

Environmental Report



Green Management Policy

The Department's green targets are mainly related to the consumption of paper and energy in the office as its operations are mainly office-based. To ensure its services to the public as well as its internal operations are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner, the Department has adopted the following principles:-

- (a) All the Department's operations should be in compliance with the relevant environmental protection ordinances.
- (b) The Department should avoid, reduce or control environmental pollution arising from its day-to-day work practice. In particular, it should exercise the principle of "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle" in the consumption of materials.
- (c) The Department will require its contractors to adopt and implement sound environmental management systems and pollution control measures in support of an environmental responsibility for its services.
- (d) The Department will ensure that all staff are aware of its Green Management Policy and will provide information about its Policy and initiatives to those who are interested.
- (e) The Department will provide training for staff to increase awareness and promote continual improvement in protecting the environment and preventing pollution.

Green Management and Promotion of Green Awareness

Green Management

The Environment and Records Management Committee, composed of green executives from Units and Sections and chaired by the Departmental Secretary, the Department's Green Manager, continued to seek staff suggestions, set directions in our green policies and issued green office guidelines. During the year, floor green ambassadors were appointed for promoting green awareness and implementing environmental programmes on a floor basis.

Green Education

In addition to regularly updating the promotional materials concerning environmental protection displayed on notice boards, and affixing stickers reminding good environmental practice next to the relevant facilities, the Department set up a "Green Corner" on its Intranet to provide updated information relating to environmental protection. Furthermore, "Green Tips" were disseminated regularly to staff via electronic mail to advise staff of constructive and effective measures easy for them to make green achievements in their daily living. All these measures are targeted to encourage staff to develop a healthy working environment.

The IRD Sports Association assisted in promoting green awareness and healthy living among staff by organizing a variety of activities in the year, including thematic talks on organic farming and polar power, promotion sale of local organic vegetables (co-organized with the Vegetable Marketing Organization), a green trail walk in support of the World Environment Day 2003's "Walking for a Green and Healthy Hong Kong", and outings and hiking activities in the countryside.

Environmental Protection Performance

To balance operational needs with environmental care and social responsibility, the Department focused its efforts on maintaining a healthy working environment with satisfactory air quality, and on attaining energy saving, reduction of paper consumption and waste minimization and recovery.

Working Environment

The smoke-free workplace policy was strictly implemented and monitored. All the Department's indoor areas were smoke-free. Non-smoking signs were displayed at conspicuous locations to invite the cooperation of staff and visitors. Departmental circulars were re-circulated regularly to staff reminding them of the importance of maintaining a smoke-free working environment as well as providing green healthy public areas to taxpayers making visits to the Department.



In setting up the centralized processing centres in early 2004, the Department accommodated the noisy equipment e.g. large-scale letter openers in enclosed sound-proof rooms. Earmuffs were provided to the staff operating these machines.

Air Quality

As in past years, the Department appointed the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to conduct an "Indoor Air Quality Measurement" in its offices located in the Revenue Tower. The results indicated that the Department had complied with the requirements of four key elements indicating the quality of indoor air as recommended by the Environmental Protection Department, namely the intensity of Carbon Dioxide, Air-borne Dust Particulate, Radon and Total Viable Count. The quality of the air in the Department's offices was graded as "Good Class".

Energy Saving

Various measures to conserve energy were taken during the year, including arranging the last-man-out after office hours to switch off electric facilities, identifying and replacing defective equipment, and turning off lights in storage areas and other electric appliances after use. On the Department's request, the Architectural Services Department had assisted in reducing the number of lightings and replacing the existing lighting system with the lightings consuming less electricity at the public corridors of the Revenue Tower. Although the Department was required to carry out a series of renovation works to make way for the implementation of its Business Process Re-engineering Project in early 2004, the electricity consumption of the year had dropped by some 667,000 kWh as compared with the previous year.

Reduction of Paper Consumption

The Department continued to adopt the following measures in the year to reduce its paper and envelope consumption:-

- Encourage both internal and external communication by e-mail and floppy diskettes.
- Make optimum use of the Department's Intranet to enable more environmental friendly, updated and speedy internal information transmission. Administrative Instructions, Staff Handbooks, training materials, reference materials, guidelines, monthly reports etc were uploaded onto the Intranet to facilitate updating and retrieval on-line and dispense with the practice of keeping personal hard copies.
- Circulate and re-circulate Departmental and Unit Circulars/Circular Memoranda/Posting Notices by e-mail.
- Replace the pre-printed forms with templates or use overlay printing. The templates of the forms are uploaded onto the Intranet so that the forms can be printed as and when required.
- Promote the use of multiple screen method in printing on-line enquiries.
- Encourage the public to file tax returns electronically or through other media like diskettes and use the Department's electronic services under the Electronic Service Delivery Scheme.
- Develop the Computer Output On-line Retrieval System to facilitate on-line report viewing, thus obviating the need for printing computer reports in hard copy. The consumption of computer plain stationery for printing computer reports in the year had dropped by some 1,746,600 folds as compared with the previous year.

- Review the need for the preparation of periodical reports, the distribution lists of outgoing correspondence and hard copies required for circulation.
- Launch the e-Seminars for employers and tax representatives to reduce paper consumption by obviating the need to print invitation letters, tickets and handouts (new initiative launched in the year). This led to savings of some 150,000 sheets of paper.

During the year, the total consumption of paper and envelopes dropped by some 6,600 reams and some 3,960,000 in numbers respectively as compared with the previous year.

Waste Minimization and Recovery

The Department implemented the Document Management System in May 2003. As a result, images of the tax returns were captured and stored in servers instead of roll films, thus saving some 350 roll films each year.

The Department continued to collect waste collectively and effectively. Bags and boxes were placed at various conspicuous locations to facilitate the collection of recyclable paper, aluminium cans and plastic bottles. Used printer cartridges were also collected for recycling. The Department collected some 371,000kg of waste paper, 37kg of aluminium cans, 71kg of plastic bottles and 5,100 used printer cartridges in the year.



New Initiatives and Targets

The Department will strive to enhance its green performance through formulating and working towards new initiatives and targets of environmental protection. The e-Leave System for leave application and processing will be launched in the Department in late July 2004 by phases. The Intranet and the Departmental Portal will be widely utilized by the Department as a convenient platform for the enhancement of e-office facilities. Continuous efforts will be made to economize on the consumption of electricity and paper.