



Annual Report 2024

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

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Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2024 Annual Report of the Government Records Service (GRS).

2024 has been another year of notable progress for GRS as we kept on with our mission to preserve Hong Kong's local documentary heritage and collective memories. Our dedicated teams have demonstrated exceptional resilience and professionalism, committedly working towards the goal of enriching our archival collections and enhancing our quality services provided to both government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) and the public.

In line with the Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address Supplement to implement fully the Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) for all B/Ds within 2025 to enhance efficiency in preserving and managing government records, we moved forward with this initiative in full swing. The Electronic Information Management (EIM) Programme Management Office (PMO), comprising representatives from the Digital Policy Office (DPO) and GRS, continued to lead the development of the Central ERKS while providing ongoing support and guidance to B/Ds on technical matters, change management, and records management. This initiative marks a significant step toward modernising the recordkeeping system in the Government for the future.

During the year, GRS maintained its dedicated efforts to curate thematic exhibitions to foster greater appreciation of our archival collections in the community. Building on the positive responses from last year, we proudly presented the onsite thematic exhibition "Wedding Stories in Archives", which brought visitors on a journey to explore the evolution of marriage systems and customs in Hong Kong. To engage a wider audience, we staged roving exhibitions and launched a brand new outreach programme "Meet up with You" in various districts to encourage direct communication and interaction with the public. Apart from visiting the onsite and roving exhibitions, members of the public could explore the exhibition contents at their own pace through the thematic web page, which featured over a hundred images of our precious archival collections and a 360-degree virtual tour.

This report outlines GRS' major activities and presents key statistics on archives and records management in the Government in 2024. I trust that this report will provide you with a clearer perspective and a more in-depth understanding of the work of GRS.

Joseph W H SIU
Government Records Service Director

VALUES

Green

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

Reliability

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

Efficiency

Be efficient in all aspects of records management.

Accessibility

Enhance public access to our archival collections.

Transparency

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

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.



VISION

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.

Part I

Activities in Retrospect



A fisherfolk wedding at Aberdeen, in which the bridal couple is seen handing scented towels to their guests
(Reference no.: X1000134 (1964))

Discovering Hong Kong's Wedding Footprint

Marriage marks a significant new chapter in the lives of countless couples. The 2024 thematic exhibition “Wedding Stories in Archives” (the exhibition) invited visitors to explore the evolution of marriage systems and customs in Hong Kong and revealed intriguing stories behind the archival holdings of the Public Records Office (PRO).

Highlights of the Exhibition

The exhibition showcased over 70 selected items under the themes of “the Beginning”, “Tying the Knot”, and “Moments of Celebration” at the Exhibition Hall of the Hong Kong Public Records Building (HKPRB). In addition to our archival holdings, the exhibition also featured items provided by the Hong Kong Museum of History, the Immigration Department, and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Archives. These displays not only uncovered lesser-known stories about traditional marriage systems and customs in Hong Kong, but also highlighted the distinctive aspects of traditional wedding scenes, rituals, and celebrations.

Evolution of marriage registration laws and systems

Before the enactment of marriage-related ordinances, couples wishing to tie the knot could choose to get married in accordance with traditional Chinese customs or to register in religious institutions.

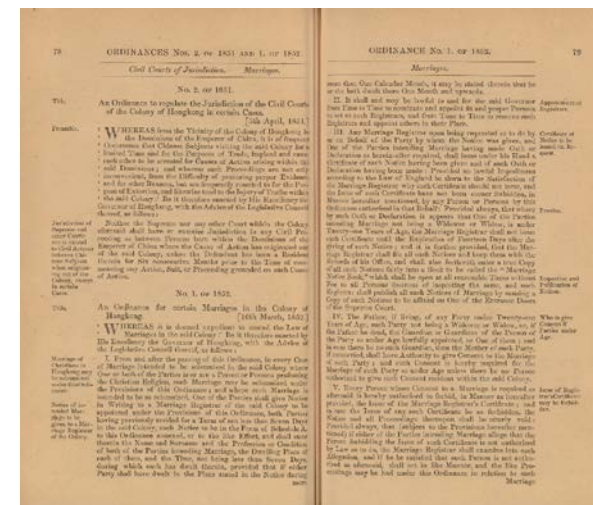


St. John's Cathedral is one of the religious institutions for celebration of marriages. (Reference no.: MHP1999.5.7 (c.1870))



Chinese wedding procession in the New Territories (Reference no.: MHP1990.60.35 (c.1890-1900s))

The earliest law governing civil marriage in Hong Kong was enacted in 1852. The registration of marriage has undergone several substantial changes over time, culminating in the official institution of monogamous marriages under the Marriage Reform Ordinance (Cap. 178) in 1971.



The earliest ordinance related to civil marriage, which set out requirements on the ceremony of Christians' marriages solemnised in Hong Kong, was enacted in 1852 (Reference no.: X1000204 (1844-1865))

Transition of officials in taking up the role of Registrar of Marriages in Hong Kong

The Registrar of Marriages has played a crucial role in solemnising and recording marriages in Hong Kong. Under Ordinance No. 14 of 1875, the Registrar General was designated as the Registrar of Marriages, supported by other Deputy Registrars. Since the Principal Marriage Registry and Land Office were both located in the Supreme Court Building (commonly known as the Old Supreme Court Building), the Land Officer was first appointed as the Registrar of Marriages in 1927. An Executive Officer Class I was also appointed as the Deputy Registrar of Marriages in 1950. The Immigration Department assumed the responsibilities of marriage registration from the Registrar General's Department since 1 July 1979, the Director of Immigration was consequently appointed as the Registrar of Marriages.



The Principal Marriage Registry was housed in the Supreme Court Building in the 1920s (Reference no.: 01-23-698 (c.1920s))

Development of Marriage Registries

Initially, the Marriage Registry located in the Supreme Court Building was the sole marriage registry in Hong Kong until the first Sub-Registry for marriages opened in Kowloon in 1956. Since then, new marriage registries have been established one after another in the urban areas and the New Territories. These registries hold cherished memories for countless couples, families, and friends.



The Marriage Room at the Causeway Bay Marriage Registry, opened in 1960 inside the Causeway Bay Magistracy Building (Reference no.: X1000215 (1961-1962))



Relevance of traditional marriage rites and customs

While many traditional wedding customs have evolved or been simplified over the years, some elements remain integral to modern celebrations. For example, flower plaques outside wedding banquet venues have become rare. The tradition of taking the bride to the bridegroom's place in a red sedan chair has changed to using luxury cars and the bride dresses both in the traditional “kwun kwa” (裙褂) and a western wedding dress on the day of the wedding. These changes preserve the essence of traditions and customs while adapting to modern lifestyles.

Flower plaques showing the surnames of the newlyweds
(Reference no.: HKRS2297-1-55 (c.1981))

Engagement Experiences at HKPRB

To enhance the experience of onsite visitors, PRO introduced a variety of wedding-themed offerings at HKPRB. For example, an optical illusion backdrop featuring traditional wedding themes was set up near the entrance of the Exhibition Hall, providing an interactive photogenic spot for visitors. In addition, a fun Cantonese linguistic game was launched during the same period as the exhibition.

What's more, a specially designed exhibition leaflet was distributed to the onsite visitors. After completing specific tasks listed on the leaflet, visitors could redeem souvenirs while enjoying the exhibition. These souvenirs, cherished by visitors, served as mementos of their joyful experiences.

Onsite visitors could pose as sedan chair bearers and share their “check-in” photographs on social media





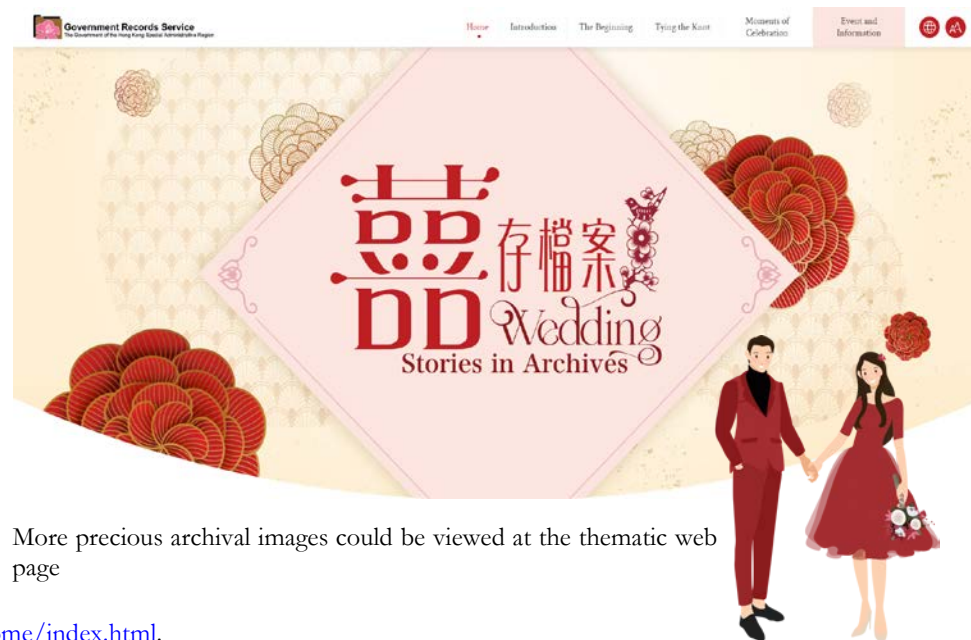
Roving Exhibitions and New Public Engagement Programme “Meet up with You”

To reach a broader audience, PRO also hosted roving exhibitions in different districts. A new public engagement programme “Meet up with You” was integrated into the roving exhibitions for the first time to foster direct communication and interaction with the public.

