

## (COER) 2003

### Forward - Green Leadership

Every day the Land Registry aims to improve the quality of our service given to Hong Kong. Managing the effects that our operations have on the environment to minimize their impacts and ensure that our staff and customers have a comfortable and healthy working environment is an integral part of this quest for improvement.

This, our sixth environmental report, records further improvements in our environmental efficiency last year, the objectives we have for the coming year and the system we have in place to help us achieve our goals. Our primary goal is to ensure that all who own or deal in property in Hong Kong can trust in our records for their security. Managing the process of dealing with those records in ways that enhance the sustainability of the city is a further benefit that we aim to give to the city we serve.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K.A. Salkeld'.

K.A. Salkeld  
Land Registrar

### 1. This Report

- This is the sixth Environmental Report of the Land Registry covering the Year 2003. It provides an overview of the Registry's responsibilities and organizational structure, our business and activities, the facilities we operate and the offices we occupy.
- This report sets out our Environmental Policy, green housekeeping rules and good environmental practices that guide our day-to-day operations.
- It also describes our Environmental Management System under which we carry out our environmental responsibilities and achieve our targets. It explains the major environmental impacts of

our operation, the efforts we have made to minimize such impacts, our environmental performance, targets and measures for continual improvement.

## 2. Organisation and Responsibilities

- The Land Registry is a trading-fund department established on 1 August 1993. It is led by the Land Registrar acting as General Manager of the Fund. As distinct from a voted-funded department, we govern our own finances, balancing expenditure with income. It is our Vision "to be the best in all that we do" and we seek to add value to our customer services constantly. Our duty is to safeguard the evidence used to prove interests in land and property, to give public access to information that supports an open market in property and open access to social and economic services, and to safeguard individual rights to privacy.
- In our organisation, the Land Registrar is underpinned by two directorate officers - a Registry Manager and a Business Manager - who in turn supervise a workforce of some 500 professional, technical and general support staff.

## 3. Business and Activities

- Our core business covers the registration and safe custody of land documents, provision of facilities for search of land registers and records, supply of copies of land records and certification of copies of such records. We also register owners incorporations under the Buildings Management Ordinance and maintain a Street Index and an NT Lot/Address Cross Reference Table for public reference.
- We deliver these services to our customers through an urban Land Registry located in the Queensway Government Offices and eight NT Land Registries in eight districts covering Islands, Sha Tin, Sai Kung, Tai Po, Tsuen Wan, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and North. We also provide property or owners information to government departments through our NT offices and the Reports-on-Titles Office at Sai Wan Ho. In the Sha Tin District, we operate an Imaging Centre where we convert paper land documents into digital images for easy storage and retrieval.
- In the year 2003, the Land Registry keeps 2.61 million computerised land registers and 15.34 million imaged documents in its Land Registration System and Document Imaging System. A total of 497,141 land documents were lodged for registration. Furthermore, 3,176,935 searches of land registers and records were made and we provided 486,744 plain or certified copies of land documents to our customers.

## 4. Stakeholders

- This Report is compiled for the benefits of our stakeholders covering customers and business associates. Our customers are mainly the general public of Hong Kong who wish to register documents affecting land or conduct search of land registers and other land records. Most of them act through solicitor firms or estate agencies. Our clients include government departments responsible for

land administration, land disposal, housing supply or law enforcement. They may also be property owners seeking to be registered as Owners Incorporations. Our business associates are private corporations with whom we are working in partnership to enhance the quality of our systems and services.

