



ANNUAL REPORT

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



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Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2023 Annual Report of the Government Records Service (GRS).

Every year, GRS curates and stages thematic exhibition to promote public appreciation of our archival holdings. With overwhelming response from the public, we continued to enrich our onsite thematic exhibition “Yesterday’s Vacation in HK” with an online exhibition and a 360-degree virtual tour. Featuring a selection of tourism-related archival holdings surrounding four themes, namely “Sights and Scenes”, “Shopping Paradise”, “Paradise for Foodies” and “Happenings in the City”, the thematic exhibition certainly served as a looking glass for members of the public to revisit the old Hong Kong.

In the year, we elevated our efforts in taking forward the Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address - Policy Measures on the full implementation of the Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) for all government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) within 2025 to enhance efficiency in preserving and managing government records. To support the full implementation of ERKS in the Government, GRS in collaboration with the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the then Efficiency Office (EffO) (combined as Digital Policy Office since July 2024), has developed a new information system – Central ERKS. The Central ERKS has multiple records management capabilities (such as creation of filing folders, capturing of records, as well as retention and disposal of records), which is a very useful tool to facilitate B/Ds in managing the voluminous records generated during their daily operation.

As the central archives for permanent retention of archival records of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, GRS has been serving the community at our existing purpose-built Hong Kong Public Records Building (HKPRB) in Kwun Tong since 1997. As our services, establishment and archival holdings expand over the years, our archives repositories have reached the maximum capacity. Against the above backdrop, we have embraced the challenge of constructing our new Archives Centre (AC) with larger archives repositories inside the mountain body of Tai Sheung Tok at the Anderson Road Quarry Development site. We are confident that the rock caverns will not only provide favourable environmental conditions (e.g. stable temperature and relative humidity) for safeguarding our precious archival holdings, but also act as an effective shelter to shield the archives repositories from torrential rain and the scorching sun as well as to buffer the external temperature, thereby reducing electricity consumption and impact on the environment.

Through the feature articles and major statistics stipulated in this report, I hope that you will have a more solid understanding of the work of GRS, the records and archives management in the Government, and the rich and diverse local documentary heritage we preserve.

Joseph W H SIU
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

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

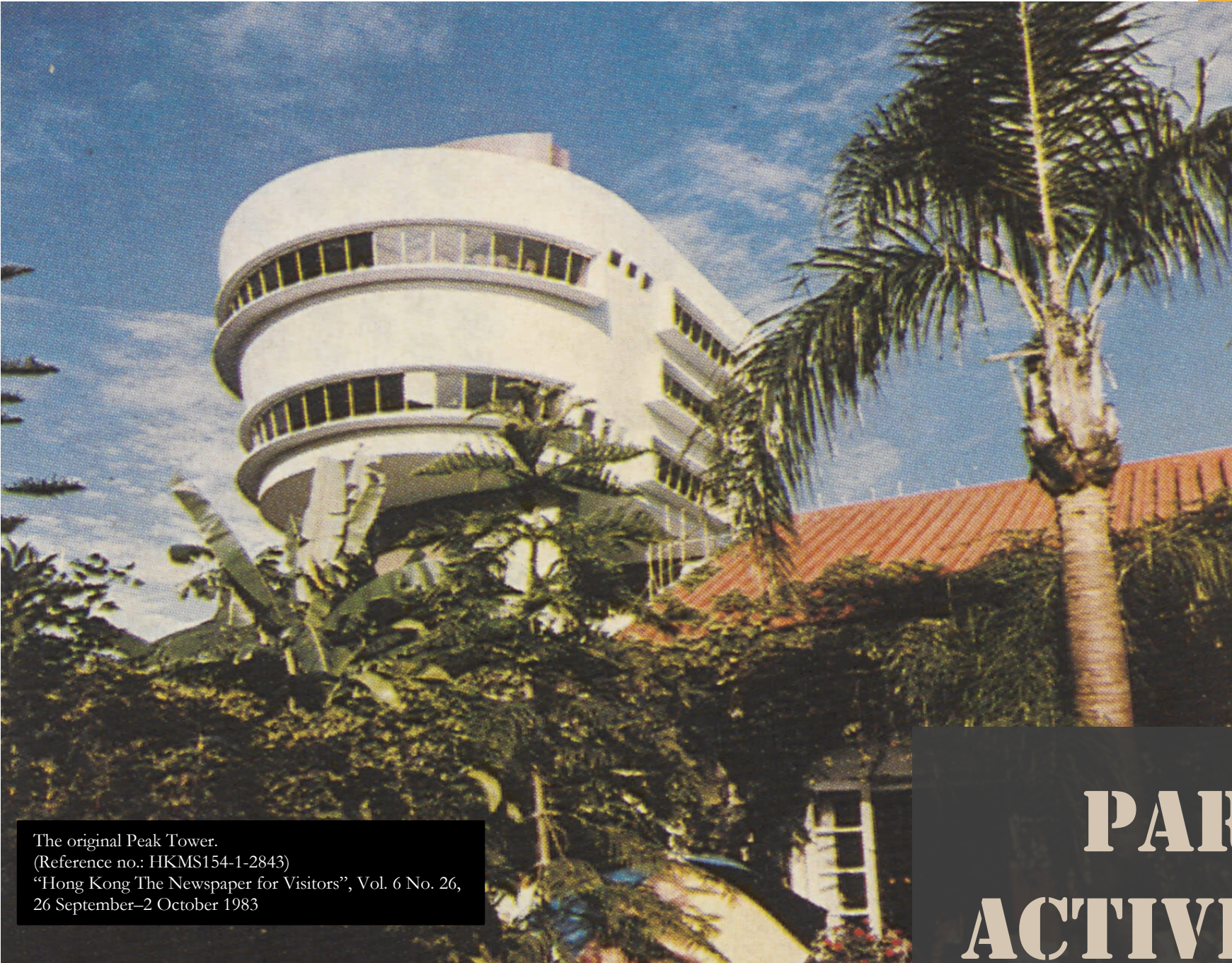
Enhance public access to our archival collections.

Transparency

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



(From left to right) Mr Albert LAI, Curator; Miss Susanne YEUNG, Chief Executive Officer; Miss Jessica LAU, Archivist; Mr Joseph SIU, Government Records Service Director; Mr Bernard HUI, Archivist; Mr Eddie CHAN, Chief Executive Officer; Mr Ted CHENG, Archivist



The original Peak Tower.
(Reference no.: HKMS154-1-2843)
“Hong Kong The Newspaper for Visitors”, Vol. 6 No. 26,
26 September–2 October 1983

PART I – ACTIVITIES IN RETROSPECT

Yesterday's Vacation in HK: Take a Trip Down to the Old Hong Kong

How did visitors spend their days travelling in Hong Kong in the old days? What were the must-try experiences for visitors during the 1950s to the 1980s? The thematic exhibition “Yesterday's Vacation in HK” (the Exhibition) organised by the Public Records Office (PRO) of the Government Records Service (GRS) in 2023 featured a selection of tourism-related archival holdings and provided a refreshing entry point for members of the public to revisit the old Hong Kong through the lens of visitors.

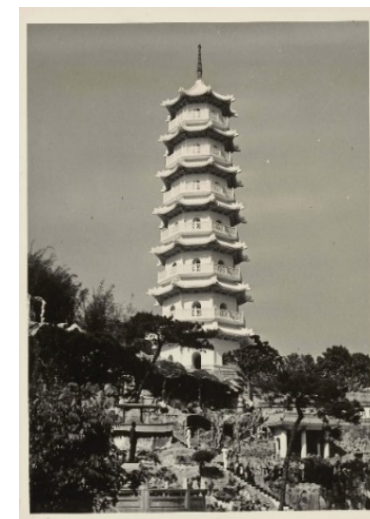


The Exhibition unveiled visitors' diverse experiences in town, and highlighted a variety of tourist attractions under the themes of “Sights and Scenes”, “Shopping Paradise”, “Paradise for Foodies”, and “Happenings in the City”

An imitated marketplace in the Sung Dynasty Village (“Orient The Visitors’ Newspaper”, Vol. 10 No. 15, 6–12 March 1981) (Reference no.: HKMS154-1-2619)

Highlights of the Exhibition

The Exhibition focused on tourism in Hong Kong from the 1950s to the 1980s. By displaying over 70 archival holdings at the Exhibition Hall of the Hong Kong Public Records Building (HKPRB), the Exhibition shed light on different facets of lives back in the days. The Exhibition highlighted a selection of nostalgic bygone scenes. Some scenic spots and landmarks popular among visitors back then, such as the Sung Dynasty Village and Haw Par Mansion, had either become history or undergone drastic changes. Members of the public could look back on these vanished landmarks and the imitated marketplace in the Sung Dynasty Village, buildings and statues inside the Haw Par Mansion, etc., through our archival holdings.