Roving exhibition staged at the Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Public Library from 20 December 2024 to 3 January 2025

Thematic Web Page and PRO Facebook Page

Apart from visiting the onsite and roving exhibitions, members of the public could explore the exhibition contents at their own pace through the thematic web page ^{Note 1}, where over a hundred images of precious historical documents, photographs, videos as well as the 360-degree virtual tour were made available for easy access. The public could also follow PRO Facebook page ^{Note 2} to participate in interactive giveaway activities related to the exhibition theme.



More precious archival images could be viewed at the thematic web page

Note 1: The thematic web page is accessible at <https://www.grs.gov.hk/ws/online/wedding/en/home/index.html>.

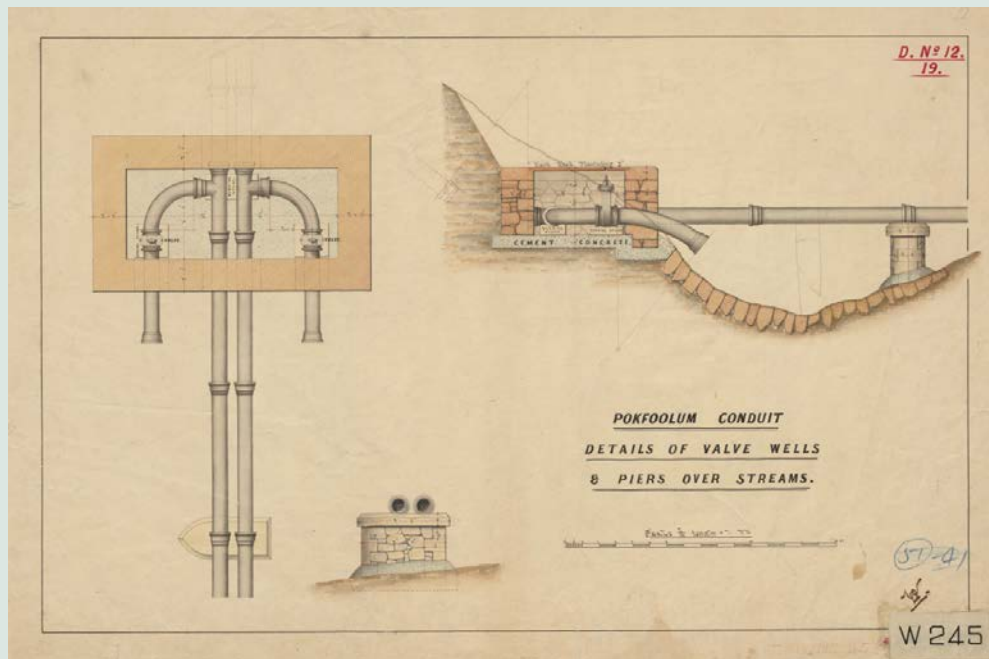
Note 2: PRO Facebook page is accessible at <https://www.facebook.com/grs.publicrecordsoffice>.

Exploring Hong Kong's Waterworks Heritage: A Journey Through Time

Have you ever strolled along Shanghai Street and stumbled upon the red brick building at Yau Ma Tei, now the Administration Office of Yau Ma Tei Theatre? This building is more than just an office, it is a historic building, originally a pumping station built in 1895.

Or perhaps you have enjoyed a boat excursion in the serene artificial lake at Wong Nai Chung Gap, a popular public boating park today. Do you know that this site was once the Wong Nai Chung Reservoir constructed in 1899?

The presence of these historic waterworks is a testament to Hong Kong's history of its water supply system. The development of publicly funded water supply in Hong Kong dates back to the mid-19th century. As the city developed, the Government faced the challenge of providing sufficient fresh water to meet the needs of the growing population and urbanisation. Before the Second World War, several major waterworks were built, including Pok Fu Lam Reservoir, Tai Tam Reservoir, Wong Nai Chung Reservoir, Kowloon Reservoir, Shing Mun Reservoir, and Aberdeen Reservoir, ensuring a reliable source of water supply for the city. The post-war era saw the continued expansion of water infrastructure, with the Tai Lam Chung Reservoir, built in 1957, being the first of its kind after the war.



Built in the 1870s, Pok Fu Lam Conduit served as the aqueduct of Pok Fu Lam Reservoir, the oldest reservoir in Hong Kong which provided fresh water supply to the Central and Western District.

The drawing illustrates the details of its valve wells and piers, with descriptions on the materials used (stone, cement concrete, and hard wood) for construction.

The conduit was classified as a Grade 2 historic building by the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) in 2009.

Drawing of valve wells and piers of Pok Fu Lam Conduit (1870s)
(Reference no.: HKRS1951-1-4)

For those fascinated by the history of Hong Kong's water supply, the newly released archival records in the “Hong Kong Record Series (HKRS) 1951” are a treasure trove. Transferred from the Water Supplies Department, these records include approximately 500 drawings and maps of Hong Kong waterworks, covering the period from the 1870s to 1970s. Most of these records were created before the Second World War and document significant waterworks across the territory. These historical drawings and maps are not just technical documents, they are invaluable pieces of Hong Kong's documentary heritage. They offer a detailed look into the engineering marvels that supported the city's development, highlighting the advanced engineering techniques of the time. They depict various installations that are essential elements of the water supply system, such as conduits (structures for conveying a supply of water), pumping stations (buildings equipped with pumps for delivering water), dams (artificial barriers that span across gorges or valleys and serve the purpose of retaining water), valve wells (structures with valves for controlling draw-off and flow rates), staff quarters, and more.

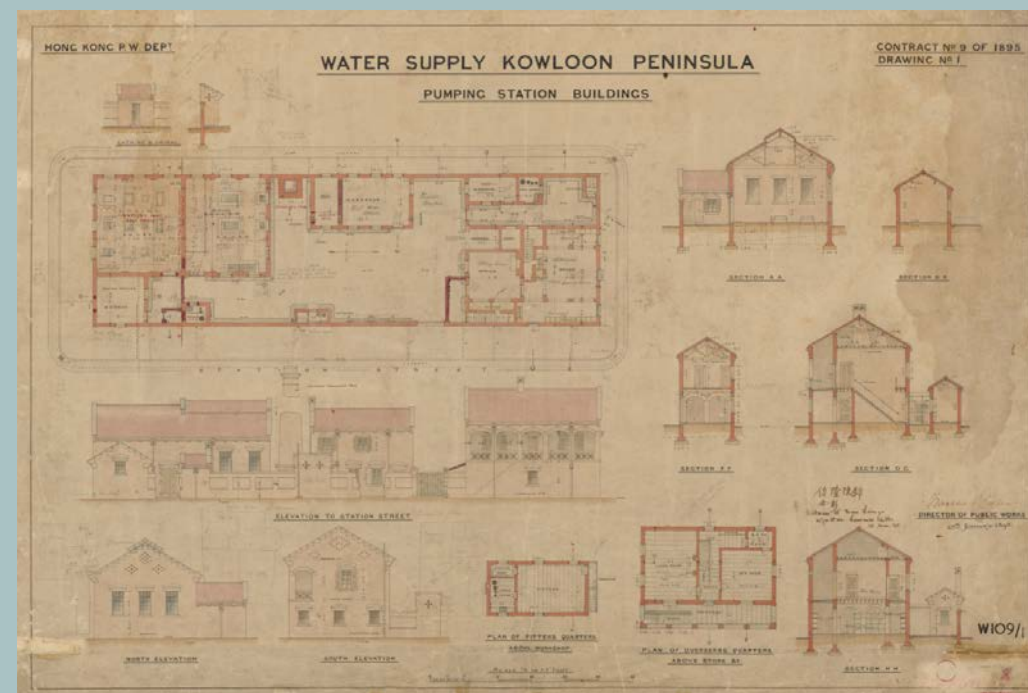
Notably, some of the waterworks, like the Pok Fu Lam Conduit and the dam of Wong Nai Chung Reservoir, have been classified as graded historic buildings or declared monuments, underscoring their recognised historical significance. The drawings and maps offer a glimpse into the past, showing how these structures were built and operated, and allowing us to appreciate the expertise and effort involved.

