

manageable task because of the small amount of offshore specific legislation involved.

4.24. In summary of this part of this Chapter we recommend that the Government urgently reconsider the administration arrangements for offshore safety. It is our firm view that there should be a single agency responsible for offshore safety matters. The existing expertise of the PED Inspectorate should continue to be used to develop safety controls although it should be augmented by expertise in occupational safety. The first task of the single agency should be to review the overlapping safety Acts and streamline the process of developing regulatory controls. We conclude that there is a strong case for the single agency to be D/Energy and that D/Energy would be capable of performing the task.

### **The role of the Certifying Authorities**

4.25. The practice of subjecting all aspects of the design and construction process to the independent scrutiny of a Certifying Authority (CA) has found general support and approval. Indeed the Committee has received no evidence to suggest its discontinuance although variations proposed range from total Government responsibility on the one hand to a wider spreading of the load over a greater number of independent authorities on the other. The majority view is however that the current arrangements are broadly satisfactory and we concur with this view.

4.26. The Committee has considered afresh the present scope of Certification, as set out in Schedule 2 of the Construction and Survey Regulations, starting with the proposition that the independent verification of design and construction is most justified where failure would pose the greatest danger to life. This leads to the consideration of the resistance of the main structure to collapse, the ability of the whole pressurised system, from well to shore or tanker, to contain the hydrocarbons and the prevention of disintegration of large rotating machinery.

4.27. The first of these matters—the integrity of the primary structure—is well covered by the existing provisions. The third—rotating machinery, including its controls—is covered only in general terms under requirements regarding “equipment”, both in the Regulations and in the Guidance Notes. Of the pressurised system, however, only that part attached to the offshore installation is subject to Certification: the systems associated with the well, and the submarine pipelines, are not included.

4.28. We think that consideration should be given to providing, as far as possible, for independent verification by the CA of the containment and control of all fluid deriving its pressure directly from the well, and of the integrity of all other pipelines. In consequence certification should be extended to require the CAs to deal with all pressure systems as far as and including the down-hole safety-valve.

4.29. We are of course aware of the control exercised by PED over these matters, but consider that a responsibility for detailed verification should rest