Government Records Service
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

ANNUAL
REPORT
2021

Contents

Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the 2021 Annual Report of the Government Records Service (GRS).

2021 was another challenging year as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect the society as well as GRS' services. Nevertheless, we persevered and exerted ourselves to make noticeable progress in the year, fully manifesting GRS' resilience, professionalism and commitment to serving the public and government bureaux / departments.

Throughout the year, we endeavoured to sustain our services through all possible means. On the one hand, GRS launched online live group visits and workshops to promote our documentary heritage to a wider spectrum of audience, and collaborated with the Education Bureau to pioneer an online professional training course for secondary school teachers to sustain our commitment to serving the public under the pandemic. On the other hand, GRS worked closely with government bureaux / departments in fostering effective records management training for government officers, especially new recruits, and met the ambitious annual training target of 10 000 government officers on records management in 2021, among them around 60% were new recruits.

To address the need of long-term preservation of electronic records in this e-Government era, GRS in collaboration with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer continued and completed a consultancy study to formulate comprehensive policy, strategies, guidelines and technical solutions for managing and preserving electronic records. To embrace the challenges of digital preservation, GRS devised a strategic training framework to strengthen our workforce as a digital proficient and multi-skilling team. In 2021, GRS also formed a Disaster Recovery Team to review the Disaster Recovery Plans and hatch related plans for enhancing the protection of our archival records. Looking forward, GRS shall spare no effort to continue to strengthen the management, protection and preservation of government records and archives, thereby enriching Hong Kong's documentary heritage.

I trust that readers will have a more concrete and lucid understanding on GRS after reading the interesting articles and key statistics included in this Report.

Miss Ruby LUK
Government Records Service Director

VISION

To be the leading, most insightful and resourceful public archives in Hong Kong that excels in preserving and promoting the documentary heritage of our city in the digital era.
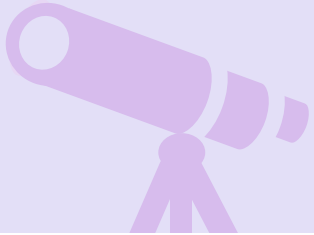
MISSION

- ► To build comprehensive and diversified archival collections;
- ► To provide user-friendly and convenient access to the archival collections;
- ► To build a digital archive with modern technologies;
- ► To promote good records management practices among government bureaux and departments and public organisations;
- ► To provide advanced facilities for storage, preservation and retrieval services;
- ► To promote awareness, appreciation and proper use of documentary heritage in our community; and
- ► To foster a closer partnership with other archives.

VALUES

*G*reen
Go Green! Be environmentally conscious through developing and promoting electronic records management in the Government and public organisations.

*R*eliability
Create and preserve reliable records to support evidence-based decisions and to promote the documentary heritage of Hong Kong.

*E*fficiency
Be efficient in all aspects of records management.

*A*ccessibility
Enhance public access to our archival collections.

*T*ransparency
Be transparent – making our Government more open and accountable through good records management practices.

Part I – Activities in Retrospect

Identity Card – A Timeless Proof

From a paper document to a laminated card, from computerisation to smart authentication, the evolution of the Hong Kong identity card (ID card) has witnessed the changes of society and the advancement in technology since it was first issued in 1949.

The thematic exhibition organised by the Public Records Office (PRO) of the Government Records Service (GRS) in 2021 highlighted the Government's policy on ID card registration, as well as the evolving designs of ID card over the past decades. Through the display of all the seven generations of ID cards and the related production equipment on loan from the Immigration Department, and photographic holdings of PRO, the exhibition demonstrated the Government's endeavour in promoting and facilitating the registration of ID cards for eligible people such as deploying mobile registration teams to different districts.

Highlights of the Exhibition

The broad selection of holdings showcased at the thematic exhibition revealed several interesting stories about the evolution of the designs of ID card and the Government's policy on ID card registration. Rather than only indicating a card holder's basic information such as the name and gender on the new smart ID cards nowadays, the earliest

Besides the name, gender, photograph and ID card number, the Paper ID cards introduced in 1949 also included the card holder's residential address, employment address, occupation, etc.
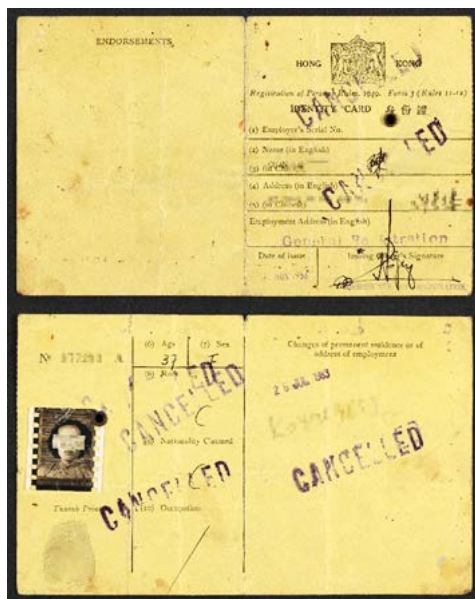
identity documents made of stiff paper also included personal information such as residential address, employment address and occupation. The holdings also showed that juvenile ID cards bore the surname but not the given name of the card holder, and there was no photograph because of the possible changes in facial appearance and given name of the juvenile before entering adolescence. The thematic exhibition also demonstrated that there had been a number of amendments to the legislation regarding the registration of ID cards over the years, such as the age requirement and fees.
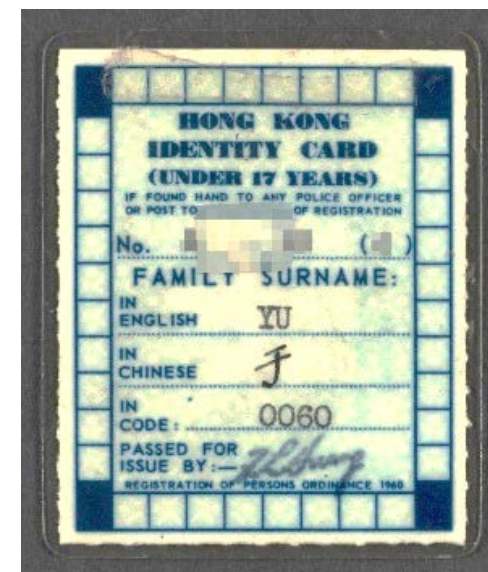
Juvenile ID cards introduced in 1960 did not bear the photograph and given name of the card holder

Other than visiting the onsite exhibition at the Exhibition Hall of the Hong Kong Public Records Building (HKPRB) and roving exhibitions at the Immigration Tower and the Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Public Library, members of the public who prefer a laid-back tour could also browse the online exhibition, where around a hundred images of precious historical documents, photographs and posters, a reference list of PRO's relevant holdings, videos related to ID cards and a behind-the-scene video of this thematic exhibition are available. PRO also produced an animated video featuring a cartoon character "Dr. Mo" to present interesting stories related to the development of ID cards through PRO's Facebook page.

Discovering the Hidden Treasures

Newly Released Archival Records

PRO delicately selected archival records about the Road Safety Campaigns and the Hong Kong Flower Shows in the 1980s and 1990s as highlight of the newly released records in 2021.

Road Safety Campaigns

Road safety has been one of the major concerns of the Government as traffic accidents could result in fatalities and injuries. The newly released archival records reveal the Government's effort in the 1980s and early 1990s in adopting a multi-pronged approach to convey road safety messages to different road users.

To raise the public's awareness about road safety, the Government has been committed to promoting general knowledge of road safety and the attitude of proper road use through publicity and public education. According to the newly released records, Road Safety Campaigns were organised targeting mainly at pedestrians and drivers, in particular those with less than two years' driving experience, in the hope of minimising traffic accidents. Among the pedestrians, youngsters and the elderly were the two most vulnerable age groups. The youngsters, being full of life and impetuous, might sometimes ignore road conditions and potential dangers, whereas the elderly might be slow to react to dangers on the roads. In addition to road safety posters with different designs, activities such as road safety talks, colouring and essay writing competitions, and slogan design competitions were organised for students, while road safety quizzes were targeted at the elderly. Other events such as street education at black spots, roving exhibitions and bus parades targeting at young drivers by displaying road safety materials and broadcasting road safety messages were organised. Selections of model drivers and pedestrians were also held at the district level and souvenirs were given to those selected by members of the Road Safety Campaign Organising Committee as a token of appreciation.

Both soft-sell and hard-sell approaches were adopted to disseminate road safety messages through different Road Safety Campaigns. For example, a relatively soft-sell, educational approach was used for the 1987/88 Road Safety Campaign, while a more emotive, hard-sell approach was adopted to roll out the new Announcements of Public Interest (APIs), with territory wide penetration and great impact, to portray the tragic consequences of road accidents for the 1988/89 Road Safety Campaign. Publicity materials, such as posters, were also used to accentuate relevant aspects of the Road Users' Code published by the Transport Department.

Screenshots of TV API: Careless Driver (1980s)
(Reference no.: HKRS 300-35-9)

Poster on Road Safety (1980s)
(Reference no.: HKRS 300-35-9)

Hong Kong Flower Shows

The first Urban Council Flower Show was held in the Memorial Garden and the Exhibition Hall of the City Hall in 1968 and had become an annual event afterwards. In 1987, the Urban and Regional Councils for the first time jointly presented the Hong Kong Flower Show at the Sha Tin Town Hall and the adjacent Sha Tin Central Park. After 1987, the Hong Kong Flower Shows were alternately staged in the Victoria Park and the Sha Tin Central Park in the late 1980s and 1990s. The purposes of organising the Hong Kong Flower Shows were to introduce gardens, horticulture and landscape industries to the general public, promote local interest in horticulture and awareness of greening, and demonstrate achievements in this field. Over the years, the scale of the Hong Kong Flower Shows had become larger, and the events had gained wider recognition in the community. The Shows have become one of the most delightful and enjoyable social events, appealing to flower lovers as well as people who appreciate the beauty of nature.