The seven-storey White Pagoda, part of the Haw Par Mansion (c.1959) (Reference no.: HKRS365-1-38-1)

The Exhibition also introduced visitors' diverse experiences that reflected Hong Kong's East-meets-West culture. According to various tourist guides, visitors could get a taste of Hong Kong-style delicacy by savouring a variety of exquisite dim sum served at tea houses or dining on sampans and floating restaurants at typhoon shelters. Apart from the abovementioned local culinary culture, visitors could also enjoy a wide variety of international cuisines, including Western, Japanese and Italian cuisines in Houston Street (which was known as the "Food Street"). The bilingual menus offering the Romanisation and English descriptions of Chinese dishes were another intriguing discovery for visitors on the dining table.



Different ways of peddling dim sum (c.1968)
(Reference no.: HKRS365-1-314-3)



Visitors enjoying dinner aboard a hired sampan ("Orient The Visitors' Newspaper", Vol. 9 No. 23, 2-8 May 1980) (Reference no.: HKMS154-2-2877)

Dining experiences aside, a wide range of local and world-class events and activities recommended for visitors during the 1950s to the 1980s also revealed the cultural vibrancy of Hong Kong. Year-round significant events included but not limited to the Cheung Chau Bun Festival, Dragon Boat Festival Race, Festival of Asian Arts, and Chinese New Year celebration activities. The participation of the visitors in the various aspects has painted a vivid picture of the special traditional and modern elements of the city.



International Dragon Boat Festival in 1988, co-organised by the then Hong Kong Tourist Association and the then Urban Council (Reference no.: X1000148)

Engaging Visitors and Touring Around

To facilitate an enjoyable and engaging journey for onsite visitors, various travelling-themed offerings were available at HKPRB. The lift lobby of 2/F of HKPRB was where visitors began their exhibition journey with a photogenic backdrop near the entrance of the Exhibition Hall for sharing their “check-in” photographs on social media. An “Exhibition Pass” booklet, which guided onsite visitors to accomplish certain tasks while enjoying the Exhibition, was also available. Members of the public were invited to collect stamps and answer the exhibition-related questions in the booklet, in return they could redeem a souvenir to conclude their exhibition journey. The souvenirs distributed were also welcomed by participants with an overwhelming enthusiasm.



Different props of the theme of travel, such as “suitcase”, “boarding pass”, “plane” and “sunglasses” were provided for onsite visitors to take photographs with



Onsite visitors could redeem a souvenir to conclude their exhibition journey by completing the tasks in the “Exhibition Pass” booklet available onsite

The Exhibition went beyond the Exhibition Hall at HKPRB by touring at eight branches of the Hong Kong Public Library in different districts to facilitate members of the public to visit the Exhibition.



Roving exhibition held at the Hong Kong Central Library

Online Exhibition and PRO Facebook Page

To facilitate members of the public viewing the Exhibition without time and space constraints, an online exhibition¹ was also available in parallel, in which over a hundred images of precious archival holdings as well as videos relevant to tourism in Hong Kong from the 1950s to the 1980s were showcased. The 360-degree virtual tour available at the online exhibition also allowed members of the public to explore the archival holdings displayed in the Exhibition Hall at their own pace. The public could also follow the PRO Facebook page² for more interesting stories covered in the Exhibition.

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

Home Sights and Scenes Shopping Paradise Paradise for Foodies **Happenings in the City** Events and Information EN | AA

Happenings in the City

From cultural experiences, sports events, to festival activities—Hong Kong always has something to offer! There are various events held in every season, which enable both locals and visitors to participate in local and world-class events, and experience the unique culture and traditions of Hong Kong. Below are the activities recommended for visitors at the time.

Spring



Summer



Autumn



Winter



More previous archival holdings could be viewed at the online exhibition

¹ The online exhibition is accessible at <https://www.grs.gov.hk/ws/online/yvbk/en/home/index.html>.

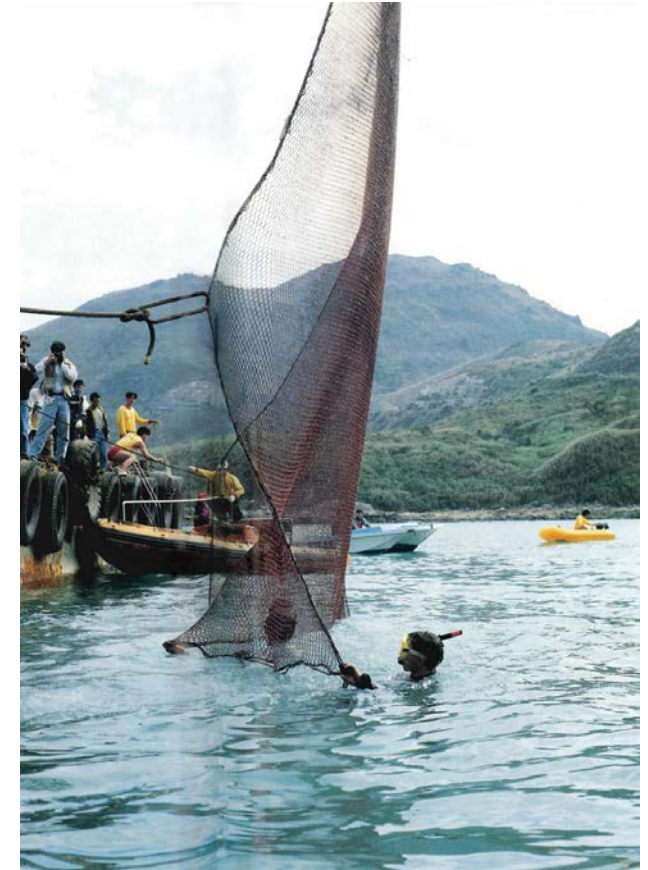
² PRO Facebook page is accessible at <https://www.facebook.com/grs.publicrecordsoffice>.

Highlights in Newly Released Archival Records about Shark Prevention

Swimming is a cherished summer activity in Hong Kong. As you delightfully swim in the waters off the beaches, are you cognisant of the fact that in the early 1990s, a wave of panic swept across these very beaches due to shark attacks?

In the summers of the early 1990s, Hong Kong's beaches became the backdrop for several fatal shark attacks. In June 1991, a shark claimed the life of an elderly swimmer in the waters off Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung managed by the then Regional Council. Two years later in June 1993, two early morning swimmers were fatally attacked by sharks off Sheung Sze Wan and Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung, igniting a wave of terror among the swimming community. The horror of these attacks was reminiscent of the fear portrayed in shark-themed movies. Films like "Jaws" (1975) have depicted the horror and panic that shark attacks can induce. These cinematic portrayals served as a stark reminder of the potential danger lurking in the waters.

Given the potential risk of injuries and fatalities from shark attacks, a variety of preventative measures were implemented in the early 1990s. One of the most prominent measures was the installation of shark prevention nets. In a meeting held in June 1993, the then Regional Council decided to experiment with new shark prevention facilities and measures, including shark prevention nets. An Ad Hoc Committee on Shark Prevention was subsequently established, and proposals were invited from interested contractors. An Inter-departmental Vetting Committee, comprising representatives from the then Agriculture and Fisheries Department, the Architectural Services Department, the then Civil Engineering Department, the Marine Department, and the then Regional Services Department, was formed to select the proposals. In 1994, shark prevention nets were installed at Clear Water Bay Second Beach and Silverstrand Beach in Sai Kung, as well as Kadoorie Beach in Tuen Mun. These nets served as a formidable barrier, completely enclosing the swimming areas of the beaches.



Experimental shark prevention net being installed at the Clear Water Bay Second Beach (1994) (Reference no.: X1000580)



Furthermore, a comprehensive package of safety measures was implemented to bolster beach safety against the threat of shark attacks. These measures included distribution of information leaflets and display of posters to raise public awareness about avoiding shark attacks. To enhance surveillance, additional lookouts were established at beaches, providing a better view in monitoring the beach areas and adjacent waters. The Government Flying Service also played a crucial role by deploying light aircraft for shark-patrol exercises during weekends and public holidays of the swimming season.

Members of the public are most welcome to inspect the newly released archival records at HKPRB and revisit the fascinating history of shark prevention works in Hong Kong.

Poster “Welcome to this beach. Observe the warning signals” with descriptions on the shark warning flag (1992) (Reference no.: HKRS1596-7-4)

公共交通
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

區域 District	海灘名稱 Name of Beaches	公共交通 Public Transport
荃灣 Tuen Mun	荃灣公眾碼頭 Tuen Mun Public Pier	荃灣碼頭巴士 Tuen Mun Pier Bus
	荃灣公眾碼頭 Tuen Mun Public Pier	荃灣碼頭巴士 Tuen Mun Pier Bus
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請遵守安全及警告訊號
OBSERVE THE WARNING SIGNALS

It is a rule to observe and that every swimmer should be under the supervision and surveillance by Life Guards.

