I reached AMSA office 45 mins before the orals. I was waiting in the waiting room. After 15 mins a man passed by. He saw me walking up and down (as I was too nervous to sit), and told me to have a seat and relax. Little did I know that this was the guy who would be deciding my fate.

After about 30 mins, the same guy came out and said Sanat come in. Shook my hands and said I am your examiner for today. He told me to take a seat and offered me water. He told me that if I want, I could take off my jacket and tie.

He started by looking at my sea time (documents for which he already had). He then asked me about my experience onboard, why I chose to appear for orals in Sydney rather than Perth, course in Challenger TAFE and blah-blah. This carried on for about 15 mins, which really calmed me down. He then asked me that if I observed something while I was waiting in the waiting room. There was a lighthouse beacon kept for show there and some placards and brochures about EPIRBS. To this I said yes I did, and told him all that I saw. To this he said very well, I was just getting an idea about your situational awareness. I thank David Pullin for this as he was the one who told me about one of his friend who was asked the same thing when he appeared for his orals. I suggest to all to notice everything in the waiting room while you guys are waiting.

Then he told me that he will be beginning with the orals questions now. He said that at any point he will not trick me. He told me that I must get 100% in stability and COLREGS. He then went quickly through the orals checklist, and then started asking questions.

The question are not in right order, but I have written as much as I can remember.

What documents would you give to the master when you join?

What will be in the handover with the 2nd mate? (I dint mention equipment manuals. He told me after the questions that all my points were right, but manuals for all equipment is also important.)

What is in an induction?
What is ISM? What is SMS? Which marine order.

What is ISPS? How is the ISPS enforced in Australia? (Through the MTOFSA 2003. After I answered this question, he told me that this is not a failing question, but most of the people that he has examined don't know about MTOFSA, and he was very happy to hear the correct answer) Which SOLAS chapter gives effect to ISPS?

What are Marine Notices? After asking this question, he gave me a paper and a pencil and told me to draw the Load lines with proper dimensions. And then he left the room. He came back after 3 minutes and waited for me to finish my drawing. After I finished he asked me if I had seen any Marine notices. I think he had to check for them as he himself did not know about the latest ones. HAHAHA

Draw load lines?

Showed me a Card and told me to identify draft?

What is angle of Loll? How do you correct it?

What is FSE?

What is MO 32? Its contents.

How to prepare hold for cargo?

Drills?

Weekly checks on lifeboat, LSA and FFA? (He was looking for lifeboat moved from stowage position.)

On load – Offload?

He then understood that my stability was pretty good, so he changed the topic.

Why does a ship need dry-docking?

What is class?

What is PSC?

What is Flag?

What is OH&S? Which act? What is PIN? Validity of PIN? What is prohibitionary notices?

How to take over navigational watch?

What is proper watch keeping?

Taking over cargo watch?

Precautions while bunkering?
You are on 300m bulk carrier. You are on Cargo watch and your ship is listed unexpectedly. Your Actions.

Gave me IMDG Code and asked me to find the Spill procedure for some Butyl compound (Can't remember the exact name). Then asked me if I can stow with class 7. As soon as I picked up volume 1, he said ok no need. He knew that I was aware where the segregation table was.

In what conditions MARPOL doesn't apply? Give 6 annexes.

Name a few Marine orders? I said about 10, and then he stopped me.

Name few conventions. As soon as I said STCW, he stopped me and said what is that?

Hours of rest? What is the requirement?

How much time should the watch keeper be rested before his first watch? (I had no idea about this and I kept quiet) He then gave me a hint by saying what was the watch keeping arrangements in port in your ship. I said 6/6, then he glared at me and then I said oh yes 6 hours)

What is squat? How can you reduce it?

How will you plan a passage? What publications.

Took out a Singapore chart and asked few symbols (disused submarine cable, pilot station, etc.) What is sector light? What is clearing bearing?

What is routing chart? Why is it important?

How to take compass error? Azimuth? Amplitude? GHA? LHA?

How to keep anchor watch? How do you know that anchor is dragging? (I dint mention transit bearings. He looked at me and said I am forgetting something important, then I said visual bearings from lighthouse, to which he replied yes visual transit bearings.

COLREGS: He told me to explain RULE 2, 5, 6 and said that I can use my own words to explain, but he is looking for some important key words. I had learnt these three rules by heart. I recited the rule 2 word by word. He was very happy. As soon as I was about to recite rule 5, he stopped me and said no need, and then he moved on. IALA A and B flip cards. Lights and shapes flip cards (Vessel aground – asked me what I will do in case I see this, towing, etc.)

Asked me about what rule 19 says. Also maneuvers I should avoid as per Rule 19. Will I sound any maneuvering signals when in restricted vis?

Gave me abbot 5 traffic situations. Wanted to know my actions and reason. Asked me in a couple of them that why I will not go to port.
He then got up from his seat and said, I will not put forward any more questions for you, as you seem to be having answers for more or less everything, shook my hand and said Congrats you have passed. OMG!!! That feeling. All the hard work paid off.

I would suggest to know everything well but not in too much depth. I felt that the topics in which I was very confident, he quickly moved on and dint go into depth.

Thanks all the guys who helped me in the Doll house. Especially Neil, Nuttie and Justin. You guys asked me questions tirelessly and thanks for all the discussions. I think it is much better to do group study for this kind of exam.

RESULT: PASS