

Hongkong Post Environmental Report 2008/09

Responsibility to the environment

Hongkong Post is committed to protecting the environment and supporting sustainable development within the community, especially by carrying out its services and internal operations in an environmentally responsible manner. To this end we have introduced a number of “green” office practices that are helping us save energy, reduce waste, and recycle materials. More generally, we are promoting environmental awareness amongst all levels of staff, and encouraging the careful and efficient use of energy and resources.

Besides describing the range of environmental measures adopted by Hongkong Post, this Report highlights some of our recent achievements and reaffirms our “green” agenda for the future.

Our Environmental Policy

- To ensure that our public offices and working areas are safe and user-friendly for everyone, including customers, visitors, staff and contractors.
- To implement effective ‘green housekeeping’ measures that will help us conserve energy and resources, reuse and recycle materials, and cut down on waste.
- To increase staff awareness of issues relating to the environment and sustainable living.
- To introduce postal products and services that take into account sustainability and environmental protection and which, where possible, enhance public awareness and appreciation of the natural environment.

Our environmental policy was first launched in 1999 and updated in 2006. Since then, we have put in place a number of programmes designed to reduce the impact of our activities on the environment by lowering consumption, recycling waste, and cutting down on our use of resources.

In the year under review, we fully complied with all HKSAR Government environmental policies and regulations relating to consumption of resources, energy conservation and recycling of waste.

Environmental initiatives and achievements in 2008/09

Environmentally-friendly philatelic products

Hongkong Post's philatelic products include picture cards, first day covers and souvenir covers, all of which are made with paper from wood pulp sourced from sustainably-managed forests. All our stamps are printed using non-toxic inks and gums.

One of the ways Hongkong Post helps promote environmental care is by issuing stamp sets with environmental or conservational themes. Over the past year we issued a number of such sets, including a set of stamps depicting six species of jellyfish in June 2008, followed in July by a set of Giant Panda stamps. In February 2009 we celebrated China's natural beauty in our "Mainland Scenery Series No. 8" stamp sheetlet, depicting beautiful Mount Tianshan in Xinjiang, the Mainland's largest glacial region.



Set of commemorative stamps showing six species of jellyfish



Stamp sheetlet of "Mainland Scenery Series No. 8: Mount Tianshan, Xinjiang"



A set of Giant Panda stamps commemorating the anniversary of the arrival in Hong Kong of Le Le and Ying Ying, donated by Central Government for the 10th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

In 2005 we first launched Stamp OnNet, an online ordering platform for our Local Standing Order Service (LSOS). By April 2009, more than 13,000 local standing order customers had registered for stamp purchases via Stamp OnNet, doing away with the need for physical application forms. Many LSOS customers -currently more than 18,000 -have also elected to receive philatelic newsletters and stamp order collection letters by email, helping us further reduce our consumption of paper.

A green workplace

In line with the Clean Air Charter, all our post offices undergo regular indoor air quality checks conducted by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department.

Four of our post offices have had environmental improvements incorporated into new building work; These four - the new Tuen Mun Delivery Office, the Shek Wu Hui Post Office, the Tin Yiu Post Office and the Yeung Uk Road Post Office - have all successfully been registered in the “Hong Kong Energy Efficiency Registration Scheme for Buildings” as complying with the Code of Practice for Energy Efficiency of Lighting Installations.



The Yeung Uk Road Post Office



Yeung Uk Road Post Office has been officially registered as an energy-efficient building

Our postal vehicle fleet

All Hongkong Post vehicles use unleaded, low-sulphur fuel, and measures to improve fuel efficiency such as switching off engines while waiting are now the norm. We have also continued adding environmentally friendly vehicles to our fleet, and now have a total of five Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) vehicles in operation. As older vehicles come to the end of their working lives, we are replacing them with vehicles meeting Euro IV standards and other environmentally friendly vehicles. In some rural areas, bicycles are still used for mail deliveries.

Hongkong Post uses the services of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) to ensure that its postal vehicles are well-maintained and have minimal environmental impact. The EMSD's environmental management system conforms to internationally recognised ISO 14001 standards.

Green Management

Hongkong Post is committed to promoting green management at many levels. Our Environmental Enhancement Steering Committee is tasked with overseeing the efficient use of resources and with implementing energy-saving measures. Building on achievements in recent years, we have continued to make encouraging progress in promoting green management and saving energy. Some of our key initiatives during 2008/09 involved:

- i) Consolidating our computer servers to reduce electricity consumption;
- ii) Reducing the number of fluorescent tubes in the common areas of all offices;
- iii) Procuring office equipment and light fittings with energy-efficiency ratings;
- iv) Including environmental procurement criteria in tenders and contracts;
- v) Auditing our compliance with green guidelines, and identifying opportunities for improvement;
- vi) Recycling waste, including processing more than 46,000 used laser jet cartridges in 2008/09 and procuring rubbish bags made from biodegradable materials.

Hongkong Post supports the HKSAR Government's recommendation that indoor air temperatures should be maintained at 25.5° C, and we monitor levels of energy consumption at all our post office premises carefully. Despite extensive building work that took place during the year at the General Post Office, the International Mail Centre, and delivery offices where the new Mechanised Letter Sorting System was being installed, our overall annual electricity consumption in 2008/09 remained at the same level as last year.

We monitor the use of photocopying paper closely, and try to avoid unnecessary printing of documents wherever possible. More than 30% of our photocopying paper is made from recycled paper.

Promoting green awareness

Hongkong Post's Workplace Hygiene Charter is helping maintain a high quality working environment for all employees. Environmental protection issues also regularly appear on agendas for management and staff briefings. All employees are encouraged to contribute ideas for environmental initiatives.

All our induction programmes include a module on environmental protection, which introduces staff to our Environmental Management System and gives them useful tips for saving energy. In 2008/09, 792 new staff members took this module. Also in the year under review, we organised seminars offering tips for driving in a more environmentally friendly manner and reducing emissions. Seminars, workshops and visits relating to environmental issues are held regularly, with all staff having the opportunity to participate. We also regularly circulate internal environmental guidelines, and encourage staff to put environmentally friendly measures into practice both in the workplace and at home.

Further, we take every opportunity to promote greater environmental awareness amongst Hongkong Post staff. For example, in 2008/09 we participated in a scheme to collect used laser jet cartridges for recycling, besides supporting various environmental outings and tree-planting campaigns such as the Tree-Planting Challenge 2008, organised by Friends of the Earth (HK). Hongkong Post has also stopped handing out plastic shopping bags to customers.



Hongkong Post colleagues planted more than 100 trees in the Tree-Planting Challenge 2008

Looking ahead

Our efforts to support the environment in 2008/09 have given us the momentum we need to move forward and find further ways of reducing our consumption of resources, minimising the waste we produce, and recycling materials wherever possible.

At Hongkong Post, we continue to commit ourselves to achieving environmental ‘best practice’ in all of our activities, while providing the community with efficient, reliable postal services.