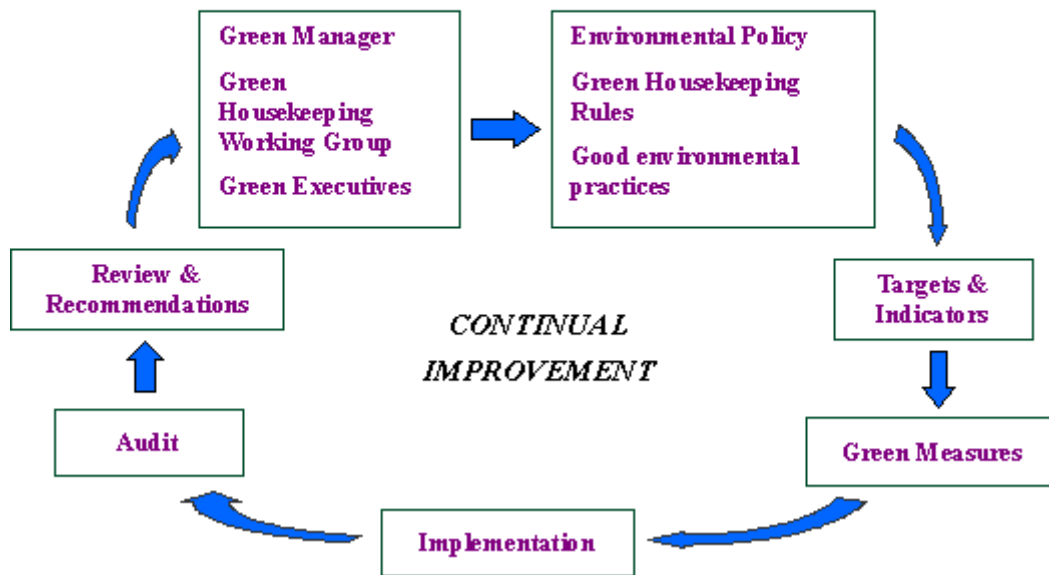
## 5. Environmental Impacts of our Operations

- In our daily operations, we accept paper instruments lodged by our customers for registration, with which we create and update our computerized land registers and convert them into imaged records. We provide facilities for our customers to inspect original land records and provide them copies of our Land Registers and imaged copies of land records. We also maintain a public register of building owners' corporations and provide copies of such register to our customers.
- Arising from the production of land registers, records and copies and the need to support our daily operations, we consume large volume of papers, including A4-size papers, different computer papers and other paper products. Over the last 10 years, we have introduced various electronic systems and green housekeeping measures to reduce paper consumption. Despite this, there remains the need to provide customers with land records and copies in paper form in order to comply with the Land Registration Ordinance and meet customer demand.

## 6. Environmental Management System

- To minimise the environmental impacts of our operations and conduct our activities in a responsible manner, we have put in place a 3-tier Environmental Management System. Under the System, the Registry Manager is appointed Green Manager overseeing the operation of the system and monitoring the Registry's environmental performance. On the operational level, a Green Housekeeping Working Group led by the Departmental Secretary and 5 office representatives has been formed to devise green measures, administer environmental audit, monitor performance and set targets. In the frontline, 16 Environment and Safety Executives have been appointed to check compliance with our Environmental Policy and Green Housekeeping Rules, to implement green initiatives, encourage adoption of best practices and raise environmental awareness. The following illustrates how our EMS operates.

**The Land Registry**  
**Environmental Management System**



## 7. Environmental Objectives, Policy and Rules

### *Environmental Objectives*

The activities of the Land Registry are basically office-based. Our environmental objectives are mainly confined to minimizing the use of papers and energy in an office setting. To achieve these,

- We exercise the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace in the consumption of materials.
- We seek continuous improvement in the efficient use of natural resources and energy.
- We create a healthy and pleasant working environment for our staff.
- We promote awareness among them, our customers and visitors.

### *Environmental Policy:*

- **Efficient Use of Resources and Energy** - We encourage our staff to use natural resources and energy wisely. We seek to use energy/water-efficient systems in our offices as far as practicable;
- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace** - We continue our efforts to reduce paper consumption and waste generation, to reuse or recycle where possible, to properly dispose of our waste and purchase environmentally preferable products and services as far as possible;
- **Compliance** - We ensure compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and regulations, with this Environmental Policy and our Green Housekeeping Rules

through the implementation of our Environmental Management System;

- **Continual Improvement** - We seek continual improvement to our environmental performance through regular assessment, audit and review, and by implementing best practices and new measures;
- **Communication** - We make all staff aware of their environmental responsibility and build a green corporate culture through regular internal communication. Externally, we communicate our environmental requirements to our suppliers and contractors. We also prepare regular reports on our environmental performance for our stakeholders;
- **Staff Participation** - We encourage our staff to actively participate in environmental activities and events. We expand their knowledge of environmental protection and ensure an active role by staff in our environmental management and auditing efforts.