It is a rule to observe and that every swimmer should be under the supervision and surveillance by Life Guards.

It is a rule to observe and that every swimmer should be under the supervision and surveillance by Life Guards.

請閱讀有關如何避免鯊魚襲擊的一般方法
GENERAL ADVICE ON HOW TO AVOID SHARK ATTACKS

- Do not swim when shark warning signals is hoisted.
- If possible, do not swim at dusk or at night.
- Do not swim alone.
- Do not swim if you are bleeding or have any open wounds.
- Stay in shallow water, as the larger sharks prefer deeper water.
- If a sharking fish alert is hoisted, everybody who start to congregates in crowdedly large numbers, leave the water.
- If the shark is spotted in the area, leave the water as quickly and calmly as possible.

游泳安全守則
SAFETY RULES FOR SWIMMERS

Do not swim immediately after a meal.

Do not swim into unknown waters.

Take good care of your children.

Try to help when in difficulty.

Do not swim in the dark.

Do not help an swimming aid.

Watch out before you help.

Learn to swim and know your swimming ability.

Do not swim alone.

Stay out of water during thunderstorms.



Information leaflet “Beaches in Regional Council Area” with advice on how to avoid shark attacks (1992) (Reference no.: HKRS1596-7-5)

New Treasures Unearthed: Acquisitions and Appraisals

In 2023, approximately 621 linear metres (115 045 nos.) of records were appraised and identified as having archival value, and subsequently transferred to GRS for permanent retention. Highlights from the newly acquired record series are listed below:

- Files relating to development of manufacturing industry from the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
- Files relating to promotion of civic education from the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau
- Files relating to survey of drug use among students from the Security Bureau
- Files relating to architectural projects for construction of public facilities/infrastructure from the Architectural Services Department
- Files relating to construction of the North Lantau Transport Corridor from the Architectural Services Department
- Files relating to departmental organisational matters from the Architectural Services Department
- Files relating to policies, standards and regulations on construction works from the Architectural Services Department
- Files relating to contracts about landslide preventive measures from the Civil Engineering and Development Department
- Files relating to planting of Bauhinia and the Bauhinia Festival from the Home Affairs Department
- Files relating to preservation and management of temples in Sham Shui Po from the Home Affairs Department
- Files relating to publicity of district administration from the Home Affairs Department
- Files relating to departmental promotional and commemorative matters from the Immigration Department
- Files relating to planning and construction process of the Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre and the Lady MacLehose Holiday Village from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department
- Files relating to welfare programmes implemented in various Kowloon districts from the Social Welfare Department



Areas around the west dam of the High Island Reservoir in Sai Kung (the late 1970s) (Reference no.: HKRS572-2-3)



Slope maintenance works at the Hong Kong Sanatorium adjacent to the Happy Valley Racecourse (1977) (Reference no.: HKRS2118-4-1)



Scenes of the Tin Hau Temple on Yee Kuk Street in Sham Shui Po (1983) (Reference no.: HKRS1185-12-2)

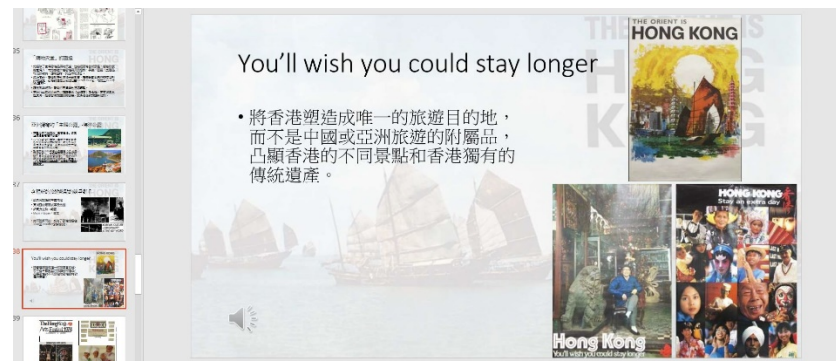
Strengthening Collaboration and Partnership with Stakeholders through Archives

In an effort to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of local documentary heritage and the archival holdings of GRS, a diverse array of public programmes (such as exhibitions, seminars, workshops, group visits and other educational activities) have been organised over the years. GRS has been striving to take proactive measures to orchestrate a series of public programmes, leveraging our collaboration and partnership with stakeholders from various sectors.

Professional Seminars and Training for Teachers

In the past decade, PRO has maintained close contact with the Curriculum Development Institute of the Education Bureau (EDB) to promote the use of GRS' archival holdings as invaluable teaching resources. A multitude of training programmes specifically designed for secondary school teachers was jointly organised.

For instance, PRO and EDB have worked in tandem to explore ways of introducing GRS' valuable archival holdings related to Hong Kong tourism to secondary school teachers. This initiative supported the learning and teaching of history in secondary schools. In addition, after several rounds of discussion with EDB, the first-ever professional seminars co-organised with EDB and the Department of History of the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) were finalised. Beginning in December 2023, a series of cross-year seminars, sharing the same theme of Hong Kong tourism as the GRS' thematic exhibition "Yesterday's Vacation in HK", will be presented by local researchers and prominent academics in a hybrid mode (i.e. onsite and online). By bringing together professional seminars and visits to the thematic exhibition, participants could thoroughly explore the archival holdings displayed and gain a deeper understanding of the development of tourism in Hong Kong.



With an average of over 100 participants joining both onsite and online sessions, the hybrid seminars received positive responses from secondary school teachers



Course information of the online professional training was announced at EDB's Training Calendar System for teachers' enrolment, which attracted the participation of 257 teachers

Besides, PRO continued the collaboration with EDB in 2023 to provide online training for secondary school teachers. To uphold the quality of the online training courses, PRO and EDB had extensive discussions on the course content and identified relevant training materials from GRS' archival holdings that best met the teachers' training needs. With professional inputs from EDB, two sessions of online professional training course with a theme related to the food and recreation development in Hong Kong were co-organised with EDB for secondary school teachers and were delivered through the online platform Hong Kong Education City. The online professional training course introduced PRO's services, took teachers on a journey to explore relevant archival holdings and walked them through online educational resources available on GRS' website. A set of questions was also provided for teachers to consolidate their new learnings from the training course.

Tailor-made School Visit Activities

With the encouraging responses and experience gained from the tailor-made public programmes for kindergarten and secondary school students in 2022, PRO actively engaged with various kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools. We customised content from our archival holdings and designed interactive games to meet their diverse needs and curricula in 2023. This initiative provided PRO with a new opportunity to promote local documentary heritage to a wider audience and extend our connection to potential young user groups.

With the aim of promoting the awareness, appreciation and proper use of local documentary heritage, PRO, Preservation Service Office (PSO) of GRS and the Records and Heritage Office of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) organised two sessions of a joint activity on 7 July and 10 July. A principal, 3 teachers and 46 senior secondary students from 5 TWGHs' schools participated in the meeting with archivists and tours to the Preservation Laboratory, Search Room and Exhibition Hall of GRS to understand better the public records management, preservation and conservation of records as well as provision of research and reference services to the public. Furthermore, under the guidance of photographers and laboratory technicians, the students also experienced the production of black-and-white photographs and learnt how to store photographs appropriately using paper folders and photo corners.



Students learning about preservation of paper records during the laboratory tour

Moreover, PRO co-organised the “Mapping History, Mapping Community” workshops with HKBU on 27 September and 1 December. The workshop introduced the description and preservation of GRS' archival maps collections and facilitated the use of archival maps through a Historical Geographic Information System. Approximately 60 students from HKBU participated in the workshop.

With the overwhelming and positive feedback from participants, GRS will make continuous efforts to enhance our public programmes and look for opportunities to promote the local documentary heritage and GRS' archival holdings to a wider spectrum of audience.

Give it a Safe and Comfortable Home: Housing Archives

As the guardian of the public records of Hong Kong, GRS is committed to preserving and protecting the documentary heritage of Hong Kong. Of all the potential risks to long-term preservation of our valuable archival records, inappropriate storage is the most detrimental. In this regard, GRS provides suitable and stable temperature and relative humidity for the archival records according to the specific needs of different materials in an environment which is free from threats posed by light exposure, gaseous pollutants, dust and pests.

