Overall Comments

Unfortunately the trend again this year is marked by a downward graphical score slope. Pleasingly however, very few candidates failed to attempt the required FIVE questions; although too many students failed to put the effort into answering each question submitting only one page of text per answer, which is generally never enough to achieve a PASS.

Question One – Tankers

The principal criticism is to note how few candidates failed to provide much background upon the various tanker types; such as Crude, Product, Chemical and Gas, before describing their selected two. The most popular were ULCC and LPG/LNG. Kit and construction were quite well described and a surprising number commendably supplemented their remarks with diagrams. It was planned to award a bonus for those who concluded with some comment about future Green Liquid Energy Products but none of the answers fell within this category.

Question Two – Contract

Middle ranking in popularity: regrettably many answers were purely lay person remarks commenting upon the legality of contracts and the possibility of action to be taken if broken. There were however some very good answers, which commenced with definitive remarks, followed by meaningful comment upon the Components, before discussing Major/Minor Breach situations, remedies and illustrative case studies.

Question Three – International Trade

The purpose of this question was to provide the student with the chance to combine learning with a changing situation: unfortunately most answers dealt with the current situation without any background and the fundamental reasons for the change. Those who did both read and understand the question correctly commenced with the historical background, coupled with comment upon the Advantages and Factors of Production, using case studies which focused upon the geographic change in primary mineral extraction and the shift in heavy industry from Europe/North America to the Far East.
**Question Four – Management Accounting**

This question proved particularly unpopular, especially given it was extremely basic and especially aimed at those climbing the first steps of the management ladder. Pleasingly the answers provided evidence of a good grasp of the basic business concept, especially concerning the importance of *Cash Flow*. There was a little confusion between the various items expected to be shown in the *Profit and Loss Account* and *Balance Sheet*. Most answers were presented from a shipowner’s viewpoint.

**Question Five – Geography**

This was as anticipated a relatively popular question with everyone making entries upon the provided world map but not all supplying a commentary supporting the entries. Less than pass mark was the norm because few candidates knew the location of the *Tropics* and the *International Date Line* was almost non-existent! The hazards, precautions and voyage tracing were quite good.

**Question Six – Common/Private Carriers**

More responses were anticipated in answer to what was intended to be a straightforward question; however, the comments were of good quality. The question was somewhat less popular this year, possibly reflecting the more broad based employment of students. A key criticism was the merging of the NVOCCs with Liner operators and whilst the *House Bill of Lading* was well described with the obligations of both the carrier and the cargo principals, not quite so much was written about the bill of lading type used with charter parties.

**Question Seven – Ro-Ro**

Less popular than expected, although in the main extremely well answered. The question did not ask for the abbreviation to be extended but pleasingly nearly all of the answers supplied correct extensions and explanatory descriptions, in addition to the mandatory sketch. There are two principal critical observations to be made in that so many thought that the main site facility requirement was an ‘L’ shaped quay and security, with hardly any reference to say, bar coding and surface marking: the other criticism was the misinterpretation of the second part of the question concerning alternative cargoes, which were described from the carriers’ viewpoint as opposed to those which the port might attract.

**Question Eight – Port Agents**

A reasonably popular question with many answers interpreted as an invitation to describe the agents’ availability 24/7. A bonus was given to the few who described a Contract of Affreightment. Many commented upon the ordering of pilots; which, whilst certainly necessary, would have been the better for including the agents’ relationships with the providers of port services. Operational and trade knowledge were well described, although disappointingly few made any reference to membership of P & I type organisations and professionally qualified corporate status and staffing.