

COOPER COOKING WITH GAS

CAMERON ENGLAND



COOPER
Energy's

REWARDED: Cooper Energy's managing director David Maxwell had his pay boosted after a strong year.

managing director David Maxwell more than doubled his pay in the past financial year to more than \$4 million, as long-term incentives recognising a strong three-year performance kicked in.

The Adelaide company has had a breakout year, ticking off most of the milestones towards first gas production at its Sole Gas Project off the Victorian coast.

Chairman John Conde said in the company's annual report, released yesterday, that Cooper's shares were up 40 per cent over the year, beating all but one of the companies in its peer group.

"The key element in these results has been the Sole Gas Project," he writes.

"Development of the offshore Sole gas field, begun in July 2017, has been completed free of lost-time-injuries and within the \$355 million budget.

"This will stand as a company-making triumph when gas supply from Sole commences."

The Sole project is expected to produce its first gas before the end of this year. Mr Conde said there was also more to look forward to.

"Cooper Energy is now positioned to record new benchmarks on a number of fronts in the coming 12 months. Production and revenue are forecast to undergo an upwards step change. The company will conduct its largest drilling program. Gas supply is set to increase with first sales into new contracts."

Cooper Energy's revenue of \$75.5 million for 2018-19 was a record, while the company recorded a \$12.1 million loss mainly because of a restoration expense.

Mr Maxwell's remuneration jumped from \$1.5 million in 2017-18 to \$4.05 million, including \$845,000 in base pay, \$646,000 in short-term incentives and \$2.48 million in longterm incentives, which accrued from the company's three-year performance to December 2018.

"Cooper Energy met or exceeded the targets of its Corporate Scorecard in all categories," the annual report says.

The report also shows that the company's market capitalisation had increased more than tenfold from 2015, growing from \$81.4 million to \$875.6 million. Mr Maxwell says in the annual report that the start-up of Sole would be "transformational" for Cooper.

"Gas production, at plant design rates, is expected to increase nearly five times, with flow-on to revenue and cash flow," he writes.

Cooper shares closed 1c lower at 55.5c yesterday.