Overall Comments Guidelines

The overall quality of the answers was generally high, with the students in particular handling the laytime question well. Students need to develop awareness of the requirements of the P and I insurance needs of the ships’ agents. The overall trend for the exam was very positive. Students supplied detailed answers and the average quality was good to high.

Question one – P & I coverage Ship-owner/Ship Agent

This has been a regular question in the recent past. And it still causes concern that a relatively small number of students appreciate the different requirements from the perspective of the ships’ agent and the ship-owner.

Most students tend to give an unrequested and rambling preamble about the history of P&I clubs being set up in London coffee houses, and then go on to discuss the shipowner requiring cover for collision damage.

Only a relatively small number of students gave an overview of the ships’ agents requirements, the main areas being acts errors and omissions, breach of warranty of authority, debt chasing and cash handling.

Question two - Steel proposal

This question asked the agent to provide a proposal to a steel company. Generally it was reasonably well handled, and perhaps surprisingly students provided much more information on the cargo handling, storage and distribution of steel than they did on marketing their ships’ agency services. Therefore students need to address the best way to market their services. This could include for example testimonials, client lists, company history, company accounts, membership of trade organisations, attractive pricing.

Question three - General Average

A concept with which the students seemed to be very comfortable. Most students who tackled this subject handled it well showing good levels of knowledge on the extraordinary sacrifice required for general average to apply. The area for improvement was where students were to advise on the procedure of average bonds and guarantees to enable the receiver to uplift cargo. That aspect could have been handled better.
**Question four - bills of lading**

The question on the three main aspects of bills of lading and for some commentary on the nature of a clean bill of lading was very well handled. Students wrote in depth on the three main properties of the bill of lading. In terms of the clean bill of lading, the importance of the clean bill of lading in transferability of cargo ownership could have been better tackled by students.

**Question five - Notice of readiness, Free Pratique and Sea protest**

This question was very well handled. Students seemed at ease with this question and gave some good examples. Free Pratique, for example, has long been seen as a slightly historical issue, however with the recent case of Ebola in the West Africa this has become a relevant and modern issue.

**Question six - Laytime**

The question on laytime was very well handled and many students gained high marks. Those students that did not get the correct answer, did however use the correct format and it became easy for the Examiner to identify mistakes and award the various component marks that could still lead to a reasonable overall mark being awarded.

**Question seven - Port agents’ operational requirements**

This question was focused on the operational requirements of the port agent when faced with the numerous financial and operational challenges that can come their way. Generally this question was well handled, and it was pleasing that in nearly every case the students understood the need to secure their company’s financial position. This was handled very well. Students did make errors with communicating with the ITF regarding the crew issues, although many students did make positive comments regarding using the Mission to seafarers company or local charities to assist with the problems of crew.

**Question eight - Disbursement**

The disbursement question is a relatively recent addition to the exam. Most students understood the concept and supplied reasonable answers. However the quality of presentation was in general quite poor. In many cases students failed to define which disbursement was for which party ie the head owner or the time charterer. Therefore a need to clearly identify who the disbursement was payable by would have enhanced the marks awarded.