The newly released archival records (such as discussion papers, notes of meetings, correspondence with various organisations participating in the Hong Kong Flower Shows and publicity materials for promoting the Shows) reveal the Government's effort in organising the Hong Kong Flower Shows in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These records also document the magnificent collection of exquisite and rare floral species together with Hong Kong's home-grown flowers displayed to the visitors. For

Hong Kong Flower Show 1988
(Reference no.: X1000148)

example, a splendid collection of rare floral species from overseas was presented in the Hong Kong Flower Show 1988. Countries contributing to the collage of distinctive collection included Singapore and Thailand with their different species of orchids, the United Kingdom with its carnations, New Zealand with its fresh cut flowers, Australia with its proteas and Holland with its tulips and daffodils. Besides, various provinces and cities in the Mainland strongly supported the Show by contributing rare species of hybrid tea roses, roses, peonies, chrysanthemums and Chinese cymbidium.

Other than the exhibition of various floral species from both local industry and those outside Hong Kong, a number of educational and recreational activities were organised for visitors, such as student pot flower growing competition, photograph competition, plant exhibit competition and talks. Commercial stalls selling horticultural products were also arranged. The records vividly illustrate the Government's commitment to elevate the quality of life for the community by encouraging greater participation of the public in recreational activities.

Members of the public are most welcome to come to HKPRB to inspect the newly released archival records and revisit the history of various campaigns and events organised by the Government.

Digitisation and Preservation of Audio-Visual Holdings

Unearthing the Videos of Airport Core Programme

PRO has preserved a fascinating audio-visual [1] archives collection. Whether they contain images of the community's street scenes in the 1950s or the APIs of the Keep Hong Kong Clean Campaign, these videos contain a wealth of knowledge and memories of the community. Among all, PRO keeps a batch of videos relating to the Airport Core Programme (ACP) which was transferred to GRS from the New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office (NAPCO) in 1998.

Highlights of the Videos

Set up in 1991, NAPCO was responsible for the overall management of project implementation and coordination of the ACP. Upon completion of the ACP, more than 400 titles of videos were produced for promotional and record purposes. The themes touched on the new airport at Chek Lap Kok, Airport Railway, Lantau Link, North Lantau Expressway, Western Harbour Crossing, Route 3, Western Kowloon Expressway, West Kowloon Reclamation, Central Reclamation and Tung Chung New Town. By viewing those videos, you will have a glimpse of the progress of construction and development of the ACP, such as Hong Kong International Airport, Tsing Ma Bridge, Kap Shui Mun Bridge, etc. They are valuable sources for reviewing the significant core programme and cityscape.

As the videos were to promote the then new airport at Chek Lap Kok, the images surround the progress of construction work of the ACP and the infrastructure to reflect the vitality of Hong Kong as an international city and an aviation hub. Most of the projects highlighted in the videos have become the landmarks of Hong Kong.

Salvage of the Valuable Holdings

One of the missions of GRS is to provide the public with access to the archival records in a sustainable manner. However, this batch of videos comprised various legacy formats belonging to the past, mostly the Video Home System (VHS) with a small amount of Betacam and U-matic (Photo 1), which are

Photo 1: VHS (bottom), Betacam (top right) and U-Matic (top left) tapes

vulnerable and subject to deterioration within a few decades. Digitisation is one of the best ways for the continued access to the content, as well as the preservation of the original videos by reducing the risk of damage incurred through handling, thereby extending their longevity and historical value. In 2021, PRO and the Preservation Service Office (PSO) of GRS worked together to commence a digitisation project for this batch of videos.

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[1] Audio-Visual records are works comprising reproducible images and/or sounds embodied in a carrier whose (a) recording, transmission, perception and comprehension usually requires a technological device; (b) visual and/or sonic content has linear duration; and (c) purpose is the communication of that content, rather than the use of the technology for other purposes, defined by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris, 2004.

Core Projects	Titles of Videos
New Airport	• **ACP - ACP all aerial** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-18) • **Hong Kong's New Landmark - Tsing Ma Bridge** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-393) • **ACP - Airport Opening Ceremony** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-283)
Airport Railway	• **ACP - Aerial photos of ACP progress** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-19) • **Gateway to the future - Vision takes shape 98 updated** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-399)
Lantau Link	• **Lantau Fixed Crossing - Tsing Ma Bridge to the future** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-8) • **Lantau Fixed Crossing - Sunrise, sunset and various angles of Tsing Ma Bridge** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-165)
North Lantau Expressway	• **ACP - Aerial shots of ten ACP Projects** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-83)
Western Harbour Crossing	• **ACP - Aerial shots of ten ACP Projects** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-83) • **ACP - West Kowloon Reclamation, Western Harbour Crossing** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-34)
Route 3	• **ACP - Main span closure of Rambler Channel Bridge** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-59)
West Kowloon Expressway	• **ACP - West Kowloon Expressway** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-39)
West Kowloon Reclamation	• **ACP - West Kowloon Reclamation, Western Harbour Crossing** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-34)
Central Reclamation	• **ACP - Central and Wan Chai Reclamation** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-33)
Tung Chung New Town	• **ACP - North Lantau Expressway - Tung Chung New Town** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-76) • **ACP - Route 3, Tuen Mun, Kap Shui Mun Bridge, North Lantau Expressway, Tung Chung** (Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-28)

The initial stage of the construction of the airport taken from Yi Tung Shan
(Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-18)

Tsing Ma Bridge under construction in the sunset
(Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-165)

The airport at the last stage before completion
(Reference no.: HKRS 2693-1-393)

Vulnerability of the Legacy Formats

VHS, a standard for consumer-level analog video recording on polymeric tape, was once popularly adopted to record television programmes at home or to make videos at events and ceremonial occasions in the 1980s and 1990s. For professional recording by filmmakers, VHS did not make the cut: Betamax, in the form of Betacam, digital Betacam and U-matic tapes were regarded as the better choices in view of their higher resolution[2] and better quality. Nonetheless, VHS and Betamax all shared the same operating principle, using polymeric tape and magnetic coating.

Nowadays, such video formats have lost their former glamour and most of the information contained therein has long been left untended given the obsolescence of certain technology as well as the discontinued supply of the playback and recording devices (Photo 2). As a result, it has become impossible to run the tapes directly without access to appropriate devices. There is a dire urgency to migrate all the readable information on the tapes to another medium or data file as far as possible.

Photo 2: U-Matic system with cassette inserted

As a matter of fact, VHS and Betamax tapes are all composed of a polyester plastic base coated with a polyester urethane binder material containing magnetic oxide particles. The decomposition of the binder layer via hydrolysis would result in the oxide layer becoming flaked or coated with dust. It is greatly subject to the fluctuation of environmental conditions and will undergo severe physical and chemical degradation if not properly stored. No wonder, these tapes possess a relatively short lifespan of only about 10 to 35 years. Even though the conditions of our tapes are good in general due to the favourable storage environment in the repository in GRS, the tapes continue to deteriorate and age over time. Substantial picture noise, side-to-side ripples or a wavy appearance, dropout and snow have been spotted on some of the images.

Digitising the Audio-Visual Collection

To prepare for the digitisation, archivists of PRO first conducted survey on the videos to have an understanding of the format, uniqueness, creation date range, storage condition information and content significance of this collection. Throughout the survey, archivists did extensive research to supplement the scant written materials transferred from NAPCO.

Digitisation of these tapes requires particular equipment and involves a precise chain of workflow to ensure an end product which can meet the standards in the archive sector. PSO undertook pre-digitisation inspection, tape playback and capture, quality assurance for any dropped frames, post-scanning processing and inspection etc. in accordance with the best practices and recommended standards of the industry. It is not a simple task which you could do at home on your own computer. In fact, our professional team took into consideration whether the final digital product would be able to be lodged in GRS' digital repository for long-term storage without any loss of information. The process of conversion to digital format takes place in real time[3], i.e. every hour of recording will require one hour of digitisation time plus another hour to review the converted video. It also requires previewing the materials

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[2] VHS has low resolution, with only 240 lines of horizontal resolution in general as compared to the commercial Blu-ray of 1 080 lines.

[3] It is a process simulated at a rate that matches that of the real event.

prior to digitisation, which may necessitate tape cleaning and splicing work[4]. GRS has engaged a service provider in the market to deliver the digitisation services in accordance with our requirements and guidelines. We worked closely with the service provider at its studio to ascertain the quality of the reproduced records throughout the course of digitisation.

GRS set the sampling rate at 4:4:4, with uncompressed Pulse-code Modulation (PCM) Audio while digitising the tapes to ensure their integrity and authenticity. No compression has been done which means no loss in quality for new uncompressed formats produced in the future from the master files. Both preservation and access copies respectively associated with their metadata (such as subject, producers, copyright, source format, resolution, bit size and frame rate) to contribute to the sustainability of the video files are produced for different purposes. Upon digitisation of the audio-visual collections, the master digitised copies would ultimately be ingested into GRS' digital repository under close monitoring, lest any further migration processes be deemed necessary subject to technological advancements according to our long-term preservation strategy. At the same time, we continue to preserve the original audio-visual collection in our repository under a stringent, year-round environmental control (i.e. 14-16°C and 35-37% Relative Humidity).

Sharing our Precious Holdings with the Public

The archival processing work is still in progress and it is expected that this batch of valuable videos would be available for public access in 2022 once the processing work is completed. We believe that the availability of these valuable videos surrounding the construction work of the airport in Chek Lap Kok would contribute to the community and facilitate citizens' understanding of the airport, change of landscapes and development of Hong Kong. The salvage of this audio-visual collection from the passage of time also signifies a major milestone in preservation of our valuable records in GRS.

