

**Submission  
No 91**

**INQUIRY INTO REGULATION OF BUILDING  
STANDARDS, BUILDING QUALITY AND BUILDING  
DISPUTES**

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**Date Received:** 26 July 2019

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I would like to contrast my experience as the architect on two projects, one inspected by local government, the other by a private certifier.

The local government certifier was actively engaged in the design of the project, studying my design carefully and offering constructive criticism and suggestions as to how to proceed.

The local government official inspected the project thoroughly at all the required stages of the construction.

Once my other project was registered with the private certifier they took no further interest. It appeared that they did not bother to study my documents.

When, at the request of the builder, an inspector came to check the footings for the correct reinforcing before the concrete was poured he came just near enough to the site to ask the builder "Everything okay?" and then left without looking at the footings.

In my view, central to the emerging disasters of our building industry is the privatisation of certification. It has been a complete failure. This failure is no surprise to me. Regulation and its enforcement is the business of government, not of private enterprise. The private operator is trying to maximise profit by spending as little time and effort on projects as he can get away with. The public official, paid a regular wage however many construction sites he checks, is motivated by wanting to protect his reputation as a thorough and reliable inspector whose projects stand the test of time.

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