



# Finance Act 1991

## 1991 CHAPTER 31

### PART III

#### OIL TAXATION

##### *Abandonment etc.*

#### **104 Abandonment guarantees**

- (1) Subject to subsection (2) below, for the purposes of section 3 of the principal Act and sections 105 and 106 below, an abandonment guarantee is a contract under which a person (“the guarantor”) undertakes to make good any default by a participator in an oil field (“the relevant participator”) in meeting the whole or any part of those liabilities of his which—
- (a) arise under a relevant agreement relating to that field; and
  - (b) are liabilities to contribute to field abandonment costs;
- and such a contract is an abandonment guarantee regardless of the form of the undertaking of the guarantor and, in particular, whether or not it is expressed as a guarantee or arises under a letter of credit, a performance bond or any other instrument.
- (2) For the purposes of section 3 of the principal Act and section 106 (but not section 105) below a contract is not an abandonment guarantee—
- (a) unless it is entered into in good faith and on terms reasonably appropriate to the nature and extent of the guarantee; or
  - (b) if the guarantor undertakes any liability beyond that of making good any such default as is referred to in subsection (1) above; or
  - (c) if it can be revoked by the guarantor otherwise than on account of some fraud, misrepresentation or other fault on the part of the relevant participator occurring prior to the making of the contract; or
  - (d) if, subject to subsection (3) below, the guarantor is, or is a person connected with, a participator in one or more oil fields.
- (3) Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) above does not apply if—

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*Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).*

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- (a) the main business carried on by the guarantor is such that it is in the ordinary course of that business to provide guarantees; and
  - (b) the relevant participator is not connected with the guarantor;
- and section 839 of the Taxes Act 1988 (connected persons) applies for the purposes of this subsection and subsection (2) above.
- (4) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (a) of subsection (2) above, a contract shall not be regarded as entered into in good faith if, as a result of any arrangement, the liability to make good any such default as is referred to in subsection (1) above will be met, directly or indirectly, by such a person that, if he were the guarantor under the contract, the contract could not be an abandonment guarantee by virtue of paragraph (d) of subsection (2) above.
- (5) In this section and in section 3(5B) of the principal Act—
- (a) in relation to an oil field, a “relevant agreement” means a joint operating agreement, a unitisation agreement (within the meaning of paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 17 to the Finance Act 1980) or an agreement entered into by some or all of the parties to a joint operating agreement or such a unitisation agreement; and
  - (b) in relation to an oil field, “field abandonment costs” means costs incurred in closing down the field or any part of it, together with any costs incurred in discharging any continuing liabilities resulting directly from that closure.