

Marine Hull – general instructions for attending surveyors

The surveyor's role

Primary: To provide an objective, factual representation of the incident as reported by the assured, through interviews, document perusal, attendance onboard and the application of sound technical knowledge and principle.

Secondary: 1) Assisting the assured's personnel with repair alternatives, advising on suitable yards, tendering etc. 2) Investigation of cause and advice on how to prevent similar occurrences arising in the future, or on other vessels. 3) Following up repair work. 4) Providing the insurer with timely estimates of total costs and time for repairs.

The survey

The surveyor must endeavor to establish an open and constructive relationship with the assured's representatives, including the Master, Chief Engineer and Superintendent to the extent applicable.

At least one of the assured's representatives should accompany the surveyor at all times whilst onboard, and all items brought to the surveyor's attention should be discussed onboard, and potential areas of disagreement brought to light at an early stage. Technical disagreements that are solved onboard at an early stage save both time and money.

First hand evidence must be collected where relevant, including photographs, statements, log extracts, records, measurements etc. The report is to be based on such evidence.

If the surveyor feels it necessary to obtain additional advice on specific technical aspects, the principle must be contacted before any action is taken.

Where class and/or flag state representatives attend the vessel, it is usually a good idea to coordinate a joint survey.

Where the vessel has been involved in a collision with another vessel, or contact with an FFO, then a joint survey of the damage done is usually necessary, together with the representative from the other party. It is very important that areas of disagreement are highlighted and discussed thoroughly on-site, and that a note is made of these areas for later inclusion in the report.

Reporting, general

The principle should be advised of the surveyor's preliminary opinion as to the scope and extent of damage as soon as this becomes reasonably clear, and in any event within 24 hours of attendance. This may either be an oral report or an email report.

The reporting ALWAYS goes through the principle's responsible claims handler.

Circumstances that arises special cause for concern must be reported back to the principle immediately. Examples would be knowledge that the vessel's class has expired or where there is clear evidence of sub-standard management.

A preliminary report should be sent to the principle in pdf format as soon as is reasonable and in any event within 7 days of attendance.

If tendering is necessary, the surveyor should send a separate update detailing the tender and all offers received, together with any applicable comments. As choice of repair yard will often be a matter of some urgency, this information may be transmitted orally, but should be followed up as soon as possible with an email or pdf report.

After initial attendance onboard, further attendance should be clarified with the principle and the assured's representative. It is usually not necessary for the surveyor to attend for the entire duration of repairs, and in minor cases, further attendance during repairs will not be necessary.

Further written reports should be submitted as and when appropriate as the repair progresses.

The final report is submitted once the surveyor has perused the relevant invoices as submitted by the assured. If the principle does not require the surveyor to go through the invoices, or if no claim materializes, this will be communicated to the surveyor.

The report

Overriding rule: the surveyor should be comfortable defending the contents of the report in a court of law, said contents being based on first hand evidence and the application of sound technical knowledge and principle.

The surveyor should avoid making ambiguous statements and avoid speculation.

The report should be issued without prejudice to the rights of the underwriters as per the conditions of the applicable insurance policies.

As a minimum, the formal preliminary pdf report should contain:

- 1) Vessel, IMO, GT, year of build, relevant technical data, place and date of survey and who was present.
- 2) A narrative of events, including pertinent dates and times
- 3) The scope and extent of damage
- 4) The necessary repairs – temporary/permanent
- 5) The cause of the damage (if possible to ascertain clearly at this stage)
- 6) The estimated total repair costs and total repair time
- 7) Relevant photographs and other technical diagrams and drawings that help to explain the incident and nature of the damage

The final report should contain the following:

- 1) Vessel, IMO, GT, year of build, relevant technical data, place and date of survey and who was present.

- 2) A narrative of events, including pertinent dates and times
- 3) The scope and extent of damage
- 4) The effected repairs – temporary/permanent + tendering information
- 5) The cause of the damage, including owner's allegations and surveyor's comments
- 6) The total cost of repairs, the total cost of owners work performed, total cost of general services, including a breakdown and comments where necessary
- 7) The surveyor's opinion on the time repair work would have taken if carried out separately and the time owner's work would have taken if carried out separately
- 8) Comments on any measures/costs incurred to save time
- 9) Relevant photographs and other technical diagrams and drawings that help to explain the incident and nature of the damage

Special requirements for Loss of Hire reporting

In general, the format of a report for Loss of Hire is the same as for Hull & Machinery. There will however be less emphasis on costs and more emphasis on time.

The preliminary report should indicate the estimated total time required to get the vessel back in service, and the surveyor should also make recommendations on the proposed repair options with a view to reducing overall repair time.

Further, in his dialogue with the owner's representatives, the surveyor should:

- 1) Keep a dialogue with the superintendent AND the principle with respect to the repair times and possible ways of reducing same
- 2) Advise the Master to keep a detailed log during the repairs
- 3) Advise on potential repair yards and alternative repair solutions if appropriate
- 4) Consider the possibility of bonus arrangements with yards if this could help speed up the repairs
- 5) Notify the principle before any decisions are made in this respect

The final report should contain:

- 1) Vessel, IMO, GT, year of build, relevant technical data, place and date of survey and who was present.
- 2) A narrative of events, including pertinent dates and times
- 3) The scope and extent of damage
- 4) The effected repairs – temporary/permanent + tendering information

- 5) The cause of the damage, including owner's allegations and surveyor's comments
- 6) A detailed breakdown of time used, including sailing, towage, waiting, repairs etc. to the nearest minute. This should ideally be based on the Master's log.
- 7) The surveyor's opinion on the time repair work would have taken if carried out separately and the time owner's work would have taken if carried out separately
- 8) Comments on any measures/costs incurred to save time, and exactly how much time has in fact been saved.
- 9) A note on the type of trade the vessel is engaged in (T/C, V/C, CoA etc.)
- 10) Relevant photographs and other technical diagrams and drawings that help to explain the incident and nature of the damage

Conflicts

Where it is clear that there are differences of opinion as to scope, extent and/or cause of damage, or any other matter of significance for the claim, this must be reported to the principle immediately, such that a constructive dialogue with the assured can be established at an early stage of the claim.