

Off the Trailer

Tough enough

Stabicraft's big new 2570 Supercab ticks a lot of boxes as a long-range fishing platform.





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The words 'big', 'bold', 'brawny' and 'beaut riding' come to mind when Stabicraft are considered and the 2570 Supercab fits the bill to a tee. First-up, though, I need to declare an interest here as, after owning a string of boats, including various twin-hulled craft along with a slew of deep-vee models, I purchased my own Stabicraft several years back. After several decades of offshore fishing, diving and sea rescue work, I have come to treasure craft that provide exceptional ride comfort in rough seas, and Stabicraft delivers that in spades.

Stabicraft is especially proud of the total buoyancy of its unique hull design, with its continuous tubes of individually sealed flotation chambers that provide what Stabicraft describes as a "life-ring" on the upper-outer extremities and which provide positive buoyancy. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that this buoyancy, being spread around the boat, as opposed to the much more common under-floor method, means that, in the event of swamping, the craft will maintain a neutral attitude, sitting virtually level in the water. The 3300lt of buoyancy built into this craft is more than that required to maintain flotation.

The New Zealand manufacturer proudly boasts that this vessel is available in three unique versions and is designed with 24 years' experience of manufacturing boats to tame the Roaring 40s, which play havoc with the waters around its Invercargill,

South Island base. All its models have to prove themselves in this harsh and unforgiving environment, which means that they very rarely encounter tougher conditions, wherever they end up.

The 2570 is claimed to be the pinnacle of Stabicraft innovation and, standard on all three models, the large bow rails and platform provide more than just a visual point of difference to the boat as they also play a big part in vessel safety. Launch and retrieval is safer, with more room, more grab rails and easier access than previous models. With its length of 7.85m (25.7 feet) and external beam of 2.49m (8.16 feet), the 2570 Supercab promises serious blue water capability, boosted by its generously proportioned cockpit space.

RUGGED

Up front, we find a very solid bow rail of a decent height, along with sections of non-skid material; two thoughtful features that enhance crew safety. A rugged cross bollard provides a substantial tie-off point for the anchor rode, which is controlled by a Stress Free anchor winch from the safety of the cabin. A SARCA anchor is a good choice and access to the tie-off bollard is via the generously proportioned watertight access hatch in the cabin roof, or by walking around the hardtop, a choice made safe thanks to well positioned hand rails.

The cabin features the usual V-berth arrangement, with in-fill, and would sleep two fair-sized adults in reasonable comfort, while the cabin side-pockets provide storage for the various items generally carried aboard. Carpet lining helps to moderate cabin noise, although a metal vessel will always produce more sound, whether underway or at anchor, than will a fibreglass one. However, the superb strength offered by 6mm-thick aluminium hull plates and the safety provided by the craft's buoyancy tanks more than makes up for a bit more noise.

Stabicrafts are built to exacting standards, with a compartmentalised hull that includes two underfloor buoyancy tanks, the fuel tank (or tanks, depending on options) and full-length bearers and cross members, all of which add up to a super-strong craft, with immense rigidity. The checker-plate cockpit sole is sealed and welded and on this model the pontoons are the Stabicraft Generation III designs that are made from 4mm aluminium plate, and which feature a narrower

Bollard-style tie-offs underpin Stabicraft practicality.





Above: The Superfish transom boasts a generous bait station and live bait tank as well as good maintenance access.

Above right: A well set up helm with excellent visibility.

and taller configuration than earlier designs. The pontoons also have more defined reverse chines that, being narrower, provide more internal beam, which comes in at a generous 2.04m (6.69ft). Greater stability at rest is but one benefit of reverse chines, as they also tend to create lift at speed, when the water is thrust downward, thus giving more rise to the hull.

Stepping aboard, one is immediately impressed by the spaciousness of this vessel. It boasts a generous 5.37sqm deck, with many practical features, including the superb Superfish transom, with generous bait station and large-capacity live bait tank, and which also boasts a very handy viewing window. An under-floor 200lt kill tank incorporates a waste pump in another example of practicality, while a gas strut enhances the raising and lowering of the lid. Provision for a wash-down pump is a standard feature and the test craft was so equipped.



The helm station is well set up, with generous head room for the lankier amongst us and the steering wheel falls readily to hand, whether standing or sitting in the swivelling, well-padded bucket seat. Vision from the helm is excellent, encompassing 270 degrees of the surroundings. The large, sliding windows and tall, toughened glass windscreen would certainly add to a feeling of confidence when traversing a particularly nasty seaway.

The dash area is large enough for a comprehensive array of electronics and the owner of this craft has made the most of it, with a Garmin GPSMAP 5012 fish finder/chart plotter, along with a comprehensive GMI 10 Digital Marine Instrument Display that keeps the skipper

STABICRAFT

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fully informed of all vital functions. The control levers fall readily to hand and, together with the placement of the steering wheel, provide good ergonomics, which is essential for long journeys in the rough seas these craft are built to withstand.

