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Environmental Report

Government Flying Service Environmental Report 2009

Foreword

This environmental report covers the environmental issues of the Government Flying Service (GFS) in 2009. In this report, we will focus on the key ways we work to help improve the environment and the direct environmental impact of our day-to-day departmental activities.

This report is primarily intended for Hong Kong residents, our various business partners, other government departments, our own staff and other stakeholders. We understand that a single environmental report will probably not be capable of fully satisfying the information needs and interests of such a diverse group. If you feel there are specific areas that the report should include, please let us know and we will try to take into account your views in our future reports.

1. What We Do

The Government Flying Service (GFS) is a disciplined services department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and is located at the south-western corner of the Hong Kong International Airport.

We provide the Hong Kong community with a wide range of flying services, including round-the-clock search and rescue coverage, casualty and medical evacuation, fire fighting and support to the law enforcement agencies and government departments. We also provide emergency services to the international air carriers within the Hong Kong Flight Information Region and international merchant ships using the shipping lanes within the Hong Kong Maritime Area of Responsibility.

The GFS has an establishment of 223 full-time civil servants as at 31 December 2009 responsible for operations, maintenance and administration. We operate a fleet of ten aircraft, namely three fixed-wing aeroplanes and seven helicopters to carry out the full range of flying services and support.

In 2009, the GFS flew a total of 4 951 hours. It assisted in 430 search and rescue operations, transported 1 464 patients to hospital by helicopter and flew 8 926 government officers and official visitors. The recurrent expenditure of the GFS in 2009/10 is \$183 million.

2. Our Specific Job

Our major tasks are to:

- carry out search and rescue over both land and sea;
- provide Emergency Medical Services;
- support the Hong Kong Police Force and other disciplined services in carrying out their law enforcement duties and training for such duties;
- assist in fire fighting and in responding to any other emergencies which constitute a threat to life or property;
- carry out photography for aerial surveys; and
- carry such persons as the Secretary of Security may authorize as passengers.

3. Vision and Strategy on Green Management

The GFS will continue its efforts to minimize the impact of its activities on the environment and provide the community with excellent search, rescue and aviation support services in an environmentally friendly manner.

4. Environmental, Health & Safety Policy

The GFS is committed to conducting operations in compliance with all environmental, health and safety requirements and regulations. The management is entrusted to providing a safe workplace for all our employees and customers.

The managers and supervisors in the GFS have the responsibility to ensure that every employee fully understands the safety policies and procedures applicable to his/her work area. The responsibility for safety and environmental practices follow the chain of command and supervisors will be held accountable for a subordinate's actions. The supervisors should provide all necessary training and instructions for their staff to perform their duties in an environmentally sound and safe manner.

Each employee has the responsibility to comply with the GFS work rules, and follow safe work practices and procedures established to protect the environment and the employees. All employees are asked to report to their supervisor all unsafe acts, hazardous conditions, and conditions which impact, or have the potential to impact the environment.

The Government Flying Service Environmental, Health and Safety Committee oversees the Government Flying Service environmental, health and safety policy and goals. It is also responsible for addressing certain topics, including but not limited to waste reduction, accident prevention and training programmes.

The Controller, Government Flying Service is personally committed to the continual improvement of our environmental,

health and safety performance and will authorise actions necessary to achieve these objectives.

In 2009, the Committee continued to promote occupational safety and health as well as environmental protection.

5. Green Personnel

In the GFS, the Green Manager is responsible for overseeing the environmental issues of the department. He is assisted by the Green Task Force and Energy Wardens in implementing the GFS's Green Policy.

Green Manager

Mr Danny Wong, Aircraft Engineer (Electrical /Instrument)² was the Green Manager of the GFS with the following responsibilities:

- (a) implementing a programme of green housekeeping within the department;
- (b) introducing measures to increase staff awareness and involvement in relation to environmental issues; and
- (c) publicising the commitment to protect the environment, formulating action plans and recording achievements.

He is the focal point whereby all initiatives related to the environment can be coordinated, sustained, reviewed and strengthened. He was assisted by the Assistant Departmental Secretary in carrying out these duties.

Green Task Force

The GFS set up a Green Task Force in February 2003 with the main focus on energy conservation. The Green Task Force comprises representatives from the Operations, Engineering, Supplies and Administration Section. They are responsible for liaising with staff members to explore possible options for saving energy without affecting the GFS operations and also discussing with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) on how to make the proposals and ideas into effective measures.

