

Home Affairs Bureau

Environmental Report 2003

Home Affairs Bureau (HAB)'s Key Responsibilities

HAB's key responsibilities are-

- (a) to co-ordinate the efforts of relevant bureaux/departments in protecting the rights of individual and to promote human rights;
- (b) to develop policy in respect of entertainment licensing, gambling, personal data protection and government advisory and statutory bodies;
- (c) to formulate and implement policies on youth development;
- (d) to promote community development; and
- (e) to support and promote the development of arts, culture and sport and recreation and the preservation of heritage.

2. Apart from proposing legislation and formulating strategies, we work closely with the government departments¹ and subvented organizations² under our purview to achieve the above tasks. We also organize our own promotional programmes, functions and exhibitions, publish publications and leaflets and run a Youth Resource Centre and a Civic Education Resource Centre.

Our Environmental Policy

3. HAB recognizes the benefits of a healthy environment and the importance of sustainable development for the future of Hong Kong. Within our policy framework, we are committed to adopting environmentally responsible

¹The departments include the Home Affairs Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Information Services Department.

²The subvented organizations include Equal Opportunities Commission, Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong Arts Development Council, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and Hong Kong Outward Bound School.

practices among our staff, and encouraging our stakeholders to do the same. We also make efforts to nurture civic responsibility for the environment. We are committed to -

- (a) ensuring that the operations of the Bureau are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner;
- (b) increasing staff awareness for protecting the environment and preventing pollution;
- (c) encouraging departments and subvented bodies under our purview to adopt environmentally responsible measures to conserve resources and prevent pollution; and
- (d) conducting review of the current green measures with a view to formulating and taking necessary actions to attain continual improvement.

Our Efforts in Environmental Management

Housekeeping

4. On an on-going basis, we have been adopting the following green housekeeping practices in improving our working environment and preserving common resources:

(a) Conserve Resources and Energy

- (i) consume less paper by printing on both sides of paper as far as practicable and minimizing photocopies;
- (ii) use electronic correspondence such as e-mail to replace traditional communication measures; avoid printing e-messages (about 76% of our staff are GOA LAN users);
- (iii) send seasonal greetings in electronic form;
- (iv) minimize the use of products which are not environmentally friendly e.g. correction fluid, batteries with mercury;
- (v) minimize the use of paper cups;

- (vi) use energy-saving light bulbs;
- (vii) avoid use of overhead lighting where natural lighting is sufficient;
- (viii) switch off lights immediately as soon as the area becomes unoccupied;
- (ix) ensure windows are closed when air-conditioners are operating;
- (x) use staircase for interfloor traffic as far as practicable;
- (xi) switch off unused computers, monitors and printers;
- (xii) put up notices to remind staff of water saving.

(b) Reuse and Recycle Waste

- (i) re-use envelopes, loose minute file jackets and paper labels;
- (ii) use recycled paper;
- (iii) collect waste papers, used laser printer toner cartridges and used typewriter ribbons in designated bins to facilitate waste recycling.

(c) Improve Air Quality

- (i) use unleaded fuel for our departmental cars;
- (ii) switch off idling car engines;
- (iii) implement the Government's "Smoke-free Workplace" Policy;
- (iv) clean the office ventilation system on a regular basis.

Conservation of Heritage

5. One of the core responsibilities of HAB is to support and promote the

conservation of heritage, which is one of the key areas in environment protection. In this respect, we are supported by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) of Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) which oversees the conservation of heritage sites throughout Hong Kong. The AMO which was established in 1976 has continually organized seminars and workshops, held exhibitions, conducted heritage tours and issued publications to promote community awareness of our heritage. Heritage impacts are also addressed and included under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance that is applicable to the development of certain categories of projects in Hong Kong.

Community Improvement and Environmental Awareness Activities

6. One of HAB's main tasks is to foster a harmonious community and a healthy and safe living environment. We are supported by the Home Affairs Department (HAD) which provides advice on building management matters and carries out various measures such as cleaning up hygiene black spots, greening and improvement works to improve the living environment of the urban districts and rural areas. Both HAB and HAD encourage public participation in activities for improving the environment.

