



Environmental Report of the Treasury for 2004

Introduction

This report sets out our environmental policy, green measures taken in 2004 and objectives for 2005 for enhancing environmental performance in conducting our business and activities.

Environmental Policy Statement

Our environmental policy is summarized as follows :-

- The Treasury is conscious of the need to remain environmentally alert, to ensure that our scarce resources are used as efficiently as possible.
- We seek to encourage cost-effectiveness in our operations and we do so having regard to environmental considerations. As we recommend or implement work practices and systems, we emphasize the benefits of electronic transmission and retention of data in electronic form rather than the use of paper.
- Within our own department, we endeavour to minimise waste, to optimise the consumption of resources and to recover and recycle materials, wherever possible.

Policy Objectives

The Treasury is headed by the Director of Accounting Services, who is responsible for the compilation and supervision of the accounts of the Government, for the management of accounting operations and procedures, and for ensuring that all regulations, directions or instructions made or given under the Public Finance Ordinance (Cap. 2) are complied with.

Key Result Areas

To ensure that our policy objectives can be achieved, we must deliver results in the following key areas; that is, we must-

- produce the accounts of the Government and to arrange for the provision of centralized collection and payment services.
- process and pay salaries, pensions, allowances and housing and certain other benefits to civil servants.

- provide secure and effective accounting and financial information systems and procedures throughout the Government.
- manage the investments of the designated funds in accordance with approved guidelines and achieve a reasonable return.

Size of Expenditure and Establishment

- The expenditure of the Treasury in the 2004-05 financial year was \$302.1 million.
- We had a staff establishment of 572 as at 31 December 2004.
- Our office is located at Immigration Tower, which is a joint-user government building.

Stakeholders

To achieve our environmental objectives, we require the support of our stakeholders, which include bureaux and departments, the pensioners, all civil servants, our staff, as well as our payment and collection agents.

Environmental Performance

The activities of the Treasury are basically office-based. Our environmental objectives are therefore mainly confined to minimizing the use of papers and energy in an office setting.

Measures taken

Performance

➤ Operational Activities

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage bureaux/departments to use the on-line General Demand Note System (GDNS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In 2004, over 92% (as compared with 65% in 2003) of the general demand notes issued by bureaux/departments were processed by them through on-line operations, thus saving bureaux / departments the need to deliver a copy of demand note to the Treasury for further processing. It is estimated that about 402,000 paper demand notes were saved in 2004. |
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- Promote electronic storage of regular reports of GDNS
- Provide GDNS balance enquiry service through the “Treasury Hotline”
- Promote wider use of various types of electronic payment methods for settlement of government bills
- Promote wider use of the on-line system for bureaux/departments to report revenue collections
- In 2004, 12 types of system reports were retained in electronic form for record purpose. It is estimated that about 94,040 sheets of paper were saved.
- Bureaux/departments which are not on-line users of GDNS can now obtain updated information through the automated telephone answering machine. Paper report is no longer required to be sent to bureaux/departments, hence reducing paper consumption.
- The popular use of the electronic payment methods for settlement of government bills has considerably saved the resources in handling payments made in-person and by post.
- The percentage of collections by electronic payment methods increased from 40% in 2003 to 42% in 2004. With a decrease in postal remittances from 6% in 2003 to 5% in 2004, the number of returned cheques has correspondingly decreased, resulting in savings in postage and 12,000 envelopes in 2004.
- In 2004, about 95% (72% in 2003) of the bureaux/ departments used the on-line system to report revenue collections, further reducing the need to fill in and submit paper input forms (GF37) to the Treasury for further processing. As a result, about 169,000 paper GF37s were saved in 2004.