Energy Wardens

Energy wardens from different sections have been appointed since January 2005. Their main duty is to inspect and ensure that the housekeeping measures for saving energy are complied with. For example, they assist in ensuring that the air-conditioning output at the corridor and lobby areas is always set at a "low cool" level in order to avoid unnecessary consumption of energy. They are also responsible for reminding colleagues to observe the energy saving measures.



Members of the Green Task Force (2009-10)

*(Front row from left to right : Mr Bon Tang, Mr Tsang Wai-ming
Back row from left to right : Ms Lorraine Lee, Ms Janice Law,
Mr Danny Wong, Mr Patrick Fok)*

6. Our Environmental Concerns and Initiatives

6.1 Aircraft Noise

We are very much concerned with the noise generated by our aircraft. Due to the nature of our flying services, such as casualty evacuation and support of law and order, it is not always possible to avoid flights where the noise may affect the public. Nevertheless, we have always been conscious of the need to conserve the environment and have taken various measures to protect the environment and minimize the noise nuisance caused to the public. Our measures include -

- (a) Higher transit height through the harbour

Unless there is an operational requirement, our helicopters will fly at 1,000 feet or above in the harbour to reduce the noise caused to the public.

- (b) Winding down of helicopter rotors

If a prolonged waiting time is expected, especially at a helipad in the urban area (e.g. Eastern Hospital rooftop), the helicopter rotors would be wound down to reduce the noise caused to the residence nearby.

(c) Flight scheduling

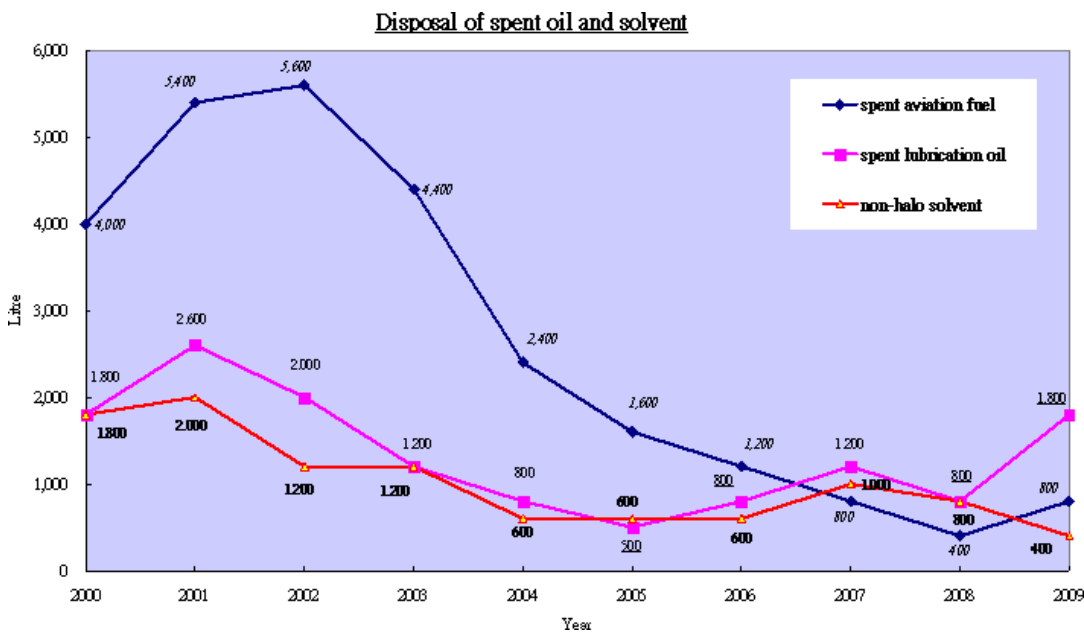
Different tasks are combined into one flight as far as possible to reduce the total flight time and fuel consumption.



