



The Land Registry

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Asia's world city

HONG KONG



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(COER) 2006

Foreword

Maintaining an open, efficient and accurate land register so that people can get on with their lives and business without worry over their property is the preoccupation of our daily business. It is our goal, however, to do everything to the best possible standard, and a necessary element of that is managing our operations in a way that respects the capacity of our environment and contributes to maintaining the health of that environment both for our benefit and for the lasting benefit of our children. With that thought, I am pleased to present this report.

K.A.Salkeld



1. This Report

1.1 This Report covers the Year 2006. It provides an overview of the Land Registry's responsibilities and organization, its business activities and the facilities it manages. The report sets out our environmental objectives, policy and targets. It describes the major environmental impacts of our operations and how we manage our business activities to minimise the impacts and achieve our environmental objectives and targets. Our performance in 2006 with reference to key environmental indicators and measurements is stated.

2. Our Responsibilities and Organisation

2.1 The Land Registry is a trading-fund department established on 1 August 1993. The Land Registrar is the Controlling Officer and General Manager of the Land Registry Trading Fund. Under the trading fund model, the Land Registry governs its own finances, meeting its recurrent and capital expenditure with the income it earns through serving customers. It is our **vision** "to be the best in all that we do" and our **mission** to

- ensure secure, customer friendly land registration and information services;
- develop our human resources, information technology and service environment so as to ensure improvement in service quality and value to our customers; and
- advocate reform of Hong Kong's land title registration system through introduction of title registration.

We share the same **core values** of "Integrity, Excellence, Respect and Learning" in carrying out our responsibilities.

2.2 The Land Registrar is supported by 7 directorate officers - who in turn supervise a workforce of some 590 professional, technical and general support staff as at the end of 2006.

3. Our Business and Activities

3.1 Our core business covers the registration and safe custody of land documents, the provision of facilities for search of land registers and records, the supply of copies of land records and the certification of copies of such records. We conduct these activities in accordance with the provisions of the Land Registration Ordinance. We also register owners' corporations with reference to the provisions of the Buildings Management Ordinance. Apart from these statutory duties, we maintain a Street Index and an NT Lot/Address Cross Reference Table for public reference.

3.2 Key business statistics for 2006 compared with 2005 are set out below. They show a decrease in business volumes over the year.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>% change</i>
Computer Registers maintained	2.76million	2.72 million	+ 1.5
Imaged Documents held	17.33 million	16.77 million	+ 3.3
Documents lodged for registration	573,375	694,299	- 17.4
Searches of registers	4.30 million	4.59 million	- 6.3
Copies of documents provided (plain & certified)	783,388	787,429	- 0.5

4. Our Facilities and Offices

4.1 Our Customer Centre in the Queensway Government Offices (QGO) provides a full range of services for land registration as well as land search and registration of owners corporations. Seven small search offices were maintained in the New Territories districts. Customers can conduct searches of land registers and place orders for imaged documents for properties anywhere in the territory across the counter or through self-services terminals installed at all search offices. In addition, we operate a Central Imaging Centre in Shatin for converting paper land documents into digital images for electronic storage and retrieval.

5. Our Stakeholders

5.1 The families and businesses of Hong Kong depend on the availability, accuracy and integrity of the land register. It allows them to go about their lives and enterprises without worry for the security of their interests in property, their freedom to deal with the property and their ability

to use it as security for loans and other economic activity. In maintaining the land register on their behalf we recognize our obligation to manage our operations in a way that uses resources most efficiently and minimizes the pressure we put on the environment.

6. Environmental Impacts of our Operations

6.1 The major impact of our business activities and internal operations on the environment is the consumption of papers. We accept paper instruments lodged by our customers for registration on a daily basis, 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 with copies of the land registers and imaged copies of our land records. We also maintain a public register of building owners' corporations and provide copies of such register to our customers. Arising from the above activities, we consume large volume of papers in our daily operations, which include photocopying papers, computer papers and other paper products such as forms and labels.

