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Buying a boat? Want a safe, sound, sea-worthy vessel

Experience counts. How much should a professional cost, how long will it take ?

As a boatbuilder experienced in both wood, metal and composite. I can report on the operation of systems and equipment but cannot comment on the internal condition of mechanical parts. I recommend a marine engineer reports on diesel engines and if a sophisticated electrical system is installed then an electrician should inspect and report on that.

With smaller vessels, an inspection of main structural items will take at least 4 hours and the vessel should be taken out of the water for a minimum of 2 hours. The vessel should be cleaned off for inspection and new antifouling should not be applied before inspection.

To inspect the rig, sails and systems as well as the cosmetics etc can easily make the total inspection a whole day. Especially if the vessel is loaded with cruising gear which has to be shifted in order to inspect bulkhead connections etc.

Generally I take 8 hours to inspect a vessel around 12 M, if it is prepared for me. In other words the owner, broker and buyer pull the boat apart for me to inspect and then they put back together. At the end of the day we have all seen the same items and that will make the settlement easier.

A written report takes a similar time to write as the inspection, where a detailed report is required describing any likely future maintenance items.

Often all that is required by an experienced buyer is an insurance condition report with major discoveries noted. I provide one or two pages of images (about 35 images per page) with a short note under each image noting defects (or items better than normal) for a vessel of her class.

I inspect to instructions and charge by the hour or at an agreed daily rate. Travel, Accommodation and mileage at cost plus GST.

So the cost depends on the level of detail required and the size and condition of the vessel.