### **Green Housekeeping Working Rules and Good Environmental Practices**

- In our daily operations, we encourage our staff to observe a set of green housekeeping rules and adopt good practices as set out at [Appendix I](#).

## **8. Measures and Performance**

The major environmental impact of the Land Registry is the huge consumption of paper when discharging our core functions. Over the years, we have made steady progress minimizing the environmental impacts of our operations. The measures taken include:-

**(1) Reducing paper consumption through introduction of electronic systems** - To minimize this impact, we have for some years moved towards computerization. This includes the electronic processing, storage, cataloging and search of land documents. These initiatives have significantly reduced our total paper consumption, updated our systems and enhanced our capability to meet changing customer demands. The e-systems introduced are

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- **Direct Access System** - In September 1994, we introduced an on-line Direct Access Service (DAS) enabling our customers to make remote search of land registers and records and order copies through their own computers. Customers can make use of the DAS Remote Ordering Service to order copies of land documents, thereby eliminating the use of paper request forms at our registries. In addition, we have downloaded all remote orders placed by DAS users through the computer onto diskettes, thereby eliminating the need to generate voluminous paper reports on a daily basis. As of 31 December 2003, there were 455 subscribers to the DAS and 2,460,985 number of searches were conducted through this service. About 80 % of

the searches of computerized land registers and 70 % of the orders for copies of land documents are now made through DAS.

- **Document Imaging System** - In January 1997, we introduced a Document Imaging System (DIS) to enable digital storage and retrieval of land documents. Under the DIS, all newly registered land documents are scanned at our Central Imaging Centre into the system. Their electronic images are stored on optical disks for on-line retrieval. The conversion of all existing land documents into electronic images was completed in December 1998. To date, over 229 million pages of paper have been successfully captured into the DIS. Through this system, we have further reduced our paper consumption as the need to store and make backup records of paper documents is eliminated.

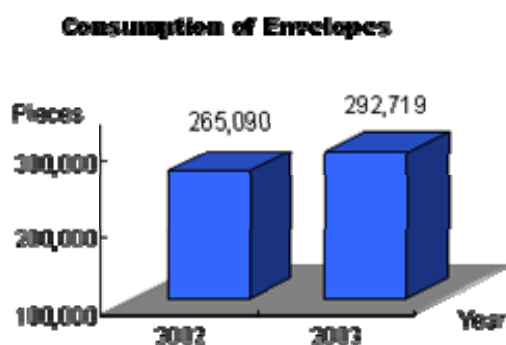
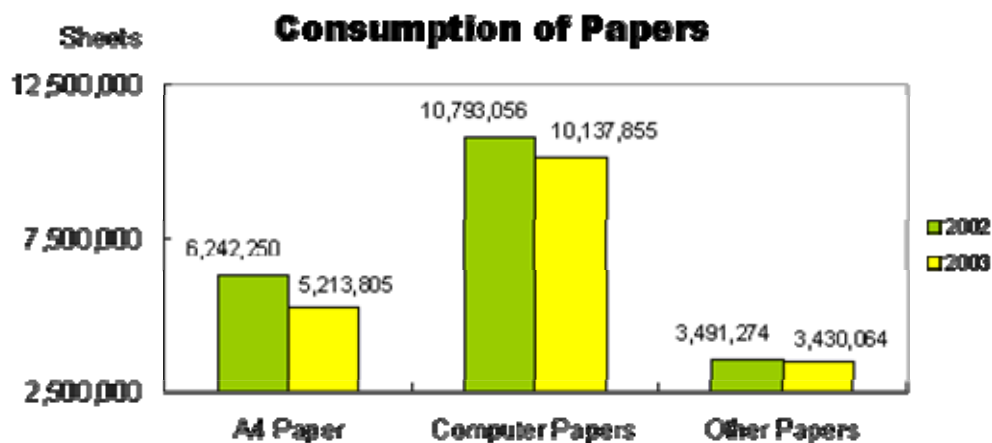
**(2) Reducing paper consumption through production of CD-ROMs to carry the Street Index and the NT Lot/Address Cross Reference Tables** - In January 1999, we transformed the traditional two-volume Street Index into compact discs, enabling users to search for the required data speedily and conveniently through their personal computers. By the end of 2003, we have produced 35th editions of Street Index. The 35th edition contained 1,220 amendments, 19 new streets and 163 new lots/sections/subsections. Our customers had purchased 240 sets of the Street Index in compact discs in 2003. For the NT properties, we have produced an NT Lot/Address Cross Reference Table in compact discs. The first edition of NT Lot/Address CD was released in April 2000. Our customers had purchased 215 such copies in 2003. The 4th edition of our Cross Reference Table contains 41 new streets and 3,166 new lots/sections/subsections. In our estimation, had bulk volume copies and replacement inserts been produced in paper form, 2,983 reams of paper would have been consumed. The production of CDs for sales has achieved substantial paper saving.

