

# Rodman

1250

BOAT REPORT

*If you are looking for plenty of boat but without unnecessary frills, this Spanish newcomer could fit the bill. What does it bring to the UK market?*





## BOAT REPORT

If you have spent any time cruising in Spanish waters, the Rodman marque will not be unfamiliar. Rodman Polyships are one of the largest and most versatile yards in that country.

They build commercial vessels in both GRP and steel, along with specialist fast patrol craft for the police and the military. But they also have a range of solid, unfussy leisure craft, designed to take you boating without the price premium that comes with too many frills.

The range extends from a partially enclosed 20-footer to a flybridge 41-footer. All share the same underlying nuance, that of the sports-fisher, but this is played up or down as required. And, interestingly, all are shaft-drive, keeping the engineering simple and cost-conscious.

Rodman made their UK debut at the Southampton Boat Show in September, being imported by Fairline distributors Peters plc. Changeable autumn weather gave us plenty of testing conditions to help us establish how much workboat ruggedness has been passed on to the flagship cruiser, the 1250.



### Flybridge

Although access to the flybridge is via a ladder, rather than stairs, it is nicely set-up with good handrails and wooden treads, and the lower portion is part and parcel of the moulding that runs across the aft wheelhouse bulkhead. We were less happy about the fact that the opening does not have any

hatch or protective guardrail, to save someone up top missing their footing and falling through, especially as the helm is right adjacent, but this shortcoming can readily be rectified.

The flybridge is not large but its layout works well, with a

convivial U-shaped settee ahead of the helm console. This allows for a couple of people to sit either side and stay in communication with the skipper while underway.

The settee can serve as a dinette when the boat is at rest, or as sunpad once an infill cushion is brought into play. The seat mouldings are cut back in to allow better legroom, but of course this restricts their usefulness as far as stowage is concerned, and the lockers underneath are quite narrow.

Rather plain in appearance, the helm console is in fact quite adequate. Engine instrument panels are set



within a Perspex-covered bits tray, which is a nice touch, while the fascia ahead of this is both a good size and well angled to take quite an array of navigation instruments. It is topped-off with a compass.

The siting of the adjustable helm seat is fine for the vertical, stainless steel wheel, but on our test boat the set-up of the throttles was not ideal. The twin levers at each helm were linked directly together, rather than through an intermediate actuator, which made them stiff and springy. Peters tell us they are looking into changing this.

### Bathing platform

By today's standards, the fully integrated bathing platform is quite slim. But what you lose here you gain in cockpit space, just a step away through the transom gate.

