CT v Jobair
2nd July 2015
PASS
Time 1hr 05mins

(RFA cadet, 10 months on tankers, 3 on landing ship dock auxiliary I.E ro-ro. No tanker questions, no ro-ro questions.)

Talked about where I had been on my last ship, said it was an unlimited OOW ticket so I will have to answer questions for any type of vessel and have I seen MGN 69? He said he expected answers from the OOW perspective. He had a quick flick through my nav and ops workbook and then put them to one side.

He told me that if I did not know the answer then I should say so and we will go from there.

I have included my answers to show how it lead on, but please do not take what I have written as correct or all he was looking for for that question, it's just to give an idea of what it was really like.

You are the officer in charge of the passage plan on your last ship from the Falklands to South Africa, what can you tell me about how you would do that?

Berth to berth risk assessment, planning for all eventualities etc. APEM. Appraisal = I mentioned ocean passages of the world, routeing charts, ALRS, sailing directions, think about MARPOL special areas and tried to make it relevant to the actual route so said about the Antarctic area for annex one. Went on to say compare different routes and ETAs, get the masters approval for which route to go for. Mentioned m notices and notices to mariners and that you needed all the necessary charts on board and upto date, or the required permits for ECDIS. I then went onto Planning and said it is where you would put the courses on the chart, ETAs, abort points, but he took me back to appraisal and asked

What in particular would I consult for an south atlantic crossing?

I was a bit stumped as I had already mentioned ocean passages and routeing charts, so I grasped at the IMO routeing guide

What can you find in the IMO Routeing guide?

I said TSSs, deep water routes, archipelagic sea lanes, and he asked if I thought that this was relevant then, so I said probably not. He was clearly looking for something else but I couldnt think so I repeated the ocean passages of the world and routeing charts, which he didnt look happy with but he moved on to ask

What information can you get from the routeing chart?

Predominant tides and winds, mean sea water temperature, probability of restricted vis, ice limits, occurance of TRSs,

How is the wind information displayed on the routeing chart?

In wind roses, the longer the lines it shows how many observations in that direction.

What about something relating to the ships draught?

I really wasn't sure about this so said so and he gave me a look, wrote something down and we moved on.

You are now on a bulk carrier loading iron ore in Austrailia, how will this affect how the ship?

I said because there will be a lot of weight low down the ship will have a large GM and will therefore be a stiff ship rolling violently in the seaway. I said it will be important for the cargo to be loaded evenly to prevent cargo shift.

Now the chief officer fills some ballast tanks half full, how will this affect the ship?

I said the free surface effect of the slack tanks will reduce the stability of the vessel due to the apparent loss of GM when the vessel rolls and the righting lever will be reduced.

So will it still be a stiff ship?

No the reduction in GM will make the rolling slower, more like a tender ship.

What is an angle of loll?

It is where the vessel initially has a negative GM but it finds a neutral GM as it has listed over to one side.

How do you correct an angle of loll?

I said it depended on how many ballast tanks you had, if you only had one port and one stbd, then you would just have to fill the lower side first, and then the other side to avoid the ship violently rolling over to the opposite side and possibly capsizing due to the extra weight now on that side.

What are the inputs to the ECDIS?

What are the inputs to the radar?

Why is speed important?

So that the arpa can accurately determine the vectors to use for collision avoidance, you might misinterpret situations.

You are now the OOW on the bridge at sea, how do you hand over the watch?

Make sure relief is fully rested and not incapacitated, ensure he has read standing and night orders and has checked the nav warnings, weather forecast before I start my handover. I then went through how I do handovers on board in quite a lot of detail following the NOCWIS. Navigation, operations, communication, weather, internal, shipping. I said at the end I would not hand over if I was in the middle of a manoeuvre or a shipping situation

|So if your relief comes up and you think the shipping situation will last another twenty minutes will you hand over?

No.

Ok so lets say you have just taken over the watch, how do you know that your radar is working properly?

I do a performance monitor at the start of every watch and log the details, I also re-tune the radar for gain sea and rain to get the best picture possible.

OK but lets say the performance monitor is broken, how would you do it then?

I said I would turn the gain up and see the return off the sea to see if it was working. He said that is for gain and didn't look impressed.

There are many ways to tell if it is working properly, what about if you are next to land?

I said compare the radar image overlay on the ECDIS, but that was not right. I stopped for quite a few seconds to think and he said

Can you give me at least one other way to tell if it is functioning properly?

I thought for what seemed like too long and said that I couldnt think of anything else. He looked quite upset and I felt really quite stupid at this point, I had clearly missed a trick here.

OK so you are OOW on the bridge and you receive a distress call, actions?

I said log the details in the GMDSS logbook, see how far from the distress we are, call the master, but I would need to know on what equipment the distress came through on and in what sea area we are to be able to know how to respond.

You have received it on Inmarsat and you are on your passage in the south atlantic.

I said then we would probably be in sea area A3 and Inmarasat would reach a LES and they would be expected to respond.

So what would you expect the message to come through on?

I'm not that hot on inmarsat so stumbled a bit and he asked me

What other equipment I would need in sea area A3?

I said HF first and he quickly said so

How would you receive the message on that?

