



Home Affairs Department Environmental Report 2020-21

Introduction

This is the 22nd Environmental Report of Home Affairs Department (HAD). It provides an overview of our work and achievements in 2020-21 regarding the following three major activities: -

- (i) organising community projects to promote public awareness and participation in the protection and improvement of the environment;
- (ii) carrying out local environmental improvement projects with due regard to the impacts on the environment; and
- (iii) adopting green housekeeping measures and fostering amongst staff an environmental-friendly culture and appreciation of their environmental protection responsibilities.

Overview

Mission

2. Our mission is to enhance communication between the Government and the people of Hong Kong and to facilitate the development of District Administration. We are committed to maintaining Hong Kong as a vibrant, caring and harmonious community. We shall continue to build on our close ties with all sectors of the community and facilitate the administration of Hong Kong in line with changing circumstances.

Major Functions

3. The major functions of HAD include: -

(i) District Administration

HAD implements and develops the District Administration Scheme, encourages public participation in the Scheme to enhance the capacity to resolve problems in districts, and ensures that public policies are effectively implemented at the district level.

(ii) Community Building

HAD implements the policy in respect of community building and promotes community involvement activities and public participation in community affairs.

(iii) Local Environmental Improvements

HAD improves the local environment through minor works.

(iv) Licensing

HAD implements the Miscellaneous Licences Ordinance (Cap. 114), Gambling Ordinance (Cap. 148), Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349), Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 376), Amusement Game Centres Ordinance (Cap. 435), Bedspace Apartments Ordinance (Cap. 447) and Karaoke Establishments Ordinance (Cap. 573) and processes permits for non-charitable fund-raising activities.

(v) Territory Planning and Development

HAD assists relevant bureaux and departments in gauging local views on the planning and development projects of the territory.

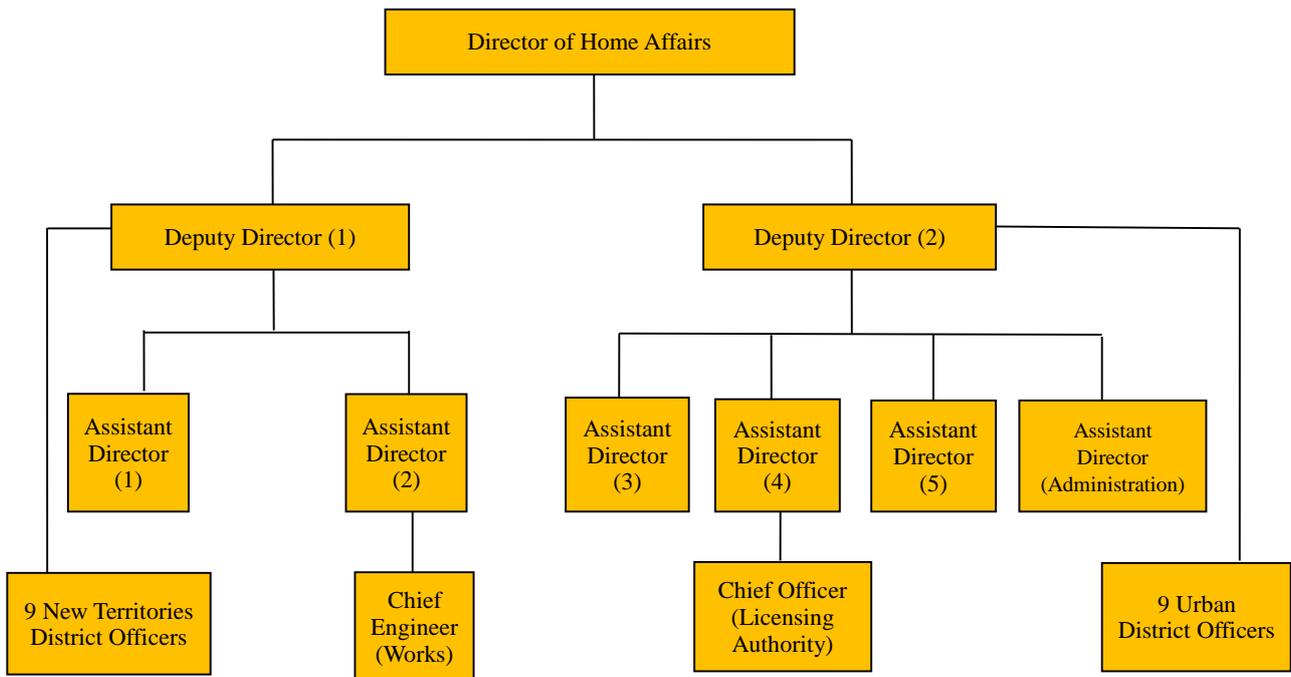
Offices and Facilities

4. HAD's offices and facilities spread across the territory. While our headquarters offices are located in Wan Chai, Tai Koo and North Point, a district office is situated in each of the 18 administrative districts in Hong Kong. Apart from this, there are 20 Home Affairs Enquiry Centres and 107 community halls/centres providing services for the public as at 31.3.2021.