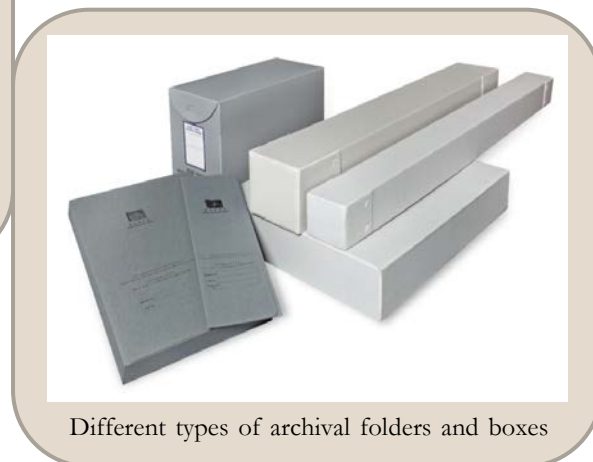
To prevent and minimise damage and future deterioration to the archival records, PSO offers professional advice on their proper storage and handling. While most of our archival records are stored in standard-sized folders and boxes, the oversized archival records are placed in appropriate-sized containers or plan chests. In 2023, more than 50 large-sized registers and 800 rolled maps were assessed and measured, facilitating selection and procurement of suitable archival boxes. Moreover, customised containers were designed and produced for various oversized maps, plans and bound volumes, etc. In the year, more than 300 archival boxes and plastic envelopes were produced. Before packaging, archival records are cleaned and treated where necessary to keep them in good condition.



GRS staff folding different types of standard-sized archival boxes



Bound volumes inside archival containers



Different types of archival folders and boxes

Archival containers are often made of paper or plastic. However, it is important to use archival quality³ materials for long-term storage, as non-archival materials may lead to irreversible damage to the archival records. Non-archival materials such as non-archival paper and paperboard may contain acids that cause staining and weaken the materials of the archival records, while plastic storage products made of polyvinyl chloride are chemically unstable and may produce acids that cause irreversible damage to the archival records. Two types of tailor-made archival containers are introduced below.

Archival Boxes

Archival boxes can be made in a variety of types, shapes and sizes. Most are made of acid-free and lignin-free corrugated paperboard. Paperboard has an advantage in that it is porous, preventing the build-up of harmful gases and moisture. They could be alkaline buffered or unbuffered. An alkaline buffered environment is important for extending the life expectancy of paper as it helps neutralise acidic gases from the environment and those released from the paper archival records themselves⁴. However, contact with alkaline materials may cause bleaching in blueprints or cyanotypes, which were widely used for reproduction of architectural drawings, so unbuffered containers should be used for these archival records. Plastic boxes can also be home-made from stable plastic materials such as polypropylene sheets or corrugated boards.



Multiple items stored within an archival box are individually wrapped and separated by dividers to prevent physical contact between archival records



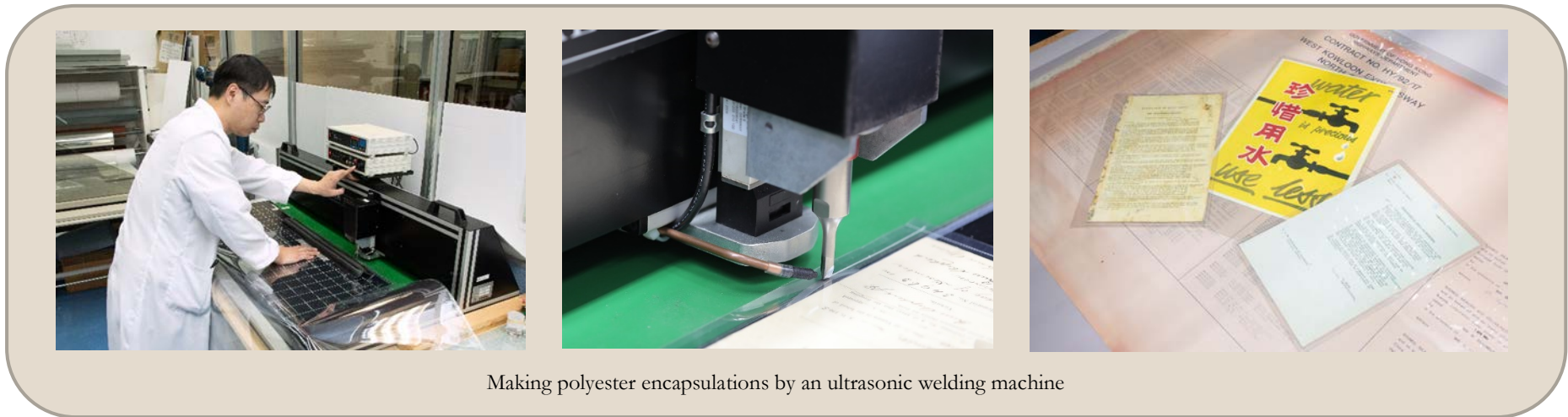
Making archival boxes from acid-free corrugated paperboard

³ Archival quality is a generic term indicating that the product is appropriate for use with archival records.

⁴ Paper degrades naturally. Lignin and other impurities oxidise and produce harmful acids, which increase the rate of deterioration of paper cellulose.

Polyester Encapsulations

An encapsulation⁵ is a transparent plastic envelope made of archival polyester films⁶ sealed around the four edges of a paper archival record with either acid-free double-sided tape or a special welding machine. Polyester encapsulation protects the archival records from abrasion and surface contact during display, storage and handling. It is commonly used for supporting and protecting fragile or damaged paper and oversized paper objects such as maps and plans. However, the electrostatic charge generated by plastic can attract friable surface media such as charcoal, pastels and soft pencil, so objects with loose media should not be stored with this method.



Making polyester encapsulations by an ultrasonic welding machine

Providing appropriate accommodation for archival records can significantly augment their preservation. Archival quality products with suitable material types and sizes should be used for the long-term storage of our valuable archival records.

⁵ Lamination differs from encapsulation in that lamination adheres the entire surface of the enclosed item to an adhesive film and a plastic layer on both sides by using heat and pressure, instead of just the edges of the plastic. It is generally difficult to reverse, therefore it is not recommended for treasured items. In contrast, encapsulation is reversible and is intended for long-term protection.

⁶ Archival polyester film is a transparent, strong, inert and durable material suitable for long-term storage.

Central ERKS Ready for Use



Central ERKS has been developed and rolled out in B/Ds

Following a review of the experience and effectiveness of the Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) pilot programme, the Government has committed in the Policy Address Supplement published in October 2019 the rollout of ERKS to all government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) by end-2025. The Electronic Information Management (EIM) Programme Management Office (PMO), consisting of representatives from the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), the then Efficiency Office (EffO) and GRS, has coordinated the full implementation of ERKS in the Government. The then OGCIO has undertaken the project management, procurement of the required software and professional services, system customisation and integration, and provision of technical advice to B/Ds while the then EffO has provided assistance to B/Ds on change management. GRS on the other hand set the functional requirements and recordkeeping metadata standards for the ERKS and has provided advisory support to B/Ds on records management issues. A new information system – Central ERKS had been developed and hosted on the Government’s private cloud platform. Before commencing implementation of the Central ERKS in B/Ds, GRS and the then OGCIO had jointly completed a comprehensive compliance check on this new system in October 2023 to ensure that it could, among others,

maintain the authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability of records it manages, and support records management functions and activities required in the Government. Some B/Ds had already rolled out the Central ERKS to users of the first phase in 2023.

Capabilities of the Central ERKS

The Central ERKS is a useful tool which provides multiple records management capabilities (such as creation of filing folders, capturing of records, as well as retention and disposal of records, etc.) to maintain the content, context and structure of records to serve as authentic, complete and reliable evidence and records of business decisions and activities. The following are some highlights of its capabilities –

- The Central ERKS has an extensive search function which enables users to search records and even contents of e-mail attachments effortlessly by keywords and/or other searching criteria such as date range, file name and file type. Users can also browse the file directory, i.e. records classification scheme (RCS), to locate their desired records by themselves without the assistance of the registry staff;
- As compared with the typical capturing of e-mails to one single location at a time, the Central ERKS allows users to capture multiple e-mails (including attachments) from Lotus Notes or Centrally Managed Messaging Platform (CMMP) e-mail client into multiple locations of the Central ERKS at the same time; and
- A value-added feature is also available to CMMP users that they can check the filing status of an e-mail in CMMP, i.e. check whether the selected e-mail had been filed to the Central ERKS previously. This can save the filing efforts of users and avoid double filing.

Kick-off Meetings and Deployment of the Central ERKS

In 2023, the EIM PMO together with the contractor conducted kick-off meetings with over 30 B/Ds. The tasks for the implementation and rollout of the Central ERKS included collection of configuration requirements, system configuration and deployment of the Central ERKS client components to workstations, user verification of the configuration data, as well as provision of user training, etc. With the steer of EIM PMO, the contractor arranged workshops on the completion of nine configuration templates. In addition, the contractor provided face-to-face briefings and hands-on training to B/Ds' users based on the EIM PMO's requirements and advice to facilitate the effective and efficient use of the Central ERKS. Computer-based training (CBT) which showed step-by-step illustration of the key functions in the Central ERKS are also offered.

