

10 Environmental Report

GREEN MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Inland Revenue Department is committed to providing a green office environment and operating in an environmentally conscious and responsible manner. Reducing consumption of paper and energy in the office continues to be the Department's green target in view of its office-based operations. We strive to protect and conserve the environment through :

- Ensuring that the Department's operations comply with the relevant environmental protection ordinances;
- Adopting green housekeeping measures in the Department such as avoiding, reducing and controlling environmental pollution / wastage arising from the day-to-day work practice;
- Requiring our contractors to implement effective environmental management systems and pollution control measures;
- Using environment-friendly products such as energy saving photocopiers, batteries without mercury, unleaded petrol for motor vehicles and products with environment or energy efficiency labels;
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the Green Management Policy with adequate information accessible by those who are interested in the subject; and
- Providing training courses and workshops on green management for staff to increase their awareness on green issues and encourage them to participate in environmental protection programmes.



GREEN MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION OF GREEN AWARENESS

Green Management

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

Green Education

Various measures were taken during the year to promote environmental awareness amongst staff, including:

- Displaying environmental protection promotional materials on notice boards and updating the materials regularly;
- Posting notices and affixing stickers adjacent to relevant facilities to remind staff of energy saving;
- Releasing updated environmental protection information in the "Green Corner" of the Department's Intranet; and
- Disseminating useful and practical "Green Tips" through e-mails and the Departmental Newsletter to all staff to promote green habits.

The Department also participated in various activities such as The Community Chest Green Day with a view to arousing the staff's awareness of environmental protection. Besides, the IRD Sports Association organised a variety of activities, including thematic talks and outings to the countryside, in the year to promote green awareness and healthy lifestyle among staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PERFORMANCE

To balance operational needs with environmental care and social responsibility, the Department focuses its efforts to provide a healthy working environment with satisfactory indoor air quality, conserve energy, reduce paper consumption, minimise waste production and encourage waste recycling.

Smoke-free Workplace

Starting from 2007, it is a statutory requirement that all indoor areas in workplaces are smoke-free. Indeed, smoking has been prohibited in Revenue Tower since 1996. No-smoking signs are displayed at conspicuous locations in the office. Circulars are re-circulated regularly to remind staff about the importance of maintaining a smoke-free working environment and providing green healthy public areas to visitors.

Indoor Air Quality

We attach great importance to good indoor air quality. During the year, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department commissioned a contractor to conduct a comprehensive indoor air quality measurement in offices located in Revenue Tower. Revenue Tower was again awarded the “Indoor Air Quality Certificate (Good Class)” in September 2012. It shows that our office fully meets the requirements in this respect.

Energy Conservation

The Department is proactive in energy conservation and has implemented various energy saving measures to reduce electricity consumption. The following energy saving measures have been adopted:

- Modifying group lighting switches to individual switches;
- Reducing lighting to the minimum required level for illumination;
- Adopting the “last-man-out” arrangement to ensure that lights and electric facilities / appliances are switched off during lunch hour, after office hours or when not in use;
- Adjusting timers so that lights in corridors and lift lobbies are switched off on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays;
- Using computers, fluorescent tubes and other electrical appliances that are energy efficient;

- Controlling use of personal electric appliances in office;
- Maintaining air-conditioned room temperature at 25.5°C; and
- Encouraging the use of electric fans to improve air circulation when necessary.

These measures will continue to be implemented in the Department to conserve energy.

Adherence to the “3R” Principle

The Department continued to adhere to the 3R principle - “Reduce, Reuse and Recycle” in the consumption of materials.

Reduction and Reuse of Paper

In specific, the Department adopted the following measures in the year to reduce paper and envelope consumption:

- Encouraging staff to minimise photocopying, to use recycled paper instead of virgin paper, to use duplex printing and photocopying, and to make the best use of the clean side of waste paper;
- Implementing the “Electronic Leave Application and Processing System” for leave applications and approvals;
- Using papers with old letterheads to print incoming fax messages and avoiding the use of fax leader pages;
- Encouraging paperless means of internal and external communication by using e-mail and floppy diskettes;
- Making optimum use of the Department’s Intranet to enable more environmental friendly and speedy transmission of internal information. Administrative Instructions, Staff Handbooks, training materials, reference materials, guidelines, monthly reports, meeting minutes, etc. are uploaded onto the Intranet to facilitate updating and retrieval on-line, and dispensing with the keeping of personal hard copies;
- Circulating and re-circulating Departmental and Unit Circulars / Circular Memoranda / Posting Notices by e-mail;

- Reviewing regularly the need for the preparation of periodical reports, the distribution lists of outgoing correspondence and the number of hard copies required for circulation;
- Promoting the use of multiple screen printing for on-line enquiries;
- Using templates or overlay printing to replace pre-printed forms. The templates of the forms are uploaded onto the Intranet so that the forms can be printed as and when required;
- Viewing reports on-line through the Computer Output On-line Retrieval System, thus obviating the need for printing computer reports in hard copies;
- Encouraging the public to file tax returns electronically through eTAX, and to use the Department's electronic services under the GovHK website; and
- Uploading e-Seminars for employers to reduce paper consumption, thus obviating the need to print invitation letters, tickets and handouts.

Waste recycling

The Department encourages all staff members to participate in the recycling programmes. Bags and recycling boxes are placed at conspicuous locations on all floors of the Department to facilitate the collection of the three recyclable wastes, namely papers, aluminium cans and plastic bottles. Besides, used printer cartridges are also collected for recycling. Throughout the year, the Department collected 420,182 kg of waste paper, 115 kg of aluminium cans, 366 kg of plastic bottles and 8,433 used printer cartridges.

NEW INITIATIVES AND TARGETS

The Department will strive to enhance its green performance through formulating and taking forward new initiatives and targets for environmental protection. The Intranet and the Departmental Portal will continue to be widely utilised for the enhancement of e-office facilities. Continuous efforts will be made to economise on the consumption of electricity and papers, and to promote the selection of recycled papers and green products in our procurement.