

C&SD Environmental Report 2012

Introduction

1. The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) was set up in December 1967. Together with the statistical units established in various government bureaux and departments, it forms the Government Statistical Service.
2. The work of C&SD can be classified into three main categories:
 - a. Conducting statistical surveys and operating statistical systems for the compilation of social and economic statistics, including data series on such areas as population, trade, industry, employment, prices, national income and balance of payments, etc.;
 - b. Performing statistical analysis and disseminating statistical data and analytical results; and
 - c. Providing consultancy and support services on statistical matters to various government bureaux/departments.
3. The Commissioner for Census and Statistics is the head of C&SD. She is assisted by a Deputy Commissioner and five Assistant Commissioners, each of whom is in charge of one division. As at 1 January 2012, the establishment of C&SD was 1238.
4. Being the leading department in the provision of official statistical services, the work of C&SD interacts with the environment mainly in the aspects of paper and material usage, waste management and energy consumption. An effective reporting system has been in force and various initiatives have been implemented in the department to enable the monitoring and improvement of its performance in these significant environmental aspects.
5. Enhancement of C&SD's environmental performance can be achieved only through the dedication and support of its stakeholders, which include its staff, its material suppliers and contractors, users of official statistical services, and other relevant government bureaux/departments. It is hoped that, with reference to this environmental report, these stakeholders can better understand C&SD's environmental concerns and will join the department in environmental protection.
6. Unless otherwise stated, figures quoted in this report refer to the calendar year 2012.

Environmental policy

7. C&SD makes good effort to ensure that all statistical activities it undertakes are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner, and meet the commitments of the Clean Air Charter signed by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in November 2006. To this end, C&SD has adopted the following arrangements in pursuance of its environmental concerns:

- a. Consumption minimisation C&SD adheres to the principle of "Avoid, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle" in the consumption of paper, materials and energy. The usage of information technology is actively pursued in enhancing the performance in this aspect wherever applicable.
- b. Staff training and education C&SD ensures, through appropriate measures such as provision of training and guidelines, that all its staff are aware of various environmental issues.
- c. Procurement management C&SD demands its suppliers and contractors to provide, wherever possible, products and services that can meet high environmental standards.
- d. Communication C&SD makes its environmental policy known to its stakeholders and the community at large through the Internet.

Environmental objectives

8. The environmental objectives of C&SD are:
 - a. To reduce consumption of paper and materials hazardous to the environment;
 - b. To reduce electricity consumption; and
 - c. To increase the environmental awareness of staff and instill amongst them a sense of responsibility for the environment.
9. The green measures and environmental performance achieved by C&SD to meet the above objectives and fulfill the commitments of the Clean Air Charter are highlighted in the following sections.

Environmental management

10. C&SD is committed to promoting green management. It set up an Environmental Management Committee (EMC) in 1995, which is chaired by an Assistant Commissioner. Members of EMC include the Departmental Secretary, a Senior Statistician from each of the five divisions, two Statisticians and a Senior Clerical Officer.
11. Since its establishment, EMC has explored a variety of green initiatives, introduced a series of green office guidelines and set the directions in implementing various environmental programmes in the department.
12. To implement environmental programmes effectively, EMC has established a network of Green Ambassadors in the department since 1999. Under the programme of Green Ambassadors, an officer on each floor of C&SD's offices is appointed as Green Ambassador who is responsible for promulgating various measures of environmental protection to colleagues working on the same floor. Specifically, the Green Ambassadors have the following roles:
 - a. Facilitating prompt actions on environmental measures and messages formulated by EMC in different offices of C&SD;
 - b. Assuming a monitoring role when green measures are implemented;
 - c. Enhancing communication between EMC and staff in different offices of C&SD on environmental issues; and

- d. Serving as site facilitators in the conduct of environmental audits in selected offices where applicable.

As at 1 April 2012, there were a total of 22 Green Ambassadors in C&SD.

