

Labour and Welfare Bureau Environmental Report 2023

Introduction

The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) is responsible for policy matters relating to social welfare, labour, manpower development and vocational training/retraining, and poverty alleviation work. Its actual recurrent expenditure in 2022-23 was \$803.5 million, with staff establishment stood at 153 as at 31 December 2023.

2. LWB's main office is operated at Tamar Central Government Offices (CGO) and its building management is centrally undertaken by the Administration Wing. Besides, LWB operates three outstation offices. Two of them are situated in government buildings with the building management centrally undertaken by the Government Property Agency (GPA), namely at Queensway Government Offices (QGO) and Revenue Tower. The remaining outstation office is situated in a commercial building, viz. The Hub in Wong Chuk Hang.

3. This Environmental Report gives an updated account of LWB's performance in green management in 2023, and presents the ongoing efforts of LWB in the implementation of green measures.

Environmental Goal and Policy

4. LWB is committed to ensuring that its operations are conducted, through the optimum use of resources and energy, in an environmentally responsible manner. We support the HKSAR Government's green initiatives to protect and improve our environment, and will continue to explore new initiatives aiming at achieving a more healthy and sustainable working environment.

Green Measures Taken in 2023

5. LWB's activities are largely office-based. Details of the green measures taken by LWB in 2023 are as follows –

(i) *Energy Conservation*

- Turning off air-conditioning units, lighting and office equipment when they are not in use;
- Using T5 energy-saving fluorescent lights extensively in offices;
- Using motion sensors for lighting control in both office and common areas;

- Diversifying and re-mapping the lighting areas;
- Using LED desk lights with longer service life and higher energy efficiency;
- Removing some light tubes to reduce non-essential lighting in ancillary areas, while maintaining adequate illumination;
- Lowering the illumination of ancillary areas after office hours;
- Lowering window blinds to reduce solar gain;
- Setting all photocopiers to automatic energy saving mode; and
- Ensuring proper maintenance of office equipment and bureau vehicles to conserve energy and reduce consumption.

(ii) *Green Transport*

- Practising carpooling and task combination as far as practicable to achieve multiple objectives in one journey instead of arranging separate trips; and
- Replacing one fossil fuel bureau vehicle with an electric vehicle (EV) by end 2024 and make two more replacements by end 2025.

(iii) *Minimising Paper Consumption*

- Using e-mails extensively for internal and external communication and transmitting documents for editing and review;
- Disseminating information and publicity materials by electronic means within LWB as well as with members of the public; and
- Using e-bulletin board and e-mails for dissemination of internal circulars, guidelines, forms and notices.

(iv) *Economy use of paper*

- Requesting minimal numbers of hard copies of government newsletters/publications;
- Keeping the number of copies of paper publications to the minimum;
- Using printers/photocopiers with double-sided copying functions;
- Setting double-sided printing and printing in grayscale as default modes for all network printers and photocopiers;
- Using the blank side of used paper for drafting, printing and photocopying;
- Minimising the number of photocopies, and using both sides of paper if printing/photocopying is unavoidable;
- Using e-fax service;
- Avoiding the use of fax leader pages;
- Avoiding the use of envelopes for unclassified documents;
- Avoiding the issue of original documents which have been sent by fax or e-mail;

- Minimising newspapers and magazines subscriptions; and
- Implementing the Electronic Recordkeeping System for filing and retaining government records in 2025.

(v) *Waste Recovery*

- Using recycled paper on a full scale;
- Reusing envelopes and using transit envelopes;
- Reusing loose minute jackets, action tags and meeting folders;
- Collecting used and unused stationery for re-distribution;
- Placing collection boxes near photocopiers for collecting one-sided used paper for reuse or drafting purposes;
- Reusing carton boxes for storage;
- Collecting used paper, newspaper, publications and printer toner cartridges for recycling;
- Collecting waste metal, glass and plastic items for recycling;
- Encouraging staff to use the reverse vending machines to dispose of used plastic beverage containers for recycling; and
- Posting notices on the Central Cyber Government Office (CCGO) to publicise the availability of surplus store items to ascertain whether they are needed by other bureaux/departments and transferring surplus furniture and equipment to other bureaux/departments for further use.