**(3) Reducing paper consumption through green housekeeping measures and wider use of LAN** - We continue to exercise the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace in our operations to reduce paper consumption. Since 1997, we began using LAN for internal and external communication and encouraging our staff to make best use of the network to save paper and enhance efficiency. In 2003, we expanded the network to cover more officers in the department including all section heads and subject users. We anticipate expanding the network further to cover clerical staff upon the implementation of our new IT system by the end of 2004.

#### **Performance in paper consumption**

Through the concerted efforts of all members of the Land Registry, we managed to reduce the consumption of paper for another year in succession. In 2003, we consumed 18,781,724 sheets of papers. The papers consumed include A4-size paper used for administrative and general purposes, different types of computer papers used in conducting our core business and other paper products used to support our daily operations. These figures represent a

reduction of 8.5% when compared to the paper consumption level in 2002. This has exceeded our target of 5%. For envelopes, we have consumed 292,719 in 2003, which is 10.4% more than the preceding year due mainly to the upsurge in business volume since the last quarter of 2003. The following bar charts compare our paper and envelope consumption in 2002 and 2003:



#### **(4) Economising the consumption of energy and other resources**

- In 2003, we continue to minimize the use of energy and other resources in our offices. We economize by energy-efficient retrofits and management control measures, such as replacing T-12 florescent tubes with T-5 tubes, installing occupancy sensors for room lighting and water faucets, maximizing the use of natural lighting and creating openness in our offices.
- We also achieved savings through observing our housekeeping rules and following good environmental practices. These include encouraging our staff to use staircases instead of the lifts, to reuse and recycle used materials, to switch off lights, office equipment and electrical appliances when not in use. We also remind our staff to save water through posting green messages at strategic locations, to reuse office supplies instead of getting new ones.

**Performance in energy and other resources consumption** - In 2003, our headquarter offices in Queensway Government Offices with a total floor area of some 5,135 sq. m. consumed 1,362,835 kWh of electricity. Our Central Imaging Centre in Shatin of some 1,380 sq. m. consumed 599,655 kWh. Comparing to the consumption level in 2002, these figures represent a drop of 0.07% and 4.52% respectively. For other resources, we consumed 1,201 ball pens, which is some 24% more than the preceding year. This is due to the upsurge in business volume in the last quarter of 2003 and the low base figure of 2002. Looking back, the consumption of ball pen has been decreasing over time, from 1,566 pieces in 2000 to 1,327 pieces in 2001 and 965 pieces in 2002.

#### **(5) Minimizing travel needs**

- We recognize the environmental impacts of urban commuting in terms of fuel consumption and air pollutant emissions. Before 1999, our land registration system did not support cross-district land registration applications and land documents searches, and customers were required to travel to the Land Registry in the district for which information was requested. In January 1999, we introduced the Cross District Search service in the Central Search Office in Queensway. In October 2000, we further extended the service to our New Territories customers by introducing the New Territories Cross District Search service. Customers can now conduct land searches as well as place orders for computerized land registers and imaged land documents for properties anywhere in the SAR in any of the New Territories Land Registries in addition to the Central Search Office at the Queensway Government Offices. This has contributed to a significant reduction in customer trips.

**Performance** - In 2003, we continue to encourage our staff to commute through public transport in duty travels. We disposed of our departmental vehicle upon the retirement of the Motor Driver in December 2003 in order to contribute further to a greener environment.

