

Labour Department Environmental Report for 2013

Introduction

This report covers the environmental performance of the Labour Department for the year 2013.

The Labour Department and its Services

The Labour Department (LD) is the principal agency in the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region responsible for the execution and co-ordination of major labour administration and occupational safety and health functions. Its aim is to enhance the well-being of the workforce progressively and promote the safety and health of those at work. It has four key programmes of work: Labour Relations, Employment Services, Safety and Health at Work and Employees' Rights and Benefits.

In 2013, Hong Kong's overall labour demand remained strong. The total number of employed persons continued to rise and the yearly average unemployment rate remained at a low level of 3.4%. LD continued to closely monitor the employment market situation and enhance our employment services on all fronts, especially in netting suitable vacancies from the market and rendering assistance to job seekers. During the year, LD undertook a number of new and enhanced activities, for instance, large-scale public educational activities on the Employment Ordinance and good people management practices; enhancement measures of the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme; publicity activities and proactive workplace inspections in relation to Statutory Minimum Wage and its revised rate; establishment of the Standard Working Hours Committee; and reinforcement of enforcement and publicity efforts in relation to the prevention of heat stroke at work and safety of Major Works Projects.

As at 31 December 2013, LD had an establishment of 2 238 posts, accommodated in 40 office locations throughout the territory. The actual expenditure of LD in 2013-14 was \$1,641 million, including recurrent expenditure of \$1,272 million and non-recurrent expenditure of \$369 million.

Our Environmental Policy and Measures

LD is committed to environmental protection by acting in compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practices, meeting the commitments of the Clean Air Charter signed by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in November 2006, as well as providing a green environment for staff and members of the public visiting our offices.

The following measures were adopted in pursuit of such commitments:

(a) Implementation of Green Housekeeping Measures

LD implemented green housekeeping measures targeting at minimising resource consumption, waste recovery and energy conservation, and had closely monitored their effectiveness. The measures taken were at [Annex](#).

(b) Training and Publicity among Staff

Through promotional and educational programmes, LD aimed to raise staff members' awareness of their environmental responsibilities. Government guidelines on green management were re-circulated regularly to publicise green management. LD also encouraged its staff members to participate in environmental activities including environmental fund-raising events (such as the Community Chest Green Day) and green management seminars organised by other bureaux/departments or outside organisations, with a view to promoting their environmental awareness.

(c) Review of Office Practices

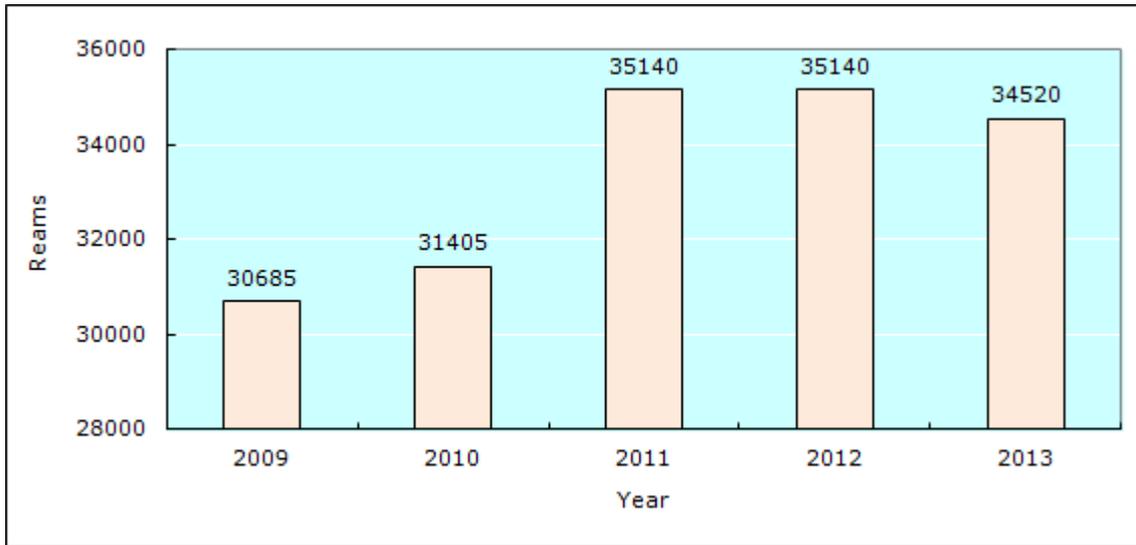
LD regularly reviewed those office practices which were not environment-friendly and introduced improvement measures whenever feasible, such as the use of high efficiency lighting equipment in its premises.