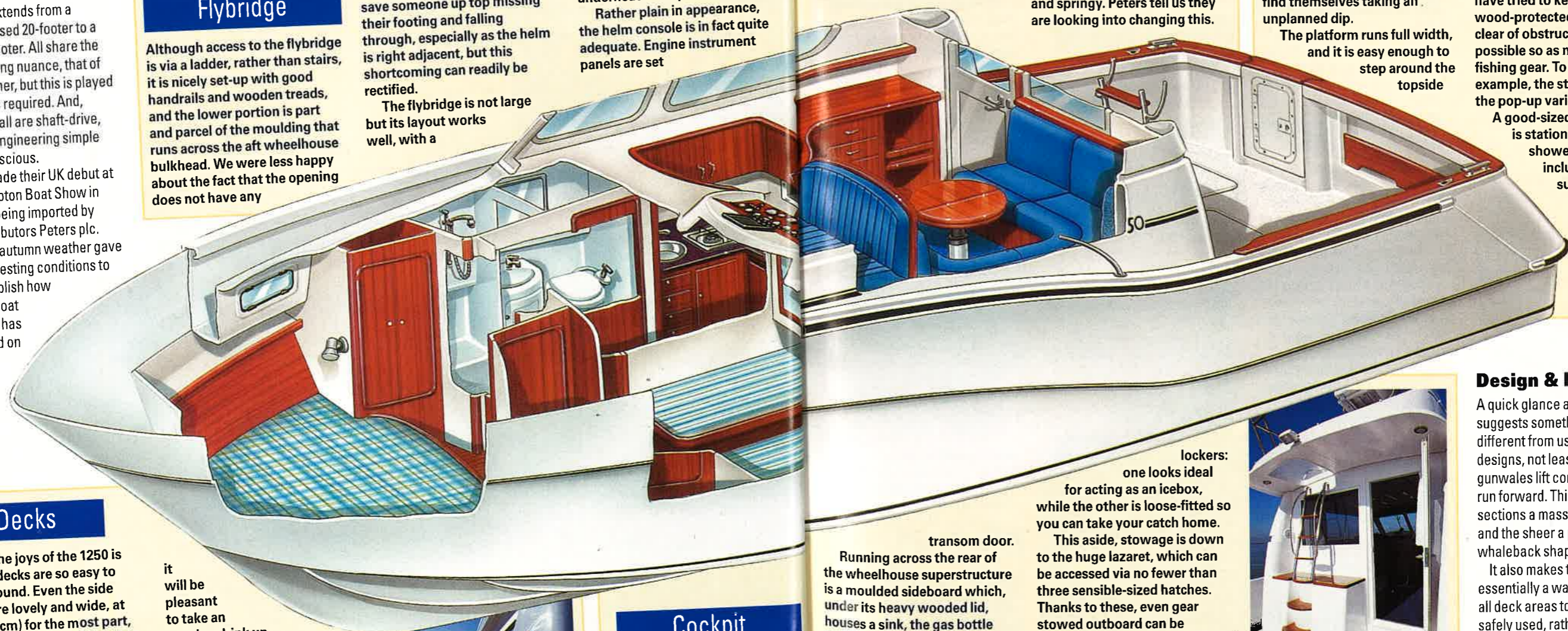
We understand that the catch on the good-sized gate is to be modified to make it less susceptible to opening by accident, which is important because it opens outwards and anyone leaning against it could find themselves taking an unplanned dip.

The platform runs full width, and it is easy enough to step around the topside



return if you are boarding from alongside. It would have been nice to find a helping handrail, but in fairness the builders have tried to keep the wood-protected coamings as clear of obstructions as possible so as not to tangle any fishing gear. To this end, for example, the stern cleats are of the pop-up variety.

A good-sized bathing ladder is stationed to port and a shower is also included. There is sufficient bulk to the transom coaming to have telescopic davits fitted here if required.



### Decks

One of the joys of the 1250 is that its decks are so easy to walk around. Even the side decks are lovely and wide, at 18in (46cm) for the most part, and bordered by a solid wall of gunwale topped off with a guardrail to a height of 3ft 2in (0.97m).

Right forward, a small seat is incorporated in the coachroof moulding, and in sunny climes



it will be pleasant to take an evening drink up here while at anchor.

The ground tackle is handled by an electric windlass tucked within the raised gunwale. A hatch gives access to the locker, which is deep but would benefit from being segmented for easier stowage of fenders and warps.

In addition to the 10in (25cm) pop-up cleats on both quarters, there are 12in (30cm) cleats forward and a smaller set amidships. All in all, mooring hardware is adequate for this size of craft, but only just.



### Cockpit

Measuring little short of 8ft x 12ft (2.50m x 3.75m), the cockpit has been kept uncluttered for fishing purposes. There is plenty of space to organise any free-standing furniture you require, although a drop-down transom bench would have been a useful option to offer.

In fact, use has been made of the transom coaming by sculpting in a handy shelf, and a locker is incorporated into the

transom door. Running across the rear of the wheelhouse superstructure is a moulded sideboard which, under its heavy wooded lid, houses a sink, the gas bottle locker and a couple of bin-type



lockers: one looks ideal for acting as an icebox, while the other is loose-fitted so you can take your catch home.

This aside, stowage is down to the huge lazaret, which can be accessed via no fewer than three sensible-sized hatches. Thanks to these, even gear stowed outboard can be retrieved quite easily, although



the wings of the compartment are occupied by the water tanks. On the down side there is no false bottom to keep things clear of the bilge, and we would have preferred to see the steering gear boxed in so that the rudder stocks cannot be fouled.

### Design & layout

A quick glance at the 1250's profile suggests something a little different from usual flybridge designs, not least because the gunwales lift confidently on their run forward. This gives the forward sections a massive amount of flare and the sheer a pronounced whaleback shape.

It also makes the boat essentially a walkaround, allowing all deck areas to be easily and safely used, rather than casting them simply as a necessary evil when it comes to mooring.