Organisation

5. As at 31.3.2021, there were 2,255 permanent posts in the Department.

Home Affairs Department Organisation Structure (as at 31.3.2021)



Environmental Policy of Home Affairs Department

6. HAD fully supports Government's policy to protect and improve the natural and living environment, and to achieve sustainable development in the long term. We strive to ensure that the services we offer are conducted in an environmentally responsible manner, and we help enhance environmental awareness through various community programmes and activities organised in partnership with community organisations and other Government departments.

Local Environmental Projects

7. HAD carries out minor local improvement works with a view to upgrading the infrastructure and improving the quality of local environment. In support of environmental protection, we include appropriate environmental pollution control clauses in all works contracts. We also encourage the use of environmentally friendly materials in the design of projects such as recycled timber and paving units containing recycled glass so as to minimise potential adverse impact on the natural environment. To avoid light pollution and energy wastage, we widely use light sensors and timer controls for light fittings in sitting-out areas and pet gardens so that the lights are controlled in response to the luminance of the environment and the times of day such as sunsets, late nights and sunrises.

8. Examples are the Sitting-out areas at Victoria Road, Southern District and outside Tai Po Sports Ground, Tai Po District.



Sitting-out area near Consort Rise at Victoria Road in the Southern District with recycled timber benches and cladding, paving units containing recycled glass, lightings with timer controls and light sensors. Existing trees are conserved, and new trees and shrubs are planted.



Sitting-out area outside Tai Po Sports Ground in the Tai Po District with recycled timber benches, paving units containing recycled glass, lightings with timer controls and light sensors. Existing mature trees are conserved, and new shrubs are planted. Besides, existing timber benches and arbours' cover are repainted, renewed and reused.

Community Engagement

9. Apart from the green initiatives in our local environment improvement projects, we continue to encourage greening at district level through organising and co-organising greening-related community involvement activities with the participation of all sectors and age groups of the community. However, due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic, these activities have been greatly reduced to comply with social distancing measures. One event, namely, “Greening and Beautification of Railings Along Footpaths 2020” was organised in 2020-21.



Greening Work

Local Greening and Planting Works

10. HAD attaches great importance to greening work and we target to promote greening at different levels. We have been working on greening and planting works across various districts by installing and maintaining planters along roadsides and flyover areas. This helps improve the urban environment not only through air purification, but also through enhancing the overall visual environment for the public.

11. Since 2014, we have been replacing, for our greening work, annuals with perennial plants such as shrubs which can offer a similar level of aesthetics enjoyment yet need no constant replacement that might generate substantial yard waste. In 2020-21, we planted over 18,000 shrubs across the districts.



Greening and Beautification of Railings along Footpaths



Roadside Flower Beds and Planters

Training

12. During the year, we encouraged our staff members ranging from frontline to managerial levels to attend over 10 courses on tree management organised by the Development Bureau. Examples are “Seminar on Principle and Practice of Plant Pest and Disease Management” and “Webinar on the Latest TRAM Guidelines and Review of Assessment Skills”. The training helps enhance our staff members’ knowledge of trees and greening, thereby facilitating their daily tree management work and fostering a culture of tree care.

Statistics of Energy Consumption in HAD

13. Electricity consumption of our government buildings in FY 2018-19 and FY 2020-21 is tabulated below:

	Energy consumption before normalization (Billed & renewal energy)	Energy consumption after normalization under comparable operating conditions	Renewable energy generation
FY 2018-19 (baseline), (million kWh)	28,368,722 (a)		0
FY 2020-21, (million kWh) (change compared with (a))	23,748,980 (-16%)	27,205,604 (-4.1%) (b)	4,833 (+0.026%) (c)
Energy Performance (-b) + (c)	4.126%		

As set out above, under comparable operating conditions in FY2018-19, there was 4.1% of energy saving in FY 2020-21, taking into consideration temporary closure of community halls/centres during the COVID-19 epidemic, and after implementing green housekeeping measures as set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Green Housekeeping Measures

Carbon Auditing

14. In 2020, we conducted a ‘paper approach’ carbon audit exercise for four of our government offices and community halls/centres. This exercise serves to monitor greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. We have also taken various measures, such as using automatic sensors in water taps and maintaining air-conditioned room temperature at 25.5 °C, to reduce GHG emissions. In future, we will continue to carry out this audit with a view to further reducing our carbon emissions.