6.2 To minimise the impacts, we have over the last decade introduced various electronic systems and green housekeeping measures to reduce paper consumption (elaborated in paragraph 9: "Environmental Measures" below). There remains the need to provide our customers with land records and copies in paper form in order to meet their needs and comply with the requirements of the Land Registration Ordinance. We anticipate that the demand for some paper records will continue but there will be growing acceptance of electronic documentation. We aim to assist that process of transformation so as to reduce our demand for resources while maintaining the value and usability of our services.

7. Environmental Objectives and Policy

7.1 The activities of the Land Registry are basically office-based. Our **environmental objectives** are directed towards minimizing the consumption of papers, office materials, natural energy and resources in an office setting. To achieve these, we :

- exercise the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace in the consumption of paper and office materials;

- seek continual improvement in the efficient use of natural resources and energy;
- create a healthy and pleasant working environment for our staff; and
- promote awareness among staff, our customers and visitors who use our facilities.

7.2 We have formulated an **Environmental Policy** to establish the overall strategic direction for the Land Registry to achieve its environmental goal and set out the key areas for actions. The current environmental policy which is subject to regular review is as follows:



Environmental Policy

- **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace** - We reduce our daily consumption of papers and envelopes, reuse used materials, recycle our waste papers and replace non-environmentally friendly products as far as possible;
- **Efficient Use of Resources and Energy** - We encourage our staff to use natural resources wisely and to install energy-efficient systems in our offices as far as possible;
- **Compliance** -We maintain a set of green housekeeping rules to reduce any adverse impact from our operations and safeguard the health and welfare of our staff. We seek to ensure compliance with such rules through a three-tier Environmental Management System (EMS);
- **Continual Improvement** - We seek continual improvement to our environmental performance through regular assessment, and by implementing new measures

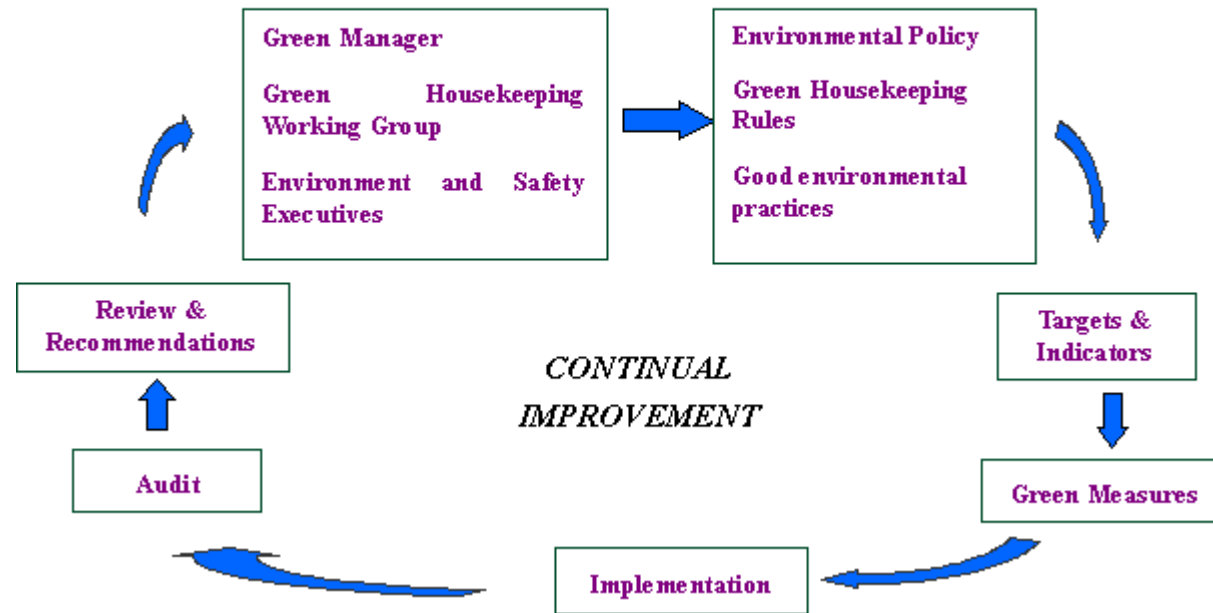
and practices;

- **Communication** – We make all staff aware of their environmental responsibility through regular communication. We encourage our staff to participate in environmental activities, attend relevant workshops and seminars, and play a part in auditing the environmental performance of all our offices.