The Pumping Station located at the junction of Shanghai Street and Waterloo Road was constructed in 1895. Equipped with steam-driven pumps, it abstracted water from three wells nearby and was part of the first infrastructure for fresh water supply in Kowloon.

The drawing illustrates the original appearance, layouts, and cross sections of the Pumping Station. Except for the engineer's office, the other parts of the Pumping Station have been demolished. Features such as arched verandahs and cast iron rainwater pipes were depicted.

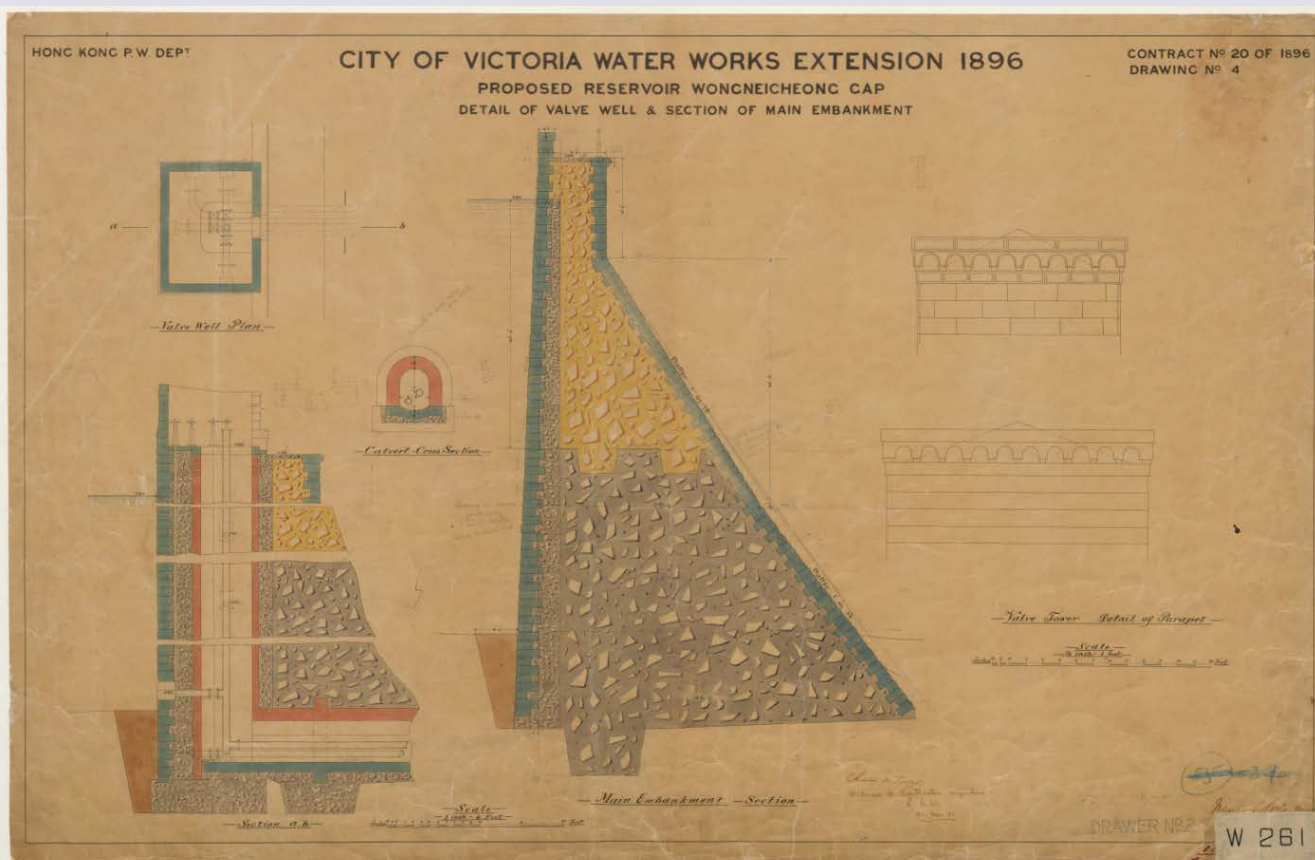
The building was classified as a Grade 1 historic building by AAB in 2009.

Drawing of Pumping Station at Yau Ma Tei (1895)
(Reference no.: HKRS1951-1-269)



In addition to showing the appearances and locations of the waterworks, the records document the structures, layouts, and materials used in their construction. Features such as arched verandahs, cast iron rainwater pipes, and keystones can be identified in the records. These records also shed light on the operation of the water supply system in the past. For example, staff quarters depicted in the records reveal that staff involved in the daily operation of the water supply system had to stay onsite overnight before the adoption of an automatic mode of operation. These precious records not only reflect the architectural features of the waterworks, but also offer a glance of the lives of the staff who were an integral part of publicly funded waterworks projects.

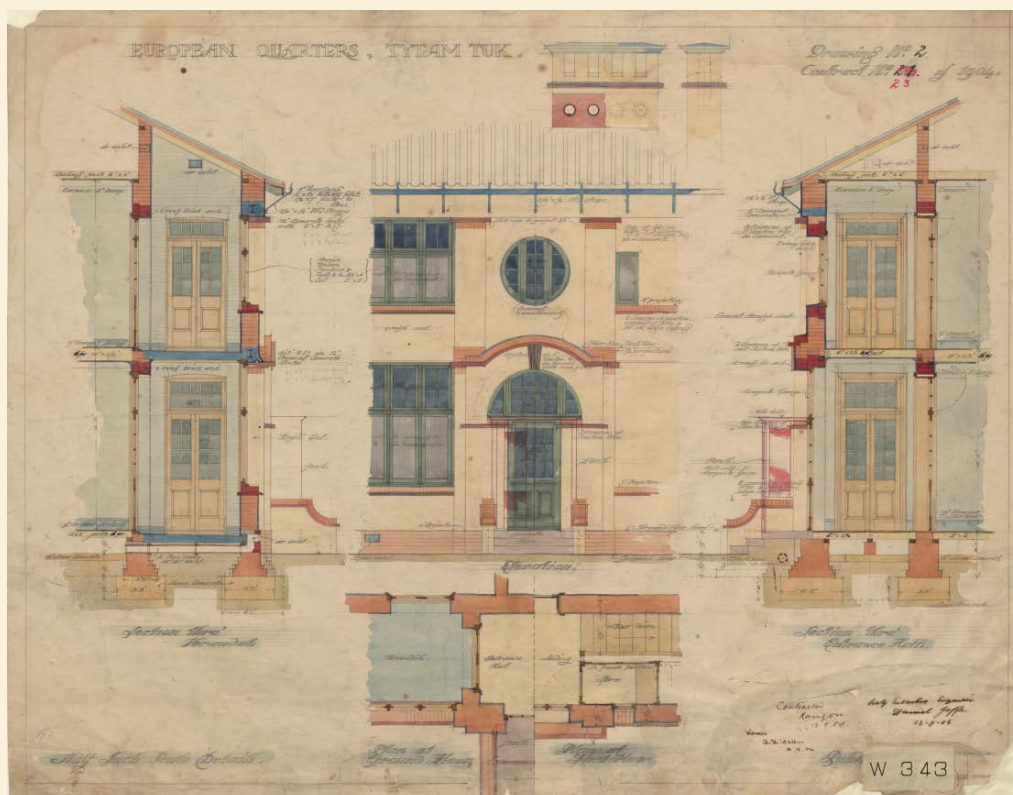
Members of the public are most welcome to inspect these newly released archival records at HKPRB and revisit the interesting history of water supply in Hong Kong.



Wong Nai Chung Reservoir, the third oldest reservoir in Hong Kong, was built in 1899. The drawing illustrates the cross sections of its valve well and main embankment. Large granite blocks were utilised in the construction of these structures.

The valve house and dam of Wong Nai Chung Reservoir were declared monuments in 2009.