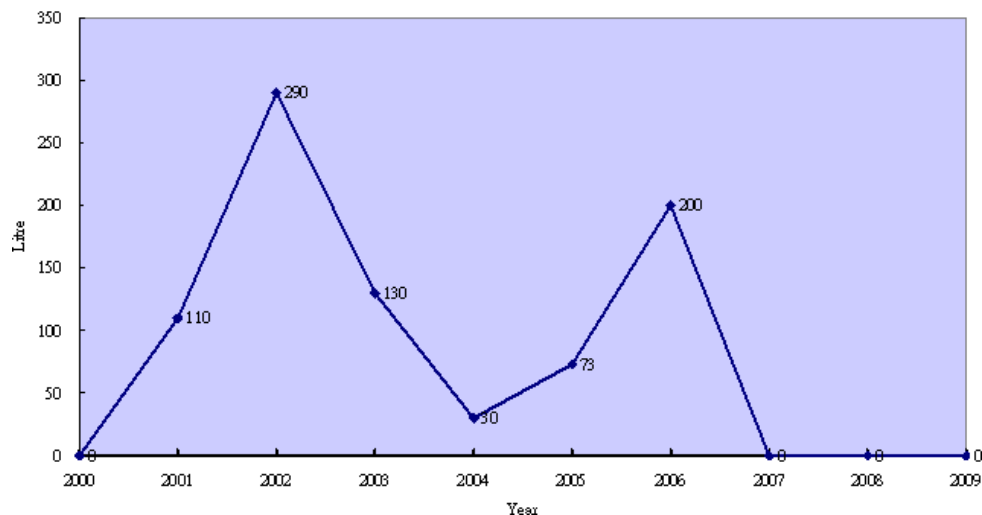
Pre-flight planning

6.2 Chemical Substances

The common chemical substances used in the GFS for the maintenance of our fleet are cleaning solvent, aviation fuel (AVTUR), lubrication oil, grease and paints. These substances are used on a daily basis. The waste chemical substances are disposed of through licensed waste collectors approved by the Environmental Protection Department. The amount of spent oil and solvent disposed of in the past ten years is as follows -



For flight safety purpose, the GFS conducts fuel sample check for each storage tank and each aircraft daily. In the past, the GFS disposed of these fuel samples. To reduce the amount of chemical wastes, since 2005 the GFS filtered the fuel samples and re-used it for other purposes. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of spent aviation fuel. Compared to 2008, the disposal of spent aviation oil and spent lubrication oil has increased by 400 litre (100%) and 1,000 litre (125%) respectively in 2009 because more maintenance tasks involving large consumption and waste generation of these chemicals were performed in 2009. Examples are the maintenance works related to the fuel system and helicopter gear box. We are mindful of such waste generation during maintenance and would keep it to the absolute minimum.

Disposal of time-expired paint

After years of effort, the disposal of time-expired paint has stabilized at a low level. The amount of time-expired paint disposed of in 2009 was zero. We have not disposed of any time-expired paint in 2007, 2008 and 2009 because the amount was minimal. It will be disposed of in one go when more time-expired paint is accumulated. We have tried to use some of the aircraft paint waste for ground equipment maintenance with the aim of reducing the waste.

The GFS reminds its staff regularly of the importance of the effective use of chemical and solvents in maintenance activities so as to further reduce the amount of chemical wastes.

6.3 Working with Other Government Departments in Environmental Protection

We work closely with other government departments in environmental protection. For example, our helicopters assist the Marine Department in conducting surveillance of floating refuse and oil pollution in Hong Kong waters. We also help in spraying oil dispersant over the sea when required.

Our helicopters also assist the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department in conducting a "Sky-shout" exercise on hill fire prevention publicity. On Sunday, public holidays and particularly Chung Yeung Festival and Ching Ming Festival, our helicopters help to disseminate the message of preventing hill fire to the public by flying above the countryside and playing pre-recorded voice messages through the loudhailers.

In addition, our aircraft carry officers of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to take aerial photographs of power stations and their surrounding environment for studies and analysis. We also assist EPD in conducting aerial inspections, surveys and monitoring of river catchments of Deep Bay and Mirs Bay on the spreading of wastewater plumes from major sewage outfalls. Our aircraft are also used to take aerial photographs for conducting site inspections and survey of existing waste facilities such as landfills and transfer stations as well as planning of special waste projects in the territories.



Helicopter in oil spill dispersant spray operation



Helicopter in fire-fighting operation (fire tank)