8. Environmental Management

8.1 To conduct our activities in an environmentally responsible manner, we have put in place a 3-tier Environmental Management System (EMS). Under the system, the Registry Manager serves as the Green Manager who oversees the operation of the system and monitors the Land Registry's environmental performance. At the operational level, a Green Housekeeping Working Group led by the Departmental Secretary and various office representatives is responsible to devise and introduce green measures, manage environmental audit and set targets. In the frontline, 21 staff of different sections are appointed as Environment and Safety Executives to check compliance, 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



9. Environmental Measures

9.1 To address the key environmental impacts of our activities, we have introduced various measures over the years.

(A) Reducing paper consumption through the introduction of electronic systems

We have for years developed different computer systems which included electronic processing, storage, cataloging and search of land documents. These have significantly reduced our total paper consumption and enhanced our ability to meet customer needs. We introduced the ***Direct Access System*** in September 1994 to enable our customers to make remote

search of land registers and records and order copies through their own computers. We also introduced **Document Imaging System** in January 1997 to enable digital storage and retrieval of land documents. Under this system, all newly registered land documents are scanned and stored on optical disks for On-line retrieval at our Central Imaging Centre in Shatin.

In February 2005, we further introduced the **Integrated Registration Information System** (IRIS) which incorporated the above systems and provided new services over the internet. As of 31 December 2006, there were 604 subscribers to the IRIS Online services and 4,325,854 On-line searches were conducted through this service. In 2006, about 86 % of the searches of land registers and 78 % of the orders of copies of land documents were made through the Online Services. In fact, any person can carry out searches of property records and obtain copies of documents in digital format or by printing on the computer through the internet. As a result, voluminous paper applications and reports for land records are saved.

(B) Reducing paper consumption through production of CD-ROMs to carry the Street Index and the NT Lot/Address Cross Reference Tables

For the urban properties, we have transformed the traditional two-volume Street Index into compact discs in January 1999. This enables our customers to search the required data speedily and conveniently through their personal computers. In April 2006, we produced the 38th edition of Street Index which contained 642 amendments and a total of 1,994 streets. Our customers purchased 208 sets of the Street Index in compact discs in 2006. The transformation of the paper-based Street Index into compact discs has saved a substantial amount of paper.

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 and the 7th edition was issued in April 2006. The 7th edition of our Cross

Reference Table contains 5,166 amendments and 2,921 streets/villages/places. A total of 174 sets of discs were sold to the customers in 2006. Had bulk volume copies and replacement inserts of the above street index and reference table been produced in paper form, 3,374 reams of paper would have been consumed. The production of CDs for sales has achieved substantial paper saving.

(C) Economising through green housekeeping measures and wider use of the Local Area Network (LAN), Government Office Automation (GOA) and e-Leave systems

We continue to exercise the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace in our daily operations to reduce paper consumption. Since 1997, we began using LAN for internal and external communication. We encourage our staff to make best use of the network to save paper and enhance efficiency. Over the years, we have expanded the network to cover more officers in the department including all section heads, supervisors and subject users. In mid 2005, we implemented e-Leave system to eliminate paper records. In early 2006, we further launched an Accessibility Program system for all junior staff so as to facilitate wider use of GOA and e-communication among staff in the Land Registry.