Drawing of a valve well and main embankment of Wong Nai Chung Reservoir (1896)
(Reference no.: HKRS1951-1-253)

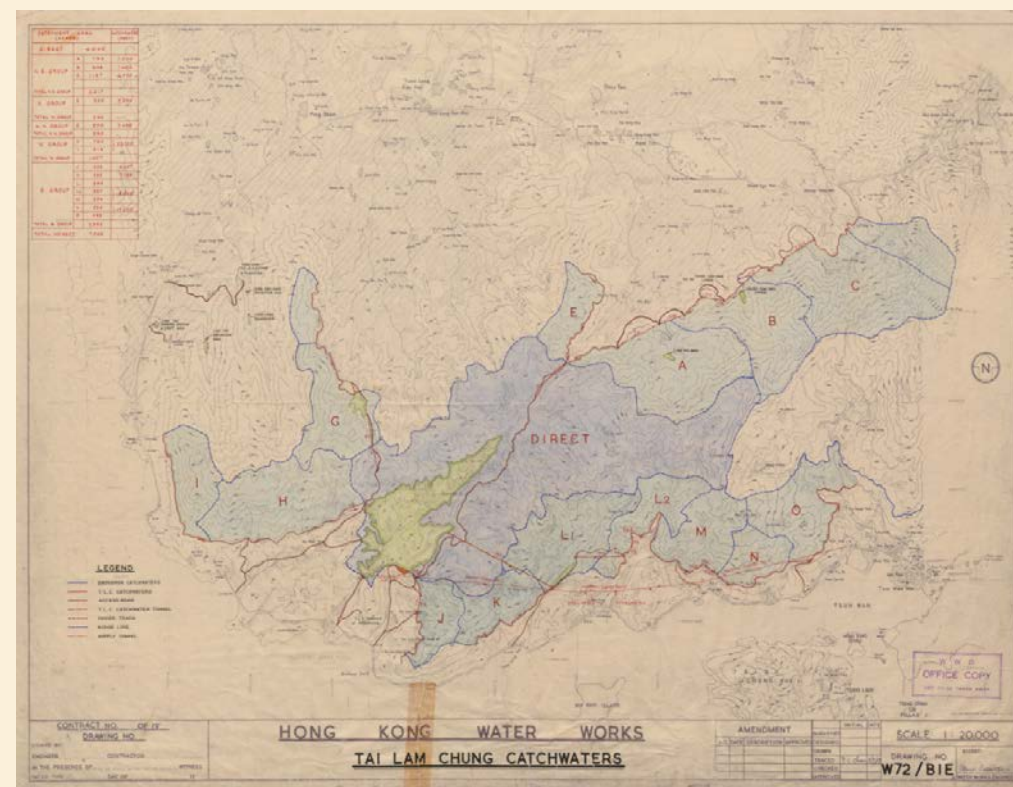


Drawing of European Quarters at Tai Tam Tuk (1904)
(Reference no.: HKRS1951-1-6)

The building was built in 1905 as quarters for European staff who were involved in the daily operation and maintenance of the waterworks system at Tai Tam. Staff were required to stay onsite overnight before the adoption of automated operation.

The drawing shows the elevation, layouts and cross sections of the building. Details of elements such as doors, windows, arches, and a keystone were also depicted.

The building was declared monument in 2009.



Map of Tai Lam Chung Catchwaters (1959)
(Reference no.: HKRS1951-1-467)

Built in 1957, the Tai Lam Chung Reservoir was the first reservoir built in Hong Kong after the Second World War. The map shows the location of its catchwaters and catchment areas.

Enriching Collection: Records Appraisal and Acquisition

In 2024, about 621 linear metres (35 831 nos.) of records were appraised as having archival value and transferred to GRS for permanent retention. Some notable series include:

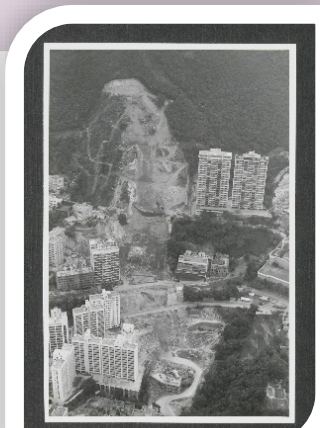
- Files relating to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council from the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
- Files relating to curriculum development for English language education from the Education Bureau (EDB)
- Files relating to revenue, taxes and taxation from the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau
- Files relating to promotional events on new technologies and innovation from the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau
- Files relating to policy and regulatory control of unauthorised building works and dangerous buildings from the Buildings Department (BD)
- Files relating to population distribution from the Census and Statistics Department
- Files relating to slope safety technical review from the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
- Files relating to policy matters of pharmaceutical services from the Department of Health
- Files relating to organisational matters and human resource management of the Department of Justice
- Files relating to road construction and traffic improvement works from the Highways Department
- Files relating to community organisations and committees in Kwai Tsing District from the Home Affairs Department (HAD)
- Files relating to district administration and district boards /councils from the HAD
- Files relating to greening promotion, horticulture and gardening from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)
- Files relating to traffic study and planning from the Transport Department



Aberdeen Dockyards and Aberdeen Harbour, across which was Ap Lei Chau (end of 19th century) (Reference no.: HKRS2017-7-4) transferred from HAD



Performance of motorcycle stunt riding in celebrations of Lunar New Year in Kwai Chung (1986) (Reference no.: HKRS1623-14-2) transferred from HAD

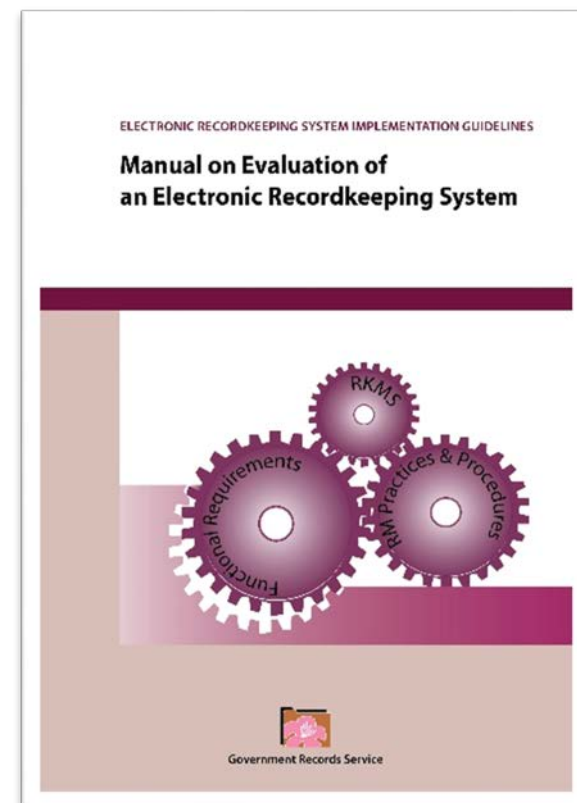


Po Shan Road landslide (1972) (Reference no.: HKRS649-3-2) transferred from BD

ERKS Launched. What's Next?

To facilitate the implementation of Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) in all B/Ds by the end of 2025, EIM PMO, comprising representatives from DPO and GRS, has centrally coordinated the development of the Central ERKS and continued to provide advice and support to B/Ds on technical and change management as well as records management (RM) issues.

B/Ds should capture the electronic message records directly to an ERKS once implemented. On the other hand, in accordance with the “Manual on Evaluation of an Electronic Recordkeeping System” (the Manual) (reviewed and updated in November 2024), B/Ds should conduct a compliance assessment of their ERKS and the associated departmental RM policies, practices and procedures governing the use, management and maintenance of an ERKS. If a B/D, after completing the compliance assessment, is satisfied that a proper ERKS is put in place in its organisation with the implementation and enforcement of adequate and proper departmental RM policies, practices and procedures, it may seek GRS’ prior agreement to dispense with the “print-and-file” practice of electronic message records. In the meantime, B/Ds should adopt a parallel run of the ERKS and the “print-and-file” practice. Against this background, some B/Ds have already rolled out their ERKS to users and a few of them have submitted applications to dispense with the “print-and-file” practice of electronic message records in 2024.



Manual on Evaluation of an Electronic Recordkeeping System

B/D's Compliance Assessment on its ERKS and its Departmental RM Policies, Practices and Procedures

As promulgated in the Manual, a compliance assessment covers two mandatory components, namely (a) to evaluate whether B/D's ERKS complies with the Government's RM policy and electronic RM requirements; and (b) to evaluate whether B/D has established proper departmental RM policies, practices and procedures, as well as defined clear RM roles and responsibilities to ensure effective and efficient management of records in an ERKS. Highlights are set out in the following paragraphs.