(d) Minimisation of Environmental Pollutants

LD observed the guidelines on infection control issued by the Department of Health in disposal of the clinical wastes of its Occupational Health Clinics, and took measures to minimise the production of environmental pollutants and/or nuisance. Chemical wastes from the Occupational Hygiene Laboratory were collected by specialised waste collector. Asbestos wastes produced by the Laboratory were disposed of by licensed asbestos waste collector as required. LD also helped reduce air emissions by observing the Clean Air Charter.

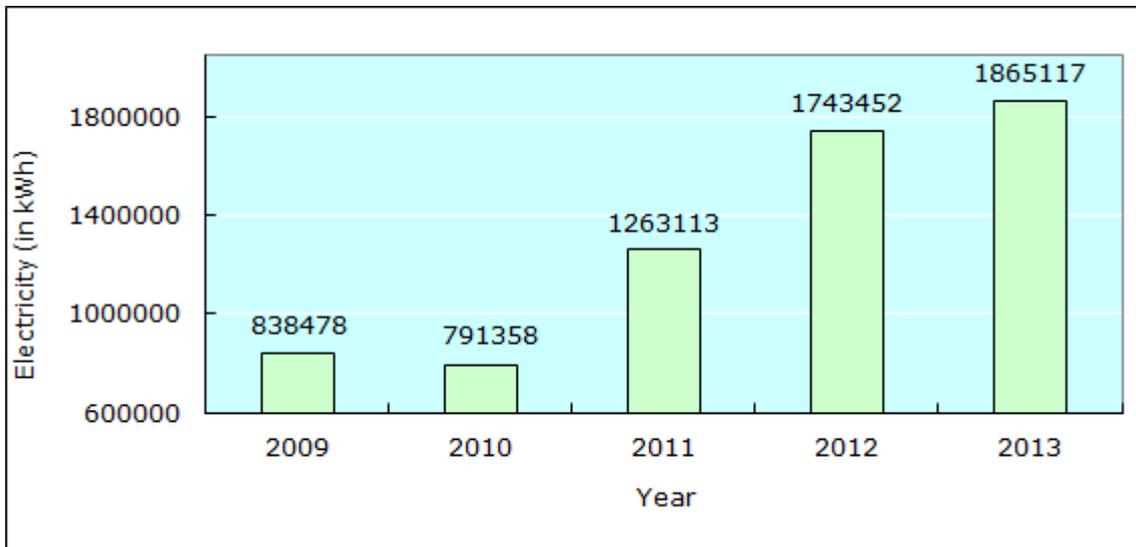
Performance

Paper Consumption



Despite the persistently heavy workload and increase in scope of LD's services, we managed to reduce our paper consumption by 1.8% from 35 140 reams in 2012 to 34 520 reams in 2013.

Electricity Consumption



Note: The figures only represent the electricity consumption of LD's offices in premises for which LD is responsible for paying the electricity bills. Electricity consumption of LD's offices in multi-user buildings managed by the Government Property Agency (GPA) and other Departments, for which we are not able to work out our share in consumption, is not covered in this report.

The number of premises for which LD was responsible for paying the electricity bills increased from 14 in 2012 to 17 in 2013. After discounting the activity changes by comparing only those premises which had been occupied for 12 months in both 2012 and 2013, the electricity consumption by these premises actually decreased by 0.4% from 2012 to 2013. With the launching of additional initiatives in various programme areas of LD in 2014, we envisage difficulties in achieving further savings in paper and electricity consumption.