Apart from having bi-weekly checkpoint meetings with the contractor, EIM PMO also attended individual B/Ds' progress meetings with a view to closely monitoring the progress of system deployment in each B/D and providing prompt advice to expedite the implementation of the Central ERKS as appropriate. Having regard to the experiences of B/Ds which had implemented the Central ERKS, some of their critical success factors are highlighted below –

- Support from senior management was very important. Some examples included providing steer and monitoring, as well as taking the lead in using the Central ERKS;
- The review of RCS should be completed before the kick-off meeting so that the contractor could provide more effective assistance to B/Ds in the completion of the configuration templates and uploading of configuration data;
- Templates completion was complicated and would require more effort and longer time than expected. B/Ds should engage the business representatives from divisions/sections early and work with the contractor closely; and
- On the training front, B/Ds should encourage their staff to attend the user training and/or CBT provided by the contractor as far as possible. Besides, some B/Ds had proactively provided all-round support to their colleagues, such as adding good practices and tips on the B/Ds' departmental intranets for wider information sharing. Some of them also introduced their own training on updated records management practices as well as tailor-made briefings on top of the contractor's training for their users.

All the above measures had facilitated B/Ds' users to adapt to the new working environment more readily.

Briefings on ERKS Implementation

To facilitate the implementation of the Central ERKS in B/Ds, GRS continued to organise briefings on the key concepts of ERKS implementation, RCS review and development of records management practices and guidelines for ERKS in 2023.

New Face with Enhanced Services: GRS' New Archives Centre

GRS has been serving the community at its existing purpose-built premises at HKPRB in Kwun Tong since 1997. Due to the expansion of services, establishment and archival holdings over the years, we have been identifying new premises since the mid-2010s. By 2019, we have decided to go for the option of constructing a new Archives Centre (AC) inside rock caverns at Anderson Road Quarry Development site. With the Legislative Council's funding approval in June 2023, GRS formally kick-started the project in the same month.



Reference design of GRS' new AC

One of the special features of the project is to build the archives repositories inside the mountain body of Tai Sheung Tok at the Anderson Road Quarry Development site. The total area of archives repositories will be over 8 700 m², providing about 76 000 linear metres storage space, which is over four times larger than the existing archives repositories at HKPRB and is capable of meeting the storage needs of at least 30 years upon inauguration. There are clear and definite advantages in this cavern option as compared to other options. Accommodating the archives repositories inside caverns not only reduces the occupation of surface land, but also provides a stable and secure environment to meet the international standard for archives preservation. In fact, the steady temperature and consistent relative humidity within the caverns create an ideal setting for sustaining the optimal storage environment of archival holdings, thereby achieving high energy efficiency.



HKPRB in Kwun Tong

To present a refreshed image to the public, GRS' facilities and the AC will undergo significant enhancements and incorporate numerous new features, which include (a) a multi-purpose hall which is also more than four times larger than the exhibition hall at HKPRB to stage holistic exhibitions facilitating the presentation of the archival holdings in a stunning and visually captivating manner and to organise more community services and educational activities such as group visits, thematic seminars, film shows and archives conservation workshops; (b) other special facilities such as the public user interview room and audio-visual room to provide quality services to the public; and (c) greening features such as a piazza, a rooftop garden and vertical greening at the façade to enhance the general public's visiting experience. Moreover, as one of the signature construction projects of the Government, this project has applied various latest technologies both in the construction process (e.g. the Modular Integrated Construction (MiC)⁷ method) to speed up the construction progress as well as in the operation equipment and systems (e.g. the Automated Storage and Retrieval System (AS/RS)⁸ and the Inventory Management System⁹) to enhance archives management, achieve high density storage and augment operational efficiency.

GRS' new AC is scheduled for inauguration in 2029, we look forward to welcoming you all there with our new face and enhanced services.



Groundbreaking Ceremony of the project held on 6 November 2023

⁷ Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) refers to a construction whereby free-standing integrated modules (completed with finishes, fixtures and fittings) are manufactured in a prefabrication factory and then transported to site for installation in a building.

⁸ An Automated Storage and Retrieval System (AS/RS) consists of a variety of computer-controlled systems and autonomous mobile robots for automatically storing and retrieving items from defined storage locations.

⁹ An Inventory Management System interfaces with the AS/RS to perform functions of archives management.

Strengthening Skills, Forging Bonds: Professional Development in 2023

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 2023, our dedicated team continued to acquire professional skills and knowledge necessary for tackling emerging challenges and fostering stronger ties with our professional counterparts.

We Learnt

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



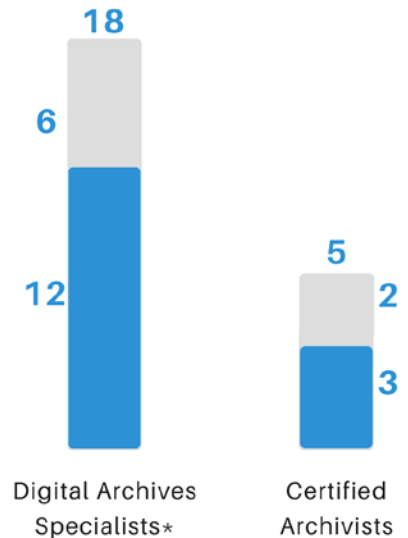
We Excelled

Our Archivist Grade officers continued to obtain professional recognition.

Our Professional Qualification

Qualified before 2023

Qualified in 2023



* Including Archivist Grade officers and Curator Grade officers completing required training and passing a comprehensive examination

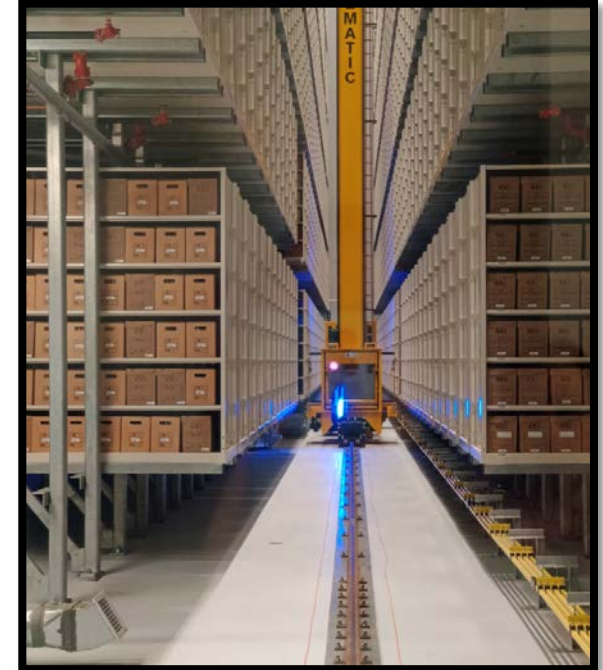
We Connected

GRS forged professional bonds and contributed to the archives and records management sector.

A delegation of GRS embarked on a duty visit to Canada in September, touring prominent institutions such as the National Library and Archives of Quebec, McGill University Collections Centre, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Library and Archives Canada, and Preservation Centre in Gatineau. The goal of this visit was to gain insight into the use of AS/RS in the sector of archives and library, the details of relocating collections, the application of smart technology in archival work, and strategies for public engagement. This knowledge has shaped and continued to guide the development of our new AC. The duty visit enriched our team with valuable experience and insight when preparing for the inauguration of the new AC in 2029.



GRS' delegation had an experience sharing session with the representatives from the Library and Archives Canada



Diverse AS/RS at the McGill University Collections Centre as well as Library and Archives Canada

Representatives from GRS attended the International Council on Archives Congress Abu Dhabi 2023 in October. The theme “Enriching Knowledge Societies” provided a platform to discuss, reflect on, and challenge existing practices while exploring and expanding the critical role that archives and information professionals play in the 21st century knowledge societies.



GRS’ representatives attending the workshop “Public Meeting: Climate Change Working Group Kickoff Meeting”



GRS’ representatives joining a guided tour to the National Library and Archives of the United Arab Emirates



Executive Board Members of the EASTICA in 2023



An Archivist of GRS presented the territory report at the 16th EASTICA General Conference

Representatives of GRS attended the 16th General Conference and the Executive Board Meeting of the East Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (EASTICA) in Shenzhen in November. The theme of the Conference was “The Roles of Archivists and Archives in the Digital Age”. GRS presented a territory report that highlighted the progress of digital preservation effort of GRS and the development of the new AC.

Fresh Eyes on Our Past: Meet Our New Archivists

Joining GRS



GRS enables us to mix business with pleasure.

Ken, Alex and Andy

(From left to right) Andy, Ken and Alex joined GRS over a year. They are currently responsible for access to archival records, public programmes and reference services respectively.

We are interested in history. Working in GRS as an archivist fulfils our aspiration for processing all kinds of primary sources everyday through collecting, preserving and promoting the local documentary heritage.

We tailor every public programme for our visitors.