B/D's self-assessment on its ERKS

The first component is an evaluation of B/D's ERKS including its functionality, features, system configuration and customisation (if any). While PMO had conducted a comprehensive compliance check of the functions of the Central ERKS base system and concluded that it has met the functional requirements and recordkeeping metadata standard of an ERKS as promulgated by GRS for deployment to B/Ds, it is incumbent upon B/Ds to ensure that the deployed ERKS in a B/D is in full compliance with the Government's RM policy and mandatory RM requirements. B/D may seek the advice of DPO on the relevant features of the Central ERKS to facilitate its assessment. B/D must satisfy itself that its ERKS has achieved a "full compliance" rating, i.e. the ERKS is a proper RM system with the capability of maintaining the authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability of records to meet continuous legal, business, evidence and accountability needs.

B/D's self-assessment on its departmental RM policies, practices and procedures

The second component is an evaluation of the implementation and enforcement of proper departmental RM policies, practices and procedures for effective management of records in an ERKS. It covers, among others, departmental RM policies and responsibilities, records classification, records capturing, security and access control, records retention and disposal, etc. To achieve a "good" rating, B/D should demonstrate, among others, that it has (a) fully complied with the Government's RM policy, mandatory RM requirements, practices and procedures; (b) developed and established departmental RM policies; (c) established a logical, systematic, consistent and scalable records classification scheme; as well as (d) developed and promulgated departmental RM policies, practices and procedures for ERKS, with adequate and proper measures to monitor the enforcement.

Dispensing with the “Print-and-File” Practice

On the basis of the results of the compliance assessment that a B/D’s ERKS has achieved “full compliance” and has obtained “good” ratings in terms of implementing and enforcing departmental RM policies, practices and procedures for its ERKS, the B/D concerned may make a request to seek GRS’ agreement to dispense with the “print-and-file” practice in managing electronic message records. Having regard to the experience of some B/Ds, some of the key aspects are highlighted below –

- ★ On the self-assessment of their ERKS, B/Ds should make sure that the production issues identified during deployment, which are pertinent to the compliance of their ERKS, have been properly addressed by the contractor.
- ★ B/Ds should also evaluate their ERKS having regard to any customisations made to meet their specific business and operational needs.
- ★ For the purpose of processing a request to dispense with the “print-and-file” practice, GRS may require a B/D to conduct a demonstration(s) of the functionality of its ERKS. To facilitate a smooth and efficient demonstration, B/Ds should arrange for staff who are familiar with the functions of their ERKS to conduct the demonstration.
- ★ On the promulgation and enforcement of proper departmental RM policies, practices, procedures and guidelines, B/Ds should upload the relevant information to their departmental intranets to raise staff’s awareness and understanding of the changes in practices, procedures and guidelines. For instance, user roles and responsibilities coupled with records capturing rules should be clearly defined to avoid duplicate filing, or in a worst case scenario, the records are not filed.
- ★ In addition, B/Ds should arrange tailor-made briefings and on-going training to facilitate their staff’s understanding of the updated practices and guidelines, etc. and ensure their compliance.

On-going Monitoring and Review

B/Ds should put in place suitable administrative arrangements to monitor and review the on-going use, management and maintenance of an ERKS, and continuous enforcement of departmental RM policies, practices and procedures across their organisations. Specifically, B/Ds should conduct a fresh compliance assessment immediately after (a) the hardware, software and/or the functionality of an ERKS has been substantially ungraded, revised or supplemented; and/or (b) the departmental RM policies, practices and procedures have been substantially revised or updated.

Vision in Action: Professional Development and Exchange

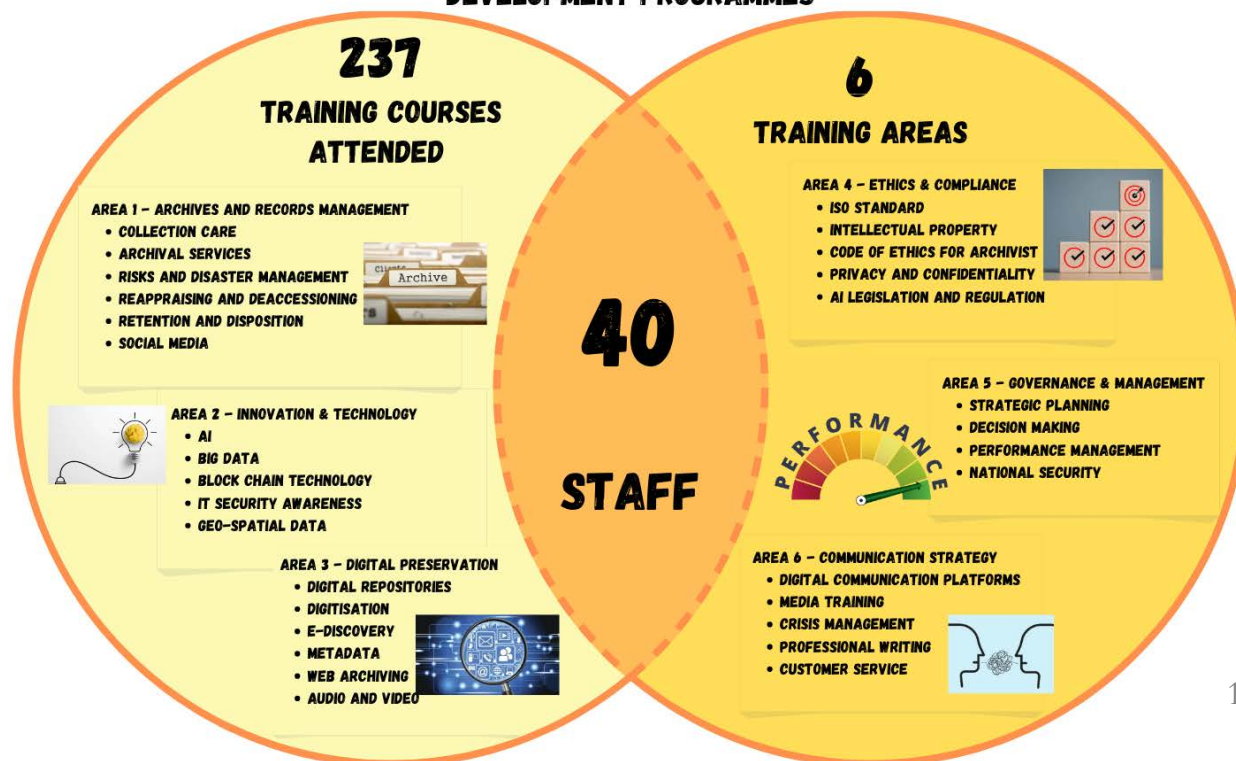
To be the leading, most insightful, and resourceful public archives in Hong Kong that excels in preserving and promoting the documentary heritage of our city in the digital era

In 2024, our dedicated team in GRS continued to have strong involvement in professional and technical skill development, especially digital-focused and compliance-related topics. Participation spanned multiple categories, including archives and records management, innovation and technology, digital preservation, ethics and compliance, governance and management, and communication strategy. Besides, we have engaged with various esteemed professional and academic institutes to foster meaningful collaborations. These collaborations aim to leverage diverse expertise, create synergies, and explore innovative approaches to achieve our shared objectives. By enhancing these collaborations, we are building stronger networks, sharing expertise, and fostering mutual advancement among professionals.

We Learnt

GRS officers participated in training and development programmes offered by professional institutions and the Civil Service College.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES





We Excelled

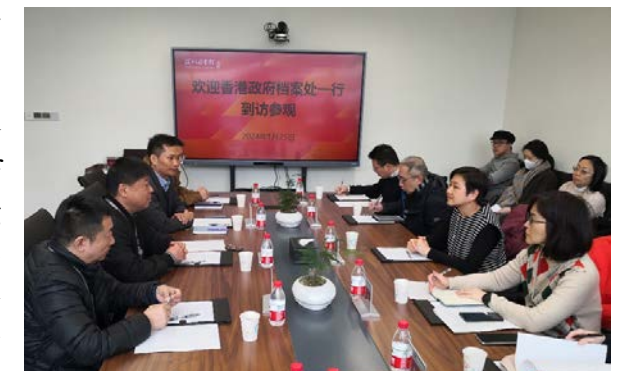
Our Archivist Grade officers continued to achieve professional recognition.

**Including Archivist Grade officers, Curator Grade officers, and an Analyst / Programmer Grade officer completing required training and passing a comprehensive examination*

We Connected

GRS fostered professional connections and played active roles in the archives and records management area.

On 25 January 2024, a delegation comprising 14 officers from GRS, along with 3 representatives from CEDD and the consulting firm AECOM, visited the North Division of Shenzhen Library (NDSL) as part of a duty visit for the project of building GRS' Archives Centre in caverns. During this visit, the delegation engaged in a comprehensive study of the Automated Storage and Retrieval System (ASRS) within NDSL's books storage area, focusing specifically on its high-speed automated sortation and carriage functions, as well as its associated hardware and software requirements. They also explored NDSL's smart library services, gaining insight into innovative approaches. In addition, the delegation participated in discussions and experience sharing sessions with NDSL experts, fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration.



