role. See who has stepped up while a replacement is found.



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The Territory's Inpex general manager Stuart Knowles has resigned, just more than one year after he took on the role.

In a stunning development at the NT's most important company, Mr Knowles left the role on Friday.

[A spokesman for the company said Mr Knowles resigned](#) for personal reasons.

He has been temporarily replaced by general manager corporate affairs Jodie Wesley while a search for Mr Knowles' replacement takes place.

Mr Knowles was appointed general manager on January 1, 2023, succeeding Roland Houareau who had held the post for four years.



Stuart Knowles, INPEX former NT General Manager

Formerly with the Australian Army, Mr Knowles quit the services when he was faced with relocation away from the Territory.

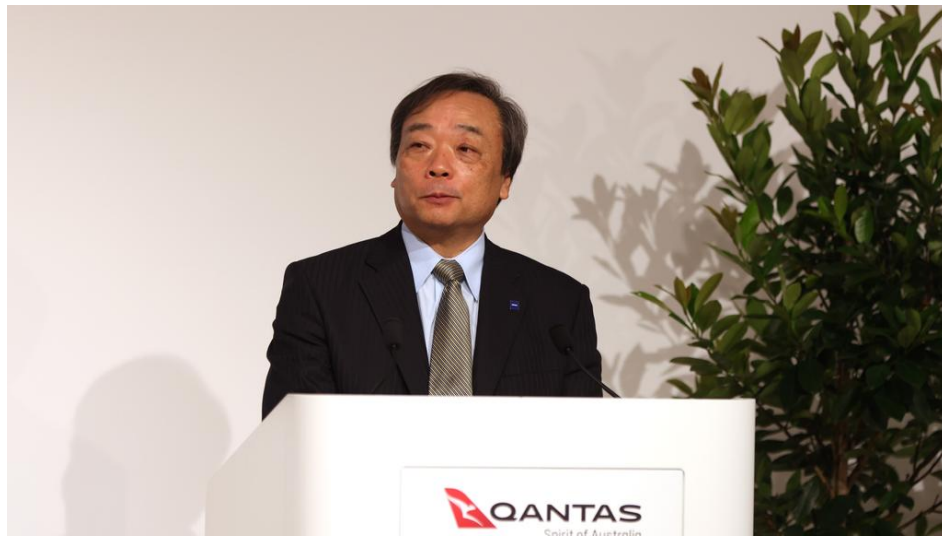
A mechanic by trade, Mr Knowles has held a number of private sector positions including with Mack trucks in Berrimah.

A stint as strategic project manager with the Department of Chief Minister first brought him into contact with Inpex in 2012.

He joined Inpex Operations Australia as compliance approvals manager in 2014 before joining the company's corporate team in 2019 after production had begun.

In an interview with NT News last year, Mr Knowles spoke of his plans for Inpex's expansion in the Territory.

"Societal and consumer changes are driving shifts in the energy market and I'm quietly confident that there will be further investment by Inpex into the Northern Territory in the future," Mr Knowles said.



Inpex President and CEO Takayuki Ueda. Picture: NCA NewsWire / Damian Shaw

Since then, Inpex's relations with the Commonwealth soured, with chief executive Takayuki Ueda warning of "unprecedented government intervention" by the Albanese Labor Government.

[Last year, Inpex chief executive Takayuki Ueda](#) warned the government's safeguards mechanism and other energy market interventions could "choke investment, strangle expansion of LNG projects and allow Russia, China and Iran to fill the void".

He said Australia was "quietly quitting" the LNG business.

Last year was also significant for the NT workforce with the Japanese multinational transferring its \$75m onshore maintenance contract from Trace to mining services provider Monadelphous.

In 2021, Inpex announced plans to develop a third train at its Darwin LNG plant.

Inpex's Darwin operations is Japan's largest single foreign investment.

Chief Minister Eva Lawler last month cancelled a trip to meet with the company's executives when floods hit remote Territory communities.

The trip is expected to be rescheduled before the August NT election.

Inpex has been contacted for comment.