



AUDIT COMMISSION CONTROLLING OFFICER'S ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT 2012

INTRODUCTION

Established under Article 58 of the Basic Law, the Audit Commission functions independently and is accountable to the Chief Executive of the HKSAR. The Commission carries out two types of audit: regularity audits and value for money audits. Regularity audits are intended to provide an overall assurance of the general accuracy and propriety of the financial and accounting transactions of the government and other audited bodies. Value for money audits are intended to provide independent information, advice and assurance about the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which any bureau, department, or audited organisation has discharged its functions. As at 31 December 2012, the Commission had an establishment of 187.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

2. The Audit Commission is committed to ensuring that our operations are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner and meeting the commitments of the Clean Air Charter. To help promote environmental protection and reduce air emissions, the Audit Commission:

- adopts green housekeeping practices and energy-efficient measures; and
- carries out value for money audits on selected government activities which have a significant environmental impact and on related environmental issues, with a view to highlighting areas for improvement in the implementation of Government's environmental improvement policies.

HOUSEKEEPING PRACTICES AND ENERGY-EFFICIENCY MEASURES

3. The Audit Commission is committed to adopting green housekeeping practices and energy-efficient measures. Since 1993, a Green Manager at Directorate level has been appointed to introduce and review initiatives to improve the Commission's green housekeeping practices and energy-efficient measures. Through the years, the range of initiatives has expanded. Staff of the Audit Commission are required to follow the following green measures:

Paper saving measures

Reduction of paper and envelope consumption:

- use electronic mail and intranet for communication and dissemination of information;
- disseminate the Audit Reports on the Internet (<http://www.aud.gov.hk>);
- use PC-based faxes;
- use plain paper fax machines;
- avoid using fax leader pages;
- avoid sending original documents after they have been sent by fax;
- adopt electronic templates of letterhead, memo and forms to avoid pre-printed copies;
- use photocopiers and printers with double-sided printing function;
- print on both sides of paper;
- minimise photocopies by circulating circulars and other documents instead of issuing personal copies to officers;
- review distribution lists regularly;
- use old sets of documents for re-circulation;
- send unclassified documents without envelopes;
- reuse old envelopes and loose minute jackets/use transit envelopes if required; and
- send greeting cards in festive seasons by electronic means.

Reuse of paper:

- place “reuse green boxes” at designated locations to collect paper used on one side for reuse; and
- use blank side of used paper for drafting, photocopying and printing documents (including fax).

Recycling of paper:

- print Audit Reports using recycled paper or paper made from woodpulp derived from renewable forests; and
- place “recycle green boxes” at designated locations to collect waste paper for recycling.

Energy saving measures

- set A/C temperature at 25.5°C;
- use venetian blinds to adjust room temperature when necessary;
- reduce lighting to minimum required for illumination;
- use energy-efficient fluorescent tubes;
- install occupancy sensors in the washrooms where lighting usage is not frequent;
- colour-code the individual lighting switches in multiple-switch circuits to identify lights not in use;
- switch off lights, air conditioning, computers and electrical appliances not in use;
- unplug all hand-held equipment chargers from socket outlets when not in use;

- minimise the use of personal electrical appliances such as heater, fan, lamp and kettle;
- set office equipment to energy saving mode during office hours;
- install timer adaptors to turn off office equipment after office hours;
- use computer workstations and printers with automatic energy saving function;
- turn off the monitor when leaving the office, even for a short period;
- turn off non-essential servers at night, on Saturdays and public holidays;
- use LCD monitors instead of CRT monitors when replacement is required; and
- conduct routine checks during lunch hour and after office hours to ensure that any unnecessary lights and air-conditioners are switched off.

Publicity/education measures

- issue internal circular to regularly remind all staff on the economical use of paper and energy saving;
- display posters which remind drivers to switch off vehicle engine while waiting;
- post 'save energy' and 'save water' notices near light switches and water taps;
- place notices near photocopiers to remind staff to make photocopies using reusable paper and to collect waste paper for recycling; and
- conduct environmental seminar.