Emissions from Vehicle Fleet and Electricity Consumption

	Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂)		Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)		Respirable suspended particulates (RSP)	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Vehicle fleet	-	-	624 kg	607 kg	37 kg	37 kg
Electricity	3 330 kg	3 562 kg	2 022 kg	2 164 kg	105 kg	112 kg

For vehicle fleet, LD had 27 vehicles in 2013, including one new electric vehicle, eight vehicles using gasoline-electric hybrid energy and one using liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). The total mileage travelled was 412 932 km; and fuel consumptions were 40 691 litres of petrol and 3 153 litres of LPG. Despite the increase in LD's activities, we reduced emissions of air pollutants from the vehicle fleet by 17 kg (-2.6%) when compared to 2012. To support the Clean Air Charter, LD adopted the following measures to minimise the emission of air pollutants by its vehicular fleet:

- (i) using electric and hybrid vehicles and running other vehicles on unleaded fuel or LPG;
- (ii) reminding our motor drivers to comply with the statutory requirement to switch off engines of vehicles while waiting to achieve fuel saving and avoid idling emissions; and
- (iii) arranging regular vehicle servicing and preventive maintenance to minimise the emission of pollutants from vehicles.

Future Targets

Looking ahead, we will continue our efforts in green management and contribute to improve the air quality of Hong Kong. We will continue to

implement green measures in consumption minimisation, waste recovery and energy conservation, as well as appropriate measures to attain the objectives of reducing air pollution. In addition, we will continue our effort to promote environmental awareness among staff members and encourage them to explore new ideas for delivering services in an environmental-friendly manner.

Feedbacks and Comments

If you have any comments or suggestions on this report, please send them to the Green Manager of LD at:

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E-mail:	enquiry@labour.gov.hk
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Annex

Green Housekeeping Measures Taken

Minimising Paper Consumption

- Using both sides of paper –
All photocopying machines in LD were equipped with the double-side photocopying function. We also encouraged staff members to write and print on both sides of each piece of paper.
- Minimising hardcopies of circulars, gazette notices and other publications –
Both internal and external circulars were disseminated to staff members through e-mail. We also made wider use of internal portal and internet with a view to minimising the requirement of hardcopies.
- Communicating by e-mails –
All staff members have been provided with individual e-mail accounts to facilitate electronic communication both within and outside LD.

- Using Departmental Portal –
LD launched its Departmental Portal in 2004 to provide a platform for information sharing and e-transactions within LD, including on-line access to the e-Payroll System of the Treasury and the e-Leave System for handling leave application, thereby reducing paper consumption.
- Adopting electronic version as the mode of publication –
LD adopted electronic version as the mode of publication for its publications, such as the Annual Departmental Report and staff newsletter.
- Using plain paper fax machines and avoiding the use of fax leader pages –
LD adopted the use of plain paper fax machines and encouraged staff members to avoid the use of fax leader pages.
- Sending greeting cards in festive seasons by electronic means.

Minimising the Use of Stationery

- Using refillable ball pens –
All staff members were provided with refillable ball pens for their daily work.
- Minimising the use of envelopes –
Staff members were encouraged to minimise the use of envelopes.
- Minimising the use of loose minute jacket –
Staff members were encouraged to re-use loose minute jackets whenever practicable.
- Minimising the use of products which were not environmental-friendly –
LD observed guidelines on green procurement issued by the Environmental Protection Department.

Waste Recovery

- Collecting waste paper for recycling –
Boxes were provided in all offices to collect waste paper. LD also arranged contractors to collect waste paper for recycling.

- Using recycled paper –
100% of the paper consumed by LD was recycled paper.
- Collecting obsolete personal computers –
Personal computers were collected for trade-in through contractors.
- Redeploying serviceable furniture and equipment for further usage.
- Collecting used toner cartridges–
Toner cartridges for printers were collected and returned to suppliers for recycling.
- Requiring the cleansing contractors to use degradable plastic bags/plastic bags with recycled content for garbage collection.

Energy Conservation

- Switching off electrical appliances when not in use.
- Adopting the use of high efficiency lighting equipment –
We adopted the use of high efficiency lighting equipment in all new premises and we also arranged to replace older lighting equipment with more energy saving system when opportunities arose, e.g. during office renovation.
- Adjusting the illumination of lighting equipment to the minimum required level.
- Installing occupancy sensors to automatically switch on and off lightning in offices and public areas._
- Adjusting the air-conditioning system with a view to keeping the room temperature to 25.5°C in accordance with the advice of the Environment Bureau.
- Encouraging staff to dress casual and smart in summer months.
- Ensuring proper maintenance of our departmental vehicles and using more clean energy.

- Reminding our drivers to comply with the statutory requirement to switch off the vehicle engine whilst waiting to achieve fuel saving and avoid idling emissions.
- Appointing Energy Wardens in all locations to monitor the effective implementation of energy saving measures.