CLAIMS

1. A method of testing a subsea transformer configured for installation in a high-pressure environment, the high pressure environment comprising a subsea installation, wherein the transformer comprises a transformer core comprising a stack of a plurality laminations, the method comprising: applying a mechanical compression force to the stack of the plurality of laminations of the subsea transformer, the force being at least equivalent to the ambient pressure of the high-pressure environment, wherein the mechanical compression force is applied using a plurality of distribution elements that overlay the plurality of laminations and distribute the force uniformly across the laminations; and testing the electrical efficiency of the transformer, and wherein each lamination comprises a plurality of core elements.

2. The method according claim 1, wherein the mechanical compression force applied to the stack is greater than that equivalent to the ambient pressure of the high-pressure environment.

3. The method according to claim 1, further comprising removing the applied mechanical compression force.

4. The method according to claim 3, wherein removing the compression force occurs subsequent to testing the electrical efficiency of the transformer.

5. The method according to claim 3, wherein removing the compression force occurs prior to testing the electrical efficiency of the transformer.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of laminations comprises at least one aperture, and wherein the method further comprises stacking the laminations such that the aperture of each lamination is positioned around a rod member.

7. The method according to claim 6, wherein a fastening member is placed in co-operative engagement with the rod member, and wherein applying a mechanical compression force to the stack comprises moving the fastening member relative to the rod member to apply the mechanical compression force to the stack.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the rod member is threaded, and the fastening member comprises a nut for engagement with the thread of the rod member.

9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the distribution element is placed between the stack and the fastening member, such that the mechanical compression force is at least partially distributed about the extent of the stack.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the distribution element comprises a rigid member being dimensioned so as to substantially overlie at least one axis of the plane of the laminations in use.