LONG RANGE

The owner of this craft specified the optional 500lt fuel capacity over the standard 360lt version to maximise the craft's range and together with his choice of twin Suzuki DF150 outboards, means that high speed runs to distant destinations are eminently practical.

The Stabicraft's unique hull design makes the transition from displacement to planing very smooth and, in fact, this hull allows the big vessel to plane at around 10 knots (18.5km/h), with the craft remaining fairly level when underway.

Now while the sea in these photos appears reasonably calm – which it was – nevertheless a smallish, but somewhat confused swell made for a deceptively lumpy seaway. Running across it at speed, the big craft took off and landed without any serious jarring. In these, and worse conditions, it doesn't take long to appreciate what a relatively soft ride Stabicrafts provide. You find yourself bracing for the inevitable hard impact, only to be relieved when the hull absorbs most of the anticipated shock. After a while in a rough sea, you find yourself running harder, with clamped jaws and white knuckles replaced by a wide grin and new-found confidence.

Stability at rest is impressive, despite a transom deadrise of 21.8 degrees. This is thanks to the aforementioned reversed chines, while the relatively high-sided cockpit coamings add to the safety factors inherent in this blue water craft.

In hard turns at speed, the Stabicraft does not progressively heel over, as does a deep-vee-hulled craft, but once the pontoon digs in, it remains at that angle and the sideways G-forces increase substantially. This is where a good handhold is essential as the grip on the water achieved by the unique hull design is remarkable and despite some serious attempts, we were unable to detect any significant cavitation in even the tightest of turns.

With brand new motors bolted to the twin engine pod, we did not push the envelope to the max. Nevertheless, after a quick transition to plane, relatively modest throttle movements produced impressive surges of power and



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acceleration. So much so, in fact, that had it not been for the fact that the craft was basically unloaded, I may have considered it to be overpowered. It certainly took very little time to go from a displacement speed of around 5 knots (9.3km/h) to over 40 knots (74km/h) and the helmsman would be well advised to warn all aboard before he puts the hammer down. However, when the 500lt fuel tank is filled to capacity and ice boxes and ice, freezers and food and drink supplies are all stowed aboard, along with several hefty crew, it will no doubt be, like the baby bear's porridge – just right. And with

Top: Stability at rest is a big Stabi' plus.

Above left: The cabin is roomy and uncluttered.

The 2570 delivers the customary smooth ride offered by the unique Stabicraft hull layout.



I found the Stabicraft 2570 to be a superb vessel and ideal for long range fishing

this owner's intention to venture long distances, I would suggest that this combination of boat and motor would be hard to improve on.

POWER TO BURN


The Suzuki DFI150 motor is an inline four-cylinder, four-stroke engine, with a DOHC four-valve powerhead that produces 150hp (110kW). At 2867cc, the Suzuki DFI150 and its bigger brother, the DFI175, are large-capacity powerplants, which offer plenty of torque to get things moving quickly and relatively effortlessly. On our test craft they are aided by 16in diameter stainless steel propellers, with a 21in pitch.

This boat has optional trim tabs fitted, which is a good thing, despite the fact that Stabicraft are not especially sensitive when it comes to trim. However, when it comes to high speed travel in strong crosswinds, trim tabs allow total control of lateral attitude to keep a craft upright and therefore fully benefiting from hull design parameters aimed at soft riding.

I found very little to fault with this craft, although I would like to see some padding on the end of each bunk so that contact with the helmsman's or passenger's shins is a little less painful and I am not totally happy with the way the pedestal seat bases are fixed to the floor, mine coming loose during the test. In fairness, I was told

that it was due to improper tightening in the rush to get the craft ready for both the test and a boat show the next day.

Overall, I found the Stabicraft 2570 to be a superb vessel and ideal for long-range fishing, diving or cruising. At a RRP of \$179,000 as tested, this craft is at the upper end of the market, but I would suggest is, nevertheless, value for money and ideal for the intended purpose.

Optional extras added around \$18,000 to the base price. These include the Superfish transom box, twin 250lt fuel tanks, the twin engine pod, a wash-down pump kit, rear boarding ladder, rear cabin wall with sliding door, two-tone metallic paint with clear on external pontoons and a port-side windscreen wiper. In addition, a windscreen washer kit was added, plus a V-berth infill, tube matting on the cockpit sole and gunwales and Lenco trim tabs. Altogether a comprehensive list. 

SPECIFICATIONS: STABICRAFT 2570 SUPERCAB

LOA:	7.86m
Beam:	2.49m
Deadrise at transom:	21.8 degrees
Displacement (hull only):	1750kg
Fuel capacity:	500lt
Engines:	2 x Suzuki DFI150hp four-stroke outboards
Passenger capacity:	9
Price as tested:	\$179,000

More information: Christies Beach Marine, tel (08) 8387 6422, web: www.stabicraft.com.