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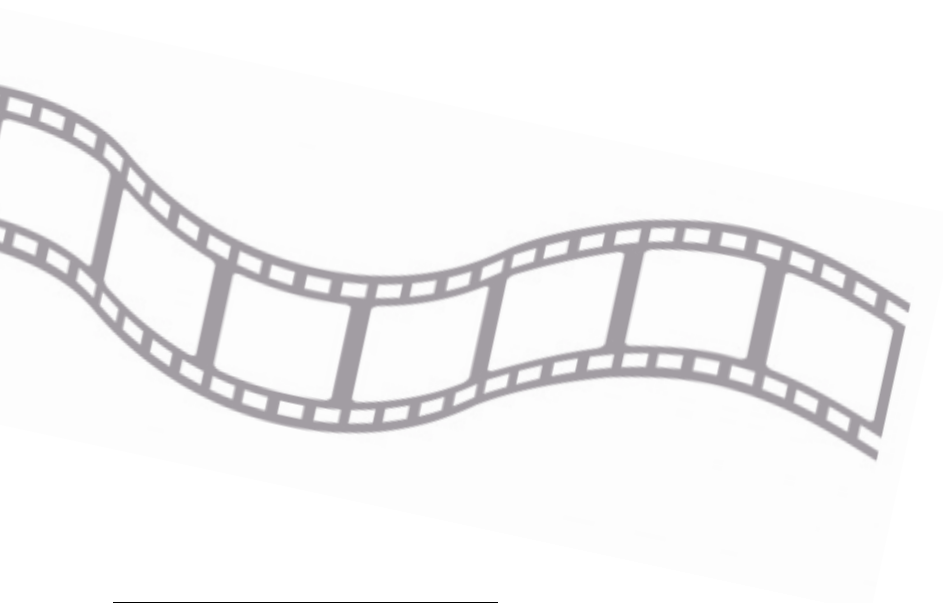
[4] Tape cleaning: gently swab the casing and inside of the tape to remove mould, dirt and dust with solvent. Splice a broken VHS tape: use purpose-made adhesive tape to join the broken or detached ends of the broken tape.

Digital Photo Albums

Documenting a Piece of Hong Kong History

Records, irrespective of format, are information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. From time to time, precious photos are found in the archival records transferred from government bureaux / departments (B/Ds) to GRS. However, users might not be aware of the existence of these historical photos which were normally buried in bunches of files and documents. To provide convenient public access, PRO continuously scours precious historical photos from the archival holdings for curating and presenting digital photo albums on GRS' website.

In 2021, four digital photo albums, namely "Kai Tak Airport in 1998", "Cultural and Leisure Complex at Choi Hung Road in 1988", "Quarry Bay Park in 1993" and "North Point in the 1980s", were curated and uploaded to GRS' website. Unlike the other three digital photo albums where the photos were dug out from the archival holdings, there was a story behind the digital photo album "Kai Tak Airport in 1998". The photos were taken by a photographer of GRS in 1998, the time when the airport was almost closed down, and it was the first time GRS sent out a photographer to take photos for official business. These photos were originally taken for preparing a joint exhibition, "Footprints of History – Exhibition of Archival Photographs on the Development of Hong Kong and Shanghai", with the Shanghai Municipal Archives in 1998. To facilitate the exhibition organisers to select suitable photos for display, the photographer also recorded the interior and exterior of the airport from different angles through camera lens. With media coverage as propellant, they had indeed aroused the interests of many members of the public.

The four digital photo albums developed and uploaded to GRS' website in 2021

To satisfy the curiosity of some users about how to develop a digital photo album, we will use digital photo albums presented in the past as examples to illustrate the background and procedure for the production of a digital photo album.

Housing
• The Hong Kong Housing Authority, 1954 - 1973
• Public Estates in 1970

Education
• University of Hong Kong in November 1945
• School Life in the 1960s

Industries and Sectors
• Hawker in the 1950s
• Tai Kok Tsui Workshops in 1955
• Tourism in the 1960s
• Agricultural Carnival in 1993

Historical Events
• Shek Kip Mei Fire in 1953
• Air Crash at Lyemun in 1956
• Damages and Shipwrecks Caused by Typhoon Wanda in 1962
• Damages Caused by Typhoon Rose in 1971
• Vietnamese Refugee Boats, 1979 - 1981

Medicine and Health
• Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the 1960s
• Health Display in 1963

City Scenes
• Gin Drinker's Bay, 1958 - 1959
• Kowloon Walled City in the 1960s to 1970s
• Canteens at Bus Termini in 1968
• Nathan Road in the mid-1970s
• Plans of Chater Road Garden, 1972 - 1975
• Po Yick Street, Tai Po in 1974
• Aldrich Bay, 1974 - 1977
• Central, Tsim Sha Tsui, Jordan and Yau Ma Tei in 1976
• Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin and Sha Tin Districts in 1977
• Tung Chung Fort in 1978
• North Point in the 1980s
• Kai Tak Airport in 1998

Leisure and Culture
• Activities of Princess Alexandra Community Centre in the 1960s
• Children's Christmas Entertainment in Kowloon City in 1968
• Cultural and Leisure Complex at Choi Hung Road in 1988
• Quarry Bay Park in 1993

31 digital photo albums curated by PRO, which are available on GRS' website

How many digital photo albums have been developed?

Up to 2021, PRO has presented 31 digital photo albums covering the period from the 1940s to 1990s under the following seven categories:
1. **City Scenes**
2. **Education**
3. **Historical Events**
4. **Housing**
5. **Industries and Sectors**
6. **Leisure and Culture**
7. **Medicine and Health**

What are the selection criteria of photos for developing the digital photo albums?

We will consider the following factors in the selection of photos:
1. **Subject** – the photos reflect changes in socio-economic aspects and cityscape of Hong Kong
2. **Quality** – the physical condition of the photos is good enough for showing details of the content; coloured photos are more preferred
3. **Quantity** – the number of photos should be sufficient to tell a comprehensive story
4. **Originality** – photos cannot be found elsewhere other than the archival holdings and rare books/albums kept by PRO
5. **Documentation** – the producers and the custodian history are well recorded and traceable
6. **Accessibility** – photos are not easily identified from the Online Catalogue @PRO unless they are extracted as online albums for public access
7. **Copyright** – the copyright of the photos belongs to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government or the photos are in the public domain
8. **Aesthetics** – photos with aesthetic value or are eye-catching would be more ideal

The Online Catalogue @PRO serves as a useful tool to locate photos from the 1.7 million holdings. As our holdings have been well accessioned and described, the photos could be easily found by keyword search on @PRO. For example, photos of the digital photo album "Nathan Road in the mid-1970s" were extracted from the archival record entitled "Photographs of Tsim Sha Tsui, Jordan, Yau Ma Tei,

The title of the archival record may shed some light on the photos contained therein

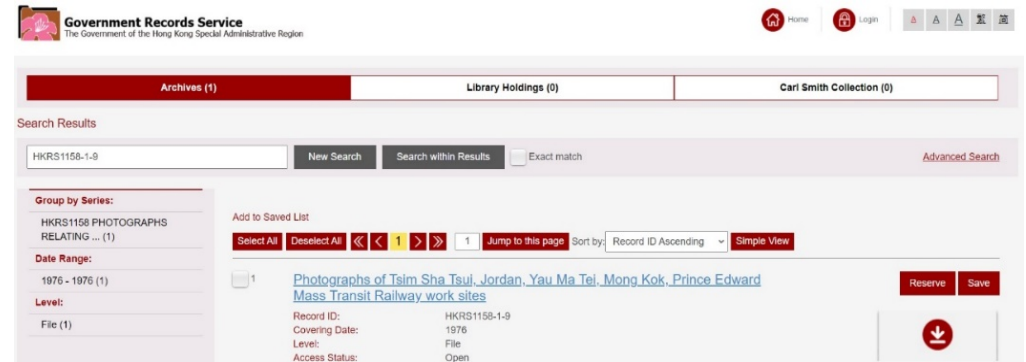Mong Kok, Prince Edward Mass Transit Railway Work Sites" (Reference No.: HKRS 1158-1-9) which could be located by searching the keyword "photograph" on @PRO. The title of the archival record sheds light on the photos contained therein about the proposed construction sites of the Mass Transit Railway from Prince Edward Station to Tsim Sha Tsui Station. Sometimes, we were inspired by the suggestions made by users through user survey and small talks with them. A user once put forward a question about Hong Kong's aviation, that if any aviation accident was documented in PRO's holdings. The user said it would be an appealing topic by offering an alternative perspective to explore the perception of Hong Kong as one of the safest airline hubs. We then conducted a research and located some precious photos about aviation accidents. In an archival record entitled "Compensation - Naval Air Crush - Compensation Claims Arising From Crash of Two Naval Aircraft at Lyemun on 26 March 1956" (HKRS 163-1-1895), photos of the wreckage of the aircraft and the damaged buildings in the aftermath of the air crash at Lyemun were found and digitised for producing the digital photo album "Air Crash at Lyemun in 1956".
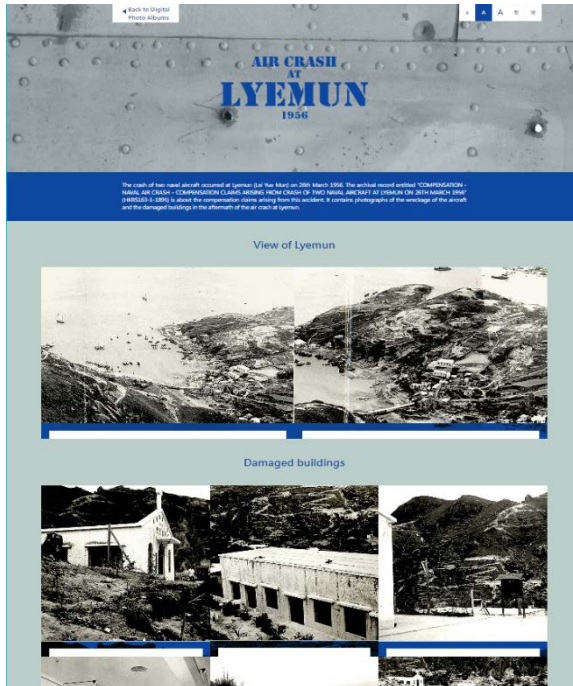
Digital photo album "Air Crash at Lyemun in 1956"

Way Forward

In the future, we will continue to bring more photos from our archival holdings to light and develop them into digital photo albums to provide convenient access to members of the public. Readers are more than welcome to send their feedback and suggestions on the themes to proinfo@grs.gov.hk.

New Initiatives to Strengthen Connection, Collaboration and Partnership with Stakeholders

To promote the understanding and appreciation of local documentary heritage, PRO regularly organises exhibitions, seminars, workshops, group visits and other education activities for the public. GRS has been making continuous efforts to adapt to the changes and overcome the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, GRS launched the online live public education programmes and co-organised with the Education Bureau (EDB) a new online professional training course for secondary school teachers to stay connected with various stakeholders in the cyberspace.