13. C&SD has put in force an environmental audit programme since December 1999. The aims of the audit programme are to verify if the day-to-day office operations and activities comply with the department's environmental policy and objectives and to explore new green initiatives through on-site visits for continual improvement in environmental performance. The focus of the programme is on energy conservation, consumption minimisation, waste recovery as well as enhancing green awareness of staff and quality of environmental management. Ad hoc audit teams are formed each year to conduct environmental audits in selected offices and the Green Ambassadors of the audited offices will take follow-up actions if required in accordance with the recommendations stated in the environmental audit reports. In 2012, two environmental audits were conducted in selected offices of C&SD.
14. Given that smoking is a principal source of indoor air pollution, a smoke-free workplace policy has been implemented in C&SD since 1 April 2005. Smoking is prohibited in the workplace of C&SD so as to maintain a healthy workplace for its staff. Starting from 1 January 2007, it is a requirement by law that smoking in all Government buildings is prohibited.

Environmental performance

Reduction of paper consumption

15. Information technology has been widely used in achieving paper saving. A number of office automation applications (e.g. Online Inventory System for Software Asset Management, and the Personnel, Training and Staff Reporting System) have been developed. Besides, most of the departmental information is internally accessible and maintained via the Knowledge Management Support System, which are organised systematically into such topics as statistical management, administrative and general matters, and IT user resources for easy retrieval.
16. In line with the e-government policy, e-options have been provided for major services of C&SD. For example, e-questionnaire templates are available for all surveys amenable to e-submissions; e-forms are also available at the C&SD Website to facilitate users' applications for various statistical services. As from June 2009, a legal provision has been made whereby e-delivery of survey questionnaires to respondents is legally acceptable under the Electronic Transactions Ordinance, such that despatch of survey questionnaires in paper form is not strictly necessary in some cases.
17. Regarding the distribution of statistical publications, data users can download these publications free of charge at the C&SD Website. Besides the latest issues, back issues of publications starting from October 2001 are also available for free download.

18. Following the implementation of the free download policy in June 2006, C&SD has reviewed the printing arrangement for its publications and reduced the number of print versions by phase. Production of the print versions of regular publications of C&SD has been completely ceased starting from 2012. Print versions are only available for selected ad hoc publications (e.g. major reports of the Population Census). This arrangement has resulted in a substantial decrease in the number of printed copies for statistical publications, which is in line with the green policy of the Government and saves the printing cost.
19. On dissemination of statistical information, many publicity/educational leaflets, pamphlets and frequently asked statistics of C&SD are available for free access at the C&SD Website. In line with its environmental policy, C&SD has ceased the production of print version of selected leaflets and pamphlets starting from end 2010.
20. C&SD hosted the 59th World Statistics Congress of the International Statistical Institute in Hong Kong during 25-30 August 2013. There were over 2500 participants and some 1400 papers were contributed in the scientific sessions. Various green initiatives were adopted to disseminate information about the Congress in an environmentally friendly way. Apart from using electronic means as the major channel of communication with various parties, all congress publications and information materials were available in electronic form to help reduce the number of printed copies.
21. On the same basis of comparison by not including the paper consumption relating to ad hoc statistical projects, the amount of A4 paper consumed by C&SD in photocopying/office printing in 2012 was 13780 reams, down by 0.1% as compared with 13792 reams in 2011. Compared with 2007, the amount of consumption was reduced by 2.2% per year on average.
22. In support of the Government's call for reduction in paper consumption, C&SD will continue to contain the consumption of paper in photocopying/office printing in 2013.

Waste recovery for recycling/re-use

23. C&SD continues its efforts in recycling the waste paper which it has generated. Each section of C&SD is provided with waste paper recycling bags for collecting waste paper. In 2012, 81 tonnes of waste paper were collected for recycling.
24. Since 2001, C&SD's effort on waste separation and recycling has extended to aluminum cans and plastic bottles. Collection bins are placed on each floor of the Wanchai Tower headquarters and two sub-offices for collecting aluminum cans and plastic bottles separately.
25. Since 1995, C&SD has joined the HP Printer Cartridge Recycling Programme under which used cartridges are collected and passed to HP for recycling. In 2012, 914 printer cartridges were recycled.

