PILOT EXAMINATION SYLLABUS 2024

The examination syllabus shall include the following topics:

(i) Knowledge of the laws and regulations governing the Pilotage Service and Ports Regulations, including Notice to Mariners and Port Notices, and any other legal document which has a direct influence on the delivery of Pilotage Services;

(ii) Interpreting the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea;

(iii) An understanding of local harbour traffic signals, including VTS operating procedures, VTS areas and traffic management;

(iv) Ability to understand and interpret Distress and Pilot Signals, Harbour Control Signals and the International Code of Signals;

(v) Liaising and communicating within the Port; Communicating by radio and co-operating with other port team members;

(vi) SOLAS Requirements regarding Pilot Ladder Arrangement, with special reference to SOLAS Ch V/23 & IMO Resolution A.1045(270). Safe Embarking & Disembarking procedures; Making a lee, preparing for pilot transfer, transferring a pilot underway and transferring a pilot when not making way. The role of IMPA and EMPA;

(vii) Knowledge of the weather services available around Malta and Gozo; identify the problems associated with abnormal weather conditions; knowledge of tidal variations in Malta and Gozo;

(viii) Knowledge of tide and under keel clearance calculations, different types of charts, charted depths and the role of the Maltese Hydrographic Office;

(ix) Knowledge on how to find on a chart the true course and the distance between two points, to lay off a course allowing for leeway and current, to avoid dangers and the use of clearing marks; to interpret chart data, particularly about buoys, lights, depths and nature of sea bottom; Be able to identify different abort points in relation to different types of vessels;

(x) Full knowledge of the coasts of Malta and Gozo, including the harbours and bays within, together with the depth of water in their vicinity and within. Full knowledge of the navigation of a ship in the vicinity of the coasts and approaches of Malta and Gozo and within their harbours;

(xi) Full knowledge of helm orders; the use of compass bearings to ascertain the risk of collision, anchors and cables; the preparations and the precautions for getting under way, making harbour or coming alongside; preparation for anchoring operations; preparations for securing to head and stern buoys; dragging anchor; clearing of a foul anchor; clearing of a foul hawser, and general procedure and precautions to be observed when dry docking;

(xii) Be familiar with different types of tugs, the advantages and disadvantages of the different types, and a general overview of tugs use during Manoeuvring;

(xiii) Full knowledge of different types of propulsion and rudder arrangement, with special reference to fixed pitch, variable pitch, twin screw, azipods and fixed, Becker or high lift rudders. The effect on the manoeuvrability of vessels;

(xiv) Manoeuvring vessels in harbours and their approaches; Handling different types and sizes of vessels, manoeuvring in different locations and conditions, the effect of wind, working with tugs and arriving and departing from berths, moorings and anchorages, the effect of squat, shallow water, speed and interaction of vessel's manoeuvrability;

(xv) Full knowledge of Bridge instruments and their use, with special reference to latest technology development, limitations and advantages of equipment. Minimum performance standards for GNSS, Position accuracy, ECDIS, RADAR, Speed log and AIS. Knowledge of VHF equipment, VDR and Integrated Bridge, together with Portable Pilot Unit: Navigation aid systems

(xvi) Reacting and responding to problems and emergency situations; assisting in the management of ship-board malfunctions and problems and dealing with emergencies, emergency contingency planning for engine, blackout and rudder failure;

(xvii) Understanding the necessity to report incidents and evaluate actions taken in order to improve future responses to a problem or emergency. The requirement to report deficiencies to Port State Control;

(xviii) Understand the effectiveness of exercising in simulated situations and the use of simulators in dealing with emergencies;

(xix) Master Pilot Exchange, Pilot Card, Wheelhouse/Manoeuvring poster and Manoeuvring booklet.

(xx) The necessary soft skills for working effectively within the bridge team and with colleagues in different situations. This includes, but is not limited to, teamwork, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, working under stressful situations, problem-solving and being able to identify the development of error chains;

(xxi) Managing personal and professional conduct and development; maintaining professional standards and improving personal performance;

(xxii) Ability to read, write and speak Maltese and English. Be familiar with the Bridge procedures guide, know about barriers to communication due to multiculturalism, be familiar with different types of communication methods, such as closed loop, be familiar with the Bridge resource management techniques, the human element and the effect of mental biases and fatigue on bridge team performance;

(xxiii) Be familiar with Life Saving Appliances used by pilots, Pilot boat safety, Personal survival techniques, Personal safety and social responsibility;

(xxiv) Current knowledge of industry best practices in relation to Pilotage. Familiar with latest relevant incident reports issued from investigation bodies such as MSIU, MAIB etc;

(xxv) Knowledge of nautical technical terms;

(xxvi) Be familiar with Onshore Power Supply systems and the interface between vessel and terminal and how this system, subject that it is connected, may have a bearing or an affect on vessel arrival/departure procedures, which should be included in the Master Pilot Information Exchange.