GRS delegation at a meeting with the representatives from NDSL

GRS attended the 2024 Seminar of the East Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (EASTICA) held in Tokyo in November 2024. The theme of the Seminar was “Towards a New Era of Archives: Challenges and Possibilities”. GRS presented a territory report that highlighted the initiatives of GRS in response to challenges of the digital age. Besides, GRS Director attended the Executive Board Meeting of EASTICA prior to the Seminar. All GRS representatives also participated in the professional visits to a couple of cultural institutes, including the National Archives of Japan, after the Seminar.



Executive Board Members of the EASTICA in 2024

Strengthening Collaboration and Partnership with Stakeholders through Archives



A GRS archivist introduced the archival holdings to students from HKBU

To continue the successful initiative from last year, GRS co-organised the “Mapping History, Mapping Community” workshops with the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) on 8 October and 3 December 2024. The workshops introduced the description and preservation of GRS’ archival maps collections and their interrelationships with other archival holdings in order to help participating students discover the richness and diversity of GRS’ archival maps. Through the use of the Historical Geographic Information System, participants enhanced their visualisation, utilisation, and analysis of the archival holdings. Approximately 90 students from HKBU attended the workshops.



A GRS archivist exchanged ideas with students on study projects utilising GRS’ archival holdings



“The exterior of the Old Supreme Court Building”
was declared a monument in 1984
(Reference no.: 951.25 HER 1992 (1992))

Part II

Year at a Glance

Performance Pledges in 2024

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



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



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.



Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%



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

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%



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

Achievement: 100%
Target: 95%



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

Achievement: 100%
Target: 98%



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

Performance Targets / Indicators in 2024



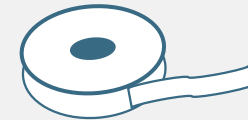
To conduct training for government officers (no. of trainees)
Achievement: 11 750
Target: 10 000

To acquire archival records (linear metres)
Achievement: 621
Target: 620



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

To microfilm records for other B/Ds (no. of images)
Achievement: 2 755 855
Target: 2 750 000



To publish records management manuals, handbooks and newsletters
Achievement: 4
Target: 2

To provide intermediate storage facilities for inactive government records in terms of utilisation rate
Achievement: 98%
Target: 95%



To render reference and research services to the public

No. of visitors
Achievement: 7 288
Target: 5 300

No. of enquiries
Achievement: 13 227
Target: 11 000



No. of group visits
Achievement: 52
Target: 30

No. of exhibition
Achievement: 1
Target: 1

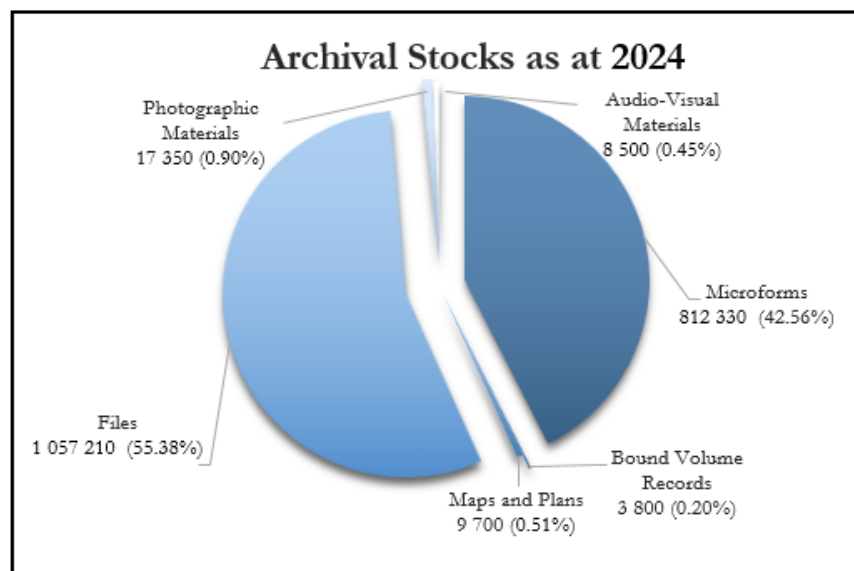
Key Statistics and Major Works

Archives Management

Archival Stocks

PRO has 2 734 Hong Kong Record Series and 245 Hong Kong Manuscript Series. They were transferred from B/Ds, offices or agencies, public organisations, private institutions and individuals, and accessioned by PRO, adding up to about 24 957 linear metres (1 908 890 nos.). The breakdown is as follows:

- Approximately 24 601 linear metres of government archives from over 100 different 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.



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, the B/D is required to review the record again every five years until the record is eventually opened. In 2024, 24 441 archival records were newly opened for public access.

Access Requests

In 2024, there were 3 460 access requests for open records and 128 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	3 460	3 460 (100%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Closed Records	128	82 (64.1%)	27 (21.1%)	5 (3.9%)	1 Note (0.8%)	13 (10.1%)

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 on our Online Catalogue @PRO. As at 31 December 2024, 49 716 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, 63 Topical Guides, various thematic web pages, etc. In 2024, two new Topical Guides, entitled “Tseung Kwan O Development (1970s – 2000s)” and “Kowloon-Canton Railway (1910-2007), have been added to the Educational Resources Portal to assist users in searching relevant PRO holdings on specific topics. Besides, two new digital photo albums, namely “Cheung Sha Wan and Sham Shui Po in the 1960s” and “Lantau Island in the 1980s”, were uploaded to GRS’ website.

Preservation and Conservation

Conservation Treatments

The number of archival and library items subjected to conservation treatments in 2024 was 59 689 sheets of document from 659 files, 506 maps and plans, and 1 album. In the year, GRS put together a team of practitioners to carry out those treatments in order to provide 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 such as providing additional support to the maps and plans. In 2024, the following items were preserved and conserved:



40 706 frames of image were microfilmed



2 929 items of archival records were assessed



7 948 items of general and classified records were inspected



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



59 689 sheets of document, **506** maps and plans, and **1** album were conserved



Mass Digitisation Project

In this technological era, there is 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 2024, GRS produced 423 103 digital images from digitising selected archival items including textual documents, bound volumes, oversized maps, architectural plans, photographs and microfilm records, bringing the total number of our digital images to about 4.5 million.

Management of Government Records

Records Scheduling and Disposal

Establishment of Disposal Authorities

As at 31 December 2024, the cumulative number of Disposal Authorities (DAs) established by B/Ds is around 7 300. The decrease when compared to the figure as at 31 December 2023 (i.e. 8 700) was mainly due to cancellation of obsolete DAs and the consolidation of overlapping/unnecessarily proliferated DAs during the DA Review Exercise in 2024.

Authorisation of Destruction of Records

Upon receipt of the disposal requests submitted by B/Ds, GRS approved the destruction of around 74 700 linear metres of records in 2024. Of these records, many are of routine nature, e.g. computer printouts relating to tax returns, reports of tax-related systems, arrival and departure cards and case files relating to immigration matters which contained personal data, air, land and sea import and export manifests, etc. All these records were confirmed to have no archival value and have met the relevant retention and disposal requirements, as well as those requirements set out in the governing legislation and regulations of the respective B/Ds.

Compliance Monitoring and Continuous Improvements

While it is B/Ds' responsibility to ensure that their records are managed properly in accordance with GRS' policy and guidance, GRS has been rendering assistance to B/Ds in this respect by way of various records management review measures, inter alia, Departmental Records Management Reviews (DRMRs). In 2024, GRS conducted two DRMRs.