(D) Economising the consumption of energy and other resources

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 using T-5 florescent tubes, installing occupancy sensors for room lighting and water faucets, maximizing the use of natural lighting and creating openness in designing our new offices. We also achieve savings through observing our green housekeeping rules and adopting good environmental practices. These include encouraging our staff to use staircases instead of the lifts, to reuse used materials and office supplies, to switch off lights, office equipment and electrical appliances during lunch hours and when not in use. We also remind our staff to save water.

(E) Minimizing office waste and encouraging recycling

We follow our green housekeeping rules in handling office waste. We encourage our staff to retain waste materials for recycling, which include used papers, printer cartridges and staples, and we recover office waste for recycling on a regular basis.

(F) Replacing materials by green procurement

We continue to observe the guidelines of the Government Logistics Department by procuring environmentally friendly materials as far as practicable, which include wood-free printing papers, reusable printer cartridges and various refillable stationeries. We will continue to procure environmentally preferable office supplies, equipment and services as far as possible.

(G) 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 environmental audits have been conducted on our offices. The audit results indicated full compliance with our environmental policy and rules. They also reflected a high level of staff awareness and participation. Past audit recommendations have led to the introduction of a variety of green initiatives.

In 2006, we started a new round of environmental audit and inspection visits to various offices of the Land Registry have commenced. The environmental audit team members are drawn from staff of different divisions. This enables staff to have more opportunities to be involved in environmental protection work, facilitates experience sharing and helps promote environmental education in the divisions they belong.

H) Improving Air quality

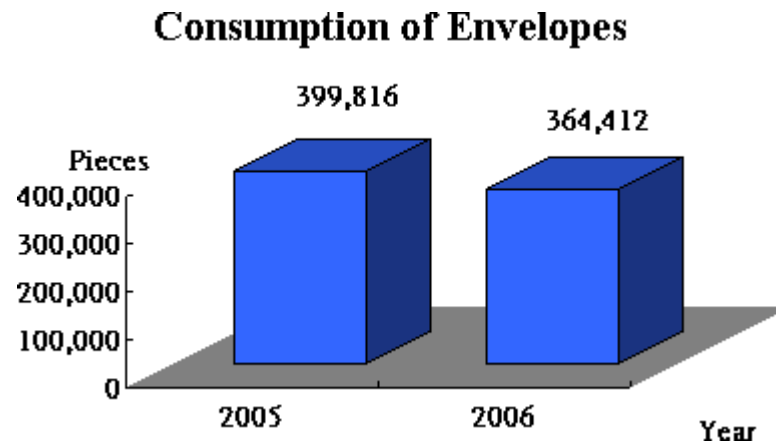
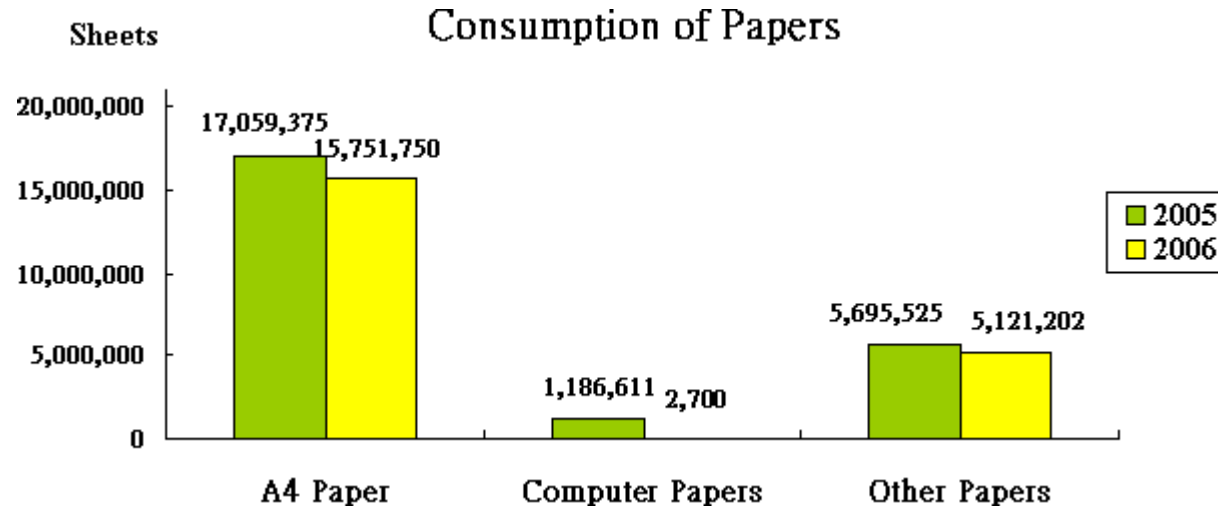
To help maintain good air quality, we participate in the Indoor