Ken

Visitors to GRS come from diverse backgrounds. We once tailored a public programme specifically for visitors from kindergartens. We selected archival holdings featuring foods and designed interactive games in order to better connect with them and raise their interest in our collections. We were glad that our efforts did satisfy our “little visitors”!

Serving the public



Connecting to users



We earned sense of achievement in helping our users.

Alex



The everyday requests from users in GRS are multifaceted. Among these requests, I found facilitating users to identify the information they required through our rich archival collections very rewarding. We once spent days to provide support to a user who was looking for information about his grandparents. Finally, we made it!



We serve as a bridge for communication between the Government and the public.

Andy



Finding a balance

In my current role assisting in the processing of public applications for access to archival records, I have learnt that it is archivists' responsibilities to strive to promote and provide the widest possible accessibility to our collections. This effort is made consistently with mandatory access restrictions, such as legal restrictions, donor agreement, institutional policies, or concerns for personal data privacy.



Has any myth been dispelled after working in GRS?



Ken: “We are not working alone. We approach the public, talk to people and connect with the world.”



Alex: “We are not serving a small group of users, but people from all walks of life.”



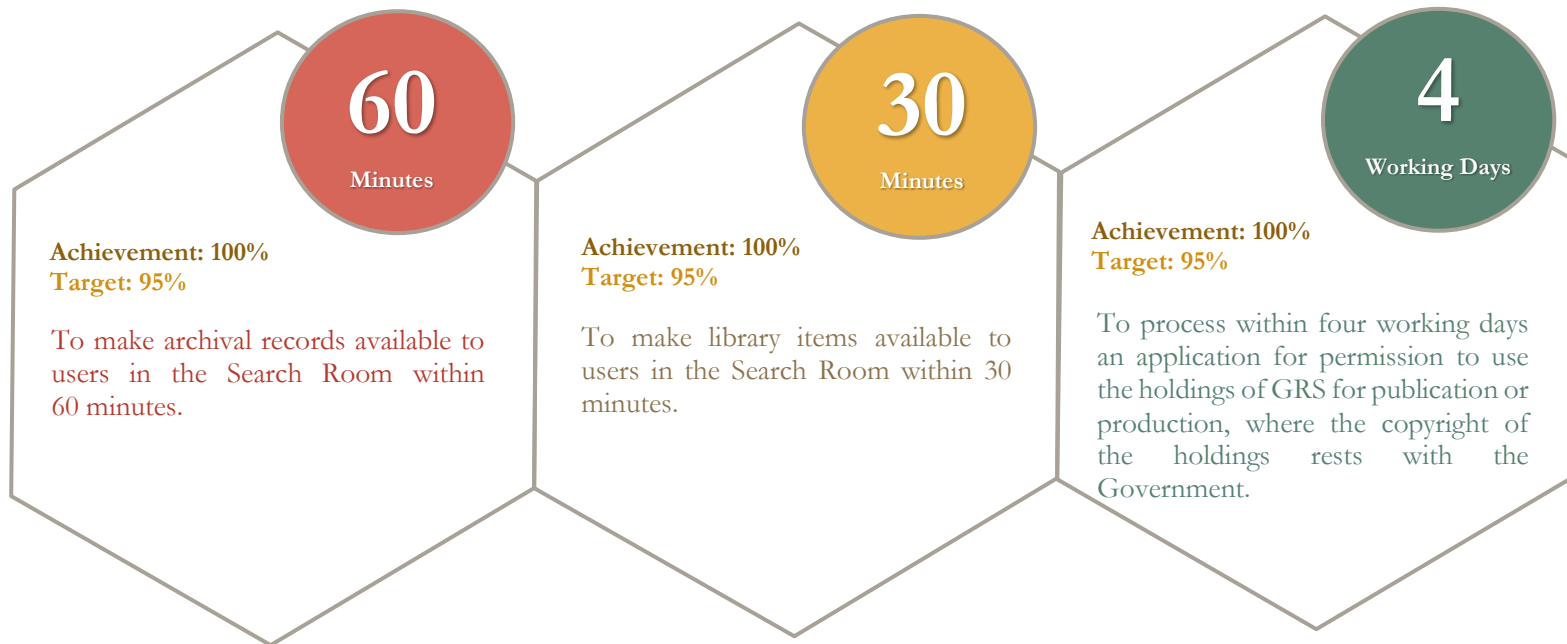
Andy: “Our work is not boring. We keep learning new skills in the digital era and see full potential in our career.”



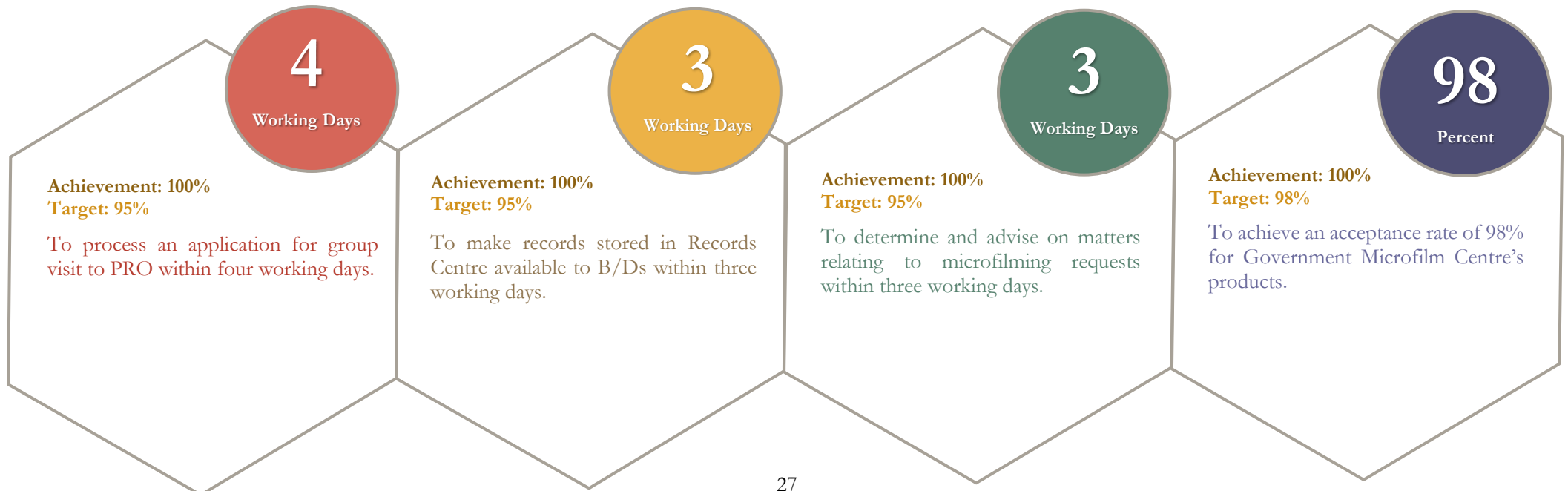


Floating restaurants in Aberdeen offered food and banquets.
(Reference no.: HKMS154-1-529)
“Hong Kong The Great Eating Adventure”, 1986

