Information Technology

During the year, the Department continued to employ information technology in our day-to-day operations and providing quality services to the public.

Information Systems

After years of efforts, the Department has developed comprehensive information systems. Both the quality and efficiency of services to the public are enhanced through the integration of these systems. With the "Assess-First-Audit-Later" system in place, the Department can automate most of the assessment processes. Tax audit and investigation works are facilitated by the use of data mining and advanced analysis tools. With extensive utilization of the Document Management System and Workflow Management System, the management, control and monitoring of documents, files and workflows are strengthened. Our staff can also have access to the Department's Intranet and General Enquiry Knowledge Database for general and technical information to answer public enquiries.

To update and upgrade the IT infrastructure of the Department to better meet operational requirements and enhance efficiency, we had applied for funding of HK$305 million in November 2010 to implement a large scale System Infrastructure Enhancement Project. The project involves the upgrade of the file server and workstation infrastructure, upgrade of the Document Management System and migration of mainframe applications to midrange platform by stages in the coming years.

IT Enabled Workplace

The Department has a well-developed network of around 2,800 workstations. Under this computerized environment, our staff can perform various work tasks instantly and efficiently, including viewing tax returns, making online enquiries, raising assessments, updating transactions etc. Different staff members can have concurrent access to electronic documents through the computer network. This facilitates the handling of multiple tasks simultaneously. Moreover, e-mail accounts and Internet facilities are provided to staff of the Department to facilitate communication and reduce paper consumption.

eTAX

eTAX provides a wide range of personalised online services to assist taxpayers to manage their tax affairs. As at 31 March 2011, some 341,000 taxpayers have registered as eTAX users. Apart from enjoying the convenience offered by the electronic services, they also contribute to environment protection. More than half of the eTAX users selected to receive e-correspondence from the Department. In the year, eTAX brought about a saving of 5.1 million sheets of A4 paper.

In 2010-11, e-filing of tax returns has increased by 15% to over 288,000 cases. There were about 428,000 e-stamping transactions. A total of 2,135,000 online enquiries for Business Registration Number were received and there were 99,000 requests (related to around 220,000 business registration cases) for supply of information on the Business Register. Starting from 1 April 2010, small corporations and partnerships can file profits tax returns online.

Other Electronic Services

Electronic submission of annual returns in respect of employee's emoluments by diskettes or CD-ROMs is one of our popular e-services. This service is well accepted by relatively large-sized employers. During 2010-11, some 48,600 employers furnished electronic returns for 2,573,000 employees (constituted around 78% of all annual employee's emoluments records received in that year), 74% of these employers used the free software provided by the Department.

With effect from 21 February 2011, the Companies Registry and the Department jointly launched a one-stop registration service. The Companies Registry will process company and business registration applications simultaneously. The relevant applications can be made electronically to the Companies Registry.