



ICS Examiner's Report

Port Agency

Overall Comments Guidelines

The overall standard for the Port agency examination in May 2024 was of a high standard. Students did well on the topics of general average, sea protest and trading certificates. Although there was a nominal percentage of students who achieved a correct answer on the laytime question, the general standard was high, and many most students were able to supply a suitable enough amount of information to gain a pass mark. Some students continued to struggle with the port agent's requirements for P&I coverage. Also, the general standard of maritime geography was modest.

Overall Comments

The questions were selected from within the port agency syllabus. Questions were set on laytime, operational issues, relevant abbreviations, ships certificates, general average, sea protests, marketing agency services in the tanker trades, cargoes and trades routes and legal aspects of port agency.

Question one- Sea Protest

Generally, this question was well handled, although only a nominal number of students chose to answer it. Those who chose to answer the question were able to give a good understanding of the concept of the sea protest and the port agents requirements to arrange the administration of the protest whilst the master is ashore.

Many students who attempted this question tended to receive high marks.

Question Two: Tanker Services

The question on the provision of a proposal to offer Tanker agency services in a port of their choice was well handled. Most student were able to offer a good historical background to their company, operational information and related added value services. Students who scored the highest marks were also able to offer details on compliance, health and safety policies and quality accreditation.

Question Three Marketing- Abbreviations

This was generally well answered by nearly every student who chose to answer it. The students seemed aware of Fonasba, FHEX, CHOPT. The ARAG abbreviation was slightly more challenging, and this may be a geographical issue where students based in Europe perhaps had a slight advantage, which the examiners will have to give some consideration on with regard to future use.

That aside, this was a very well-handled question.

Question Four P & I club

As per previous years, students seemed more at ease discussing the requirement of the shipowner to procure P&I cover, rather than the ships agent.

There seems to be a general lack of understanding of the ships agent's requirements for acts, errors and omissions coverage, breach of warranty of authority cover, cash handling and assistance in retrieving shipowners debt. Although it is important to note that the P&I does not underwrite the ships agent's debts as some students incorrectly suggested.

Question Five- General Average

The question on General Average was very well answered. Most students were able to give a clear understanding of the concept of general average and this also used much of the required language of general average such as "extraordinary voluntary sacrifice, proportionate share, Peril, jettison, York Antwerp etc"

Most students were also able to offer a capable overview of the administrative process required under General Average, covering the concept of general average bonds and guarantees.

Question Six – Trade Routes

Most students who attempted this question chose to answer on the topic of crude oil. Most did well and could identify the major vessel types and associated trade routes. Some of the mapwork was perhaps not the best, but did show a slight improvement on previous years. Students did however fail to maximise the opportunity to gain further marks by not offering a full range of the vessel's dimensions and tonnages. It was noted that very few students selected the Biomass option.

Question Seven- Trading Certificates

This question was a "banker for students" with many students able to offer a wide range of trading certificates and relevant comment on each. It remains a reasonable question for the exam as it is specifically relevant to the day-to-day role of the ship's agent and the interaction with the ships master.

Question Eight

The Laytime question was generally well answered by students. However it was somewhat disappointing that only a nominal number of students achieved a full mark. However the general approach in creating a laytime statement was very encouraging, and the standard was high. In such cases where students may have made a small error which led to an incorrect answer there was enough information provided to enable the examiners to offer 10-12 marks in most cases.