

Survey Preview

This is a quick note about what to expect for your upcoming survey or decision whether to have me survey a vessel for you. On the same page as this link are sample surveys for a number of different types of vessels. Pick the one that most closely matches the vessel of your interest and review what is in it. The information contained within is what my survey method will examine and how the results will be presented.

Survey types

Structural analysis is the same for all the surveys. It is performed using visual inspection, moisture meters and an assortment of tap hammers. The following is where the types of surveys differ:

1. **Prepurchase** – careful examination and operation of all equipment aboard to determine its condition and functionality. All equipment to be examined must be in a ready state prior to the survey. Equipment such as tenders and watermakers and other gear that may be stowed in a dormant state must be prepped in advance if they are to be evaluated adequately during the survey without incurring extra time or expense.
2. **Insurance underwriting/financial evaluation** - careful examination of all equipment aboard to determine its condition. All equipment to be examined must be in a ready state prior to the survey. Owner participation is encouraged. I carry a good selection of test equipment in my bag and do not mind spending extra time on a particular system that you might have concerns with.
3. **Damage inspection** – careful examination of all equipment aboard to determine its condition. In some instances, operation of equipment will also be performed to rule out damage that may not be obvious from visual inspection.

Survey order

The order of a survey is important whether for prepurchase, insurance or damage. My preference is dockside inspection first. It provides an opportunity to check the hull in its native environment. If there leaks or inoperative underwater thru-hulls are located they can be addressed during the haul-out. If the boat is already hauled out then perform its inspection and allow adequate time to receive results prior to launching it again. Better to address below waterline issues while the boat is still hauled out.

The survey is secondary to the safe function of the vessel underway. When a trial-run will be performed it is my opinion that as much of the operational testing possible should have been done in advance. Minimize distractions to the skipper by performing detailed inspections of navigation equipment, thrusters and other equipment prior to getting underway.

Summary survey order:

1. **Dockside inspection** – to familiarize with vessel and prove operation of systems that do not require testing underway.
2. **Haul-out** – to inspect wetted surface for damage and cleanliness prior to getting underway.
3. **Trial-run** – test function of main engines and equipment that cannot be proved dockside.
4. **Touch-up** – review all information and tests performed prior to ending survey inspection to ensure adequate detail has been acquired to complete report.