The cockpit is spacious in the extreme, not least because it has no form of fixed seating, although the commodious lazaret will swallow plenty of loose chairs and a table. Up top, the flybridge is not large by conventional standards but will still seat six on settees arranged ahead of the helm console.

Accommodation is very practical, with headroom rarely dropping below 6ft 4in (1.93m). There is plenty



of smart cherry joinery, in general finished to a most adequate standard. Some of the varnish work lets it down slightly, but we were pleased to find that the seat and bunk bases, together with any cut-outs, also benefit from a coat or two rather than being left as bare wood.

From the light, comfortable saloon with its interior helm position, it is a couple of steps down to an open galley, while two well-proportioned cabins share a single toilet compartment complete with a separate shower cubicle. Whilst the main part of the saloon is laid to carpet over a GRP sole, the cabins and galley are finished with attractive wood decking.

The hull itself is a medium-vee form which extends right back under the bathing platform, with sections of 23° amidships and 12° right aft. It is fashioned with deep, scalloped tunnels, which have allowed the engines to be positioned lower in the hull, hence keeping the height of the cabin sole low and the shaft angle shallow for maximum efficiency.

A small section of keel runs out from the quite deep forefoot. Although this fades aft of the propellers, and cannot do much to protect them or the sizeable rudders, it appears to make what is a relatively performance-orientated hull turn quite flat. There are two sets of sprayrails plus a wide chine and deep knuckle in the topsides.

Although its fit-out is less consummate than on most boats of its size, the 1250 is relatively heavy, and it seems the weight has gone into the hull and deck structure rather than furnishings and ancillaries. Indeed, wherever you look there are huge stiffeners bracing the hull, and the GRP deck moulding is engineered in such a way that it forms an inner liner to the raised bulwarks, so that these gain in stiffness and strength as well as benefiting from being washed down easily.

Engine options run from twin 350hp to twin 480hp diesels, from Volvo Penta or Yanmar. Our test boat had one of the least potent options, Volvo Penta TAMD 63Ps developing 370hp apiece, but with



**Saloon**

The flybridge overhang gives a good measure of protection to the door into the wheelhouse,

which is a step up from cockpit level. Inside the saloon, the deckhead enjoys a neat nautical stripe effect using wood strips to break up the fabric panelling.

The sideboard to starboard has the same fresh styling, with a curved double cupboard, drawer unit and shelving below a fiddled surface. Across from this is a comfortable dinette with a neat expandable table that will allow up to six to sit around it.

An infill is included, to make this into an occasional extra berth, and the wooden seat-base incorporates a number of lockers, accessed mainly via side hatches rather than by lifting the cushion.

The view out when seated is good, with the windows sensibly proportioned. A sliding section on each side offers ventilation.

**Interior helm**

Two people can sit at the helm position, the wheel being offset towards the centreline rather than outboard so that either watchkeeper can play skipper.

The console struck us as being altogether too flat to make the engine gauges easy to view from a sitting position, and the navigation instruments fascia suffers almost as badly, so every now and again you might need to hop to your feet.

This lack of angle detracts from what is otherwise a spacious, well laid-out console where controls,



instrumentation and switches fall readily to hand. A good-sized compass tops off the console, and a few smaller bits of kit can be accommodated on a head-height panel above the screen.

Outboard, at knee level, is a covered panel that gives access to the battery switches and fuel shut-offs. A fiddled shelf above neatly takes care of loose small items.



these it was no slouch and the package seemed a good match.

**Performance & handling**

It was not far short of a Force 6 that was whipping across Chichester Harbour on the day of our performance test in the 1250, making the bar at the entrance too

hairy to contemplate, so we had to console ourselves by conducting trials in the special speed dispensation area in comparatively sheltered waters. Even here, the conditions were such as to make it apparent that there is substance beneath the hull's macho posturing.

It readily cut across the short,

steep, violent chop, and its sprayrails, wide chine and deep knuckle did a commendable job of preventing large amounts of wind-borne spray finding its way aboard — even if the horizontal rain made it necessary to helm from inside in any case.

