

# **University Grants Committee (UGC) Secretariat Environmental Report 2006**

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the 2006 Environmental Report of the University Grants Committee (UGC) Secretariat. In this report, you will find our environmental policy, performance in 2006 and our targets for 2007. This year, a part on our response to the Clean Air Charter has also been included in this report.

## **Controlling Officer's Profile of Key Responsibilities**

The UGC is a non-statutory advisory body appointed by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to offer impartial and expert advice to the Government on the funding and development of higher education in Hong Kong, and to provide assurance to the Government and the community on the standards and cost-effectiveness of the operations and activities of the UGC-funded institutions.

The UGC Secretariat is formed to provide secretariat support to the Committee. We had an establishment of 48 permanent posts and 16 contract staff as at 31 December 2006. We are located at 7/F Shui On Centre, 6-8 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong.

## **Environmental Policy**

We are committed to contributing to a healthier and more sustainable environment by ensuring that our operations are conducted in an environmentally-responsible manner, in that -

- a. we work by the 3 "R" principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle in the consumption of materials, supplies and energy and seek continual improvement to make effective use and reduce consumption of natural resources;
- b. we support and promote the practice of environmentally-responsible purchasing among staff;
- c. we promote greater awareness among staff in assuming their environmental responsibilities; and
- d. we review our activities and operations regularly to strive for continual improvement in our environmental performance.

## **The Clean Air Charter**

To show Government's commitment to improve air quality, the Chief Executive signed the Clean Air Charter (the Charter) on behalf of the Government of the HKSAR in November 2006. To support the Charter, we have actively adopted the promotion of green driving widely by -

- a. following the "Environmental Friendly" Guidelines issued by the Government Logistics Department (GLD);
- b. conducting frequent checks for overheating or any other defects of vehicle;
- c. always reminding our driver to switch off engines while waiting as so to reduce idling emissions and achieve fuel saving; and
- d. using unleaded gasoline to help reduce emission of polluting particles.

### Green performance in 2006

In 2006, the following green housekeeping practices were taken in our workplace -

#### **(A) Waste minimization**

- using double-sided network printers and photocopiers;
- using the back of used paper for drafting before collection for recycling;
- re-using file jackets and economising the use of envelopes;
- reducing the use of fax covering and printing of fax journals;
- minimising the use of paper cups;
- using e-mails for distributing meeting papers thereby reducing the number of hardcopies printed;
- promoting the extensive use of e-mail and the Local Area Network (LAN) in internal and external communications;
- minimising the number of hardcopies of circulars issued to staff by disseminating departmental information electronically or by circulation;
- use of electronic Christmas and New Year banners for seasonal greetings;
- encouraging the shared use of reference materials through the intranet;
- using environmentally-responsible products supplied by the GLD e.g. refillable ball pens, clutch pencils and recycled paper;
- printing publications with papers made from wood pulp derived from renewable forests and uploading publications onto the Internet; and
- using plain paper fax machines.

#### **(B) Waste recovering for recycling**

- collecting waste paper for recycling;
- collecting used toner cartridges for printers and fax machines for recycling; and
- collecting used plastic bottles and aluminum cans.

#### **(C) Energy conservation**

- using computers, lamps and fluorescent tubes with Energy Efficiency labels;

- installing energy saving fluorescent lights with electronic ballasts and occupancy sensor control on the lighting system;
- affixing "Save Energy" stickers to air-conditioning and lighting switches;
- disseminating green messages to remind staff to switch off their computers, lights and air-conditioning outside office hours or when not in use;
- switching off unnecessary lighting and air-conditioning when area is not in use;
- arranging for the last-man-out to check and turn off all lighting and electric devices before leaving office; and
- complying with the policy set by Electrical and Mechanical Services Department by maintaining the office room temperature at 25.5 degree.

#### **(D) Improvement in indoor air quality**

- implementing government "Smoke-free Workplace" policy; and
- cleaning the office ventilation system on a regular basis.