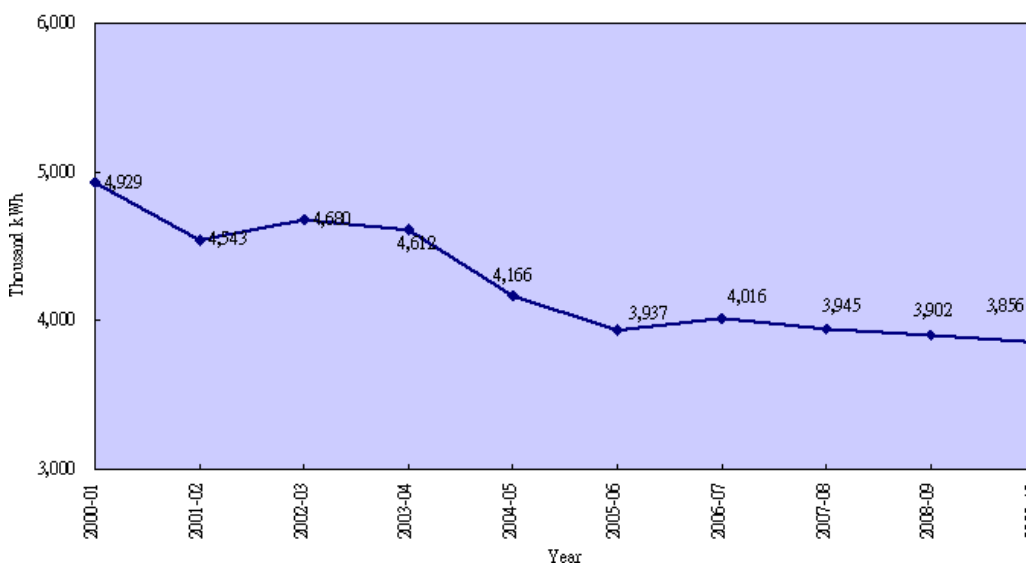
6.4 Energy Use and Energy Savings Measures

The GFS is highly concerned about energy conservation. Through the implementation of different energy saving measures, we are able to achieve reduction in electricity consumption and to maintain the consumption at a low level. The GFS was able to reduce 1,073,000 kWh (or 21.77%) of electricity consumption in ten years (from 2000-2001 to 2009-10). It represents a reduction of 751 tonnes in Green House Gas emission (CO2-equivalent).

It is the government's policy for each department to cut down the electricity consumption by 5% by 2013-14, using 2007-08 as the base year. In 2009-10, GFS was able to reduce the electricity consumption by 2.27% and 1% when compared to 2007-08 and 2008-09 respectively.

The table below shows the electricity consumption in the GFS for the past ten years.

Electricity Consumption



To reduce the use of unnecessary energy, we adopted house-keeping measures such as activating the "energy saving" mode in all computer terminals, suspension of the passenger lift, installation of solar films at the windows which are exposed to direct sunlight, setting the room temperature at 25.5°C and regular inspection to common areas.