Online Group Visits and Workshops

GRS always looks for opportunities to enhance its online services to promote the documentary heritage to a wider spectrum of audience. With encouraging response and experience gained from the trial run of online live workshops organised in 2020, the online live group visits and workshops launched since January 2021 has become a new mode under the regular public programmes to provide an alternative for group visitors during the suspension of face-to-face programmes.

Moreover, online public programmes could allow a bigger audience to participate in our activities without space constraint. In this regard, a total of 24 online group visits and workshops were arranged in 2021, reaching out to 1 280 citizens through this new mode of public programmes.

From 15 January 2021 onwards, online group visits have been provided by PRO

Online Training Course for Teachers

Over the past decade, GRS has joined hands with the Curriculum Development Institute of EDB to organise onsite workshops for secondary school teachers to promote GRS' resources as teaching reference. Inspired by the online workshop "Kwun Tong@Archival Records" which had reached out to 1 760 students, GRS worked with EDB to develop the first-ever online professional training course for teachers in 2021.

To uphold the quality of the online training course, several rounds of meetings were arranged with EDB to discuss the course content and identify training materials from GRS' archival holdings which could best suit the training needs of teachers. With the theme "Housing Development in Hong Kong in the 1950s-70s", the online training course introduced PRO's services and took teachers on a journey to appreciate the relevant archival holdings as well as other online education resources such as the Educational Resources Portal, online holdings and PRO's Facebook page. A set of questions was also provided to facilitate teachers to consolidate knowledge learnt from the training course.

The training course, which was delivered through the online platform Hong Kong Education City (HKEdCity), attracted the participation of 300 teachers. With the overwhelming and positive feedback from the participants, another new online professional training course about the Government's relief work for people affected by typhoons in the 1960s and 1970s would be launched in 2022.

Education Bureau
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Course ID	CDI020211063
Course Title	Online Professional Training Course for teachers on 'Housing Development in Hong Kong in the 1950s -70s' (New)
Organising Division	Curriculum Development Institute
First Issue Date and Time	2021/03/09 11:27
Latest Issue Date and Time	2021/03/16 14:15

Event(s)	Event (ID)	Date	No. of Event Days	Venue	Speaker(s) / Facilitator(s)	Max. no. of participants
	AA (Full)	2021/03/10 (Wed) - 2021/05/05 (Wed)	0.5	Online course on HKEdCity	(Not applicable)	150

Event (ID)	Closing date for		Remark
	Applicant	Recommending / Approving Officer	
AA (Full)	2021/03/30	2021/03/31	Successful applicants will receive an email with the relevant information about the online course from the EDB within 7 working days after the application is confirmed. To facilitate further arrangement, all applicants are required to submit an email address and the HKEdCity ID during the application of the course. Please refer to the attachment for instructions to retrieve the HKEdCity ID.

Participant Group	Finance Type: ALL **Level:** SECONDARY **Subject/Function:** HISTORY AND CHINESE HISTORY **Participant:** COORDINATORS, DEPUTY HEADS, PANEL HEADS, SCHOOL HEAD AND TEACHERS Remarks: Priority to History teachers. Other subject teachers are also welcome.

The online professional training course "Housing Development in Hong Kong in the 1950s-70s" at HKEdCity's platform

HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY
MA TAU WAI ESTATE
TYPICAL 7-PERSON FLAT
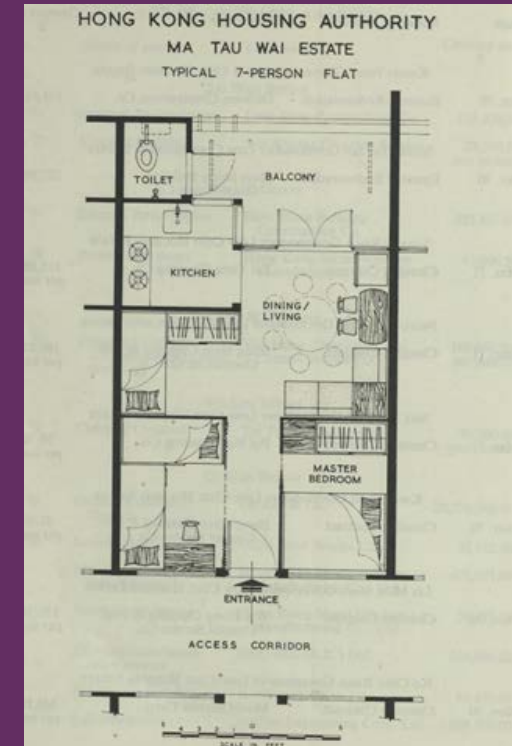
One of the archival records selected for the online professional training course "Housing Development in Hong Kong in the 1950s-70s"

The Solutions for Long-term Preservation of Electronic Records

In the e-Government era, there is extensive growth of electronic records such as e-mails resulting from the wider use of networked computers and electronic devices during the process of decision-making or service delivery across the Government. In line with the Government's Electronic Information Management Strategy promulgated in 2011, B/Ds are required to, among others, implement the Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) to drive the electronic records management (ERM) in the Government to improve the overall management of government records and enhance the operational efficiency of B/Ds. Pursuant to the announcement in the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address Supplement of the full roll-out of ERKS to all B/Ds by end-2025, GRS, together with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office, set out to jointly undertake and support the implementation of ERKS across the Government to enhance efficiency in managing and preserving government records.

Consultancy Study on Long-term Preservation of Electronic Records

With the paradigm shift in records keeping practices from paper records to electronic records, profound changes in the staff mindset, approaches and methodologies of processing electronic records are necessary to prevent electronic records from becoming inaccessible, incompatible, or lost to posterity in light of the rapid technological advancement and obsolescence. It is also foreseeable that the number of electronic records managed by and stored in B/Ds, and records in electronic forms with archival value to be transferred from B/Ds to GRS for permanent retention will continue to increase with the implementation of ERKS in the Government. On such premise, a comprehensive consultancy study on the long-term preservation of electronic records was completed in 2021 to research and formulate government-wide policy, strategies and

techniques for managing and preserving electronic records, in both unstructured and structured computing environments, in the Government as long as they are required to serve legal, regulatory, business, operational, evidence and archival purposes.

GRS, in collaboration with OGCIO, appointed an overseas consultancy firm to conduct the comprehensive consultancy study commencing in late 2019. Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, regular online video conferencing instead of on-site visits was conducted to facilitate information gathering on ERM in B/Ds and archival records management in GRS, routine project progress update and exchange of views on various aspects of electronic records preservation. To help the consultants better understand the situation and challenges in Hong Kong, online interviews were arranged for the consultants to have in-depth discussions with the records managers, information technology staff and business systems owners of 16 selected B/Ds (including OGCIO).

Online interview was arranged for the consultants to have in-depth discussions with the records managers, information technology staff and business systems owners of a B/D

By analysing the information collected and referring to the experience of leading international counterparts, holistic and comprehensive policy, strategies, guidelines and technical solutions were proposed to tackle the challenges of the preservation of electronic records in the ever-changing digital environment. The guidelines devised clearly defined roles and responsibilities of different parties in the preservation of electronic records - B/Ds are responsible for the preservation of electronic records that are required to be retained for the long term under their custody, while GRS is responsible for preserving electronic archival records and ensuring their future accessibility. The guidelines also covered the proper management of electronic records in ERKS and the transfer of those records with archival value to GRS for permanent retention.

The consultants advised various technical solutions to the preservation of electronic records generated in business systems to facilitate B/Ds in managing electronic records that required long-term preservation properly under their custody. Examples include applying the Software Independent Archiving of Relational Databases (SIARD) format to preserve the whole database of a business system in legacy file formats, adding new recordkeeping functionalities to their business systems during systems enhancement, and integrating business systems to ERKS for easier filing of electronic records. System owners and users could select the most suitable methods based on the system nature, business operation model, cost-effectiveness as well as resources available.

Digital Repository for the Long-term Preservation of Electronic Records

The consultancy study proposed preservation strategies for GRS from bit-stream preservation to migration. Preservation planning embraces the entire operation of GRS' digital repository. Preservation plan can be developed by conducting risk assessments to mitigate the risk of obsolescence of electronic records. Mitigation methods include migration according to the established preservation priorities and monitoring of the technological changes which might impact the sustainability of and access to different types of formats. Workflow is also proposed starting from file transfer from B/Ds for appraisal and accessioning in GRS, followed by the creation of submission information package (SIP) for ingestion in the digital repository of GRS.

In addition, the consultants recommended retaining at least three copies of archival storage of electronic records. GRS' digital repository has adopted quadruplicate copies including backup segregation to guarantee a full recovery of electronic records after unexpected disasters. Furthermore, regular fixity checks are applied to detect any unexpected file change or corruption on the electronic archival records, thereby ensuring all electronic records are securely preserved while upholding their authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability over time in the digital repository. Currently, the digital repository is hosted on the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services (GCIS) platform with round-the-clock technical support services. The high scalability of GCIS enables flexible system upgrade and reconfiguration to cater for expansion in the future.

Way Forward

A governance model with a detailed implementation plan was proposed in the consultancy study to execute its recommendations, including looking into the feasibility of the proposed technical solutions. With the gradual implementation of the government-wide long-term preservation of electronic records in the coming years, raising awareness of, maintaining effective communication with and providing guidance to B/Ds to facilitate their understanding of the roles and responsibilities of different levels of staff in carrying out long-term preservation of electronic records in the Government are key to success.

Disposal Authority Review Exercise

Mission is Possible

GRS has embarked on a full-scale Disposal Authority Review Exercise (the Exercise) since 2019 to review all B/Ds' Disposal Authorities (DAs) with the mission of determining the archival value of B/Ds' programme records. The Exercise is a very daunting but rewarding task. During the Exercise, the most frequent questions raised by B/Ds are about the records appraisal decisions of GRS and the public access mechanism to archival records. Understanding that B/Ds might not be familiar with the value of archival records and our role in preserving archives, we see the Exercise as a good opportunity for us to bridge the gaps with B/Ds.