#### **(E) Environmentally-responsible purchasing**

- procuring energy saving computers and photocopiers with duplex function;
- including common environmental friendly terms such as trade-in clause, recycling arrangement, etc., as far as practicable when arranging tenders;
- using green products procured by the GLD; and
- recycled paper is used in lieu of plain wood-free paper for printing and photocopying.

#### **(F) Raising staff awareness**

- discussing green housekeeping measures at the Departmental Consultative Committee.

#### **(G) Enhancing environmental awareness of eight UGC-funded institutions**

- invited the eight UGC-funded institutions to observe green management practice in November 2006 by writing an advisory letter to them.

Concerning paper consumption, there was an increase of 15.5% from 2,580 reams in 2005 to 2,980 reams in 2006. As the operation of UGC Secretariat is entirely office-based, applications and papers are inevitably received in paper-form quite frequently. While we tried hard to minimise paper consumption, the increase in paper consumed was mainly attributed to the following operational reasons, particularly launching of new initiatives in (c) and (d) below -

(a) the increase in the numbers of meetings and related activities;

(b) the increase in the number of applications for Competitive Earmarked Research Grant (CERG);

(c) the launching of the Public Policy Research Grants; and

(d) the conduct of the Research Assessment Exercise 2006.

With a wider application of information communication technology, more and more meeting papers are distributed by electronic means and hence envelope consumption were reduced from 18,880 in 2005 to 17,459 (-7.5%) in 2006. We also made use of the Departmental Portal to store and disseminate internal information which eliminated the need of circulating hard copies. Due to the increase number of meetings and related activities in our department, there was an increase in waste paper collected for recycling by 22%, i.e. from 5,450 kg in 2005 to 6,648 kg in 2006.

Concerning electricity consumption, the total amount of electricity consumption increased from 262,478 kWh in 2005 to 272,734 kWh in 2006 (+3.9%). The increase in electricity consumption was mainly attributed to operational need, such as preparing and conducting meetings of the UGC and its sub-committees/groups, as well as installation of new computer servers and network equipment.

### **Targets for 2007**

In 2007, we are actively exploring more concrete measures to seek improvement in green management. By reviewing our green performance in 2006 and taking into consideration our actual operational requirements, our targets will focus on -

(a) reduce paper consumption by using electronic means -

- explore the feasibility of extending the scope of the CERG system, which is an electronic information system to conduct CERG business over the Internet, to cover monitoring and review of approved projects;
- electronic mails will continue to be used as the most popular means of communication within and outside the Secretariat; and
- the design and use of departmental e-Christmas cards in addition to paper ones.

(b) reduce paper consumption in operation -

- actively consider uploading new publications (e.g. audit manuals) onto internet for public viewing in order to reduce printing on paper;
- remind staff on paper reduction measures at regular intervals; and
- actively consider and encourage sharing of hardcopies of proposals/papers by Members during meetings.

(c) further increase the use of recycled paper and other green products available from GLD so as to help reduce subsequent waste disposal problems -

- publication of UGC documents will continue to be on environmental friendly paper; and
- photocopiers, printers and scanners with duplex function will continue to be purchased to facilitate double-sided printing and electronic record-keeping.

(d) collect waste paper/newspaper/toner cartridges/plastic bottles/aluminum cans and other solid plastic wastes for recycling; and

(e) add the term of the use of degradable plastic bags or plastic bags with recycled content for garbage collection in our cleansing service contract.

In addition, we will step up our efforts in promoting greater awareness among staff by -

(a) adopting green housekeeping practices as appropriate;

(b) issue of guidelines addressing various aspects of resources consumption and waste reduction during daily operations from time to time;

(c) arrange more environmental protection activities to foster in them an environmental friendly culture e.g. donating usable and/or recyclable items to needed members of the society; and

(d) solicit support and suggestions for green initiatives from staff.

### **The way forward**

Looking ahead, we will continue to explore the feasibility of more extensive application of information and communications technology commensurate with our operational requirements with a view to achieving, among others, the reduction of paper-based processes and records to the minimum and consequently, paper consumption.

We welcome comments on this report. Please contact us at [ugc@ugc.edu.hk](mailto:ugc@ugc.edu.hk).

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UGC Secretariat  
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