Air Quality (IAQ) Certification Scheme organized by Environmental Protection Department. We employ qualified contractor to conduct indoor air quality measurements in the offices at QGO. The offices are certified to have fully complied with the Good Class of the IAQ Objectives.

10. Environmental Performance

Paper consumption

10.1 Paper consumption in the year has reduced significantly by 12.8%. We consumed a total of 23,941,511 sheets of papers (including A4-size papers, computer papers and other paper products) to support our daily operations in 2005. In 2006, it was only 20,875,652. The reduction was achieved due to a number of factors, including the slight decrease in business volume which affected paper consumption, the full implementation of the IRIS in 2006 where large scale consumption of paper for internal testing of the system was no longer required, the increased use of On-line service for land search by customers and the wider use of e-communication among staff in the Land Registry. Our consumption on envelopes was also reduced to 364,412 in 2006, representing a 8.9% reduction when compared with the preceding year. The bar charts below compare our paper and envelope consumption in 2005 and 2006.



10.2 In our Environmental Report for 2005, we targeted to achieve a 5%

reduction in paper consumption in 2006. Benchmarking our performance in 2006 against the set target, we are pleased that we have achieved a result that far exceeded it.

Energy consumption

10.3 Our offices are mainly accommodated in QGO, which is a joint-user building with no separate electricity meters for individual floors. Hence, the achievements of our energy saving measures are mainly reflected in the overall energy conservation result of the whole building. In 2006, the QGO achieved a 2.7% reduction in electricity consumption. This exceeded the set target of 1.5% for the building. It demonstrated not only the concerted efforts of the user departments in the building to save energy, but also the effectiveness of the energy efficiency retrofits and conservation measures that we have put in place in our offices. To reflect more accurately the performance of the user departments in QGO on energy saving and help them monitor their consumption more effectively, the Architectural Services Department will install separate electricity meters for each department in 2007. After then, we will have our own consumption readings for monitoring purpose. For the Central Imaging Centre and Data Centre in Shatin which have separate electricity meters, their consumption in 2006 was 633,408 kWh. Comparing with 2005, a slight increase of 1.7% is recorded. This is mainly attributed to the addition of a number of IT equipment in the second half of 2006 to enhance the IRIS for service improvement.

Office Refitting

10.4 We refurbished our offices in QGO in 2005. We adopted flexible and open design to reduce materials used in initial work and future re-organization of offices. The open design also enhanced natural lighting and ventilation flow. We used good quality but durable office furniture that last longer. We used approved materials such as non-toxic paints that would not do harm to the environment in fitting-out works. In 2006, we completed the fitting-out works for the offices of the Legal Service Branch on 28/F and the offices of the Title Registration Operation Division on 18/F. The same environmental practices were adopted, and environmental benefits reaped. We are now planning to relocate our Central Imaging Centre and Data Centre in Shatin to our office in QGO and the Central Computer Centre of the Office of the Government Chief Information Office in Sai Kung respectively in the near future. We will continue to apply these good environmental practices when undertaking office fitting-out works.

Resources consumption

10.5 We consumed 1,694 ball pens, which is some 27.9% less than the preceding year. The remarkable decrease in consumption could be attributed to the wider use of e-communication and GAO.

