Orals with Irwin

19/04/2016 and 03/05/2016

Thanks for the help of all guys in my class throughout the year. I took bits and pieces from everybody that helped along the way.

I can't stress enough how valuable these past Oral's are and get into the library to read them all and get familiar with the questions they'll ask.

I was placed on a bulk carrier 370m long, 63m wide with a 23m draft that is flagged in Australia.

1. Joining in China you get out of the Taxi what are your first actions? As soon as I got to gangway he said stopped me.
2. You're now in the 3rd Mate's cabin and he has gone home ill and you'll receive no handover what should you do?
3. Explained all the documents I would give to the Master? (The one he probed a bit further for which I didn't mention was my Endorsement from the Vessel's Flag State for my COC.)
4. Once I got to ISM and SMS he probed further about them?
5. Role of the DPA? When would you contact them?
6. Your about to arrive in the Port and the Master says to you the Cargo Ship Safety survey is due, who would you expect to come and how would you prepare for them? Do you know your Marine Orders and which one covers LSA's? (I said I haven't memorized all the Marine Orders)
7. What kind of things would you find in a Lifeboat? How many flares and of what type?
8. What is some Fight-fighting equipment on board?
9. You see a fire in an electrical panel what extinguisher would you use? Said CO2, can you use anything else? (Dry powder)
10. SCBA sets, how would you test them and how often?
11. What's a low pressure test on the set?
12. Name a couple of conventions? (I gave the major 5 and he didn't dig too much further into anything there)
13. What is the IMDG Code? What is contained in it? (After the Volumes and Supplement)
14. What is the difference between Segregation and Separation? Got this one wrong, look it up!
15. Do I know the Annexes of MARPOL? Got this one wrong as I didn't do enough study on routing charts, they're in the library.
16. The crew want to wash Alumina residue overboard can they do it? (Thanks to past orals I was prepared for this one)
17. What can you tell me about passage planning?
18. I mentioned routing charts and pulled one out and ask, what do you use it for and what time of the year this one is for? What are sector lights, point out a few symbols on the chart and obstructed lights, what are they? TSS? What could you use for a transit bearing and how do you do one?
19a. He gave me all the lateral and cardinal markers without tops and ask me to put the correct tops on them then ask for the lights? I got the safe water marker wrong because I couldn’t remember all four light characteristics.

20. In the middle of the Indian Ocean and the cook wants to dump something over the side? (Ask what it is and how much)

21. What is the Garbage Record book? What types of ships are required to have it? (I said 400GRT or carrying more than 15 passengers and he said are you sure, I replied yes. I think he throws this in every now and then to see if you’re confident with your answer.)

22. Gave me a piece of paper with a ship on it will only ‘K’ at the bottom and said fill in the rest for a ship with positive stability?

23. He filled in the bottom and said he’s load some ballast what does that do to the ship? (I said it moves ‘G’ down)

24. Does that decrease or increase the ship’s stability?

25. Ask what fresh water allowance was? Write down the formula please and also the Dock Water Allowance formula?

26. Explain a little bit about these and why we have them?

27. What is TPC and why do we have it?

28. Load line, can you just draw a rough load line of a vessel for me please? Where is the free board?

29. You’re approaching port and the Master asks you to prepare for the Pilot to board what would you do? (Asked first what the ship’s freeboard is, he said 13 metres)

30. Pilot is on board discussing the Pilotage Plan with the Master, should you be involved?

31. What is BRM and what is its goal?

32. Master leaves the bridge and the Pilot makes a deviation from the plan should you say anything? Pilot says he it doesn’t matter it’s just a small change what do you do? Should you tell the Master?

33. Ship is loading and you take over the cargo watch from the Chief Mate and he is critical about you filling out the cargo log book with every detail about the cargo being loaded and where, why? (I gave a range of answers here but he kept digging and I said I wasn’t sure what he was asking for)

34. He then drew a longitudinal view of a ship and asked again why the Mate would be concerned with monitoring all cargo? (Once he drew the picture it clicked, bending moments and shearing forces he was after)

35. What are shearing forces and bending moments? What are IMO stability requirements? (I said I only know the last 3)

What is minimum GM? What about for grain? (Gave him them and he left it at that)

36. Ship departs port and is going to anchor and you’re now on the forecastle what is your role?

37. What is a shot of chain and how are they joined? What does 5 on deck mean?

38. Ship’s at anchor and your go to the bridge to relieve the Master to take over the Anchor watch, what would you expect? (Same as any watch, doesn’t matter that it’s the master)

39. You’ve got the cadet on watch with you and he asks what a proper look-out is?
40. All available means?
41. What is AIS? Would you use it for collision avoidance? Why not?

42.

On to COLREGS.
Gave me a couple standard situations and ask who the stand-on was and who the give way vessel was. Then
moved to restricted visibility and ask a few questions and fog signals.

This was the first situation I got wrong as I made a
wrong decision in my action to take.

This is the other situation I made the wrong decision.
Remember the first part of Rule 19.

I had my second attempt at Orals 2 weeks after and was more prepared. I was in there for an hour again
and we went through more of exactly the same things. He asked at the start what he’d told me to work on
last time and I gave him the exact questions and he asked for the answers straight away.
Guy the best advice I can give is that the examiners know you have a lot of knowledge to recall, if you don’t
know what they’re asking for then get them to rephrase the question because you’ll have the answer and it
will come to mind. Don’t stress if you miss the first try, you’ll be better prepared for the next attempt.
Best of luck to all future Candidates.