I really wasn't very comfortable with this and said on the screen. He just looked at me so I said in a DSC message which reduced his frown a bit.

So what would you do now?

I repeated my earlier answer and said I would need to know if the master was going to respond to it, he said he was and

it was a vessel sinking 80 miles away.

I said calculate a route to the distress position, tell the whole ship what was going on, prepare the hospital, get blankets ready, get extra people on the bridge to help with comms on my ship we had enough personnel to do this, extra lookouts.

|**You arrive at the scene and there are three other ships arriving at the same time, how will you know what to do?**

Consult IAMSAR vol 3, look at search patterns, consider the accuracy of the datum, taking into account set and drift.
Does the datum matter for which search pattern you use? Or the number of ships?

Told him about the four search patterns, when you use them and how many ships for each.

So going back to the GMDSS logbook, what do you write in that?

I said in general or for the distress? He said both. I started with your daily checks, position, internal DSC, printers, batteries.

What about if you have a new GMDSS book?

Ships details, details of all persons holding a GOC, captains details. Then went back to daily entry and said master has to sign every day as well.

How do you test the EPIRB?

Read the instructions on the side first. Following them instructions, you will need to put it in test/safe mode before you take it out of its housing so you dont activate it accidentally and then conduct the internal test on the EPRIB.

What would you do if you did set the EPIRB off accidentally?

Turn it off immediately and contact the relevant shore station to tell them it was a false alert.

Thats what you would do?

Erm... (frantically trying to remember what I had forgotten...) Yes but I would double check in ALRS vol 5 for any guidance.

But thats what YOU are going to do?

I thought at this point that I was getting towards the point of failing on a safety aspect, he looked really angry and I had no idea what I was missing. I said again I would have to check my actions, but I can't think of anything else.

You're not going to tell anyone else?

CLICK!!

Oh yes I would inform the master!

Just inform him?

I would tell him I had accidentally set it off so he was aware.

Do you not think he might need to ensure the correct action is taken and be involved in that?

Yes.

So when would you call the master?

Listed them off quickly to try and redeem myself.

Launch a davit launched liferaft.

I misheard him and thought he had said lifeboat so I started talking about the lifeboat but he corrected me when I got to putting the plug in and said 'I said davit launched liferaft'. I apologised and took what seemed like ages to recompose myself and start on the liferaft instead.

You are on the bridge and you hear someone shout 'man overboard'

I said I would quickly check if I could see what side he had fallen before I put the wheel over, he said he fell port side. Standard answer, but I dont think I made it clear that I had two watchkeepers on the bridge as he was confused where I got my helmsman from if my lookout was pointing.

How would you know that your dry powder extinguisher was going to work before you use it?

I said it would have been wieghed and serviced. Wanted to know how often the service was, I said 5 years and he looked surprised so I said I would have to check in solas chapter 11-2.

You are on the bridge and you encounter heavy rain, actions?

Rain will restrict vis so I said that and went into rest vis checklist.

You said retune the radar, what will you do then? Just leave it?

No I will monitor it closely as my other means of identifying risk of collision are not as effective. I will plot any targets on arpa and determine if risk of collision exists.

Gave me a plot with true vectors, relative trails, ground stabilised with a vessel 5 miles on my stbd quarter. Actions? (Also gave me a parallel rule if I wanted it.)

I said I would not use this mode for collision avoidance. He asked why and said that the vectors would not be accurate for movement in the sea.

ok but you have got it so what can you tell me?

Looking at the vectors and trails, there is risk of collision. I then quoted first part of rule 19 and action ie not alter towards a vessel on or abaft my beam therefore will make broad alteration of course to port and continue to monitor.

This lead onto ROR

Vessel on stbd quarter, she is overtaking, not taking action, takes action after 5 short and rapid, goes and tries to cross ahead, steady again – another call to master and 5 short and

rapid.

following direction of traffic in TSS

- **gave me a red light on smartie board 4 points to stbd crossing tss. What other lights might it have? Red over green all round lights in a vertical line. I said rule 18 still applies but she should not impede my passage, no action, call master 5 s+r.**

- **Another smartie board with RAM towing over 200m partially submerged object. Day signal? Action? Rule 18, give way, because unusual situation I called the master (also because of my previous failure to do so for the epirb) and said prefer to slow down as long as it was readiliy aparaent to the other vessel etc.**

open water vessel crossing from port, - I am stand on, what are my responsibilities? May shall etc. call master 5 s+r.

Now it was CBD, does this change anything? Still stand on but change of responsibilities, call master, nav risk assessment as probably confined waters, alter to stbd if safe water as alteration of course is more obvious, if not possible, slow down in good time.

fishing vessel making way from port side with gear ext. astern of her 2 points on port bow. What is it? Bearing opening. No risk of collison but nets going over my current course. I would call master and say im going to pass ahead of him to avoid the nets – dont know how far they go.

And then he sat down and said I had passed!

And thus ended three years of work in just over an hour of questions -

all I can say is dont panic – if you have done the work you will be fine. Good luck!!!

Thanks to all staff, especially good old Mr Ward for all the time he puts into helping us pass, as well as Mr Leppert, Mr Macnamee and Mr Jowett.