Bridging the Gaps

From the perspective of B/Ds as records creators and users, records are created for managing ongoing, day-to-day programmatic and housekeeping activities, tracking finances and budgets, and protecting legal interests, etc. Once the records accomplished their tasks and reached the end of the prescribed retention period, they could be disposed of. Being the records keeper and facilitator, archivists of GRS are concerned about the archival value of the records through weighing the historical, evidential and informational significances of the records. In other words, we not only assess the usefulness or significance of records based on the purposes for which they were originally created, but also the extended use of the records, e.g. research and historical value. When B/Ds had different views from ours on the appraisal decisions on their records, we would first clarify with B/Ds on the views and considerations. Then we would collect further information from B/Ds,

such as record samples and records creation practices, or discuss with B/Ds in greater detail to have a more in-depth understanding of the records concerned. After we have examined the additional information, we would review our recommendations and further explain our stance and assessments to B/Ds. The appraisal process is interactive and consultative. We would base on extensive research and communication with B/Ds to develop deeper understanding and knowledge on the context and content of their records and make a sound appraisal decision.

B/Ds also conveyed their concerns over public access to some of their archival records during the Exercise. Access to archival records kept by GRS is governed by the Public Records (Access) Rules 1996. Though the ultimate goal for an archive is to provide the widest possible access to its archival records, GRS, similar to all other archives, recognises and accepts the need to impose access restrictions on the records containing sensitive and classified information. For these records, B/Ds are consulted in considering their disclosure status. Both B/Ds and GRS appreciated the Exercise in bridging the gaps in the understanding of records and archives management in the Government.

Mission Impossible?

"Would it be an impossible mission to review all these B/Ds' DAs within the tight schedule of this Exercise?" This thought crossed our archivists' mind when the Exercise was kicked off. To address the issues of scale and complexity of the Exercise, we drew on the appraisal experience of

the archives of other jurisdictions and adopted a functional approach to appraise the records series which covered records of similar nature, scope, functions and activities. That is, to consider GRS' acquisition guidelines and holdings, the responsibilities and history of B/Ds, and the context and content of the records in determining the archival value of the records at series level instead of individually, hence the details of each file's content are not the primary focus of the appraisal. With this appraisal approach, we were able to arrive at a well-informed and valid decision on the archival value of the records, regardless of their subject matters, in an effective manner.

GRS is B/Ds' Partner in Preserving Their Corporate History

GRS aims at acquiring and preserving B/Ds' records with archival value through the Exercise as they form part of the Government's corporate history and our society's collective memory. The key to success for the Exercise lies with communication and collaboration with B/Ds. Based upon mutual understanding, our archivists target to identify the following categories of archival records in the Exercise:

- Policy records of the HKSAR Government
- Records showing the development of ordinances and regulations
- Records showing the establishment and restructuring of B/Ds
- Records reflecting the development of key departmental functions
- Records on key committees, boards, councils and task forces
- Research and studies relating to policies and legislation
- Major statistics about Hong Kong's socio-economic development
- Records documenting the legal rights and responsibilities of Hong Kong citizens and residents
- Maps and photos of different neighbourhoods in Hong Kong
- Records of infrastructure projects
- Planning and drawing records on government facilities and buildings
- Records about significant associations and individuals
- Visits records of major government officials or VIPs
- Records of major activities and functions organised by the HKSAR Government
- Records of major incidents / accidents
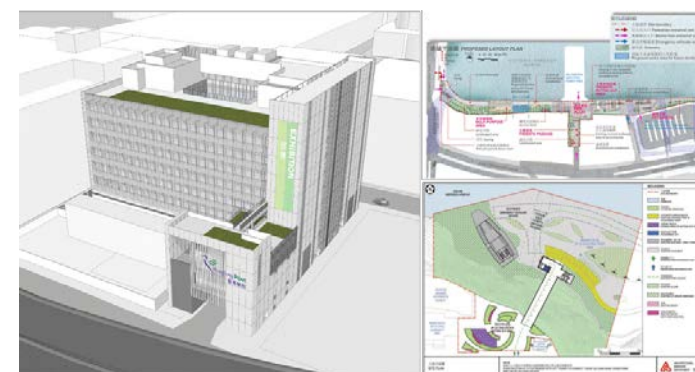
Upon the completion of the Exercise in 2022-23, we believe that more records series with archival value will be identified and transferred to GRS for permanent retention in accordance with the DAs.

Disaster Recovery Plans for Archival Records

GRS currently holds about 1.7 million items of archival materials with diverse formats and media, ranging from folders, bound volume records, maps and plans, photographic materials, magnetic cassette tapes, motion picture films to microfilms etc. It is one of the essential roles of GRS to preserve and protect these materials against damages and environmental threats.

Since 2021, a Disaster Recovery Team (DRT) has been formed to review the Disaster Recovery Plans and devise related plans for better protection of our archival records, which list out recommendations and methods for prevention, preparedness, response and salvage of the holdings under threats, as well as provide guidelines to facilitate our staff to implement timely actions and follow-up mitigation. The benchmarking achievements in 2021 are highlighted below.

Formation of a Disaster Recovery Team

The DRT comprises a team leader and several coordinators with specialist expertise, such as inventory coordinator, communication coordinator, venue manager, disaster recovery coordinator, and materials and equipment coordinator.

A Contingency Plan

- It provides mitigation measures and step-by-step guidelines on ten types of immediate response actions to be undertaken by the corresponding staff should there be any disasters.
- 25 scenarios for five major potential threats have been plotted.
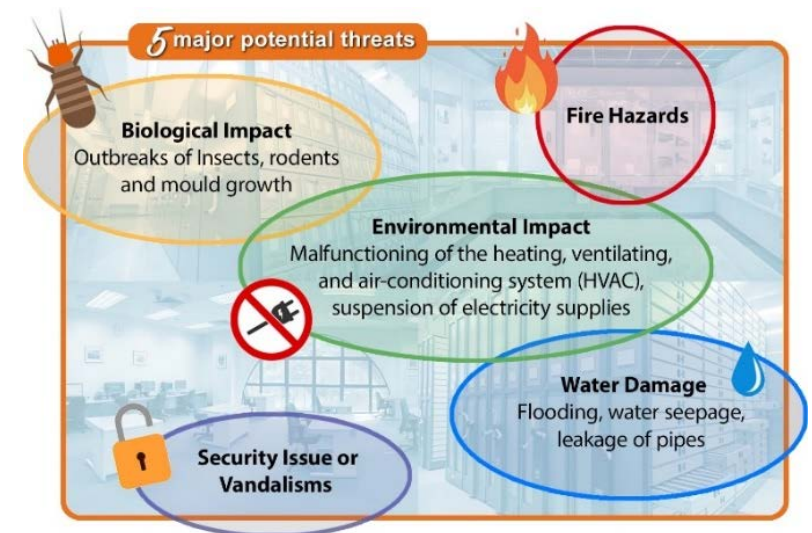
An Evacuation Plan

- It lists out proper procedures and sequences to safely vacate archival holdings away from a place with an imminent threat or hazard.
- Temporary storage areas with acceptable environmental conditions and security control have been identified on GRS' premises for relocation and storage of the affected archival holdings if needed.

A Pocket Response Plan and Emergency Contact List

It itemises the essential information required during emergency, e.g. emergency contacts of DRT's members and service agencies.

Training and Development

Two briefing sessions were held on 12 July and 30 August 2021 for introducing the key concept of the Disaster Recovery Plans to staff in GRS.

Way Forward

We would continue to offer briefing sessions, workshops and refresher courses to highlight the key issues of the plans and to remind staff and frontline attendants of the importance of disaster management: prevention and preparedness. The DRT members would review the plans regularly and organise drills once a year to prepare our staff for potential threats on the archival materials.

A Priority List

A priority list of archival holdings with high and significant archival and reference values has been prepared for immediate evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Disaster Recovery Bins

Disaster recovery bins containing essential supplies for emergency use are placed at specific locations of GRS' premises.

Professional Development and Training

Getting Ready for the Digital Era

Digital preservation is a series of managed activities including policies, strategies, best practices and standards to ensure ongoing access to digitised and born-digital records over time. You can imagine the provision of training for digital preservation is a very challenging task because it touches on different aspects of archives and records management coupled with the constant technology advancement. The following guiding questions are keys for GRS to develop the training programmes for our staff:

- What essential skills and knowledge would GRS staff need to acquire for managing digital preservation?
- What special tools and services would they need to use for their work relating to digital preservation?
- How could they get sufficient and appropriate skills and knowledge?
- How could they access suitable forms of training and professional development?

Skills and Knowledge

Having reviewed the training needs survey and workforce development strategy conducted by some professional institutions[5], it was revealed that training in digital records and archives management was the most requested training subjects. Besides, the studies also showed a trend of increasing demands for training for general management skills, such as governance, management and leadership. In fact, GRS commissioned a consultant to carry out the Consultancy Study on Long-term Preservation of Electronic Records which was completed in 2021 and staff training was one of the major foci. Based on the Curriculum Framework for Digital Curation[6] (Picture 1), it was recommended that GRS staff must demonstrate both subject-specific skills (such as selection and appraisal, digital preservation technology, copyright legislation and metadata standards) and generic professional/project skills (such as risk management, audit and certification, resource and project management, communication and advocacy skills, etc.).

Picture 1: Skill Categories, extracted from A Curriculum Framework for Digital Curation

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[5] Examples of the studies and surveys: International Council on Archives (2017): *ICA Member Training Needs Survey conducted in August 2017 - Analysis of Responses* and The National Archives (2018): *Archives Sector Workforce Development Strategy*.

[6] DigCurV (2013). A Curriculum Framework for Digital Curation. Available at: https://digcurv.gla.ac.uk/.

Tools and Services

Unlike managing paper records, there are various tools and services that GRS may need to use for implementation of different digital preservation functions such as checksum, appraisal, acquisition, ingestion, metadata processing, access and preservation, etc. For examples, checksum generation tool, Preservation Description Information (PDI) generation tool, archival descriptive tool, data packaging tool and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are the common tools in use. To facilitate GRS staff in the identification of suitable tools to achieve different functions, knowledge in technology and updated market information of the tools and services are required.

Forms of Training Programmes

The staff responsible for digital processing and preservation have already possessed certain knowledge and related qualifications in archives and records management. What they need for professional development are to adopt a new mindset to collaborate externally (e.g. among archives, museums and libraries) and internally (i.e. all functions of the archives offices are interdependent in the digital era), to acquire new knowledge and technology, and to gain experience in digital preservation through connection with the practitioners and experts in the profession.

