

# **Customs and Excise Department Controlling Officer's Environmental Report 2022**

## **Preface**

The Customs and Excise Department (the Department) is a progressive and dynamic law enforcement agency responsible for anti-smuggling, interdiction of drug trafficking, intellectual property rights protection, trade facilitation, import and export control, safeguarding consumer rights as well as collection of excise on dutiable goods.

In discharging its statutory role, the Department strives to promote sustainable development and is committed to making the best use of available resources.

## **Services and Operations Conducive to Greening**

We consider it necessary to be environmentally responsible in delivering our services and operations, and are actively participating in the following international and community-wide environmental programmes:

- *Ozone Layer Protection*

The Department took part in “Project Sky-Hole-Patching” jointly launched in 2006 by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Customs Organisation Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific (RILO A/P) to combat illegal trading activities connected with Ozone Depleting Substances. It has been extended to cover the hazardous waste and operated as a routine project since 2007. In 2022, we performed checking on 54 related licences.

- *Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste*

To fulfill international obligations arising from the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, we continued to work with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) on implementation of the “Strategic Control Scheme on Hazardous Waste”. In this regard, 27 containers were returned to

the relevant exporting countries while 33 pieces of seizure information were relayed to RILO A/P and overseas counterparts for follow-up action in 2022.

- *Recycling of Rechargeable Batteries*

To minimise pollution caused by improper disposal of harmful materials and conserve natural resources, we also joined the “Rechargeable Battery Recycling Programme” conceived by EPD, conservation groups and battery traders, under which 7553 seized rechargeable batteries were sent abroad for recycling in 2022.

### **Green Approach to Facilitate Trade Activities**

We have adopted a green approach to improve our services and developed the following systems to facilitate trading activities:

- *Electronic System for Cargo Manifests (EMAN)*

EMAN enables a one-stop electronic submission of manifests by air freight, marine cargo and river trade carriers. As at the end of 2022, over 85.1% of inbound marine cargo pre-arrival information was submitted through the “EMAN Statement I Submission Scheme” and 216 major forwarders had joined the “e-Sea Customs Clearance Scheme”. Continued efforts will be made by our officers to induce users to submit manifests electronically.

- *Money Service Operators Licensing System (MSOS)*

MSOS was implemented in 2012 to process on-line submission of licence applications, regular returns and public enquiries. The system not only reduces paper consumption, but also mitigates environmental impact of errands run by Money Service Operators (MSOs) when submitting paper-based applications and returns. The Department has recorded a significant increase in the number of on-line submissions over the past few years and will continue to encourage the use of electronic means in lieu of paper by MSOs.

- *Dutiable Commodities System (DCS)*

The e-Licence website of DCS was launched in January 2017 for the electronic application of dutiable commodity licences. Since 27 July 2017, all licence applications have been required to be submitted electronically through the DCS. The DCS has also supported electronic submission of Application for Ships' Stores and Confirmation of Receipt of Ship's Stores since 16 March 2020 and 30 June 2021 respectively. The initiatives have enhanced efficiency and reduced paper consumption.

- *Smart Hydrocarbon Oil Management (SHOM)*

The initiative of SHOM was introduced to the DCS in June 2021 for hydrocarbon oil companies to submit sales return electronically through a newly designated electronic platform. It has achieved a paperless and more environmental-friendly business approach by reducing the printing of documents in hard copies for duties calculation and auditing.

- *Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Registration System (DRS)*

The Department is developing the DRS which will enable Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones to submit online application for new registrations and renewals in prescribed electronic forms. To further reduce carbon footprint, DRS will issue electronic certificates, each with a static QR code that can be scanned for easy access to information from the DRS online register. In addition, DRS will connect to and exploit the Government's "Shared Blockchain Platform", and will apply the Department's self-invented dynamic QR code authentication technology to enhance online validation of registrants. The system is scheduled for rollout in March 2023.

## **Green Office Environment**

We make every effort to cultivate a green office environment through the following measures:

- Headquarters Building

The Customs Headquarters Building (CHB) contains a diverse array of environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient installations including zero ozone depleting refrigerant for chiller units, occupancy sensors for lighting and air-conditioning as well as photovoltaic panels and vehicle battery charging facilities. Meanwhile, water-cooled air conditioning system, high-efficacy illuminating devices and podium gardens are deployed to speed up heat dissipation.

- Housekeeping Measures and Staff Training

We monitor closely the outcome of different housekeeping measures aimed at minimising wastage, encouraging recycling and promoting energy conservation. In addition, we regularly update and re-circulate guidelines to alert colleagues on their environmental responsibilities, support events hosted by conservation groups and organise seminars to exchange experience with relevant stakeholders.

- Electricity Consumption

The Department has implemented various measures to save energy and invited the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to perform proactive maintenance and servicing of the air-conditioning systems and chiller plants, thereby containing the impact of increased services on electricity consumption. The level of consumption in 2022 was slightly less than that of 2021 by 0.5%. The Department would continue to support Government's objective on electricity saving by implementing various electricity saving measures.

- Carbon Audit

To echo the need for combating climate change, the Department also assessed the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (carbon performance) for its premises with high energy consumption, i.e. with an annual electricity consumption of more than 500 000 kWh. In 2022, the GHG emissions of four buildings and two control points with a total floor area of 125 008 square metres were 13 391 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

- Renewable Energy

We respond to the government's encouragement on the use of Renewable Energy (RE) and have installed photovoltaic panels for generating solar energy in some of the Department's major premises, including CHB and Kwai Chung Customhouse (KCCH), and the generated electricity is returning to the electricity supply of those premises. The Department would identify suitable locations to install additional photovoltaic panels for promoting the use of RE in energy saving.

- Use of Recycled Paper

We continue to promote the use of recycled paper which accounted for 48.84% of the paper consumption in 2022.

- Indoor Air Quality

We have participated in the Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme launched by EPD and engaged a contractor to inspect office premises with construction floor area exceeding 10 000 m<sup>2</sup>. In 2022, CHB was awarded with "Excellent Class" certificate for its indoor air quality and two other premises – KCCH and Tsing Chau Street Customs Staff Quarters – were both awarded with "Good Class" certificates.

- Use of Plastic Waste Bags

Our building management contractors are regularly reminded to reduce reliance on plastic waste bags for their cleansing services and are required by tender conditions to use plastic waste bags made from degradable or recycled materials.

- Reduction of Waste from Catering

In support of the Government's drive to reduce food waste, we signed the Food Wise Charter in October 2015. In 2022, we continued to carry out a number of corresponding measures including the display of posters and publicity materials at staff canteens to arouse staff's awareness. The staff canteen and Mess at CHB have been offering the

option of “less rice” for meals and “lesser number of courses” in banquet menu and have complied with the requirement on “Avoidance of Use of Disposable Tableware” by not providing plastic straws and poly-foam food containers, and using paper-based food containers and wooden tableware for take-away meals instead.

### **Looking Forward**

We will uphold the impetus in advocating a green workplace and continue to inculcate deeper awareness among our staff on the essence of green living.

### **Comments and Suggestions**

This report is accessible on our homepage at [www.customs.gov.hk](http://www.customs.gov.hk). We welcome feedback conveyed either in writing to our Green Manager at the Customs Headquarters Building, 222 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong or via e-mail at [customsenquiry@customs.gov.hk](mailto:customsenquiry@customs.gov.hk).

**Customs and Excise Department**  
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