

Although a list of the NBTHK Shinsa fees are available on the website, there is very limited information published about costs and expenses that will be incurred in addition to the Shinsa fees in the transportation and handling of blades and kodogu which are charged by an agent or dealer. Expenses that are normally incurred in addition to Shinsa fees include the following:

- Shipping to and from Japan. One or two blades average about \$30 to \$40 EMS each way.
- Registration of swords with the Tocho 6,300 yen per item. Fittings do not require registration.

It generally takes three hours to get a sword ready for export; measurements, oshigata, cover letters, customs forms, invoices, packing, etc. A broker will also have to spend additional time on inspection, repacking, shipping, and invoicing upon return. Frequently, the kanteisho are shipped later, so involve an additional mailing. Fees should run between \$150 and \$200 per item.

Once in Japan the swords are cleared at the Tocho which meets once a month. To be able to clear swords requires having a permanent address in Japan, filling out a good deal of paperwork, and paying the above mentioned licensing fee. Then the swords must be carried to the Honbu for submission. There is paperwork every step of the way. Then for export, there is an inspection and de-licensing, this process takes about ten days.

Normally, brokers in Japan will charge between 30,000 and 40,000 yen per item for this service. They will handle tosogu for a good deal less.

There are some American's who travel back and forth to Japan on a regular basis, and as such they perform all functions, and therefore charge a little more. However, the aggregate cost is about the same. Since currency fluctuations are a fact of life, so the cost at completion can be very different from the original estimate.

Roughly the cost per blade, exclusive of shinsa, should be approximately:

- \$ 60.00 registration\*
- \$ 70.00 postage to Japan & back\*\*
- \$300.00 broker fee in Japan
- \$150.00 broker fee in the USA
- \$680.00 per sword...

While the NBTHK-AB as an organization can not recommend a particular broker, by asking collectors and people in the business you can easily find out who is a reputable broker and who is not.

- \*Tied to yen/dollar exchange.
- \*\* Exclusive of domestic mailing.
- \*\*\* This is only an estimate.