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BP Tankers

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# Oral Report Alec Keep

13:15 exam, went down the night before and stayed in the Crosby leisure centre, good place, easy to get to the MCA building if you have a car.

## Passage Planning

Started with passage planning, I started with the APEM then he went on to ask about how I would plan a passage from the gulf to Singapore. He put me on a VLCC although I had never been on one, I therefore immediately said I would be looking for deep water routes etc. having got half way through the appraisal and he said what about planning, started to explain and he moved to execution stage, and monitoring each time he calmly moved on. He must have liked the answers because the passage planning only took 5 minutes.

## Chart work

Just as we finished passage planning he produced a chart showing Liverpool and North Wales just up to Skeries lighthouse. The chart had courses drawn on showing an approach to Liverpool pilot station using the TSS, he asked me about the TSS and where would I find information about it. He asked for a lot of information about chart symbols such as the North Cardinal Mark, asked me about the top mark which I said was on the chart and the letters BY he asked where I could find more information about this light so I said the list of lights, or if you have ECDIS you can interrogate the symbol, he didn't seem to be bothered about the ECDIS and moved to more chart symbols asking about tidal diamonds and why there are two Figures I said for the springs and neap tides which moved me onto tides what is the difference between the two and how does that affect me? Said departing ports etc. He then said you are now entering the port of Liverpool show me the pilot station symbol on the chart and said where can you find more information, said ALRS volume 6, he said that if a pilot station requires a DSC then how would you send it, I said coast station MMSI number, then he moved on. He asked me about another few questions about calling points, lights on buoys and the direction of buoyage for that chart and how would I correct a chart using the Weekly notice to mariners and also mentioned that we used a chart management system onboard for tracing and make sure you mention about checking the previous notice.

## Cargo Work

Keep looked through my TRB and noticed that on my first he knew the captain. This was then the ship he put me on for the cargo questions he asked, which was okay because I had read through my notes from that ship.

He asked me about the pump room. Firstly starting with the centrifugal pump, how it works. Asked me about how does the steam run the pump, how does the steam from the machinery space enter through the bulk head in the pump room. At this point I had a blank but he helped by walking through what it should be, still couldn't get the answer he wanted he then told me, I cant actually remember what he said. He then moved on to the I.G System, firstly asked me about the requirements for Tonnage and the atmosphere from delivery and in the tanks, both of which I could just tell him, he asked me about some of the components of the system such as the blowers and I just tried to add in the requirements, so said we had 2 at 125% of the maximum discharge rate, he seemed very happy with the answers then moved onto vapour space and how I.G. fills the space when discharging all very simple quick fire questions which was good and something that ran through the exam.

Said pre watch rounds and the pump room inspections, told him it wasn't an enclosed space if it is for routine work, then mentioned about the PPE I would wear including taking the EEBD and the personnel gas monitor informing the OOW, stopped me and moved on.

## Rules

Light and shapes of a Power driven vessel over 100m and all of the arc of visibility including the height above the deck line for the forward mast head light and something was mentioned about the range of lights, I brought in that we had a finding from a PSC saying that the side lights must have matt black paint around the back plate not shiny or glossy paint.

He gave me the following situations -

Sailing vessel crossing from Port to Starboard showing a green light. ( I always checked that he was showing me on the board was what he wanted to show he was fine with this, all the way through) He asked for actions, I gave him the easy bit first, saying a series of compass bearing and radar ranges to see if collision exist and then I said under rule 18 we are to keep clear so I could see if safe to pass ahead or could alter to port pass a stern he seemed happy.

RAM -He then gave me two vessels engaged in replenishment of fuel at sea, he said what lights would they display all of the characteristics of the light and day signals, asking how far apart the lights should be and the specifications of the shapes asked me what other vessels

should show restricted in the ability to manoeuvre, rattled then off quickly and gave the definition of RAM. It was originally 4 points to port clearly converging. Again risk of collision exists Said under rule 18 I need to keep clear so I could alter to starboard match there course and cross ahead, or slow down. Then he asked is there anything else you could do, I could alter to port and pass astern, he was happy with that and asked what I would do on the bridge I said go to port and it will get the situation over quicker.

Same vessels now ahead of me, I was clearly 2 points abaft the beam, asked me if that changes anything, initially I paused and said no. He then asked if would this change if it was just one vessel. I said yes because of rule 13, then going on to ask about how would I know if I was overtaking at night, if you say the quote from the rule he changes the situation very quickly.

He said I am now on a VLCC in a narrow channel what lights would a vessel CBD display and the day signals, and the morse signal in RV. He gave me a vessel from my starboard side over 50m, asking me what would I expect the other vessel to do, so started to quote the last section of rule 8 and explained it briefly in my own words, from his reaction I think he liked the way that I explained the change in responsibility for the other vessel.

When he was setting the next situation he asked me the risk of collision. I did this in the wrong order because I thought he said how do you know if the risk of collision exists, so started saying the last section of the rules and stopped, he asked me any more? So I started quoting the rule, seem happy and moved on.

Buoyage, straight into a region B entering port, lights of the Starboard hand with preferred channel to port. Took a few seconds to answer, he then asked me all of the areas around the world that would use region B. Asked me about the responsibility of vessels crossing a channel etc, then he put a small FRB type of vessel in front of me less than 15m and said the risk of collision exists. Stated the section of rule about not impeding and my actions would be 5 short and rapid and then light to complement and call the master, then he moved it away.