Other green measures

- enforce smoke-free work place policy in all offices;
- arrange regular cleaning of carpet;
- clean air ducts regularly with a view to maintaining good air ventilation;
- conduct regular indoor air quality checking;
- place air purifiers near photocopiers;
- use unleaded fuel;
- use recyclable laser printer cartridges;
- collect used printer cartridges for reuse;
- use refillable ball pens and clutch pencils;
- minimise use of products which are not environmental friendly (e.g. correction fluid);
- repair old equipment;
- use hand-dryers in washrooms;
- install timer taps in toilets;
- reuse decorative materials in festive seasons;
- exchange diskettes within and outside of department;
- collect used CDs for recycling;
- provide rubbish bins in the pantry for collecting waste plastic bottles and cans;
- use of environmental friendly sundries items, e.g. rechargeable batteries; and
- decline to accept souvenirs and gifts when attending events and functions.

GREEN HOUSEKEEPING PRACTICES AND ENERGY-EFFICIENCY MEASURES

PERFORMANCE AND TARGET

PAPER AND ENVELOPE CONSUMPTION

4. In 2012, there was an increase of 6.5% in paper consumption and 93.9% in envelope consumption as compared with 2011 owing to the conduct of a recruitment exercise which attracted a large number of applications. About 99% of the total quantity of paper used in 2012 was recycled paper with at least 50% recycled pulp.

5. In 2013, it is the Commission's target to control the growth of paper and envelope consumption.

ENERGY-EFFICIENCY MEASURES

6. The Commission occupies an internal floor area of 1,961m² on the 25th and 26th floors of the Immigration Tower. In 2012, the electricity consumed by normal power supply of office areas was about 218,927kWh¹. The corresponding indirect emission was 418.2, 254.0 and 13.1 kg of SO₂, NO_x and RSP².

7. There is one departmental vehicle, using unleaded fuel in the Commission. The total mileage in 2012 was 8,626 km and the unleaded fuel consumption was about 1,623.3 litres. The related emission was about 7.8 kg of NO_x.

8. In 2013, the Commission will make continued efforts to promote energy saving in the office premises.

¹ The electricity consumption for the office A/C system is excluded as no separate meters are available for measurement.

² The indirect emission from electricity consumption is calculated according to the formulae set out in the "Guide to Clean Air Charter Report Writing" published by EPD in January 2008.

AUDIT STUDIES ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

PERFORMANCE AND TARGET

9. In 2012, the Audit Commission issued two value for money audit reports on environmental-related issues.

“Monitoring and Reporting of Air Quality”

(Chapter 1 of the Director of Audit’s Report No. 59 of October 2012)

10. Air pollution is one of the major problems in Hong Kong. The Environment Bureau and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) are responsible for formulating and implementing environmental policies, including those on air quality. In 2012-13, the EPD’s estimated expenditure on managing air quality is \$627 million.

11. The air quality objectives (AQOs) stipulate the concentration limits for seven major pollutants. Under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 311), the EPD, as the Air Pollution Control Authority, is tasked to aim to achieve the AQOs as soon as reasonably practicable and thereafter to maintain the quality so achieved. The EPD has also compiled an hourly air pollution index for each of the 11 general air-quality monitoring stations and three roadside stations. The Audit Commission has conducted a review on the Government’s monitoring and reporting of air quality. The Audit Commission found areas where improvements can be made and provided a number of recommendations to address the issues.

“Implementation of air-quality improvement measures”

(Chapter 2 of the Director of Audit’s Report No. 59 of October 2012)

12. The major sources of air pollution in Hong Kong are motor vehicles, marine vessels and power plants as well as emissions from the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region. As of March 2012, there were 131,490 diesel vehicles, including 120,990 commercial vehicles (e.g. goods vehicles, non-franchised buses and light buses) and 5,800 franchised buses. Due to increased maritime activities in Hong Kong and the PRD region, emissions from vessels have substantially increased and become a significant source of air pollution in Hong Kong. Emissions from local power plants accounted for 50% of sulphur dioxide, 25% of nitrogen oxides and 16% of particulate matters with a diameter of 10 micrometres or less of the total emissions in Hong Kong in 2010. In April 2002, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government issued a joint statement setting targets for reducing emissions of various pollutants in the PRD region by 2010.

13. The Audit Commission has conducted a review on the implementation of air-quality improvement measures. The Audit Commission found areas where improvements can be made and made a number of recommendations to address the issues.

14. The Audit Commission will continue to conduct value for money audit studies on issues which have significant environmental impact.

THE WAY FORWARD

15. The Audit Commission will make continued efforts to help promote environmental protection through adopting green housekeeping practices as well as energy-efficient measures, and carrying out value for money audits on environmental issues.

FEEDBACK

16. We value very much your feedback, which would be useful for further improving our report in the coming years. If you have any comments or suggestions, please let us know by any of the following means :

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