#### **(6) Minimizing and recycling office waste**

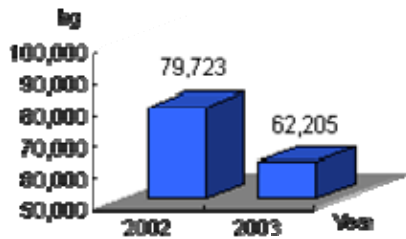
- We follow our green housekeeping rules in handling our office waste. We recover waste materials for recycling including used papers and printer cartridges.

**Performance** - In 2003, we collected 62,205 kg. of waste paper and 678 printer cartridges for recycling. Comparing to 2002, the volume of waste paper collected has decreased by 22% due mainly to the wider use of LAN. The consumption of printer cartridges has decreased slightly by 0.6%. This reflects the positive response of our

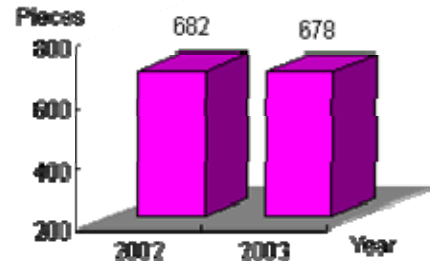


staff to management's call to refrain from printing electronic documents unless strictly necessary. The bar charts below carry the data.

**Collection of Waste Paper**



**Printer Cartridges for recycling**



#### ***(7) Replacing materials purchasing by green procurement***

- We continue to observe the guideline of the Government Logistics Department by procuring environmentally friendly materials as far as practicable, which include stationery refills and paper with recycled materials. We will continue to procure environmentally preferable office supplies, equipment and services as far as possible.

#### ***(8) Conducting Environmental Audit***

- Under our Environmental Management System we have established an audit mechanism to check compliance with our environmental policy and rules. Since 1997, a number of audit teams have been formed to inspect 16 of our offices covering some 7,800 square meters of office space and involving over 50 staff members in the audit teams and hundreds of others in related activities. The audit results indicated full compliance with our environmental policy and rules. They also reflected a high level of staff awareness and their active participation in environmental activities.
- Past audit recommendations have led to the introduction of new green initiatives. These include the installation of separate electricity meters in our offices at QGO and the establishment of a material and energy consumption database in 2003 to enable better performance monitoring and benchmarking.
- The inspection of all LR offices was completed in late 2002. The outcome of the last inspection was reviewed in January 2003. Since all offices have been inspected and the department is in the process of reorganisation and rescheduling its office accommodation, audit activities have since been suspended until our new organisational structure is in place and all office refurbishment work is completed.

## 9. Continual Improvement

### *(1) Review of Policy and Rules*

- We have reviewed our Environmental Policy, Green Housekeeping Rules and Good Environmental Practices with regard to our environmental management approach. It is our conclusion that the current policy, rules and practices remain valid and should continue to be observed. Over the years, we have issued regular reminders of compliance to our staff and will continue doing so in future.

### *(2) Strategic Change Plan*

- We have developed a Strategic Change Plan to enhance the quality and scope of our services. In Phase One of the Plan, our core registration and search services will be centralized and improved. In Phase Two, a title registration system will be introduced to replace the existing deeds registration system after 12 years. In support of the Plan, we are developing a new computer system (the Integrated Registration Information System, IRIS) to revamp our existing IT systems, viz. the Land Registration System (LRS), the Direct Access System (DAS), and the Document Imaging System (DIS). IRIS will enable on-line processing combining data entry and registration, which will replace the current batch processing system. IRIS will also streamline the registration process to a whole-of-job operation, thereby increasing productivity and simplifying administration. Apart from efficiency improvements, the new system will eliminate the need for production of property listings in paper form and reduce the amount of paper reports. It is estimated that the implementation of IRIS will achieve substantial saving in paper.