Our Performance in Year 2003

7. In 2003, we pursued the following specific environmental initiatives –

(a) ***To continue to identify the environmental impact of our policy areas and programme activities***

We have continually encouraged the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) and the Commission on Youth (COY), which are under our auspices, to use Bureau's funds that come under their scrutiny to sponsor projects that have incorporated themes of environmental protection.

In May 2003, CPCE launched a series of Television Announcement of Public Interests (TV APIs) on civic education to promote the benefits of having a clean and healthy environment. The APIs have been well received by the public and one of them won the 14th Annual International Competition – Galaxy Awards 2003 “GOLD WINNER” by the International Academy of Communications Arts and Science/Mercomm, Inc.

In September 2003, CPCE launched the second series of short television animation programmes (迪迪仔週記 II) to convey messages on civic education. The episodes with the theme “Hong Kong Our Home” conveyed messages to encourage Hong Kong citizens to care and keep our environment clean. The public response to the programmes was encouraging. According to the rating performance report from the television station, the audience size is over 1.1 million on each episode.

For the 2003 Youth Summit and the Pre-summit Youth Forums organized by COY, the theme was youth participation. One of the discussion subjects was how the youth could participate in the field of environment protection. A number of recommendations and suggestions were put forward by the participants and they were subsequently sent to the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau for consideration.

(b) *To step up using electronic media for publicity purposes*

To reduce paper consumption, we have been increasingly using electronic media such as multi-slide TV Announcement for Public Interest, webpage and internet for publicity. We have reduced the number of publications printed on paper and issued CD-ROM copies instead as far as practicable. For examples, CD-ROM copies were issued for the First Report of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Second Report of the HKSAR under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) for distribution to the public.

(c) *To reduce paper publications*

We conducted a review in early 2003 on our regular paper publications with a view to identifying room for reducing our printing requirements and hence paper consumption, and had achieved savings in paper consumption.

(d) *To adopt additional energy saving measures*

We did a brainstorming session with office managers in the Bureau in June 2003 and have implemented the following additional

energy saving measures –

- (i) We have generally shortened the air-conditioning (AC) provision hours in order to reduce electricity consumption.
 - (ii) We have kept the number of photocopiers turned on for use after normal office hours to the absolute minimum, in order to save the amount of electricity used in maintaining the machines in ‘sleep mode’.
 - (iii) We have affixed ‘Save Energy’ stickers to AC and lighting switches to remind staff to turn off AC and lights when not in use.
- (e) ***To monitor the usage of office stationery with a view to identifying realistic ways of reduction***

In 2003, we have achieved the following major quantifiable performances:

- (i) paper consumption decreased by 12.18%;
 - (ii) envelope consumption dropped by 26.88%;
 - (iii) file jackets consumption dropped by 9.73%;
 - (iv) desk diary refills consumption dropped by 1.05%; and
 - (v) used printer cartridges collected increased by 20%.
- (f) ***To continue adopting appropriate measures to improve the indoor air quality of our office***

We cleaned our office ventilation system on a regular basis in 2003.

The Way Forward

8. Looking ahead, we will continue our efforts in promoting the importance of being responsible for our environment. We will -

- (a) continue to gauge the environmental impacts of our policy work and programme activities and encourage our funds applicants to adopt environmentally responsible measures when launching projects and activities;
- (b) continue our efforts in nurturing civic responsibility which will in turn bolster concerns for the environment;
- (c) continue to encourage staff participation in environmental protection and energy saving activities; and
- (d) arrange regular cleansing of the ventilation system to improve the indoor air quality of our office;

Invitation for Comments

9. We welcome your comments on this report. Please send them to us through one of the following means:

E-mail : hab1@hab.gov.hk
Fax : 2591 6002
Telephone : 2835 1400
Post : Home Affairs Bureau,
31/F, Southorn Centre,
130 Hennessy Road,
Wanchai, Hong Kong.