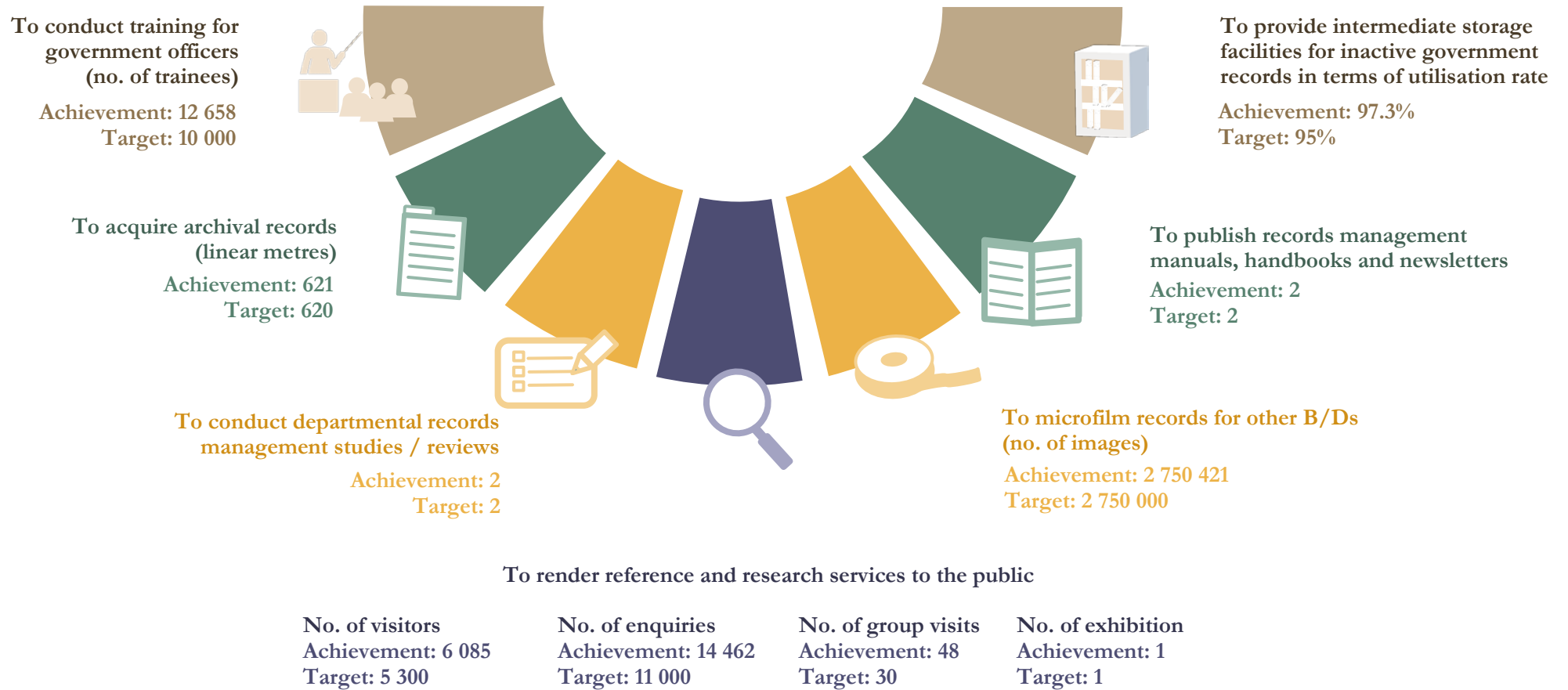
PART II YEAR AT A GLANCE



Performance Pledges in 2023



Performance Targets / Indicators in 2023



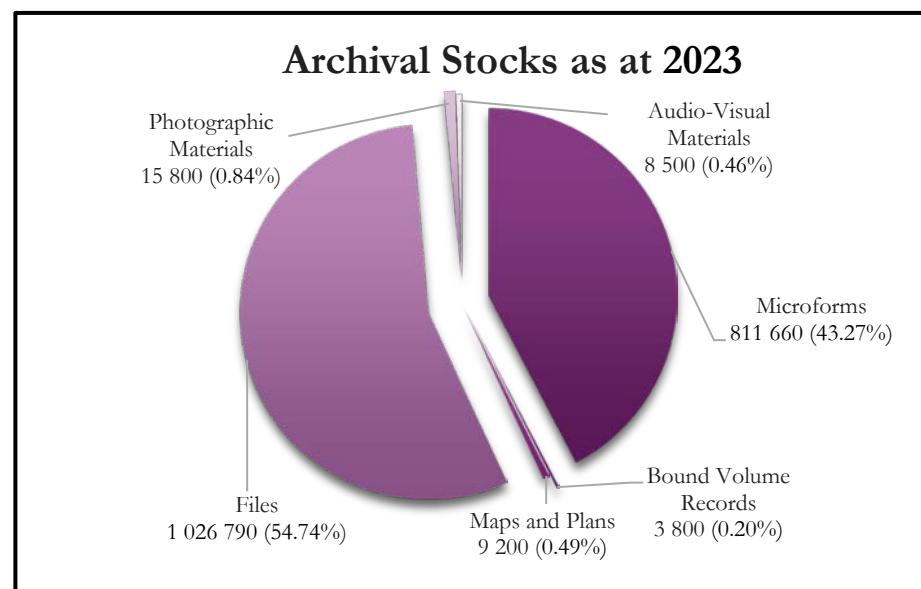
Key Statistics

Archives Management

Archival Stocks

PRO has 2 733 Hong Kong Record Series and 243 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 24 336 linear metres (1 875 750 nos.). The breakdown is as follows:

- Approximately 23 980 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, it is required to review the record again every five years until the record is eventually opened. In 2023, 24 282 archival records were newly opened for public access.

Access Requests

In 2023, there were 3 386 access requests for open records and 155 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	3 386	3 386 (100%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Closed Records	155	106 (68.4%)	31 (20%)	4 (2.6%)	1 Note (0.6%)	13 (8.4%)

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 2023, 48 753 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, 61 Topical Guides, various thematic web pages, etc. In 2023, two new Topical Guides, entitled “Waste Management” and “Child Welfare Service”, 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 “Mui Wo in the 1980s” and “Hawker Areas in Sha Tin in 1974”, were uploaded to GRS’ website.

Preservation and Conservation

Conservation Treatments

The number of archival and library items subjected to conservation treatments in 2023 was 80 521 sheets of document from 1 744 files and 8 volumes of books. In the year, GRS put together a team of practitioners 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 2023, the following items were preserved and conserved:



82 279 frames of image were microfilmed



3 263 items of archival records were assessed



8 554 items of general and classified records were inspected



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



80 521 sheets of document and **8** volumes of books were conserved

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 2023, GRS produced 473 602 digital images from digitising selected archival items including textual documents, bound volumes, oversized maps, architectural plans, photographs and microfilm records, which were comparable to the figures of last year, and brought the total number of our digital images to over 4 million.



Management of Government Records

Records Scheduling and Disposal

Establishment of Disposal Authorities

As at 31 December 2023, the accumulative number of Disposal Authorities (DAs) established by B/Ds is around 8 700. The decrease when compared to the figure as at 31 December 2022 (i.e. 14 100) was mainly due to cancellation of obsolete DAs and the consolidation of overlapping/unnecessarily proliferated DAs during the DA Review Exercise in 2023.

Authorisation of Destruction of Records

In 2023, GRS approved the destruction of around 79 400 linear metres of records. 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.

Compliance Monitoring and Continuous Improvements

While it is B/Ds' responsibility to ensure that their records are managed properly in accordance with the 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 2023, GRS conducted two DRMRs on the Labour Department and Companies Registry and their reviews are underway. As regards the five DRMRs commenced between late 2020 and 2022 on the Fire Services Department, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), Civil Aid Service, University Grants Committee Secretariat as well as Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (in the order of inspection), GRS completed the inspection and analysis on RTHK and was concluding the reviews with the other four B/Ds concerned.

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 2023, GRS provided the following training services to government officers:

Training Events	No. of Participants
Training courses, seminars and briefings organised by GRS	4 974
Training courses, seminars and briefings organised by B/Ds with GRS' input	2 602
i Records Management Training (iRMT)	5 082
Total	12 658



Records management training organised by GRS



iRMT developed by GRS

Reaching Out

13 Jan 2023



PRO was invited to organise a workshop with tailor-made content and interactive games at a kindergarten.

4 Mar 2023

The number of “Followers” on PRO Facebook page exceeded 10 000!



10 Jun 2023

In celebration of the International Archives Day, GRS participated together with local institutions in an exhibition organised by the Hong Kong Archives Society for the event at CLPulse. More than 30 replicas of our archival holdings were exhibited, attracting over 750 visitors to the event.



7 and 10 Jul 2023



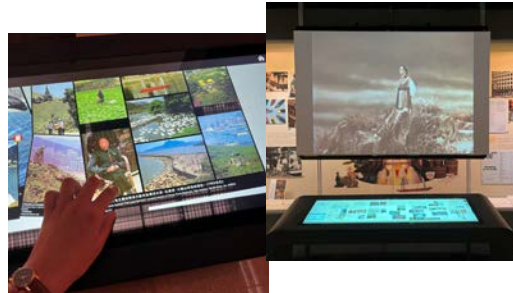
GRS and TWGHs jointly organised two activities to promote the awareness, appreciation and proper use of local documentary heritage. 50 participants from 5 TWGHs' schools attended the activities.

18 Aug 2023



A Facebook post relating to industrial buildings in the 1970s issued on 18 August 2023 received a top performance in 2023. The post reached over 510 000 persons. More than 3 900 “Likes” and 400 “Share” were recorded.

15 Sep 2023



PRO staged a thematic exhibition “Yesterday’s Vacation in HK” together with its public engagement programme and online exhibition. The exhibition showcased a selection of tourism-related archival holdings from the 1950s to the 1980s under four themes, namely “Sight and Scenes”, “Shopping Paradise”, “Paradise for Foodies”, and “Happenings in the City”, to take audience a trip down to old Hong Kong. The public engagement programme together with its souvenirs distributed were well received by the audience.

27 Sep and
1 Dec 2023

GRS and HKBU co-organised the “Mapping History, Mapping Community” workshops to introduce the description and preservation of GRS’ archival maps collections. Approximately 60 HKBU students participated in the workshop.



Oct 2023

GRS representatives attended the International Council on Archives Congress Abu Dhabi 2023 under the theme “Enriching Knowledge Societies”.

10 Nov 2023



PRO was invited to organise a workshop with tailor-made content at a secondary school.