- Encourage correspondence with pensioners through e-mail on the internet
- Implementation of new Payroll System
- Promotion of E-payslip and e-Statements
- Issue of Approval-in-principle papers to applicants under Home Purchase Scheme in soft copy
- Distribute Circulars, Instructions and Regulations to bureaux/departments electronically
- The number of e-mails received from and issued to pensioners has increased from about 100 per month in 2003 to about 150 per month in 2004, and the number is expected to continue to increase.
- In 2004, about 864,000 sheets of printed payroll reports issued to bureaux /departments were saved.
- In 2004, a total of 31,000 civil servants have opted to receive monthly e-pay statements and their e-Housing Benefit statements. As a result, about 449,700 paper payslips, 31,000 Housing Benefit statements and 303,700 envelopes were saved in 2004.
- Approval-in-principle papers issued to applicants under Home Purchase Scheme have been sent to bureaux/departments in soft copy. As a result, 50,000 sheets of paper were saved in 2004.
- All Accounting Circulars, Treasury Circular Memoranda, Standing Accounting Instructions and Financial and Accounting Regulations have been issued by e-mail. Officers in bureaux/departments can also access the documents on the Central Cyber Government Office website and the Treasury Intranet.

- Issue of electronic reports
- The distribution of Ledger Accounting Financial Information System (LAFIS) reports to bureaux/departments electronically through Treasury's File Transfer System (TFTS) has been implemented by two phases. Since the implementation of the first phase on 26.4.2004, an approximately 2 million sheets of paper were saved in 2004. More paper is expected to be saved in 2005 after the implementation of the second phase.
- Submit tax-return electronically
- In 2004, all Employer Returns to Inland Revenue Department were submitted in the form of CD-ROM. Concurrently, 31,000 government officers who had opted to receive e-payslip also received their copy of Employer Return electronically. As a result, about 189,000 sheets of paper were saved.

➤ **Housekeeping Arrangements**

Paper Saving

- Use electronic mode of communication
- Reference material and information were disseminated/re-circulated to staff by e-mail and placed on Treasury Intranet to minimize the use of paper. Staff members are encouraged to use of e-mails for internal and external communications as far as possible.
- Treasury grades training circulars, seminar notes and monthly staff grade news were disseminated to Treasury grades officers through electronic means.

- Minimize paper consumption

Energy Conservation

- All staff have adopted the practice to use both sides of a sheet for photocopying and printing and re-use envelopes and file jackets.

- Switch off lighting when the office area is not in use.

- Set all computer and office equipment to energy saving mode during office hours and switch off them when not in use.

- Arrange for the last-man-out to check and turn off all lighting and equipment.

Waste recycle

- In 2004, 48,439 kg of waste paper was collected for recycling.

- In 2004, 221 empty toner cartridges were collected for recycling.

➤ **Environmental Awareness Among Staff**

Education/publicity

- Guidelines on best green practices were promulgated to staff. Staff members also participated in energy saving experience sharing seminars to increase their general awareness of green management in office.

Environmental Actions Requiring Special Attention

We will continue our efforts to improve our environmental actions and practices. Specifically, We will look into the following areas for further enhancement in our environmental performance:

- (a) To continue to promote wider use of the on-line facilities for processing General Demand Notes and reporting on revenue collections within the Government.
- (b) To continue to promote receipt of payments and payment advices by Government's creditors through electronic means.
- (c) To continue to promote the use of e-mail by pensioners to communicate with the Treasury and the use of internet service to update their address.

- (d) To continue to promote the use of e-pay slips among civil servants and make this use mandatory for civil servants working in Accessibility - Programme - ready bureaux/departments in 2005.
- (e) To continue to extend the use of e-statement to other payroll related statements such as Notification of Priority Number under Home Purchase Scheme/Non-accountable Cash Allowance Scheme, payment advices on passage allowances and education allowances.
- (f) To streamline reporting and retention of civil servants' family particulars with the introduction of Central Payroll Related Database (CPRD) in early 2005. Bureaux/departments will hence update spouse/dependant details in CPRD direct instead of writing to the Treasury.

Views and Suggestions

If you have any views and suggestions, please write to our Green Manager at the Treasury, 27/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. You may also get in touch with us by-email at info@try.gov.hk or by fax on 2598 9273.