

27 October 2023

## **General Circular No. 5/2023**

### **Central Preservation Library for Government Publications**

(Note : Distribution of this Circular is Scale C. It should be brought to the attention of officers who, because of the functions of their posts, are required to take action on, or to be informed of, the Circular.)

#### **Purpose**

This Circular sets out the functions of the Central Preservation Library for Government Publications (CPL) of the Public Records Office (PRO), the Government Records Service of the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office and the roles and responsibilities of bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in the preservation of government publications. General Circular No. 1/2001 of 30 January 2001 is hereby cancelled.

#### **Government Publications**

2. Government publications are information resources which are published in paper and/or electronic formats at government expense, or as required by law. They provide information on a wide variety of subjects and usually in the formats of reports, statistical analyses, ordinances, maps and plans, posters and pamphlets, etc.

#### **The CPL**

3. As an integral component of PRO, CPL selects and centrally preserves government publications that are of enduring value, and provides access to these collections with a view to enhancing public knowledge and

appreciation of the documentary heritage of Hong Kong as well as understanding the Government's policies and various aspects of Hong Kong's development.

4. The functions of CPL include the following –

- (a) acquires and selects for preservation government publications in paper and electronic formats, including reports, pamphlets, posters, photographs, maps and plans, audio-visual materials, etc., produced by B/Ds;
- (b) acquires and selects for preservation rare books and printed materials relating to Hong Kong;
- (c) maximises the life of its collections through providing good storage facilities and preservation strategy; and
- (d) provides reference and reproduction services to its collections for the use of B/Ds and members of the public.

5. Since CPL is a preservation library, its hard copy collections are kept in closed-stack and available for inspection in the Search Room of PRO. Soft copies of the publications are available for viewing on designated equipment in the Search Room.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of B/Ds**

6. To help develop the collection of CPL, B/Ds are requested to inform CPL within two calendar months after a new publication is issued. CPL will also from time to time approach B/Ds to ensure list(s) of new publications have been provided to CPL. For a publication which meets the selection criteria (see paragraph 7 below), CPL will inform the B/D concerned to transfer one hard copy or one soft copy of each of the publication to CPL for preservation. For providing easy access by the public online, a soft copy of the publication is more preferable. In case the publication is not produced in the medium/format as specified in the **Annex**, B/Ds are required to convert the publication into the required format (e.g. convert information posted on

departmental website into a pdf format<sup>1</sup> file) and send it to CPL. For publications issued by joint programme involving more than one B/D and/or external bodies/organisations, or ad hoc committees formed for specific studies/consultation/inquiries, the chair B/D or the B/D which provides secretariat support will be responsible for transferring the publication to CPL.

## **Selection Criteria**

7. CPL preserves publications produced by B/Ds which document their functions, policies, programmes, services, operation and interaction with the public and contain significant information about Hong Kong. Selection criteria of publications and the file formats acceptable to CPL for preservation are at the **Annex**.

## **Selection of B/Ds' Library Materials by CPL before Disposal**

8. Some of the B/Ds have their own library and regularly dispose of obsolete library items. Prior to disposing of any library materials other than those listed in the **Annex**, B/Ds should consult CPL by providing a list of their library materials for selection. CPL may require B/Ds to transfer the items that meet the selection criteria and warrant permanent preservation.

9. For items not selected for CPL's permanent preservation, B/Ds should dispose of them according to the procedures promulgated under the Stores and Procurement Regulations or established departmental weeding policies as appropriate. CPL is not responsible for granting approval for destruction of B/Ds' library items.

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<sup>1</sup> PDF/Archive (PDF/A) is preferable. It is an International Organization for Standardization standard (ISO 19005: Document Management - Electronic Document File Format for Long-Term Preservation) designed for long-term archiving. A document in the PDF/A format can preserve its "visual appearance over time, independent of the tools and systems used for creating, storing, or rendering the files".

## Contact Details

10. Enquiries on this Circular should be addressed to Senior Assistant Archivist (Public Records) 6 of the PRO at 2195 7829. Other contact details of CPL are as follows –

Central Preservation Library for Government Publications  
Public Records Office  
1/F Hong Kong Public Records Building  
13 Tsui Ping Road  
Kwun Tong  
Kowloon  
Tel: 2195 7829  
E-mail: [CPL@grs.gov.hk](mailto:CPL@grs.gov.hk)  
Website: [www.grs.gov.hk](http://www.grs.gov.hk)

11. This Circular should be re-circulated annually.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nicholas CT Chan', written over a faint circular stamp.

(Nicholas CT Chan)  
for Director of Administration

c.c. Judiciary Administrator  
The Ombudsman

## Selection Criteria and Format Requirement of Publications to be sent to the Central Preservation Library for Government Publications (CPL) for Preservation

### Selection criteria

Please send the publication/ printed material produced by bureaux/departments (B/D) to CPL if it meets any one of the following criteria:

- ☐ it documents or reflects the functions of the B/D;
- ☐ it documents policies and strategies formulated/ implemented by the B/D;
- ☐ it documents programmes and services launched by the B/D;
- ☐ it documents the operation of the B/D;
- ☐ it documents the B/D's interaction with the public; or
- ☐ it documents significant information about Hong Kong.