(vi) *Other Environmental Measures*

(a) *Green Management*

- Appointing a green executive in each division/team/office of LWB to promote and implement green measures on a division/team/office basis;
- Declining souvenirs and gifts as far as possible when officers attending events and functions;
- Avoiding bestowal of souvenirs in LWB's events and activities;
- Serving drinking water in glasses during meetings;
- Avoiding the use of bottled water, paper cups and plastic utensils in LWB's meetings and activities;
- Recording the weight of daily general waste/recyclables to monitor the trend of waste generation in the office;
- Sending electronic seasonal greeting cards during festive seasons; and
- Minimising the use of and reusing decorative materials;

(b) *Green Working Environment*

- Participating in indoor air quality inspection;
- Promoting a green working environment by placing greenery and plantings in the office;
- Maintaining a non-smoking environment in office premises;

- Improving air quality in the office by cleaning air ventilation systems regularly;
- Cleaning and maintaining office facilities, including furniture and equipment, carpet and distilled water dispensers regularly;
- Using auto-sensitised water taps in toilets; and
- Installing flow controllers in pantries to reduce water consumption.

(c) *Green Procurement*

- Procuring plain paper fax machines and other energy efficient office equipment and electrical appliances;
- Procuring electrical appliances, such as refrigerators, with Grade 1 Energy Efficiency Label;
- Trading in office equipment, such as photocopiers, in procurement;
- Acquiring green stationery, such as refillable ball pens and items made of recycled materials, supplied by the Government Logistics Department;
- Requiring cleansing contractors to use plastic bags made of degradable contents or recycled materials for the collection of refuse and paper shreds on a full scale;
- Reviewing regularly the usage rate of stock items that have expiry dates;
- Arranging bulk purchase and delivery to reduce individual product packaging;
- Adopting green specifications promulgated by the Environmental Protection Department for the procurement of goods and services as mandatory or desirable requirements, subject to the availability of green options of the stores and services; and
- Adopting the e-Procurement System for the purchase of IT products and services under the IT Standing Offer Agreements.

(d) *Raising Staff Awareness on Green Management*

- Circulating guidelines and tips on green environment to staff regularly and posting them on e-bulletin board;
- Reminding staff to turn off computers and office equipment when they are not in use;
- Displaying posters/stickers with messages of protecting environment in office areas;
- Including green messages in the Christmas Party's games to promote staff's environmental awareness;
- Encouraging staff to attend training/seminars as well as participate in activities on environmental issues and green management;
- Circulating the monthly waste and recycling statistics regularly to staff to promote waste minimisation;
- Reminding staff to bring their own reusable tableware instead of disposable tableware for take-away meals; and

- Encouraging our staff to take the stairs rather than the lift when going up and down between floors.

Commitment to Clean Air Charter

6. LWB abides by the commitments stated in the Clean Air Charter. In addition to the green management efforts as listed out in paragraph 5 above, LWB will continue to –

- use unleaded fuel for bureau vehicles until all vehicles to be replaced by EV;
- require drivers/chauffeurs to switch off vehicle engines whilst awaiting;
- encourage shared use of government vehicles among colleagues; and
- maintain room temperature at 25.5°C during summer months.

Green Management Performance

7. The green measures taken in 2023 were effective. The whole building of the CGO where LWB’s main office is located has been awarded with “Excellent Class” under the Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme in 2023, while the buildings where LWB’s three outstation offices are located have attained “Good Glass”. Green measures on conserving electricity consumption and waste recycling among bureaux and departments in CGO, QGO and Revenue Tower are centrally monitored by the Administration Wing or GPA. Regarding the leased office accommodation in Wong Chuk Hang, its overall electricity consumption has decreased by 0.3% in 2023 compared to 2022.

Continuous Improvement

8. Apart from continuous implementation of the green measures now in place, LWB will continue to explore new green initiatives and enhance the environmental awareness among staff by -

- promoting the 4Rs principles of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace” in office management;
- arranging/encouraging green executives to attend training/ seminars/ workshops/briefings on environmental issues and green management;
- reviewing LWB’s green initiatives regularly to seek continual improvement and identifying new initiatives to reduce resource consumption;
- promoting waste reduction and striving to reduce office/pantry/ washroom waste;

- monitoring electricity consumption in our offices and exploring all possible means to further reduce energy consumption;
- monitoring paper consumption and promoting best practices for saving paper in our offices; and
- incorporating the green guidelines into the new cleansing contracts for our offices when they are next due for renewal/award.

Comments and Suggestions

9. LWB welcomes your views and suggestions. Please contact us by the following means –

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