

BUYING A SECOND-HAND BOAT – THINGS TO CONSIDER

When you are in the market for a second-hand car, it is common practice to take someone with you who knows a bit about them. The same should happen with boats, but unfortunately many people buy a boat without obtaining advice from someone who “knows boats”.

If you are looking for a second-hand boat, we suggest you take someone along with you who can advise on the integrity of the vessel. There are a few basic tips on what to look out for in the hull that would be relatively easy for an experienced person to recognise.

CHECKING ALUMINIUM HULLS

The two areas that can be problematic in aluminium boats are electrolysis and fractured welds.

Electrolysis causes the aluminium to corrode and is due to the presence of dissimilar metals. It is important to keep a regular check on the hull as this corrosion will eventually result in holes in the aluminium. Areas to monitor include:

- around fastenings (bolts, screws and rivets)
- where the hull is in contact with trailer rollers and skids
- the bilge, where water and debris can sit for long periods.

Welding fractures particularly occur:

- at frame connections
- along the keel at the chines
- where any transom brackets are welded.

CHECKING GRP (FIBREGLASS) HULLS

The two problem areas in fibreglass boats are delamination and rotting of the core material and fractures in the glass laminate.

- Transom – completely remove the engine mounting bolts or bilge drain plugs to inspect the timber inside the laminate. Water can enter and become trapped inside, eventually rotting the timber and reducing the structural integrity of the transom.
- Frames and stringers – be aware of rotting. Remove any flooring to inspect the condition of these frames.

Glass laminate stress fractures can occur either in a panel or at a joint and develop under heavy load or point load areas such as:

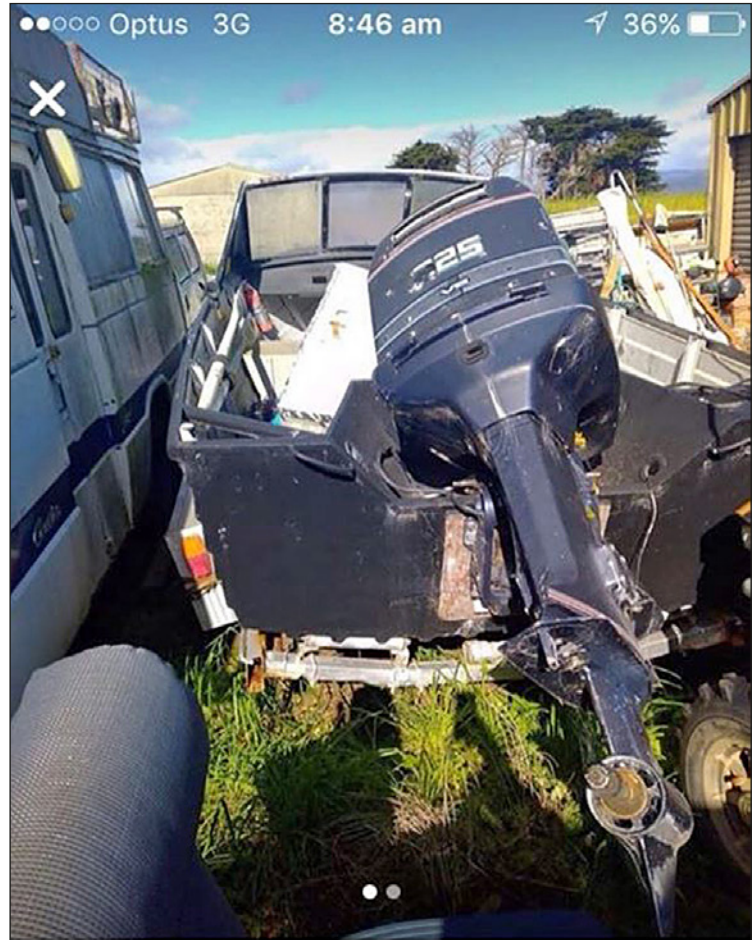
- where thwarts connect to the hull
- along the keel or chines
- gussets connecting the transom.

OTHER WORTHWHILE CHECKS

In addition to the hull, the seller may also be including all the safety gear, which could be old and out of date.

- Check the use-by date on the flares
- Does the EPIRB have battery life and current registration? Registration details will need updating with AMSA
- Are the life jackets the new AS4758 standard and if they are inflatables, are they in service?
- If there is a marine radio, is it a VHF or an old and redundant 27 MHz radio?

All these items need to be checked. If they need replacing, it could cost you a lot more than you think.



Sold pp boat

\$850

Updated on 14 hours ago

 **Send seller a message**

There is no such thing as a cheap boat – they are cheap for a reason

The engine should also be thoroughly inspected. Ask the date of the last service, take the cowling off and check the oil level, look for oil leaks and issues around gaskets.

Trailer boats need to be inspected from the winch strap to the back of the trailer. Check for rust, wobble the tyre to ensure the wheel bearings are sound and make sure the brakes and lights are

working. If the trailer is not in good condition, it is not only unsafe, but it could cost many thousands of dollars to repair or replace.

If you are considering buying a second-hand boat, make sure you do your research and check the hull and all the gear with someone who has good boating knowledge and some common sense! 