He said you see a white light on for 5 seconds and off for 2, with no other information. What is the light, said safe water mark, what other characteristics could be, stopped me at Isophase and asked me what that means. Said off for same as on, then said what does the Iso mean to you when looking at a synoptic chart, I said Isobars and what they mean, showing equal bands of pressures. Little bit of synoptic charts such as what does a cone represent and what does a semi circle represent. All quick fire questions, then moved onto heavy weather precautions, started with the bridge plotting the weather and informing all heads of departments, then I said starting from forward working backwards throughout the ship what I

would secure etc, said we had a document in the SMS about Heavy weather, seemed happy enough and moved to anchoring.

Anchoring the vessel after the master has given you a brief about the depth etc, said you are now half way up the deck what you going to do on the f'clse. Started with the EDH answer seemed happy then he stopped me at the waters edge.

Asked me about Marpol and what would be the most relevant chapters for an Oil tanker, then moved to what the regulation says about equipment and about the discharge overboard, from the engine room and how the OOW is to make sure it is okay to discharge in the area we are in, he asked me about the other chapters just the titles and moved on.

Put me on a bulk carrier and said about loading steel coils, what is the certificate you need, I was unsure but said I would consult the Bulk carrier code and he told me the certificate name, and moved onto load lines, asking me what the C/O considerations are for loading, I stated a few about bending moment and then about the dock water density. He said your loading in an open berth with a RD of 1.025, so salt water and then asked me where do you load to, I said to summer lines. On the line would it be top or bottom, I said bottom he said top and said thats the answer I was expecting and didn't mind I got it wrong. He said sometimes you see LR on the marks, what does this mean? I said lloyds register, said what they did, in terms of class surveys, he asked me can they do anything else, I said they can act for the flag state to do inspections.

Pre departure checks - Asked me to set up the bridge, again said SMS for pre departure checklist, he said walk me through. Firstly I mentioned that I would check we had a passage plan on paper and ECDIS, said checking the safety depths on ECDIS, then that the manifolds can not be connected for Radars, steering test, or Main engine kicks on air, as soon as I had finished the sentence he moved straight to radars, the Set up, said Brilliance, Gain Tuning, Rain and Sea clutter. Brilliance for the correct light at the time, gain needs to be a small speckle on the screen and tuning I said I would do manually if possible. He asked me about how I would set it up in terms of North Up and Trails etc, told him because we had used charts that It would always be in North Up so what we had on the chart made it easier to plot position on the chart.

This moved onto safe speed, didn't want to say the quote so just said appropriate to the circumstance and conditions. Then said how about position fixing, said the speed we planned to do and that it was half the time, seemed happy and then asked me about means of position fixing on a coastal passage. Listed them all off and he said how about deep sea, I said mainly

the GPS and celestial navigation for checking the GPS, thought he would move to the sextant as he picked up the box but he just moved it to get to some A3 radar plots.

Gave me another traffic situation, of a vessel starboard side over 50m at right angle to my course, asked me what I would do, said large bold alteration to starboard. Then he put the west cardinal mark and said I was heading 170, the way he placed the vessels was as if he could see 170 not me. So I swapped the ship so it was my heading, I initially said the wrong alteration, but realised halfway through and changed it.

Asked me about the Free fall lifeboat, launching in a drill and the requirements for a simulated launch including the actual release of the hook, and finally how often they should be run in the water. Asked me about the safety aspect of it, said about risk assessments and permits to work, Asked me about risk assessments and what I would do, where would I find information said COSWP and then SMS and peoples experience. I always went into detail pulling from past experience.

Asked me about taking a gyro error and how do you apply it, I said transits initially, he said your on a tanker you cant used that everyday so how do you do it deep sea? Talked about the bearing I take and using the Almanac to get the true, happy enough with that moved on.

MOB deep sea port side, I asked my location on the bridge he said next to the wheel, I then said I would do the Williamson turn, he nodded and moved on asking what I would do next, I said I would push the MOB buttons on the GPS, He stopped me instantly and said, why aren't you doing the Whistle... I said sorry I would, sounding 3 Long blasts, this was the only question I managed to finish apart from traffic situations. I went through the whole checklist, got to the end saying I would need to find the way to get the MOB back onboard, then asked me a few different ways in which I could, started with the easy one, I had spoken to my last 3/O about his experience because he had been in a recovery of migrant rescue where they used the Midship crane, said that even though it wasn't for lifting persons but in an emergency you could if you had to.

### Pilotage

Asked me about pilot ladder specifications and I am to meet the pilot what am I checking etc, then my experience of a Master pilot exchange, mostly off the checklist, gave him an example of Brisbane pilots requiring the OOW to inform them over the course change 0.7nm before and the new course. He then said what is my responsibility when the pilot is onboard.

## Fire

He gave me a situation with a fire in the cabin I said Find Inform Restrict and extinguish. He then probed saying would you just leave the scene, I said no, he said would you tackle the fire if there was a hose or an extinguisher, I said the company would prefer not to tackle a fire on your own but one shot if it is safe enough to do and most put myself in immediate danger.

He gave me a radar plot already drawn relative vectors I was heading 265 roughly and this vessel was fine to starboard maybe half a point, he had drawn my own speed next to the centre of the plot, he explained the plot and asked what I would do, it was a situation where I was overtaking so quoted the rule said I had options could go to starboard but in this instance I would go to port. As soon as I said that he said okay you have passed!

Overall Alec keep was extremely fair, if you were unsure he would dig for answers but if he saw you struggling or asked you about a different ship type he would never leave you without an answer and would always explain himself. A very relaxed atmosphere in the room most of all you must be confident in your answers, if he knows you know the answer he will change the question.