7 Information Technology

The Department has been making extensive use of information technology in daily operations and services.

IT ENVIRONMENT

The Department has a comprehensive and integrated IT infrastructure, including different types of computer application systems and platforms. Assessment processes are automated by the "Assess-First-Audit-Later" system. Tax audit and investigation works are facilitated by the use of data mining and advanced analytical 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. Meanwhile, the Department's network connects the computer system and staff workstations on different floors. Apart from adopting computerized workflow to enhance efficiency, a wide range of information is stored in the Department's Intranet and General Enquiry Knowledge Database for convenient access by our staff at work. Moreover, e-mail and Internet facilities provide an efficient and environment-friendly communication platform for our staff.

We are actively implementing a large scale system infrastructure enhancement project. In 2012-13, we completed the upgrade of the system server and workstation infrastructure under Stage I of the project, commenced the activities on upgrade of Document Management System under Stage II, and also carried out the procurement activities for migration of mainframe applications under Stage III.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES

eTAX

eTAX provides a wide range of online tax services to the public. It includes internet filing of tax returns, stamping of property documents, business registration enquiries, electronic notices, payments and applications etc.

The Department endeavours to enhance eTAX services. In April 2012, the e-filing service was extended to cover employer's annual returns of remuneration and pensions. Starting from 12 November 2012, applicants for duplicate business registration certificates through eTAX will be provided with the duplicates in the form of electronic records.

eTAX services are widely used. As at 31 March 2013, there were some 473,000 registered eTAX users. The take-up rate rose year after year **(Figure 34)**.

Figure 34   eTAX Usage Statistics

	2011-12 Number	2012-13 Number	Increase / Decrease
Internet filing of tax returns			
— Tax Return-Individuals, Property Tax Return and Profits Tax Return	334,011	**386,411**	+15.7%
— Employer's Return of Remuneration and Pensions			
IR56A (Note 1)	–	**4,684**	–
IR56B (Note 1)	–	**28,367**	–
— Employer's Notifications of Commencement of Employment, Cessation of Employment and Employee's Departure from Hong Kong (Note 2)	2,618	**10,168**	+288.4%
Stamping of Property Document	284,875	**302,239**	+6.1%
Business Registration Number Enquiry	2,726,764	**2,944,391**	+8.0%
Application for Supply of Information on the Business Register			
Requisition	106,592	**117,094**	+9.9%
Business registrations involved	245,889	**278,693**	+13.3%

Note:

(1) This service was launched in April 2012

(2) This service was launched in August 2011

Other Electronic Services

During 2012-13, some 46,400 employers furnished annual returns for 2,762,000 employees by diskettes or CD-ROMs. About 72% of these employers used the free software provided by the Department.