

FT vs Leggett (40mins)

20th November

0915

Result - Pass

As with everyone else, arrived 15mins early and signed in, as well as handing in my phone. Leggett came out at 0915 and introduced himself, and took my TRB and workbooks. He then went back into his office and left me in the waiting room whilst he looked at the workbooks, for about 10mins. Afterwards he came out and led me into the exam room. He gave no official warning as to when the exam starts, it starts as soon as you walk in the room.

First question he asked me was about the movable bulkheads that we used to have on the Arklow vessels. This threw me somewhat, as much of my revision was based around my last vessel, but I realise I should have seen this coming as the Arklow vessels are regular visitors to Liverpool and he no doubt knows them well. I talked about risk assessments, correct PPE and PPC, safety harnesses because of the risk of falling into the hold. He asked me how many people it took to move the bulkhead, and what the roles were of each. He asked me what the main risk of doing a job like this on such a regular basis was. I'd just read an article in Seaways in the waiting room about complacency in terms of Bridge Resource Management, and answered with this. I think that was what he was looking for as he moved on pretty quickly.

Next thing he asked me about was Passage Planning. He has clearly heard the APEM thing many times, I got through less than a minute of talking about Appraisal before he stopped me.

Put a ship in front of me. Then he put a white marker on the port bow and said you have an MOB, what are your actions. Rattled through the initial actions, I suspect I might have missed some as he didn't stop me right away, but when I started going through the Williamson turn with the model he moved on.

Asked what maintenance you would carry out on FFA. I talked about hydrants and hoses first, general condition etc. Moved on to extinguishers, general check, and mentioned inverting the powder extinguishers at which point he stopped me. He moved on to ask me what my actions would be on joining a new ship as a third officer. Mooring lines, general condition, gangway/security, personal safety, before moving on doing a handover and checking lifeboat condition, condition of the davits etc.

How would you launch a lifeboat in an abandon ship situation? Went through the procedure on the container ship. I talked about the release mechanism. He asked me if I had the Japanese version of the release hooks, used a name that I had never heard before. He wasn't very complimentary about Japanese ship building! Asked me how we carried out drills for the lifeboat. I said we used to lower an embarkation ladder, as the ship hadn't been into dry dock to have fall prevention devices fitted. He commented about how that is much more dangerous than just lowering the lifeboat with people inside. Then asked me the purpose of the fall prevention device and what they were used for.

You are going down to the aft mooring station during unberthing. Started on the bridge with brief from the pilot and master. Risk assessment, crew wearing correct PPE/PPC. Hand signals with person operating the winch. Safety of the crew, crew away from snap back zones, no bights in ropes. Mentioned that we would take tugs, and said that we would make sure all crew were standing well clear of tug lines when weight was coming on. Moved me on after this.

ROR

Asked me to tell him about rule 5. I assumed with the way he phrased the question he wanted more than for me to just parrot the rule at him so explained about lookout mostly in my own words, although borrowing some of the phrases from the rule. He seemed happy with my answer.

Asked me to define a vessel engaged in fishing. This time I parroted the relevant part of rule 3.

Asked for some examples of vessel restricted in ability to manoeuvre. I gave him underwater operations, minesweepers and vessels engaged in towing where the nature of the tow severely hampers her ability to manoeuvre.

Put a vessel on my starboard side. What are your responsibilities?

Put a vessel on my port side. What are your responsibilities?

Put a vessel ahead of me, maybe a point to port, that I was overtaking. Again, what would I do?

Put a vessel in a head on situation.

Put a sailing vessel crossing from my port side. Responsibilities?

You are approaching restricted visibility, what are your actions? Put a vessel on my port beam, I started launching into a spiel about not altering towards a vessel on or abaft the beam, but he stopped me and said how do you know what he is doing? I backtracked and said I would first acquire him on radar, and he put two arrows on to indicate his relative vector and true vector. Then I said I would alter to starboard.

Showed me a starboard hand lateral mark, what is it, describe the light.

Showed me a west cardinal mark, describe the light, you're heading south what do you do?

Showed me safe water mark, describe the light.

Asked me what the lights would be for a fishing vessel. I said red over white. He then said what would be the extra lights for a fishing vessel with its nets fast around an obstruction. I said two red lights in a vertical line. I may have had a lucky escape on this one, as those lights are for trawlers only. Leggett didn't seem to notice though. He asked me what the International Code of Signals was and what the code flag would be for a fishing vessel with its nets made fast around an obstruction.

Got the smartie board out and put a towing vessel, less than 50m in length, tow less than 200m viewed on its starboard side. Put it on my port side and asked what my responsibilities would be.

Finished off by asking me what the weather was today. Asked me to take a guess at the pressure, I had no idea and said so. He told me, and then said congratulations you've passed. Spent the next couple of minutes asking about UASC, and talking about sea time in general, the Foundation Degree, and what my plans were for the future.

My advice to everyone, but particularly if you get Leggett, is that he is clearly only vaguely interested in what you say. If you are confident with your answers, you'll rarely get to talk about a subject for any length of time. Hit the points quickly, don't ramble, and the whole exam will fly by. I think it's fair to say I had an easy time of it, and I think it was because of that.

Thanks to Mr Ward and to all my classmates for helping me through. Good luck everyone, I'm sure you'll be fine!