### *(3) Communication and staff participation*

- We will continue to conduct various green activities to promote a corporate environmental culture and sustain the interest of existing believers. In January and March 2003, we had arranged an environmental awareness workshop for 100 of our staff in collaboration of EPD and green groups. In June 2003, some 66 staff and family members participated in a walkathon, viz. "the Walk for a Green and Healthy Hong Kong" organised by the Environmental Campaign Committee and government departments.
- To sustain improvements, we will continue to display our Environmental Policy, Rules and Good Practices at prominent locations in our offices, putting across our environmental vision and encouraging compliance. We will also invite our staff, customers and people who visit our offices to use the green boxes placed at strategic locations for collection of waste papers.

## 10. Environmental Targets for 2004

For continual improvement, we have set the following targets for 2004:

- (a) To ensure continued compliance with our Environmental Policy and Green Housekeeping Rules;
- (b) To encourage continued adoption of our good environmental practices through notices and updates on our Green Message Boards, issuing reminders and communicating our environmental performance through our quarterly consumption statistics;
- (c) To reduce paper consumption by 5%;
- (d) To reduce energy consumption for our headquarter offices at QGO and our Central Imaging Centre at Shatin, both by 2%;
- (e) To practice green procurement for more store items; and
- (f) To continue minimising waste generation and recovering materials for recycling.

## 11. Information and Suggestions

- We welcome any questions, comments or suggestions. Please send them to our Green Manager or Departmental Secretary by email at [ds@landreg.gov.hk](mailto:ds@landreg.gov.hk) or by post to 28th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong. An electronic copy of this report is posted to the Land Registry Homepage at <http://www.landreg.gov.hk>. To save paper, we do not provide hardcopy unless upon special request.

Appendix I

### Green Housekeeping Rules

#### **I. Reduce**

1. Use both sides of paper.
2. Use back of used papers for drafting, printing, internal correspondence and file copies.
3. Do not use fax leading page or print fax journal.
4. Stop junk fax or mail by contacting the senders.

#### **II. Reuse**

1. Keep one-side used papers, envelopes and paper clips in different collection boxes for reuse.
2. Reuse penholders by using refill ball-pen.
3. Reuse florescent pens by using refill ink.

#### **III. Recycle**

1. Recycle all recyclable materials, separating them from the non-recyclable ones.
2. Collect waste papers in green boxes or collection bags for recycling purpose.
3. Do not put refuse into green boxes or recycle bags.
4. Place green boxes in public search halls to collect recyclable materials and raise public awareness of our environmental responsibility.
5. Return used printer cartridges to Supplies Supervisor for recycling purpose.

#### **IV. Save Energy and Water**

1. Do not use more water or electricity than needed.
2. Press the "energy saver" button on photocopiers when not in use.
3. Switch off all office equipment before close of office.

4. Use screen saver on computers.
5. Switch off all electrical appliances when not in use.
6. Switch off lights during lunch hours and in areas not occupied.
7. Switch off the air-conditioning in offices not occupied, if independent switches are installed.
8. Locate refrigerators away from heat source and allow sufficient space for air circulation.
9. Inform the relevant authorities as soon as possible in the event of water leakage or flushing system malfunction.

#### **V. Green Office Environment**

1. Do not smoke in workplace.
2. Arrange regular cleaning of air ducts to maintain good air quality.
3. Place noisy equipment in enclosed rooms.

#### **VI. Communication**

1. Put posters, publicity materials and departmental circulars on environmental policy and measures onto the Green Corners of individual offices.
2. Report deficiencies to the Environment and Safety Executives.

### **Good Environmental Practices**

- Avoid using personal electrical appliances in offices.
- Keep entrance doors to lift lobby closed.
- Use venetian blinds to keep heat away from offices.
- Use staircase instead of lifts.
- Use "half tone", "draft quality" or "save toner" function, if installed, when printing draft documents from computers.
- Use different holders, boxes or trays to hold different reusable items.
- Designate more than one collection point for reusable and recyclable items.
- Use biodegradable detergent for washing.
- Use electronic means for internal and external communication.
- Label collection bags/boxes for waste papers clearly.
- Post a list of recyclable and non-recyclable materials near to or above green bags or boxes.
- Sort out any reusable materials during disposal of documents or files (e.g. file tags, file covers).
- Use water and energy wisely.
- Decorate offices with green plants.
- Discuss green practices and explore new ideas with staff during staff meetings.
- Encourage staff participation in environmental seminars and activities.