ICS Examiners Report

Offshore Support Industry 2011

**Overall Comments**

Generally an improved effort from most candidates this year. As expected some questions proved to be more popular than others, but overall a fairly balanced approach was made. In some cases candidates only demonstrated fairly basic knowledge and answers lacked relevant additional information, which would have produced improved marks. In particular better knowledge of global production areas needed to be demonstrated, rig movement practice, deeper knowledge of cargo characteristics and improved knowledge of chartering markets and techniques.

**Question One**

The regulator areas we were looking for included Flag State requirements, Class, Marpol/Solas, SPS rules, ISM/SMS. Additionally industry driven protocols such as CMID and those from IMCA. This question was answered adequately to well.

**Question Two**

Most could identify the key products (e.g. fuel, drill water, potable water, liquid mud, base oil, heavy brine, dry bulks) and what they are used for, although specialist products such as methanol and glycol were often missed. Candidates tended to lose out by not describing the characteristics of the various tanks fully enough. –Recirculation/agitators for Mud, Conical pressure vessels for dry bulk, strengthening for mud and brine for high specific gravity (often 2.5) Tank coatings, coffer dams & stainless steel for Methanol etc.

**Question Three**

We were looking for a simple description of a jack-up rig and how it works, the going onto the move, the role, the tow master, insurance requirements, tugs to be employed including number, size and roles. Also the relevance of outside factors such as weather/sea-states/currents. Finally the positioning procedure jacking up and preload. All those who answered understood the process, but some could have gone into more detail.

**Question Four**

I would describe it as a straight forward confidence builder of a question, with almost all who answered it bagging a good number of marks.

1) Knock for Knock – Each party covers their own losses regardless of blame
2) Bollard Pull - Static continuous test /rating of tugs ability tow/pull
3) Shark Jaws – Lock tow wire/chain to enable safer disconnect of anchors etc
4) DP Plot – Chart showing DP vessel’s ability to hold station in certain wind and currents
5) IMCA – International Marine Contractors Association - promotes safety and working practices
6) FPSO – Floating Production Storage Vessel - moored riser/shuttle tanker
7) FMEA – Failure Mode Effect Analysis – required for DP vessels – repercussions of single point failure
8) Force Majeure – contractual term freeing the parties from liability in the event or events beyond the control of the parties – Acts of God/War/Strike/Quarantine etc
**Question Five**

All candidates got some of the main established areas right and most appropriately recognised the levels of maturity of those areas. Many answers however were far from complete, often choosing to ignore areas such as the Far East, Sakhalin, Caspian, Mediterranean, India, China, Western Australia and the new frontiers of North Atlantic Ice margins, such as Greenland, Barents Sea and not forgetting Canada. Candidates were often able to describe the various areas but were poor when it came to explaining the commonality of areas of differing levels of maturity.

**Question Six**

Answers were rather thin on discussion although most got some of the basic points. In simple terms a large field close to shore next to existing infrastructure such as export pipelines etc, is likely to be developed with a fixed jacket and topsides (a smaller field is more likely to be a subsea tie in), whereas a find in deep water a long way from shore and any existing infrastructure is more likely to be developed with an FPSO and shuttle tanker solution. This is likely to be quicker and easier to develop when first oil starting to generate a positive cash flow. Geology, environment, political regime and security are other factors.

**Question Seven**

The most popular question. It seems that young brokers may understand some of the services they provide, but perhaps the course should include a section on how to sell. It is not enough to say that you have experience and would be delighted to hear back from the client. Some went off track by elaborating too much about their S&P/new building and demolition skills when the question is about chartering. Poor English and handwriting let some candidates down.

**Question Eight**

Almost all candidates selected Supplytime 2005 and it was clear they were regularly fixing on the form and could list out sufficient number of key areas for consideration. All clauses are important, but liability/insurances, Mutual hold harmless, payment terms/late payment, grounds for termination, maintenance days, fuel pricing, contamination, tank cleaning and 24 hour working are all things to consider.