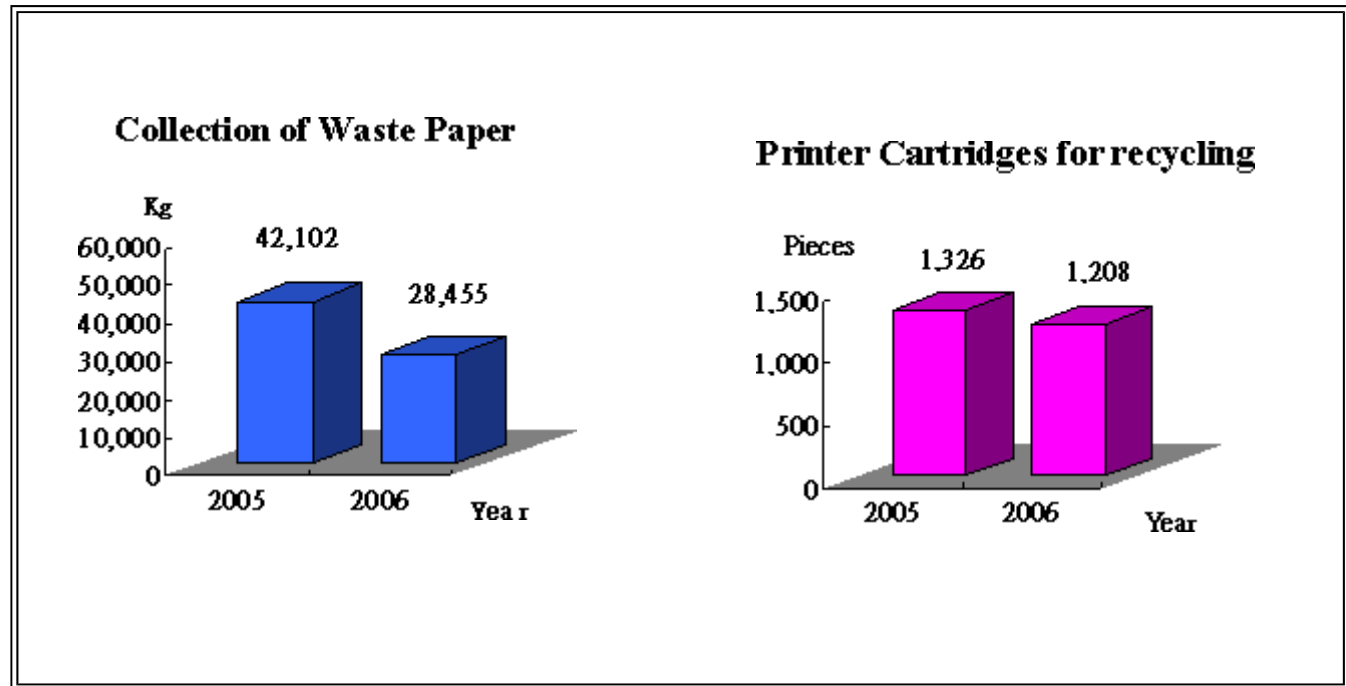
Minimizing travel needs

10.6 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. Our 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. With the implementation of the IRIS in February 2005, our customers can conduct land searches as well as place orders for computerized land registers and imaged land documents for properties in the Customer Centre at the QGO, the NT Search Offices and through the internet. This has contributed to a significant reduction in customer trips. The planned relocation of the Central Imaging Centre in Shatin to QGO will also help save energy and reduce gas emissions. At present, there is a daily shuttle to transport documents between QGO and Shatin. When the relocation is completed, about 250 round trips a year can be saved.

10.7 For our staff, we encourage them 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.

Reducing office waste

10.8 In 2006, we collected 28,455 kg. of waste paper and 1,208 printer cartridges for recycling. Comparing to 2005, the volume of waste paper collected has shown a continual decrease of 32%. This was attributed to the wider use of LAN for communication, and our staff exercising the practice of reduce and reuse of paper. The consumption of printer cartridges has also decreased by 8.9 %. The bar charts below carry the data.