Solar Panels



Occupancy Sensor



Setting room temperature at 25.5°C



Zoned lighting and switches



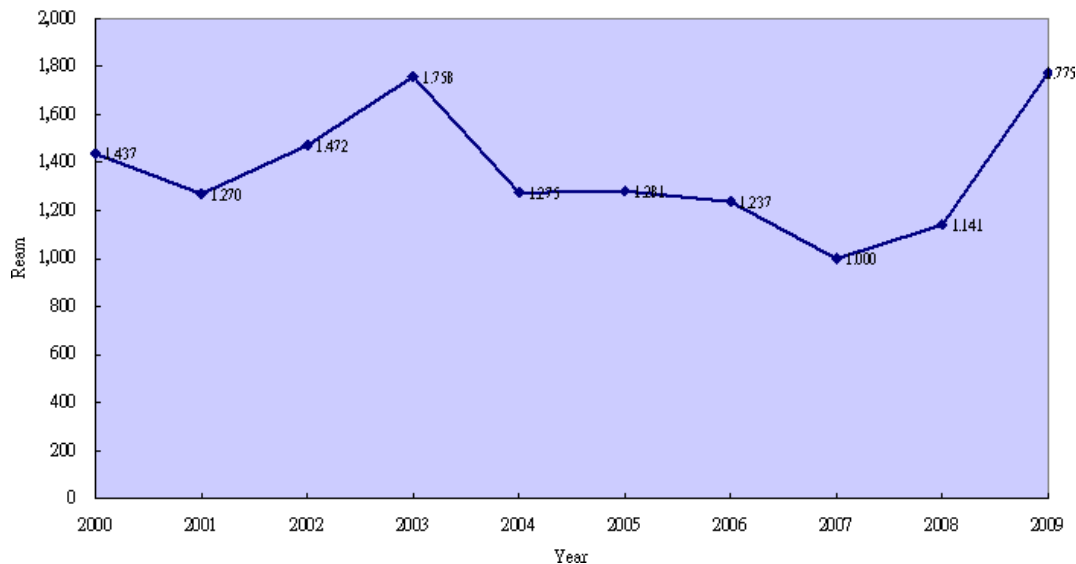
Suspension of the passenger lift



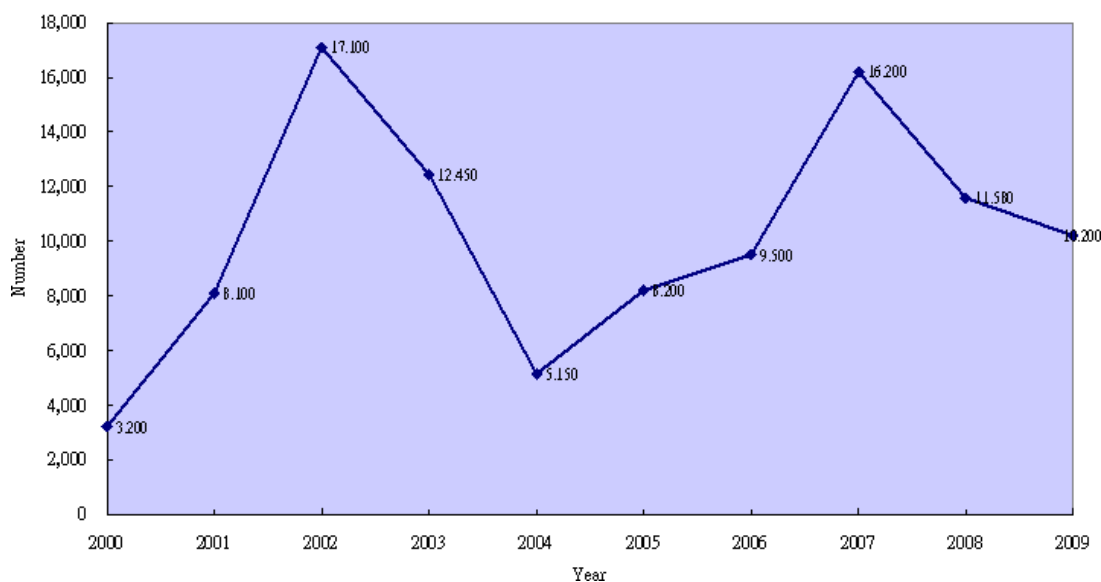
Solar films at the Air Command and Control Centre

6.5 Paper Consumption

Compared to 2008, the paper consumption of GFS has increased by 56% in 2009 which was mainly due to the organization of more recruitment exercises in the year. More paper was used for the production of test papers and the issue of letters to the applicants, etc.

Paper Consumption

Compared to 2008, the consumption of envelope in 2009 has reduced by 12%. We will continue to closely monitor the use of paper and envelopes and promote the use of electronic communication, reuse of paper, envelopes and file jackets etc.

Envelope Consumption**6.6 Other Green Housekeeping Measures**

The green housekeeping measures we have continued to implement in 2009 can be broadly grouped into the following categories:

- use of environmentally friendly lighting facilities, electrical appliances, stationery, office equipment and sundries items (e.g. bio-degradable plastic rubbish bags and rechargeable batteries) ;
- installation of water purifiers to provide drinking water in the office in order to reduce the use of bottled water ;
- collection of recyclable materials (e.g. paper, aluminum cans, floppy diskettes, plastic bottles and toner cartridges) ;
- promotion and education of "Green" lifestyle through the issue of Green tips and e-newsletters, exhibition on "Green" lifestyle and organization of talks with the EPD. For instance, a talk on environmental protection was arranged on 17.7.2009 for all GFS staff. An exhibition on waste management was organized at the staff canteen from July to August 2009 and ;
- Participation in related activities such as the Airport Community-wide Carbon Audit and the Community Chest Green Day on 15.4.2009.



Removal of fluorescent light bulbs in offices and corridors



Rechargeable batteries and charger



Water purifier



Recycle bins



7. Aims for 2010

We will continue to encourage and remind our staff to practice and implement the various measures/programmes initiated in 2009 to help protect the environment. Our targets in 2010 are:

- to gradually reduce the level of electricity consumption so as to achieve the government's aim to cut down the energy consumption by 5% in 2013-14 using 2007-08 as the base year ;
- to work closely with the EMSD in implementing more energy-saving measures (e.g. installation of solar films and extension of occupancy sensors) to reduce electricity consumption and ;
- to continue to educate our officers on the awareness and importance of environmental protection. We will invite officers from the Environmental Protection Department to deliver talks on environmental protection topics and nominate staff to attend seminars on related topics organized by other government departments.

We will continue to monitor progress in the above areas.

8. Information and Suggestions

For further information required or any suggestions, you may contact the Departmental Secretary of the GFS through:

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