Training and Professional Development Programmes

Based on the above studies and assessment, GRS has developed a strategic training framework to strengthen our workforce as a digital proficient and multi-skilling team which is flexible to changes. Under the framework, the training programmes focused on four major areas, namely Subject Knowledge, Tools and Services, Technology, and General Management. In 2021, GRS identified more than ten online courses, webinars and online conferences of different levels to meet the training needs of our staff. A total of 15 staff attended a structured online training programme in digital preservation organised by a leading overseas professional society. To explore more opportunities for our staff to connect with the experts and experienced practitioners, GRS has adopted the out-of-the-box thinking to propose an online discussion session with the tutors of some courses on top of the webinars. Our staff found this mode of training pragmatic and effective.

Training Programmes for GRS Staff in 2021

Areas	Subjects of the Courses / Seminars	Professional Institutions
Subject Knowledge	- Standards: Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies (PREMIS), Standards for archives - Archives management: Digital processing, Accessioning and ingest, Repository management and preservation, Access to digital archives, Retention schedules	- Society of American Archivists - Society of Australian Archivists
Tools and Services	- Open Archival Information System (OAIS), Tools integration - Digital Preservation Capability Maturity Model	- Society of American Archivists - ARMA International
Technology	- AI and machines learning - Digitisation and emerging technologies	- National Information Standards Organisation - International Council on Archives - East Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (EASTICA)
General Management	Risk assessment, Audit for records management	ARMA International

Plowing in the Records Management Training for Government Officers

Cultivating good records management culture in the Government begins with educating government officers on proper records management and instilling in them a sense of responsibility in complying with the mandatory records management requirements. To this end, GRS has stepped up the efforts in enhancing records management training for newly recruited government officers, refining the training framework to identify more target groups of trainees, revamping contents of training courses to suit B/Ds' training needs, and exploring different modes of delivery to optimise the effectiveness of our records management training.

Training for Newly Recruited Government Officers

One of the important work targets on records management training in 2021 was enhancing records management training among newly recruited government officers. With GRS' utmost efforts coupled with B/Ds' ardent support, among the 14 000 strong government officers trained in 2021, around 60% were new recruits. GRS was delighted to see the overwhelming response and active participation of 57 B/Ds, which arranged their new recruits to receive basic records management training. As at the end of 2021, this programme attracted the participation of new recruits amounting to over 8 800 from around 250 grades in these 57 B/Ds. GRS will consolidate its fruitful collaboration with B/Ds on this important mission and review the need to make records management training mandatory for grades not yet covered under this programme.

To deliver records management training to government officers in the most effective and comprehensive way, GRS reviewed and refined its records management training framework in 2021. Under the new framework, the training needs of officers from different strata and sectors were identified and addressed. Most importantly, a records management seminar was organised for directorate officers to engage them in the records management process and to inject high-level support to records management in B/Ds. Moreover, the contents of training courses were refined so as to focus more on the specific needs of different target groups of trainees. To enhance the communication between GRS and B/Ds, another records management seminar was organised for Departmental Records Managers (DRMs) in 2021. This seminar was a very useful channel to enhance B/Ds' understanding of the rationale and important features of GRS' new initiatives at an early stage on one hand, and to facilitate GRS to discern and address the concerns of and problems encountered by B/Ds on the other. All these newly organised seminars in 2021 were welcomed by B/Ds with encouraging participation rate and positive feedback.

DRM Seminar organised on 17 December 2021

Online Learning Package "i Records Management Training"

Besides, GRS has been exploring new means to deliver records management training, which has become more important than ever before amidst the pandemic. Apart from conducting the training in different modes such as face-to-face and web-based, GRS was developing Phase II of "i Records Management Training (iRMT)" in 2021, which is an online self-learning training package available on the Civil Service College's Cyber Learning Centre Plus (CLC Plus). While Phase I of iRMT consists of eight

modules to equip trainees with fundamental records management concepts, Phase II of iRMT comprises 12 modules to provide trainees with more in-depth records management knowledge. The modules have been gradually launched on CLC Plus and the development will be completed in early 2022. In 2021, over 52% of the records management trainees acquired their training via web-based courses, either through iRMT or online training classes. GRS will keep pace with the technology advancement as well as the changing circumstances and training needs to refine the modes of delivery in order to optimise the effectiveness of our training.

The breakdown of records management training services provided by GRS in 2021 is as follows:

Training Events	No. of Participants
Training courses, seminars and briefings organised by GRS	4 294
Training courses, seminars and briefings organised by B/Ds with GRS' input	3 323
iRMT	7 262
Total	**14 879**

Briefings on Electronic Recordkeeping System

Pursuant to the announcement in the Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address Supplement of the full roll-out of ERKS to all B/Ds by end-2025, in addition to the above-mentioned records management training, GRS has also organised briefings with a view to assisting B/Ds in commencing their ERKS preparatory work. In 2021, GRS organised around 300 briefings for over 9 500 participants from around 60 B/Ds (including around 280 smaller-scale briefings organised by B/Ds with GRS' assistance), focusing on the key concepts of ERKS implementation and the review of records classification schemes (RCSs). To further provide in-depth advice and assistance to B/Ds, GRS deployed non-civil service contract Executive Service Assistants to over 40 B/Ds to support their review of RCSs. In addition to identifying problems in B/Ds' RCSs and providing necessary advice on RCS review, the Executive Service Assistants also assisted B/Ds in organising ERKS-related briefings and answering enquiries on records management-related issues, etc.

Exhibition of "Identity Card – A Timeless Proof" at the Exhibition Hall of HKPRB

Part II – Year at a Glance

Performance Pledges in 2021

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%

60
Minutes

To make archival records available to users in the Search Room within 60 minutes.

30
Minutes

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%

To make library items available to users in the Search Room within 30 minutes.

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%

4
Working Days

To process within four working days an application for permission to use the holdings of GRS for publication or production, where the copyright of the holdings rests with the Government.

4
Working Days

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%

To process an application for group visit to PRO within four working days.

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%

3
Working Days

To make records stored in Records Centres available to B/Ds within three working days.

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%

3
Working Days

To determine and advise on matters relating to microfilming requests within three working days.

Achievement: 100%
Target: 98%

98
Percent

To achieve an acceptance rate of 98% for Government Microfilm Centre's products.

Performance Indicators in 2021

To acquire archival records (linear metres)
Achievement: 622
Target: 620

To publish records management manuals, handbooks and newsletters
Achievement: 2
Target: 2

To conduct departmental records management studies / reviews
Achievement: 2
Target: 2

To provide intermediate storage facilities for inactive government records in terms of utilisation rate
Achievement: 97.9%
Target: 95%

To conduct training for government officers (no. of trainees)
Achievement: 14 879
Target: 10 000

To microfilm records for other government B/Ds (no. of images)
Achievement: 2 834 133
Target: 2 750 000

To render reference and research services to the public

No. of visitors
Achievement: 3 266 [Note]
Target: 5 000

No. of enquiries
Achievement: 14 040
Target: 11 000

No. of group visits
Achievement: 41
Target: 30

No. of exhibition
Achievement: 1
Target: 1

Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and consequential adjustment of the Search Room and public programme services of PRO, the number of visitors in 2021 was lower than the target.

Key Statistics

Archives Management

Archival Stocks

PRO has 2 694 Hong Kong Record Series and 243 Hong Kong Manuscript Series. They were transferred from government B/Ds, offices or agencies, public organisations, private institutions and individuals, and accessioned by PRO, adding up to about 23 447 linear metres (1 740 600 nos.). The breakdown is as follows:

- Approximately 23 091 linear metres of government archives from over 100 different government B/Ds, offices or agencies; and
- About 356 linear metres of non-government records of public organisations, private institutions and individuals associated with the history and development of Hong Kong.

Archival Stocks as at 2021

Photographic Materials 15 800 (0.91%)
Audio-Visual Materials 8 100 (0.47%)
Microforms 723 100 (41.54%)
Files 980 600 (56.33%)
Bound Volume Records 3 800 (0.22%)
Maps and Plans 9 200 (0.53%)

New Additions

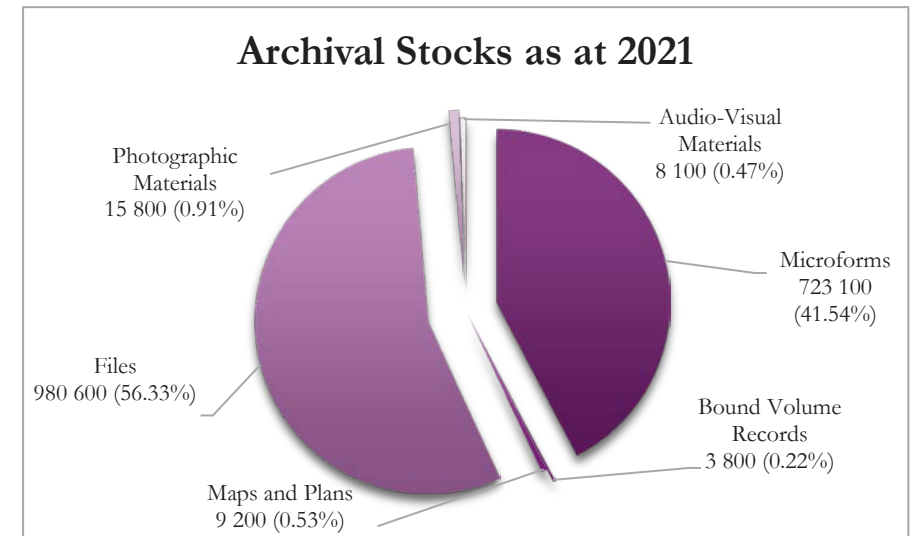In 2021, about 622 linear metres (34 703 nos.) of records were appraised as having archival value and transferred to GRS for permanent retention. Some notable series include:

- Minutes and papers of the Executive Council from Chief Executive's Office
- Files relating to metrication and calibration services from Innovation and Technology Bureau
- Files relating to aircraft registration and airworthiness in the 1940s from Civil Aviation Department
- Files relating to planning and construction of mail centres from Hongkong Post
- Files relating to drafting, making, enforcement, and amendment of transport-related ordinances from Transport Department

Records Open to Public Access

Access to archival records kept by GRS is managed through the Public Records (Access) Rules 1996. In general, the public are allowed access to archival records which have been in existence for not less than 30 years or the contents of which have at any time been published or wholly disclosed to the public. Where a transferring B/D has reviewed that a record which has been over 30 years old but should not be opened for access due to its sensitivity in the interim, it is required to review the record again every five years until the record is eventually opened. In 2021, 21 675 archival records were newly opened for public access.