No. of Major Building audited	4
Total floor area	10,297 m ²
Category	Community halls/centres & office type buildings
Total GHG Emissions	1,351 tonnes of CO _{2-e}

15. Implementation of energy saving measures will continue in our offices and community halls/centres. The following are some examples in 2020-21:-

■ Air-conditioning:

- Maintaining air-conditioned room temperature at 25.5 °C;
- Using curtains or blinds to screen off sunlight to reduce the need for air-conditioning and energy consumption;

■ Lighting:

- Switching off lights in offices and community halls/centres when they are not in use;
- Turning off non-essential lighting (e.g. at reception areas and corridors) at offices during lunch hour;
- Delamping by switching on two fluorescent light tubes in a light plate instead of all three tubes without affecting office operation;
- Using energy-efficient lighting such as LED lamps and T5 fluorescent lamps;

■ Other electrical appliances:

- Using energy-efficient office equipment, including computers and photocopiers with energy saving mode;
- Using timer controls for electrical appliances, arranging the last-man-out to check and reminding staff to switch off non-essential electrical appliances when they are not in use; and
- Affixing “Save Energy” stickers and warm reminders near the switches.

Water Conservation

16. We have taken the following measures to reduce water consumption: -

- Encouraging staff members and the public using our facilities to conserve water consumption by displaying environmental protection promotional materials on notice boards and updating the materials regularly; and installing automatic sensors in water taps at our offices (i.e. at washrooms and pantries) and community halls/centres.



Solid waste reduction

17. We have made the following efforts to reduce solid waste at offices: -

- Paper consumption:
 - Minimising the use of paper by printing on both sides of paper, re-using envelopes and file covers, and issuing departmental notices and circulars through electronic means, etc.;
 - Sending electronic greeting cards to government contacts and posting on HAD's website to deliver festive greetings;
 - Prioritising the use of recycled paper, which accounted for about 90% of our total paper consumption in 2020-21;
 - Placing boxes/trays next to photocopiers to collect used paper for recycling. During the year, approximately 67 tonnes of waste paper were collected from headquarters offices and district offices;
 - Displaying a notice on the water dispenser to remind the staff to avoid using paper cups; and
 - Putting a collection box in prominent place to encourage the staff to reuse envelopes;



■ Plastic consumption:

- Avoiding the use and distribution of plastic umbrella bags and deploying alternative means, such as umbrella racks, umbrella dryers, floor dryers and carpets to keep the floor dry;

■ Recycling:

- Placing three-coloured recycling bins in offices to encourage recycling;
- Placing collection boxes to facilitate the collection of recyclable waste paper;
- Providing red and green collection bags to collect used paper for recycling; and
- Reusing decorative materials for festive seasons.



18. To ensure the energy-saving measures are fully implemented, we have assigned Energy Wardens and Assistant Energy Wardens in each office to conduct routine checks and help foster an environmentally friendly culture.

Green Procurement

19. To further support environmental protection, we have adopted the following green procurement measures: -

- Adopting green specifications for products according to guidelines promulgated by the Environmental Protection Department as appropriate;
- Procuring in an environmentally friendly manner, such as recyclable stationery items, wood-free and recyclable printing paper;
- Procuring energy-saving office equipment and electrical appliance;
- Collecting used printer toner cartridges from users and arranging for trade-in; and
- Including “trade-in option” for procurement of replacement store items.

Clean Air Charter

20. To achieve the commitments of the Clean Air Charter, we have adopted the following measures: -

- Planning routes when using departmental vehicles to minimise the journey distance and time and avoid congested areas;
- Encouraging staff to maximise the use of departmental vehicle journeys to reduce carbon emission, e.g. group passengers to nearby destinations in one trip by one departmental vehicle;
- Promoting the awareness of green office environment by circulation of publications with green messages. Perennial planters are also placed in offices to enhance green awareness and to provide better working environment for staff; and
- Encouraging staff to use internal stairs instead of lifts to access nearby floors.



Environmental Targets in 2021-22

21. We are committed to upholding our environmental goals and policies in our work and operations. For 2021-22, we aim to achieve the following green targets: -

- To actively participate in the implementation of Greening Master Plans in the 18 districts, and to explore feasible greening proposals for contributing to a greener environment in all districts;
- To sustain our efforts in tree management work with a view to maintaining and protecting the health and physical conditions of our trees. To continue our collaboration with the Tree Management Office of Development Bureau in conducting audits and reporting on our tree risk assessment in order to ensure the quality and professional standard of the assessment exercises performed by our contractors;
- To continue our support to the government's waste reduction policy by replacing annuals with perennials as much as possible;
- To keep up our efforts in the energy-cum-carbon audit programme to identify additional measures for energy and carbon emission reduction and continue to monitor implementation of the recommended energy management opportunities;

- To continue our participation in the IAQ Certification Scheme to maintain satisfactory IAQ standards and promote good IAQ management practices across venues; and
- To further build up environmental protection culture in our offices by encouraging staff participation in government-initiated greening activities and seeking continuous improvement in our internal green housekeeping measures.

Feedback

22. We welcome feedback on this report for further improvement. If you have any comments or suggestions, please write to us through any of the following channels: -

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Fax: 2834 7649

E-mail: hadgen@had.gov.hk

Home Affairs Department
January 2023