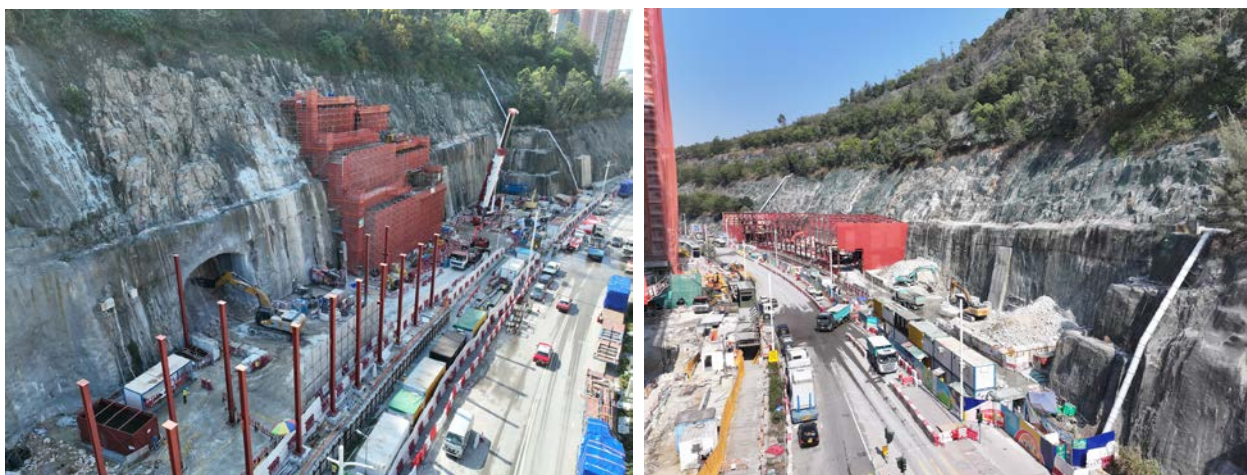
Training and Consultancy

GRS is responsible for providing consultancy services in supporting B/Ds on issues and solutions relating to records management. Various kinds of training programmes are organised, including regular classes, topical seminars, briefings and workshops for records management personnel and general records users. In 2024, GRS provided the following training services to government officers:

Training Events	No. of Participants
Training courses, seminars and briefings organised by GRS	4 139
Training courses, seminars and briefings organised by B/Ds with GRS' input	2 450
i Records Management Training (iRMT)	5 161
Total	11 750

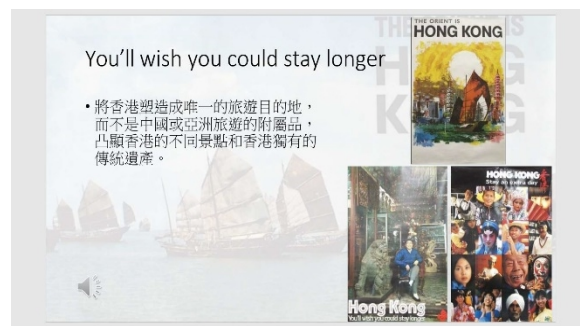
Construction of a New Archives Centre in Caverns

Blasting works to excavate rock caverns inside the mountain body of Tai Sheung Tok at the Anderson Road Quarry Development site for constructing the Archives Centre commenced in December 2024.



Blasting works for constructing the Archives Centre

Reaching Out



A post on PRO Facebook page relating to the arrival of sea lions issued on 5 January 2024 earned the top ranking in 2024. The post reached over 109 000 people, garnered more than 800 “Likes”, and was shared over 100 times.

5 Jan 2024



Jan 2024 to May 2024

To provide continued support to the implementation of the secondary history curriculum, PRO, EDB, and the Department of History of HKBU jointly organised a series of six professional seminars under the theme “The Social and Economic Development of Hong Kong in the 20th Century from the New Perspective of Tourism History”. These seminars, designed for secondary school teachers, were conducted in a hybrid format. After the inaugural seminar in December 2023, five additional seminars covering various topics were held between January and May 2024. A total of 614 secondary school teachers attended these five seminars, bringing the overall participation to 703.



12 Jan 2024

PRO organised a workshop featuring custom-designed contents and interactive games tailored specifically for kindergarten students.



PRO was invited to participate in the “Hong Kong in Archives” workshop organised by the History Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where a PRO archivist delivered a presentation. Additionally, PRO hosted a half-day visit programme to HKPRB for the participants.

2 and 3 Feb 2024



Apr and Sep 2024

25 Jan 2024

GRS’ delegation joined the representatives of CEDD in a duty visit to NDSL to learn more about NDSL’s ASRS for GRS’ Archives Centre works project.



Feb and Mar 2024

PRO organised three onsite workshops in collaboration with the Hong Kong Museum of History, focusing on the use of archival records for historical research. These workshops catered for a total of 107 participants in the 13th Inter-school Competition of Project Learning on Hong Kong’s History and Culture.

To promote GRS’ archival holdings and online resources as teaching references, two online training courses under the theme “Development of Hong Kong in the 1950s–1980s through ‘Yesterday’s Vacation in Hong Kong’” were co-organised with EDB. Delivered via the online platform Hong Kong Education City, the training courses attracted a total of 219 secondary school teachers.



New recruits for museum conservation from LCSD visited GRS. They were given a tour of the facilities at HKPRB to broaden their perspective on preservation of records.

7 Jun 2024



16 May 2024

Representatives from the Guangzhou Archives visited GRS for the research project on connections between schools in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao during the Second World War. They were introduced with relevant archival holdings in GRS and had in-depth exchanges on the research project with GRS archivists.



8 Jun 2024

In celebration of the International Archives Day, GRS together with local institutions participated in an exhibition organised by the Hong Kong Archives Society for the event at the Sally Wong Leung Hall of the Vicwood K.T. Chong Building, Po Leung Kuk. More than 20 replicas of our archival holdings were exhibited. The total number of visitors for the event was 710.

PRO presented a thematic exhibition titled “Wedding Stories in Archives” alongside a public engagement programme and an online exhibition. Featuring over 70 selected archival holdings, the exhibition uncovered lesser-known stories about traditional marriage systems and customs in Hong Kong, while also highlighting the unique charm of traditional wedding scenes, rituals, and celebrations. To enrich the onsite visitor experience, PRO introduced a range of wedding-themed offerings at HKPRB, which were well received by the audiences.

2 Sep 2024



GRS representatives attended the 2024 Seminar of the EASTICA under the theme “Towards a New Era of Archives: Challenges and Possibilities” held in Tokyo.

11 to 14 Nov 2024



8 Oct and 3 Dec 2024

GRS and HKBU continued to co-organise the “Mapping History, Mapping Community” workshops to introduce the description and preservation of GRS’ archival maps collections. Approximately 90 students participated in the workshops.



14 Nov 2024

The number of “Followers” on PRO Facebook page exceeded 18 000!

The Records Management Seminar for Public Organisations 2024 was held online. Around 750 participants from 57 public organisations attended the webinar.

3 Dec 2024



To reach a wider audience, PRO staged the series of roving exhibitions under the theme “Wedding Stories in Archives” at shopping malls, various branches of the Hong Kong Public Library across different districts, and the Administration Tower of the Immigration Headquarters.

Dec 2024 to Jul 2025

7 Dec 2024

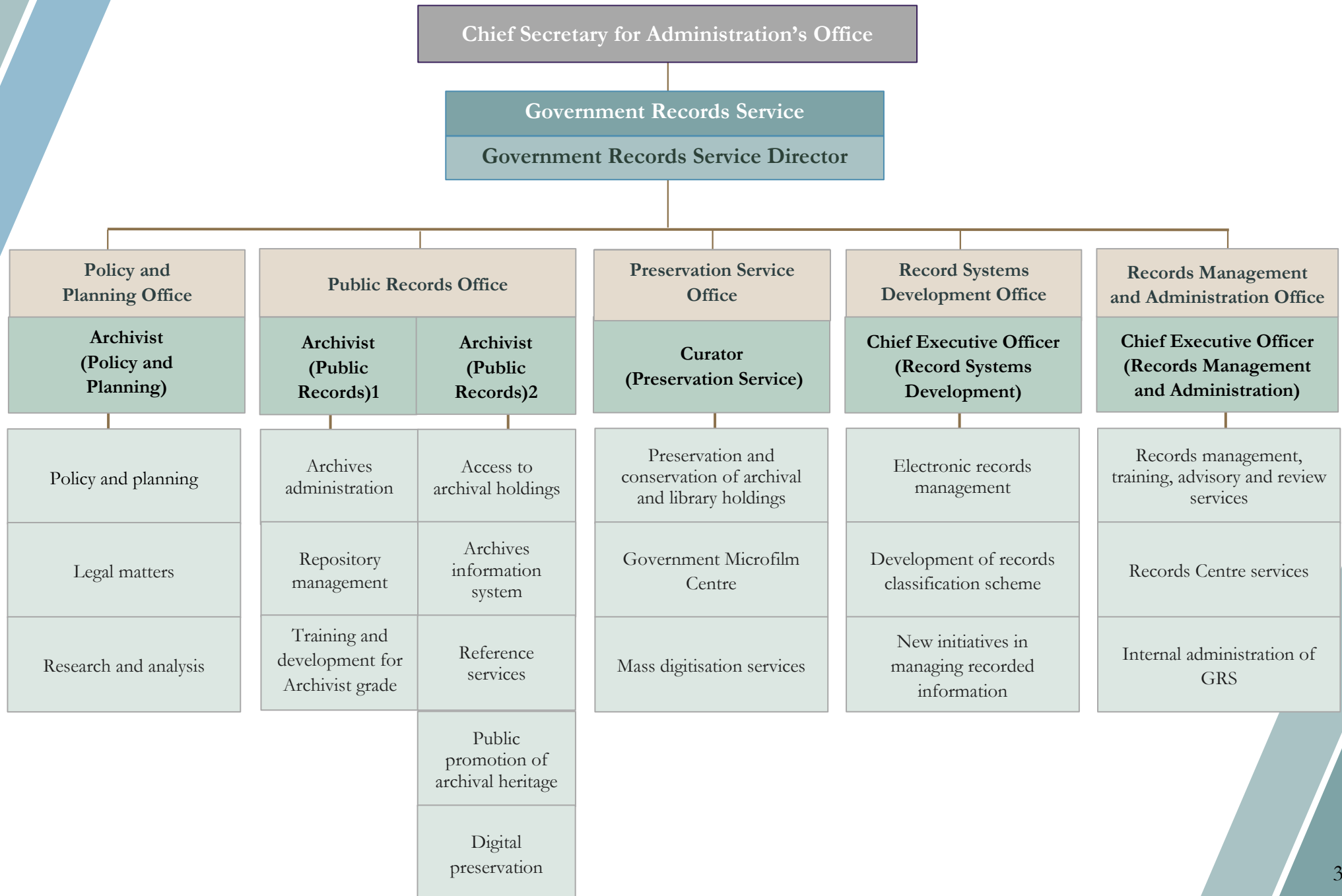
A new public engagement programme titled “Meet up with You” was introduced as part of a series of roving exhibitions for the first time, aiming to foster direct communication and interaction with the public. The inaugural session of the programme was held at the Hong Kong Central Library.