Access Requests

In 2021, there were 2 595 access requests for open records and 126 access requests for closed records. The results are tabulated below:

Nature of Requests	Number of Requests	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Denied	Directed to Use B/Ds' Service	Withdrawn by Applicant
Open Records	2 595	2 595 (100%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Closed Records	126	74 (58.7%)	37 (29.4%)	0 (0%)	1 Note (0.8%)	14 (11.1%)

Note: The applicant was directed to use the existing charged service of the B/D concerned to obtain the information.

Central Preservation Library for Government Publications

Central Preservation Library contains selected government publications, reports and printed materials on Hong Kong to preserve local documentary heritage. Its holdings date back to as early as the 1840s. They are held in different formats ranging from files, bound volumes, photographs, posters, maps and plans to films. Many of them have been digitised for convenient access in our Online Catalogue @PRO. As at 31 December 2021, 46 614 government publications have been preserved in our Central Preservation Library.

Educational Resources Portal

To provide convenient access to our records, GRS has prepared different kinds of online resources, including dozens of online exhibitions and digital photo albums, 57 Topical Guides, various thematic web pages, etc. In 2021, two new Topical Guides, entitled "Broadcasting" and "City Hall", have been added to the Educational Resources Portal to assist users in searching relevant PRO holdings on specific topics.

Preservation and Conservation

Conservation Treatments

The number of archival and library items subjected to conservation treatments in 2021 was 76 835 sheets of document from 1 517 files and 9 volumes of books. In the year, a special team of practitioners had been appointed to carry out those treatments in the hope of providing ample supply of conserved documents for digitisation without delay. Most of them underwent minor treatments to revive their integrity and clarity prior to image capturing. However, some of them suffered from severe damages and losses, hence required major structural restorations like re-binding the books and providing additional support to the oversized documents.

In 2021, the following items were preserved and conserved:

69 422 frames of image were microfilmed

24 318 items of general and classified records were inspected

76 835 sheets of document and **9** volumes of books were conserved

2 928 items of archival records were assessed

57.8 linear metres of archives with risk of pest infestation were fumigated

Mass Digitisation Project

In this technological era, there was a great demand for digital formats of our records in view of their wider and better circulation on electronic platform for easier public access. GRS is dedicated to upholding a steady digital output of our archival holdings. In 2021, GRS produced 413 774 digital images from digitising selected archival items, scanning microfilm collection items, oversized maps and architectural plans, which were comparable to the figures of last year, and brought the total number of our digital images to over 3.2 million.

Management of Government Records

Records Scheduling and Disposal

Establishment of Disposal Authorities

As at 31 December 2021, the accumulative number of DAs established by B/Ds is around 14 200. The decrease when compared to the figure as at 31 December 2020 (i.e. 14 500) was mainly due to the obsolete DAs and the consolidation of overlapping/unnecessarily proliferated DAs during the DA Review Exercise in 2021.
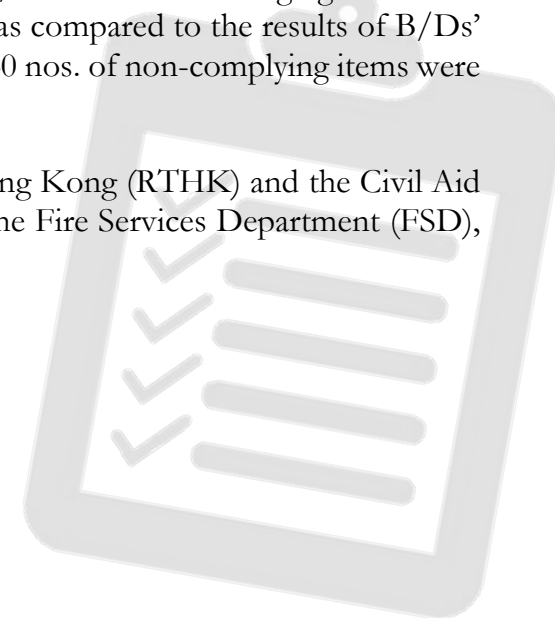
Authorisation of Destruction of Records

In 2021, GRS approved the destruction of around 79 900 linear metres of records. Of these records, many are of routine nature, e.g. arrival and departure cards and case files relating to immigration matters which contained personal data, computer printouts relating to tax returns, reports of tax-related systems, etc. All these records were confirmed to have no archival value and have met the relevant retention and disposal requirements, as well as those set out in the governing legislation and regulations.

Compliance Monitoring and Continuous Improvements

In 2021, GRS analysed B/Ds' reports on their self-assessments covering the period from January to December 2020. Out of the 82 B/Ds surveyed, 67 B/Ds had reported full compliance and 26 nos. of non-complying items were observed among the remaining 15 B/Ds. It was encouraging to see that more B/Ds had reported full compliance with the mandatory requirements and there was a general improvement as compared to the results of B/Ds' self-assessments for the period from January to December 2019 where 54 B/Ds had reported full compliance and 40 nos. of non-complying items were observed among the remaining 28 B/Ds.

In 2021, GRS conducted two Departmental Records Management Reviews (DRMRs) on the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) and the Civil Aid Service (CAS) and their reviews were underway. As regards the two DRMRs commenced in 2020 on EDB and the Fire Services Department (FSD), GRS was concluding the reviews with the B/Ds concerned.

Reaching Out

12 July
PRO's Facebook page has reached its first anniversary. PRO continuously shared its holdings and news with members of the public and interacted with the wider community. As at the end of December 2021, a total of 4 530 "Likes" and 5 106 "Followers" were recorded.

15 January
PRO introduced online group visits and workshops for wider audience. In 2021, PRO organised 24 online group visits and workshops which successfully reached out to more than 1 280 participants.

26 January
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Records Management Seminar for Public Organisations 2020 was postponed to January 2021 and held online with around 640 participants from 52 public organisations.

19 August
Representatives from the Immigration Department, which was a supporting Department of the thematic exhibition "Identity Card – A Timeless Proof", visited GRS. The representatives toured around the Exhibition Hall and learnt about the highlights of holdings and services of PRO.

23 August
PRO staged the thematic exhibition "Identity Card – A Timeless Proof". The exhibition displayed over 70 holdings to showcase the evolution of ID card together with the changes of society and the advancement in technology since ID card was first issued in 1949.

4 September

PRO staff delivered a hybrid mode talk titled "Evolution of Identity Card: An Archival Story" at the Hong Kong Museum of History (HKMH) and through the YouTube Channel of HKMH. A total of 265 persons participated in the talk both on-site and online.

4 September to 28 November

PRO staged a roving exhibition at the Immigration Tower (1/F, Footbridge Level) in Wan Chai.

22 December

The Records Management Seminar for Public Organisations 2021 was held online. Over 660 participants from 45 public organisations attended the webinar.

22 November

Representatives of GRS presented the territory report and participated in the discussion session of the 15th General Conference of the EASTICA online.
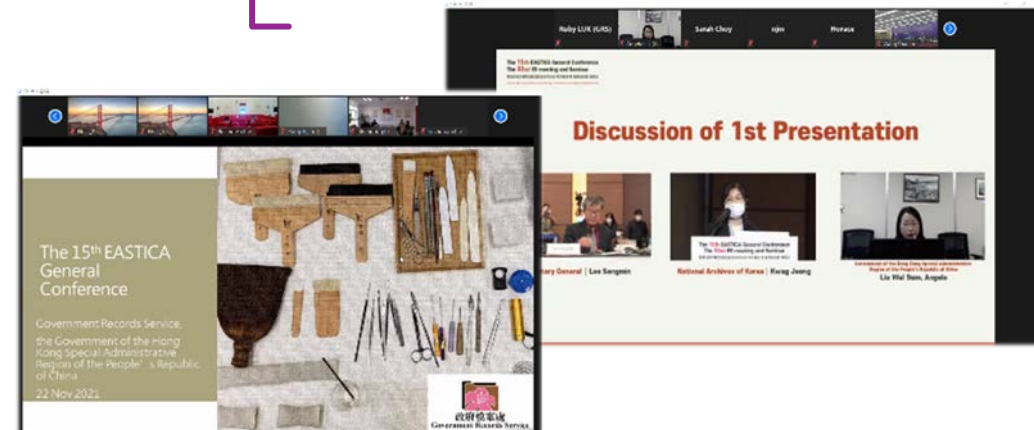
24 December 2021 to 6 January 2022

PRO staged a roving exhibition at Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Public Library (the roving exhibition was originally scheduled for display until 17 February 2022. It was closed on 7 January 2022 due to the latest situation of the COVID-19 pandemic).

Part III – About GRS

Our Organisational Structure

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Chief Secretary for Administration's Office
                    |
       Government Records Service
Government Records Service Director
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Legislation and Planning Office

Archivist (Legislation and Planning)

- Study of archival legislation
- Research and planning

Public Records Office

Archivist (Public Records) 1

- Archives administration
- Repository management
- Training and development for Archivist grade

Archivist (Public Records) 2

- Access to archival holdings
- Archives information system
- Reference service
- Public promotion of archival heritage
- Digital preservation

Preservation Service Office

Curator (Preservation Service)

- Preservation and conservation of archival and library holdings
- Government Microfilm Centre
- Mass digitisation services

Record Systems Development Office

Chief Executive Officer (Record Systems Development)

- Electronic records management
- Development of records classification scheme
- New initiatives in managing recorded information

Records Management and Administration Office

Chief Executive Officer (Records Management and Administration)

- Records management training, advisory and review services
- Records Centres services
- Internal administration of GRS

Our Staff

As at 31 December 2021, GRS has 124 staff members from different Civil Service grades, working together for the betterment of records and archives management in the Government.

