

# **Home Affairs Bureau**

## **Environmental Report 2004**

### **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 departments<sup>1</sup> and subvented organizations<sup>2</sup> 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 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

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<sup>1</sup>The departments include the Home Affairs Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department and Information Services Department.

<sup>2</sup>The 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, Hong Kong Outward Bound School and Hong Kong Sports Development Board/Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited.

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 as far as practicable;
- (iii) send seasonal greetings in electronic form;
- (iv) minimize the use of products which are not environmentally friendly e.g. correction fluid;
- (v) minimize the use of paper cups;
- (vi) shorten the air-conditioning (AC) provision hours and set the AC

temperature at 25.5 in the summer months in order to reduce electricity consumption;

- (vii) keep the number of photocopiers turned on for use after normal office hours to the absolute minimum;
- (viii) use energy-saving light bulbs;
- (ix) avoid use of overhead lighting where natural lighting is sufficient;
- (x) switch off lights immediately as soon as the area becomes unoccupied;
- (xi) ensure windows are closed when air-conditioners are operating;
- (xii) use staircase for interfloor traffic as far as practicable;
- (xiii) switch off unused computers, monitors and printers;
- (xiv) conduct periodic patrol by designated staff to ensure the green practices are properly followed.

*(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.
- (d) Promote Staff Awareness on Environmental Protection
- (i) affix 'Save Energy' stickers to AC and lighting switches to remind staff to turn off AC and lights when not in use;
  - (ii) put up notices to remind staff of water saving;
  - (iii) circulate green messages and useful green tips to staff periodically to promote environmental awareness.

### ***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 2004**

7. In 2004, we pursued the following specific environmental initiatives –

(a) *To continue identifying 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 2004, CPCE launched a new series of telephone hotline stories (「擔攪仔 聽故仔」電話熱線故事) to convey messages on civic education. The story “人人有責” conveyed messages to encourage Hong Kong citizens to care and keep our environment clean. An animated version of the story was also prepared and uploaded to the CPCE website for public viewing. The public response to the stories was encouraging. Average calls to the hotline were 30,000 each month and over 30,000 visitors had viewed the animated stories through the CPCE website.

In May 2004, CPCE launched the “Flower Passion Campaign” to promote public awareness of environmental beautification and the sense of belonging to the community through participation of planting activities. A kick-off ceremony was held at the Kowloon Park in May 2004. The 18 District Offices had also organized similar activities in the districts.

From July to August 2004, CPCE launched “A Tribute to the Fighting Spirit against SARS” Roving Exhibition at the 2004 Hong Kong Book Fair and four shopping malls to sustain the precious civic values manifested by the Hong Kong community in the fight against SARS. The fight against SARS outbreak in 2003 exemplified certain commendable civic qualities of Hong Kong citizens including, among other things, our front-line health care workers served the public with professionalism and selflessness and all members of society had been working together with a strong sense of civic responsibility for keeping the environment clean and healthy. The exhibition covered a wide range of SARS-related publications, documentaries, audio-visual productions, photos and other records. It had been well attended by the public.

From September to November 2004, CPCE launched a photo contest on “Brighten Up Hong Kong”. Twelve winning photos capturing the true colours and beauty of the city were selected for the 2005 CPCE Desktop Calendar. Public awareness, sense of commitment and responsibility to maintain the environment clean and healthy were promoted.

In 2004, COY worked closely with HAB in organizing district-based youth forums formed by young people, which served to provide a platform for them to participate in public affairs through the process of deliberating on policy issues and conveying their views to the Government and the wider community. Issues of concern to the community, including environment protection issues, had been deliberated by the young people.

***(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.

***(c) To reduce paper publications***

We continued to review regularly on our regular paper publications with a view to identifying room for reducing our printing requirements and hence paper consumption. Consultation papers and reports issued by HAB are uploaded to HAB’s website to reduce the number of hard copies printed.

***(d) To monitor the usage of office stationery with a view to identifying realistic ways of reduction***

In 2004, we used less envelopes (dropped by 12.6%), file jackets (dropped by 28.4%) and desk diary refills (dropped by 26.2%) when compared with 2003.

***(e) To support Government’s initiatives to help create a paperless office environment***

In 2004, we put in place the web-based e-Leave system to reduce the use of paper forms for leave application and processing.

## **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;
- (d) arrange regular cleansing of the ventilation system to improve the indoor air quality of our office; and
- (e) promote a wider use of electronic means for internal communication to minimize paper consumption.

## **Invitation for Comments**

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

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