Part III

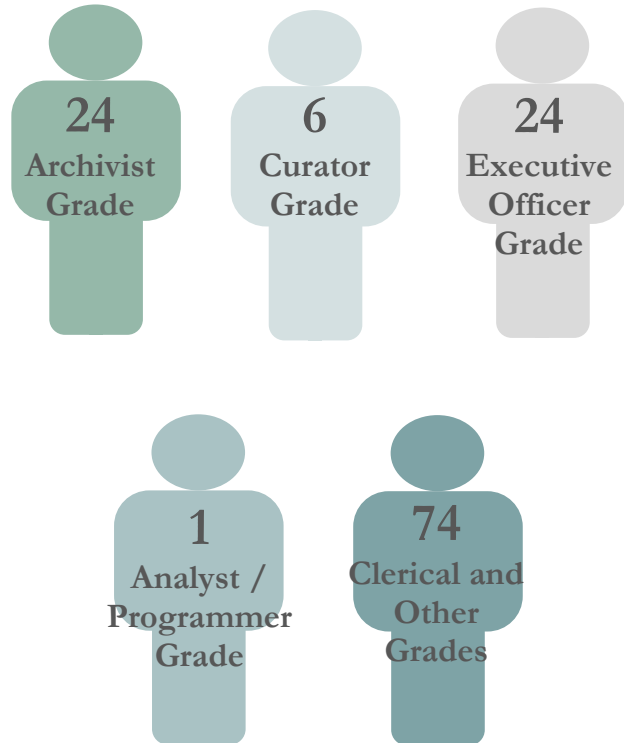
About GRS

Our Organisational Structure



Our Staff

As at 31 December 2024, GRS has 129 staff members from different Civil Service grades, working together for the betterment of records and archives management in the Government.



Our Facilities



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 electronic records management in the Government and public organisations. In 2024, we continued to adopt 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
- Incorporating green specifications into procurement exercises as far as possible to procure 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.

With colleagues' effort, the total paper consumption in GRS has decreased by 7% in 2024 compared to that in 2023.

Other energy saving measures

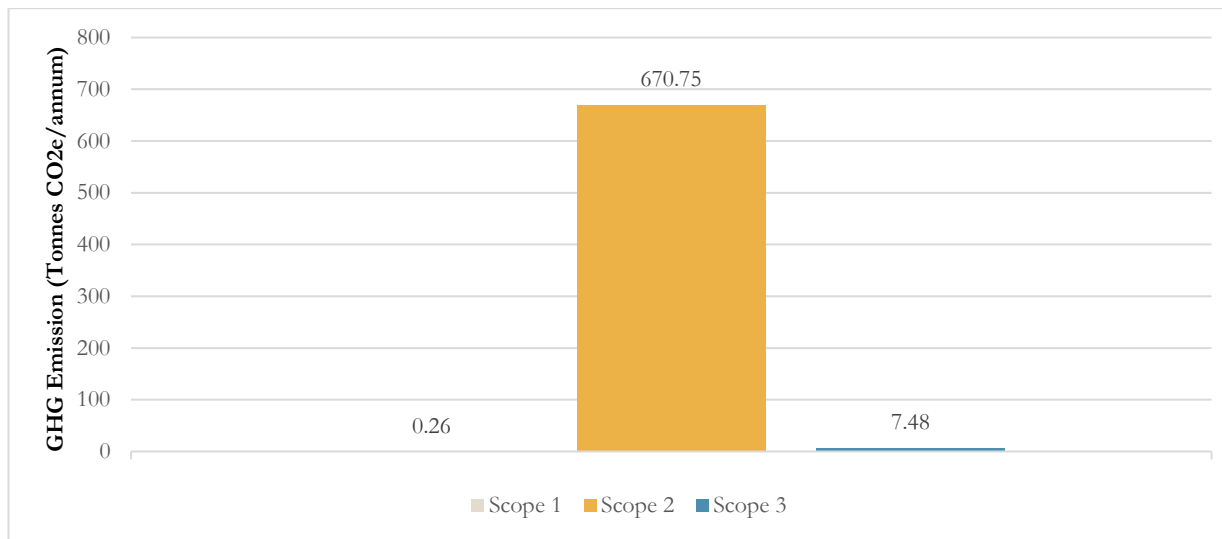
As the building manager of HKPRB, GRS is committed to promoting environmental protection and energy conservation in our building. HKPRB at 13 Tsui Ping Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, was opened in 1997 as the first purpose-built archival facility in Hong Kong. It is constructed and equipped to meet international 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 paper records in an environment with average temperature at 18°C and relative humidity 50% and even lower for records in other physical formats, 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 T5 fluorescent tubes have been replaced by T5 LED tubes;
- Switching off lights in corridors and lift lobbies outside office hours where applicable;
- Switching off at least one of the lifts outside office hours;
- Encouraging staff to use the staircase instead of lifts;
- Using automatic sensor faucet in toilets to reduce water consumption;
- Using energy efficient computers, LED lights, photocopiers, etc.;
- Separating light switches for different light zones;
- Using occupancy sensors in areas not frequently used, e.g. rear staircase;

- Maintaining air-conditioned room temperature at 25.5°C in office areas; and
- Activating hibernation modes for computers, copying machines, etc.

Energy-cum-carbon Management

A paper approach carbon audit exercise was conducted to assess the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (in terms of tonnes CO₂ per annum) of HKPRB in 2024. The audit results are as follows:



Scope 1 -
Direct GHG emissions refer to emissions from the Generator

Scope 2 -
Energy indirect GHG emissions refer to emissions from electricity purchased

Scope 3 -
Other indirect GHG emissions refer to methane generation at landfill due to disposal of paper waste and emissions from electricity used for fresh water processing and sewage processing

The above diagram shows that the major carbon emission source in HKPRB is the energy indirect GHG emissions arising from consumption of electricity. The energy indirect GHG emissions (670.75) in 2024 has decreased by 2.1% as compared to 685.31 in 2023 showcasing the effort GRS made to minimise the energy indirect GHG emissions from HKPRB.

Way Forward

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

Abbreviation

AAB	Antiquities Advisory Board
ASRS	Automated Storage and Retrieval System
BD	Buildings Department
B/Ds	Government Bureaux / Departments
CEDD	Civil Engineering and Development Department
DAs	Disposal Authorities
DPO	Digital Policy Office
DRMRs	Departmental Records Management Reviews
EASTICA	East Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives
EDB	Education Bureau
EIM	Electronic Information Management
ERKS	Electronic Recordkeeping System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GRS	Government Records Service
HAD	Home Affairs Department
HKBU	Hong Kong Baptist University
HKPRB	Hong Kong Public Records Building
HKRS	Hong Kong Record Series
iRMT	i Records Management Training
LCSD	Leisure and Cultural Services Department

MVAC	Mechanical Ventilation and Air-Conditioning
NDSL	North Division of Shenzhen Library
PMO	Programme Management Office
PRO	Public Records Office
RM	Records Management