22
Executive Officer Grade

6
Curator Grade

25
Archivist Grade

1
Analyst/Programmer Grade

70
Clerical and Other Grades
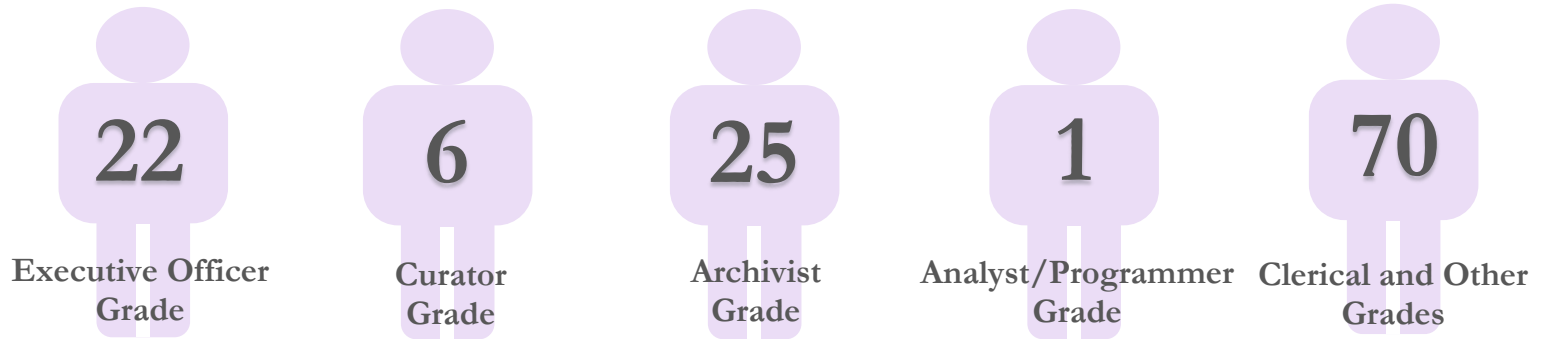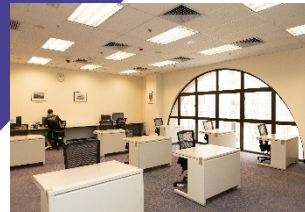
Our Facilities

Exhibition Hall

Lecture Room

Search Room

Records Centres

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Preservation Laboratory

Government Microfilm Centre

Archival and Library Repositories

Environmental Report

Environmental Objectives and Green Measures

Go green

GRS is committed to ensuring that its operations are conducted, through the optimum use of resources and energy, in an environmentally conscious and responsible manner. "Go green!" is one of the core values of GRS and we are committed to be environmentally conscious through developing and promoting ERM in the Government and public organisations. In 2021, we had taken the following measures to promote environmental awareness amongst staff, including:

- Affixing stickers adjacent to relevant facilities to remind staff of energy saving;
- Disseminating useful and practical "Green Tips" through e-mails on a regular basis to all staff to promote green habits; and
- Procuring environment-friendly products such as energy saving photocopiers and products with energy efficiency labels.

4R principle

GRS also promotes the adherence to the 4R principle - "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Replace" in the consumption of materials. Specifically, GRS has put in place the following measures to reduce paper consumption:

Promoting a paperless office:

- Encouraging staff to use electronic means, e.g. e-mail or e-Memo, for internal and external circulation and communication;
- Uploading internal information, such as circulars, administrative instructions, training and reference materials, guidelines, etc. onto the common drive to facilitate updating and retrieval online, and dispensing with the practice of keeping personal hard copies;
- Uploading the hyperlinks of our manuals, circulars and guidelines on records management onto the Government Intranet for easy accessibility by government officers to obviate the need to print out the publications; and
- Using ERKS to keep records electronically instead of in physical files.

Where the use of paper is unavoidable:

- Encouraging staff to minimise photocopying, use recycled paper instead of plain paper, use double-side printing and photocopying, and make the best use of the blank side of used paper;
- Reusing envelopes and file jackets; and
- Avoiding the use of fax cover sheets and using the blank side of used paper to print incoming fax messages.

GRS also acquires green stationery, such as refillable ball pens and items made of recycled materials, supplied by the Government Logistics Department.

Other energy saving measures

As the building manager of HKPRB, GRS is committed to promoting environmental protection and energy conservation in our building. The HKPRB at 13 Tsui Ping Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, was opened in 1997 as the first purpose-built archival facility in Hong Kong. It is constructed and equipped to meet international standards for the preservation of archival records. As half of our purpose-built building is used as archival repositories, which require round-the-clock air-conditioning to keep records in an environment with temperature lower than 24°C and relative humidity not higher than 65%, more than half of our energy consumption comes from the Mechanical Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (MVAC) system. While the continuous use of MVAC system is operationally necessary in HKPRB, GRS has identified and put in place the following offsetting energy saving measures:

- Closing the curtains during daytime to help lower room temperature;
- Encouraging staff to wear light clothes to reduce the use of air-conditioning in summer months;
- Unplugging or turning off electrical appliances or lights that are not in use and avoiding leaving the appliances in standby mode;
- Switching off office equipment completely during non-operating hours;
- De-lamping the areas with higher-than-required lighting level;
- Reducing lighting to the minimum required level for illumination;
- All the T8 fluorescent tubes have been replaced by T5 energy-saving fluorescent tubes;
- Switching off lights in corridors and lift lobbies on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays;
- Switching off at least one of the lifts outside office hours;
- Encouraging staff to use the staircase instead of lifts;
- Installing automatic sensor faucet in toilets to reduce water consumption;
- Using energy efficient computers, LED lights, photocopiers, etc.;
- Separating light switches for different light zones;
- Installing occupancy sensors in areas not frequently used, e.g. rear staircase; and
- Maintaining air-conditioned room temperature at 25.5°C in office areas.
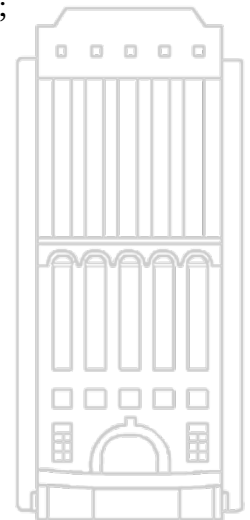
Energy-cum-carbon Management

A paper approach carbon audit exercise was conducted to assess the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (in terms of tonnes CO_2 per annum) of HKPRB in 2021. The audit results are as follows:
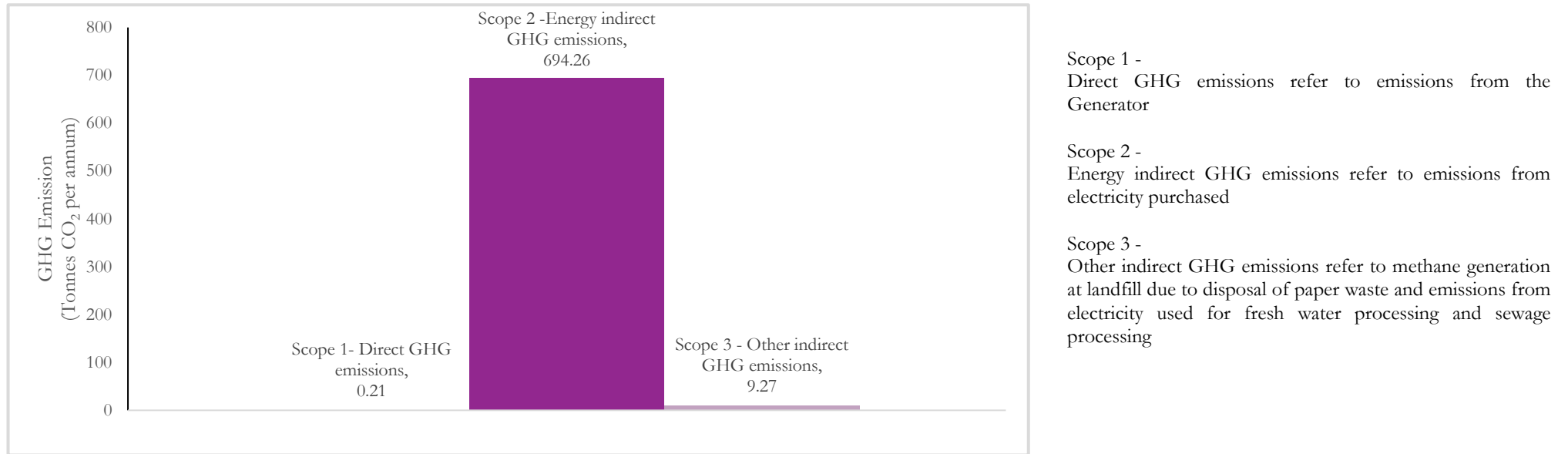
The above diagram shows that the major carbon emission source in HKPRB is consumption of electricity. With replacement works of various electrical and mechanical systems of HKPRB which have been carried out in phases, coupled with the effect of special work arrangement, the energy indirect GHG emissions were reduced from 892.84 in 2020 to 694.26 in 2021, representing a decrease of around 22%. GRS will strive to further reduce the energy indirect GHG emissions from HKPRB in the coming years.

Way Forward

GRS will make continuous effort in implementing green measures with a view to maximising energy saving.

Abbreviation

ACP	Airport Core Programme		HKMH	Hong Kong Museum of History
AI	Artificial Intelligence		HKPRB	Hong Kong Public Records Building
APIs	Announcements of Public Interest		HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
B/Ds	Government Bureaux / Departments		ID Card	Hong Kong Identity Card
CAS	Civil Aid Service		iRMT	i Records Management Training
CLC Plus	Cyber Learning Centre Plus		MVAC	Mechanical Ventilation and Air-Conditioning
DAs	Disposal Authorities		NAPCO	New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office
DRMs	Departmental Records Managers		OAIS	Open Archival Information System
DRMRs	Departmental Records Management Reviews		OGCIO	Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
DRT	Disaster Recovery Team		PCM	Pulse-code Modulation
EASTICA	East Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives		PDI	Preservation Description Information
EDB	Education Bureau		PREMIS	Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies
ERKS	Electronic Recordkeeping System		PRO	Public Records Office
ERM	Electronic Records Management		PSO	Preservation Service Office
FSD	Fire Services Department		RCSs	Records Classification Schemes
GCIS	Government Cloud Infrastructure Services		RTHK	Radio Television Hong Kong
GHG	Greenhouse Gas		SIARD	Software Independent Archiving of Relational Databases
GRS	Government Records Service		SIP	Submission Information Package
HKEdCity	Hong Kong Education City		VHS	Video Home System