11. Efforts made to sustain and achieve continual improvement

Regular Review of Policy and Rules

11.1 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.

Strategic Change Plan and IT renewal

11.2 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

services have been centralized in February 2005 and our land search services made available through the internet. In Phase Two, a title registration system will be introduced to replace the existing deeds registration system 12 years after implementation of the Land Titles Ordinance. In support of the Plan, we have developed a new IT system (IRIS). This system enables On-line processing combining data entry and registration. It streamlines the registration process to a whole-of-job operation and improve efficiency. It also eliminates the need for production of property listings in paper form and reduces the amount of paper reports.

Communication and staff participation

11.3 To strengthen our environmental efforts, we increased the appointment of Environment and Safety Executives from 16 to 21 in 2006. We conducted a number of activities to promote a green culture and sustain interest within the Land Registry. These include the participation of an experience-sharing workshop on Energy Efficiency Awards organized by the EMSD in June, the promotion of dress casual in summer months, the holding of a brainstorming discussion with staff on Clear Air Charter in August, the holding of a seminar on environmental protection for our staff in September and the organization of a Green Fashion Show with design and production by our staff in the Land Registry's Annual Dinner in November.

11.4 To sustain interests and raise awareness, we continue to display our Environmental Policy, Green Housekeeping Working Rules and Good Environmental Practices in our intranet and at prominent locations in our offices, putting across our environmental vision and encouraging compliance.

Working with partners

11.5 Through our promotional efforts, some government departments have begun to accept our reports-on-title in soft copy. This contributed to the saving of paper consumption. Promotion work would continue to attract more users to use this service. Separately, we are discussing with the Hong Kong Association of Banks and Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation arrangements to allow for mortgage documents to incorporate standard terms by reference to master copies that would be kept in an archive at the Land Registry and open to public search. This could reduce substantially the bulk of documents presented for registration and subsequently requiring copying, bringing cost and environmental savings and business efficiencies to all parties.

Supporting the Clean Air Charter

11.6 We support the principles and spirit of the Clean Air Charter, and implement appropriate measures to achieve the objectives of reducing air pollution. In addition to the above-mentioned efforts which help reduce energy/resources consumption, minimize the use of vehicles and eliminate the use of non-environmental friendly materials, we are also proactive in promoting staff awareness of green practices through various means. We will continue to sustain efforts to improve the air quality of Hong Kong.

12. Environmental Targets for the Year 2007

12.1 To keep up the momentum in green management, we will :

- continue to encourage the adoption of good environmental practices through various means including uploading useful information to the Land Registry's intranet, posting notices and updates on our Green Message Notice boards, issuing reminders and communicating our environmental performance to staff through our quarterly consumption statistics, and publication in the Staff Magazine;
- reduce paper consumption by 3% through pursuing more paper saving measures such as replacing as far as practicable the operational reports by soft copies, and promoting wider application of electronic communication and storage of records;
- complete the installation of independent electricity meters for the offices in QGO for better monitoring of electricity consumption, explore further energy saving measures such as installing timers to automatically turn off office equipments after they have been left idle for a period, and continue with the existing electricity saving measures;
- complete discussion with the Hong Kong Association of Banks on arrangements for filing of Standard Terms Documents so as to reduce the bulk of mortgage documents and associated paper consumption;
- continue to conduct environmental audits in offices to look for areas

for future improvement;

- continue to explore practicable green housekeeping practices in economizing the use of resource and minimizing waste; and
- continue to encourage and organize activities/trainings to promote the awareness of staff in environmental protection.

13. Information and Suggestions

13.1 We welcome any questions, comments or suggestions. Please send them to our Green Manager or Departmental Secretary by email at 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.

Land Registry
June 2007

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