



# Logan a late addition to Senate inquiry on Varanus gas crisis

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Former WA energy minister Fran Logan is a last-minute addition to the list of witnesses to give evidence to the Senate's inquiry into the Varanus Island gas explosion today after the Liberal Party claimed he had escaped scrutiny for his handling of the crisis.

Senate committee chairman Doug Cameron, a former high-profile unionist, who had said that it was up to Mr Logan and former premier Alan Carpenter to make themselves available for the inquiry, would not say whether the committee had asked Mr Logan to appear or whether he had volunteered.

"I've got other things to do," Senator Cameron said. "Why would I want to comment on it? It's an inquiry, and people are coming along to the inquiry. Senate inquiries are held in high regard."

Mr Logan did not return calls.

Mr Logan's absence from the draft witness list prompted claims that the Labor-controlled Senate committee was using its majority to protect the former Labor government from revealing what it knew about the Varanus Island explosion that slashed gas supplies



Fran Logan

to WA industry and households.

WA Liberal Senator Mathias Cormann said on Tuesday: "This is essentially a Labor Party controlled committee and it's disappointing they are using their majority to perpetuate the cover-up."

The Federal inquiry was set up to examine the economic impact of the gas crisis and the government's response to it, including the adequacy of its crisis management.

The inquiry will start at 8.20am, 40 minutes earlier than planned, and will end half an hour later, part-

ly to accommodate Mr Logan, the last witness of the day.

The Carnegie Corporation and three members of the Department of Treasury and Finance are also additions to the two-day hearing.

The DomGas Alliance, the Australian Hotels Association, the Food Industry Association of WA and the Chamber of Minerals and Energy are among groups to give evidence in Perth today. The hearing will continue for half a day tomorrow in Bunbury.

The inquiry will consider the economic impact of the gas crisis, the disproportionate disruption to industry in the South-West, and the nature of contractual arrangements forced on business and industry during the crisis and their status since the partial resumption of Varanus Island gas.

It will consider the government response, including the adequacy of crisis management and the reliance on one source of gas for domestic markets.

It will examine the provision of reliable and affordable supplies of alternative energy, the feasibility of developing emergency storage of gas and the justification for any refusals to release relevant facts.