Reduction of plastic bag consumption

26. C&SD keeps on reminding its staff to be economical in paper consumption with a view to reducing the rubbish generated and minimising the usage of plastic garbage bags. To further promote the use of "degradable" plastic bags, C&SD has included a provision in the new cleansing services contract for its offices requesting the cleansing contractors to use "degradable" plastic bags or bags made of "recycled plastics" for storing rubbish.
27. Starting from May 2008, C&SD has stopped distributing single-use shopping bags to members of the public (e.g. when they purchase statistical publications in the offices of C&SD) so as to help reduce the consumption of plastic and paper bags.

Energy conservation

28. C&SD recognises the importance of energy conservation and efficiency. It has carried out a good amount of energy saving retrofit works since 1998, including installation of energy-saving fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescent lamps, and replacing magnetic ballasts with electronic ballasts.
29. Apart from the modification of engineering installations, C&SD emphasises good housekeeping practices in achieving energy conservation. Green energy management practices are widely adopted in the offices. Such practices include switching off lights, air-conditioners and electric equipment when not in use, lowering venetian blinds when sunlight is strong, and setting air-conditioning at appropriate room temperature, etc.
30. To assess C&SD's performance in energy saving, figures on the total amount of electricity consumption in four C&SD office locations⁽¹⁾ in 2011 and 2012 are compared on the same basis by not including electricity consumption in newly set up offices. In 2012, the four selected locations consumed 1080709 kWh of electricity, 1.7% less than the amount of electricity consumed in 2011 (1099270 kWh). The emission of sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and respirable suspended particulates (RSP) corresponding to the electricity consumption in these offices amounted to 2064 kg, 1254 kg and 65 kg respectively.
31. It is the Government's target to achieve a 5% saving on the total electricity consumption in government buildings from 2007-08 to 2013-14. Through concerted staff effort, significant saving in electricity consumption has been achieved by C&SD between 2007-08 and 2012-13. It is expected that the 5% saving target could be achieved in 2013-14.
32. There are three departmental vehicles in C&SD. The total mileage in 2012 was 36526 km, and the fuel consumption was about 5402 litres. The corresponding emission of NO_x and RSP was about 40 kg and 3 kg respectively.

Carbon audit

33. In October 2012, information was provided to the Building Management Office (BMO) of Wanchai Tower to facilitate the collection of carbon emission data in respect of activities conducted by various departments in Wanchai Tower (including C&SD headquarters) during the period from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

Indoor air quality

34. A "good class" indoor air quality certificate continued to be issued to Wanchai Tower (where C&SD headquarters is located) in October 2012.

Building an environmental culture

35. To keep staff informed of C&SD's latest measures on environmental protection and to foster their awareness of green office practices, a column entitled "Environmental Protection and You" has been established in the Departmental Newsletter since March 2002. Articles on environmental issues contributed by Green Ambassadors, covering such topics as waste recovery, energy conservation, green pledge and green procurement, are regularly published in that column.

36. An environmental seminar for Green Ambassadors was held in November 2012 to support their work more effectively.

The way ahead

37. C&SD will continue to work along its environmental policy and improve its environmental performance. Specific targets that C&SD aims to achieve in the coming year are set out below:
- a. To sustain efforts in consumption minimisation, waste recovery and energy conservation;
 - b. To continue organising training sessions and green activities to raise staff's awareness of and participation in environmental protection; and
 - c. To explore more green initiatives which can be implemented in office operations and activities of C&SD.

(1) Four office locations in C&SD, out of a total of six, were selected for quantitative assessment of performance in energy saving. This was because separately metered electricity consumption figures comparable over the two years 2011 and 2012 were available only for those four office locations.