22 Nov 2023



Representatives from the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Archives visited GRS and had an in-depth exchange regarding archives administration and preservation. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Archives' representatives were also given a tour of the facilities within HKPRB.

28 to 30 Nov 2023

GRS representatives attended the 16th EASTICA General Conference under the theme “The Roles of Archivists and Archives in the Digital Age” in Shenzhen.

12 Dec 2023

The Records Management Seminar for Public Organisations 2023 was held online. Over 800 participants from 57 public organisations attended the webinar.

Dec 2023 to May 2024

To support the implementation of the secondary history curriculum, PRO, EDB and Department of History of HKBU jointly organised 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” in a hybrid mode (i.e. onsite and online).

Dec 2023 to Jul 2024

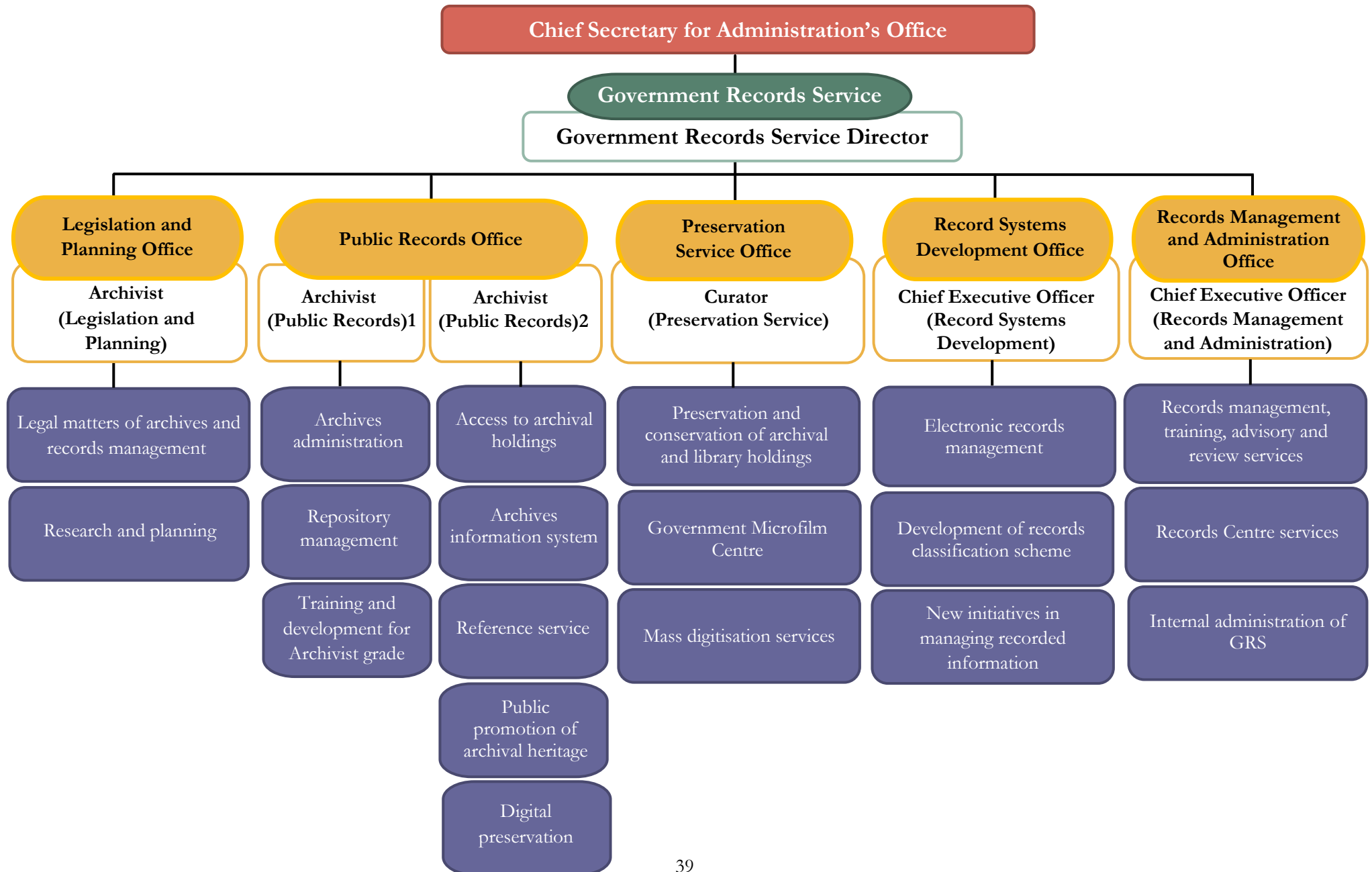
PRO staged eight roving exhibitions at branches of the Hong Kong Public Library in various districts, including the Hong Kong Central Library, Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Public Library, Tuen Mun Public Library, Ma On Shan Public Library, etc.





PART III ABOUT GRS

Our Organisational Structure



Our Staff

As at 31 December 2023, GRS has 132 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 2023, 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 5% in 2023 compared to that in 2022 despite the resumption of normal work arrangement.

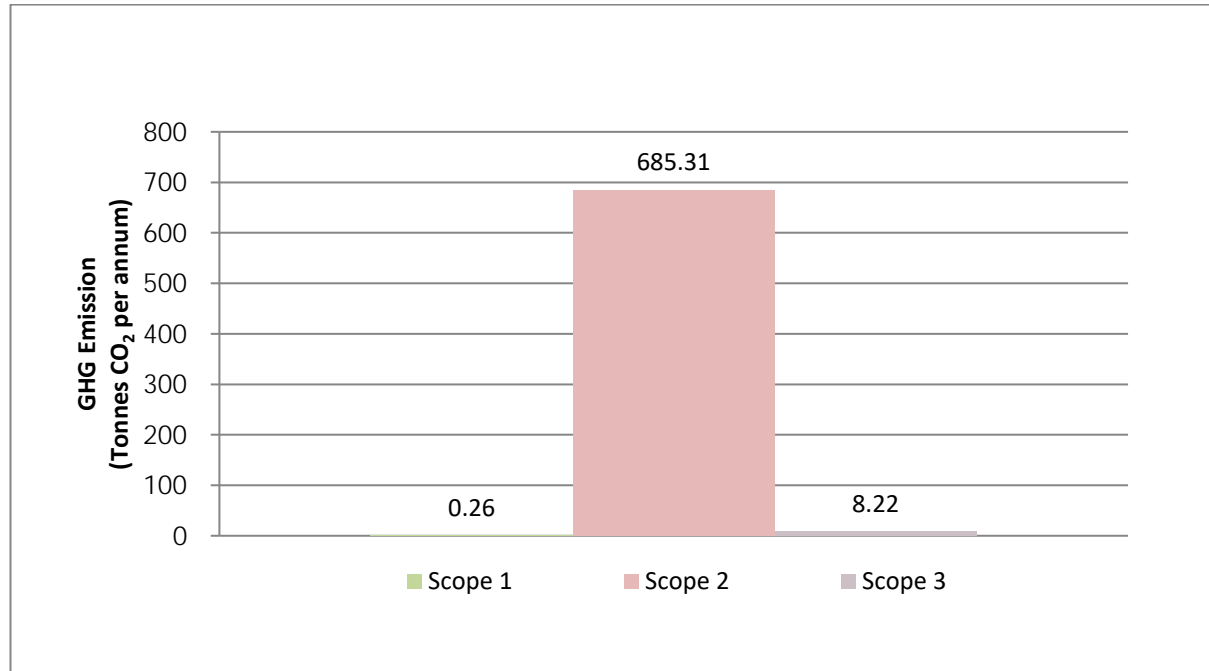
Other energy saving measures

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 at 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;
- Replacing the T5 fluorescent tubes 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, 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 2023. 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 (685.31) in 2023 has decreased by 5.9% as compared to 727.91 in 2022, manifesting the fruitful 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

AC	Archives Centre
AS/RS	Automated Storage and Retrieval System
B/Ds	Government Bureaux / Departments
CBT	Computer-based Training
CMMP	Centrally Managed Messaging Platform
DAs	Disposal Authorities
DRMRs	Departmental Records Management Reviews
EASTICA	East Asian Regional Branch of the International Council of Archives
EDB	Education Bureau
EffO	Efficiency Office
EIM	Electronic Information Management
ERKS	Electronic Recordkeeping System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GRS	Government Records Service
HKBU	Hong Kong Baptist University
HKPRB	Hong Kong Public Records Building
iRMT	i Records Management Training
MiC	Modular Integrated Construction
MVAC	Mechanical Ventilation and Air-Conditioning
OGCIO	Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
PMO	Programme Management Office

PRO	Public Records Office
PSO	Preservation Service Office
RCS	Records Classification Scheme
RTHK	Radio Television Hong Kong
TWGHs	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals

