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WA Minister for Mines and Petroleum Bill Marmion.

Marmion: Onshore gas has the potential to dwarf offshore

Martin Kovacs, 5 Mar 2014

WA Minister for Mines and Petroleum Bill Marmion flagged the potential of Western Australia's onshore unconventional gas resources in his plenary address during the opening of the Australasian Oil and Gas Exhibition & Conference (AOG).

While WA's abundant reserves of offshore natural gas have long been a focus for industry, Marmion told delegates the future may well prove to be onshore.

"Oil and gas is already a multi-billion dollar industry for Western Australia, however its current contribution is dwarfed by the opportunities presented by its future," Marmion commented.

"As considerable as the state's offshore LNG resources are, there is even more potential onshore—Western Australia has an estimated 280 Tcf recoverable natural gas from shale and tight rock.

"This is more than double Western Australia's known offshore reserves—if even a moderate percentage of these estimates are proven, our onshore gas resources present a remarkable opportunity for Western Australia."

While Premier Colin Barnett has been critical of companies seeking to employ FLNG technology, stating it will deprive the local economy of the economic benefits of LNG developments, Marmion acknowledged the role of the technology in unlocking stranded gas resources.

"As a former engineer, one area that particularly interests me is the development of floating LNG; the growing importance of this technology is reflected by its inclusion in events such as AOG 2014," Marmion commented.

"Floating LNG is an ideal technology for unlocking remote and stranded resources. And, of course, the engineer in me cannot just help but marvel at this amazing technology.

"Watching the vision late last year of the Prelude floating LNG vessel floating out of its South Korean dry dock was an incredible moment."

Marmion noted he is keen to see WA benefit from the flow-on effects of FLNG projects.

"I do not want to see this technology used in place of developing Western Australia's infrastructure and creating Western Australia jobs to access Western Australian resources," he stated.

"It is my hope that Prelude and future floating LNG developments tap into the world-class expertise that is available in Western Australia through facilities

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