### Examples<sup>1</sup>

Examples of publications and printed materials to be sent to CPL for preservation	Examples of publications and printed materials DO NOT need to be sent to CPL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budget Speeches <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy Addresses <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government Gazettes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Departmental reports (excluding Departmental Environmental Reports, or other reports on routine administrative matters) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research reports and operational studies conducted or prepared by B/Ds for policy formulation (e.g. <i>Railway Development Strategy 2014</i> , then Transport and Housing Bureau) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interim and final reports commissioned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Press releases and speeches <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newsletters, newspapers and magazines <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publication catalogues <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performing and cultural programme catalogues, posters and leaflets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exhibition catalogues of thematic exhibitions not related to Hong Kong (e.g. <i>"An Age of Luxury: the Assyrians to Alexander" Exhibition Catalogue</i> , Hong Kong Museum of History)

<sup>1</sup> This is not an exhaustive list of publications to be preserved or rejected by CPL. Rather, it aims to provide examples for B/Ds to facilitate their identification of library materials to be transferred to CPL for preservation. For items marked with '\*' or '\*\*', please also refer to the format requirements of soft copy.

Examples of publications and printed materials to be sent to CPL for preservation	Examples of publications and printed materials DO NOT need to be sent to CPL
<p>by B/Ds, such as those produced by ad hoc committees formed for specific studies/consultation/inquiries, interdepartmental working groups or Government-funded statutory bodies and organisations, or directly related to B/Ds' main business (e.g. <i>Heritage Study on Central Government Offices Complex</i>, commissioned by Antiquities and Monuments Office)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reports by independent investigation panel and commission of inquiry Reports (e.g. <i>Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Excess Lead Found in Drinking Water</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation papers on government administration, policies, regulations or prospectus regime (e.g.; <i>Public Consultation on the Review of the Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW) Rate</i>, Minimum Wage Commission.)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Key statistics and indexes related to Hong Kong (e.g. <i>Port of Hong Kong in Figures</i>, Marine Department)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guidance and standards on policies formulated or implemented by B/Ds, or specific regulations (e.g. <i>Layman's Guide on Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme</i>, Buildings Department; <i>Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme</i>, then Transport and Housing Bureau; <i>Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (2017)</i>, Curriculum Development Council)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Codes of practice in relation to B/Ds' missions (e.g. <i>Code of Practice for Metal Scaffolding Safety</i>, Labour Department)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exhibition catalogues of thematic exhibitions related to Hong Kong (e.g. <i>"The Legend of Hong Kong Toys" Exhibition Catalogue</i>, Hong Kong Museum of History)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Posters relating to services launched by B/Ds or territory-wide campaigns or</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General reference works (e.g. dictionaries and encyclopedias)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School textbooks</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial journals not published by the Government</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proceedings of seminars, conferences or workshops not related to Hong Kong</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blank forms</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leaflets of service centre</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Facilities and venues user guides</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance pledges</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reports of indoor air quality of offices</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name lists of advisory board / committee members</p>

Examples of publications and printed materials to be sent to CPL for preservation	Examples of publications and printed materials DO NOT need to be sent to CPL
<p>programme (e.g. <i>Keep Hong Kong Clean, We Can Do It!</i>, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department)*</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maps, drawings and plans*</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publicity materials other than posters, including promotional audios and videos in relation to B/Ds' functions (e.g. <i>Beware of Employment Scams, Be a Cautious Job Seeker</i>, Labour Department)**</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Glossaries (e.g. 《政府部門常用辭彙》)</p>	

### **Format requirement of soft copy<sup>2</sup>**

<b>Medium Categories</b>	<b>Acceptable Formats and Specifications</b>
Document Files	PDF/A <sup>#</sup> (ISO 19005)  PDF (ISO 32000)  ODF (ISO/IEC 26300)  Open Office XML (ISO/IEC 29500)
Graphics or Images - items marked with asterisks (*)	TIFF <sup>#</sup>  JPEG 2000 (ISO/IEC 15444)  JPEG (ISO/IEC 10918)  PNG (ISO/IEC 15948)  GIF
Sound Recordings - items marked with two asterisks (**)	FLAC  MP3  WAV  BWF
Audio-visual Files - items marked with two asterisks (**)	MPEG 4 (ISO/IEC 14496)  MPEG 2  AVI  MOV  WMV

<sup>#</sup> preferable format and specification

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<sup>2</sup> These format requirements are making reference to ISO/TR 22299: 'Document management – Digital file format recommendations for long-term storage', which gives guidelines for selecting the most appropriate file format(s) for the storage, usability, and exchange of data with long-term management objective.