The view ahead through the three-part screen was good, even

**Galley**

The galley is L-shaped with a Corian worksurface, oddly bereft of a fiddle when almost every other surface on board has one. This oversight is compounded by the rather exposed nature of the built-in twin-burner gas hob, which has a very loose pan-holder and is likely to spill the beans given any movement.

Other appointments include a good-sized stainless steel sink, a large fridge/freezer and a built-in microwave.

Stowage is like the curate's egg: good in parts. There is a neat set of drawers and useful overhead cupboards, but the main cupboard beneath the worktop, although extremely large, has no shelving and is unlined.

It is also a missed opportunity that the countertop is not fashioned with a recess along its outboard edge, to increase the amount of space under the encroaching side deck and create a secure stowage for jars such as tea, coffee and sugar.

Cut-outs in the wood-effect decking give access to the various bilge sections, of which the boat has five in all. The adjacent steps have hinging treads to provide extra stowage space or, more usefully still, house a rubbish bin. Ventilation is via an opening eye-height port.



**Forward cabin**

In a bit of lateral thinking, the forecabin's double bed is orientated like a vee-berth, so that the occupants' feet are

pointing forward, rather than having the headboard across the forward bulkhead.

This works well, in that the berth is hugely wide at the shoulder, over 6ft 0in (1.83m) in fact, as well as 6ft 3in (1.91m)

in length. There are shelves on each side, and handily positioned reading lights.

The adjacent hanging lockers are of a useful size, with shoe lockers at their base. Clothes storage is augmented by three drawers in the bunk-base, while the rest of the huge void here is accessed via a number of hatches beneath the mattress.



**Toilet**

Rather than put an extra door into the forward bulkhead and make the forecabin en-suite, the builders have used the extra space to fashion a separate shower stall into the toilet compartment.

The showering area is not the largest we have seen, but is still adequate. It is curtained off by a vinyl screen, and

thoughtfully includes a fiddled shelf for the loofah and shower gel.

The rest of the compartment is roomy enough, with a good-sized, fully moulded basin. Unfortunately the cupboard under this suffers from a very basic finish, like the one in the galley, being unlined and with no shelf.

An opening port provides the only means of ventilation, there being no extractor.



**Midships cabin**

As with the forward cabin, the midships cabin's berths face the other way round from what one usually expects: the occupants' feet face aft. This is because, as a result of having a low saloon sole, there is insufficient headroom above the bunks to sit against the forward bulkhead.

The berths are generous in length at 6ft 4in (1.93m), and just over 2ft (0.61m) wide, making them adequate if not exactly roomy. The voids beneath have plenty of hatches in them to make for extra stowage, which for the most part is clear of the bilge.

There is plenty of room towards the head of the berths, close to the door, to stand and dress.

Clothes storage is down to a

double wardrobe which has hanging space on one side and shelves on the other. A mirrored pair of doors in the bulkhead give excellent access to the wiring and controls behind the helm.



with the wipers kept heartily employed, although we were a little disappointed to find they were not self-parking. Visibility towards either quarter is also unimpaired. Our main reservation about the interior helm (given that the rather agricultural throttle system is already being rethought) was that the shallow angle of the console meant we had to peer over any instruments rather than take them in at a glance.

The Rodman made easy progress over the waves, even at full-throttle, which gave a clear 29 knots. Not only that but the large rudders nipped the boat round in a couple of boat lengths in double-quick time, even against the wind.

When we dropped our speed the bow would not be pushed off track, and our progress was just as well defined. Pull right back to idle, and it is possible to maintain a



## Engine room

Engine access for day-to-day checks could not be simpler, with a hinged hatch in the saloon sole opening to allow you to drop down on to a treadplate towards the front of the compartment.

Here, you can quickly give the raw-water strainers the once-over, before doing an about-face and checking the pre-filters tucked along the central alley between the engines. Dipsticks and coolant levels can just as readily be inspected, and room enough has been left above the engines to allow these to be topped up. Even for fairly major



servicing, there is sufficient room right over and around the engines to get at the necessary filters and belts without troubling to get any more of the sole raised. This is a good thing because, although it is possible to take up more of the sole, it comprises not loose panels but a sizeable moulding that requires some perseverance to free.

