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Balance and objectivity required from Lazarus Inquiry

The Senate Select Committee Inquiry into natural gas which meets in Dalby on Wednesday presents an opportunity to have a balanced, factual debate which improves community understanding of unconventional gas.

APPEA Queensland Director Mr Chris Lamont expressed concerns that Senator Lazarus's attacks on the industry suggest he is not seeking evidence based responses or submissions.

In the last week Senator Lazarus has described the industry as a "scourge" and claimed it is poisoning people.

Numerous independent and parliamentary inquiries have confirmed that a properly regulated natural gas industry is safe, responsible and enormously beneficial to Australia, especially to regional communities.

Mr Lamont said: "If this inquiry is to be worthwhile it must hear from independent experts and examine claims from all sides of the debate.

"While the inquiry will cover issues already exhaustively investigated by many independent and parliamentary inquiries, APPEA sees the inquiry as an opportunity to put facts on the table.

"We hope to see a final committee report that is balanced and factual, improving the community's understanding of the industry. It is important that fear campaigning and misinformation do not displace fact and credible evidence."

Last week the BP Energy Outlook report predicted natural gas will be the world's fastest growing traditional fuel with consumption increasing by 1.8 per cent a year to 2035.

"Queensland is well placed to capitalise on the world's growing appetite for cleaner burning energy," Mr Lamont said.

"Saying no to natural gas is saying no to thousands of jobs, regional development, a better economy and a meaningful response to climate change."

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