One reason that the layout works is that the fuel tanks are located across the front of the compartment, rather than

outboard, which means there is plenty of room to get at service points once you ease round the sides. Our only slight misgiving was the location of the battery boxes, tucked under the side decks, which must make these hefty items awkward to remove even if there appears to be sufficient clearance to check them.

The shaft logs, braced by the aft bulkhead, are clear of obstructions. For easier access to them, there is a hatch let into the cockpit.



harbour/river speed of under 5 knots without continually dropping in and out of gear.

For close-quarters manoeuvring, the rudders again have real effect, and the hull can be pushed around quite steadily, despite the extremely windy conditions, stiff throttle controls and the absence of a bow-thruster. From the flybridge helm you get a good view astern and down the starboard side, which is useful when making

an approach to get a crewman ashore off the bathing platform.

A second excursion a few days later gave us a very different feel for the 1250, as we ran out to sea, over the residual swell towards the Isle of Wight. Again, we found the boat pleasingly responsive to the hull and throttles as we worked our way around our photoboot.

As a cruise setting, 2400rpm sees the boat clipping along at an unfussy 24 knots, and unless the

wind really pipes up you are not likely to have to come back from that. At these revs, fuel consumption is about what one might expect at 1.24mpg, giving an adequate range.

No trim tabs are fitted, either as standard or even as an option, and certainly we had no need of them, whether to level the boat up in a crosswind or dip the bow. It is always pleasing to find a hull which can maintain just the right attitude by itself.

Although the cockpit could not be called peaceful once the throttles were pushed beyond 2000rpm, sound levels from the engines were not unreasonable. The main source of noise pervading the interior appeared to be resonating bulkheads, which could be cured with some extra bracing.

### Conclusions

We thought the Rodman 1250 refreshingly different when we first set eyes on it, not least because it gives buyers the opportunity to acquire a no-nonsense 40-footer without having to shoulder the

### BUILD

glass-reinforced plastic

### RCD

build category B

### DIMENSIONS

#### LOA

41ft 5in (12.62m)

#### HULL LENGTH

39ft 3in (11.98m)

#### BEAM

13ft 9in (4.21m)

#### DRAUGHT

3ft 2in (0.95m)

#### AIR DRAUGHT

15ft 9in (4.8m)

#### DISPLACEMENT

11.3 tons

#### FUEL CAPACITY

286gal (1300lt)

#### WATER CAPACITY

88gal (400lt)

### ENGINES

twin Volvo Penta TAMD 63Ps  
6cyl, 5.5lt diesels  
370hp at 2800rpm

### PRICE

£161,797 inc VAT as standard

### SUPPLIERS

Peters plc, Chichester Marina,  
Chichester, Sussex PO20 7EJ.  
Tel: 01243 511381.

### BUILDERS

Rodman Polyships,  
Apartado Postal 501, 36200 Vigo,  
Spain. Tel: +34 986 811810.



expense of a sophisticated fit-out.

Indeed the boat has a great deal going for it, not least in the sea-keeping and engineering departments, being solid underfoot and very capable underway. There is also loads of usable exterior space, which could perhaps be made more versatile still by the addition of a few drop-down seats around the cockpit.

Add a cleanly styled interior, for the most part well finished, and comfortable accommodation for four, and you have a cruiser which could spearhead the arrival in British waters of a new Spanish armada.

## Rodman 1250

### PERFORMANCE & FUEL CONSUMPTION

sound levels dB(A)

rpm	knots#	gph†	lph†	mpg†	range*	trim	saln	midcab	ckpt	flybg
1200	8.9	—	—	—	—	2.5	69	74	79	69
1500	10.8	—	—	—	—	3.5	72	74	81	72
1800	14.1	12.1	55	1.17	268	4.5	73	76	82	76
2000	17.9	13.4	62	1.34	307	5.5	76	78	84	80
2200	20.9	17.2	78	1.21	277	4.5	79	80	87	82
2400	24.1	19.4	88	1.24	284	4.5	80	82	88	83
2600	26.1	24.0	109	1.09	250	4.0	81	84	88	84
2900	29.4	33.9	154	0.87	199	4.0	83	85	90	84

# Measured by GPS. † Calculated from engine manufacturers' figures. \* Allows 20% margin.

CONDITIONS wind southerly Force 6, sea moderate

LOAD fuel 80%, water 100%, crew 3