

New Heights in International Cooperation

CHAN Pak-wai



From 25 May to 6 June, Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Director of the Hong Kong Observatory and Mr CHAN Pak-wai, Senior Scientific Officer, attended the World Meteorological Congress in Geneva, Switzerland. Held once every four years, the congress determines the general policies, strategies and long-term plans for the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Mr SHUN attended the event in the capacities of the Permanent Representative of Hong Kong, China with WMO and President of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology (CAeM), and led discussions on the developments of aeronautical meteorological services in the next decade. The congress noted the good progress of the work of CAeM, particularly the implementation of quality management system for aeronautical meteorological services by its members. Aeronautical meteorology will remain a strategic priority of WMO in the next four years, whereas the congress has approved a new Aviation Research Demonstration Project proposed by and developed under the leadership of the Hong Kong Observatory.

Under the new Global Framework for Climate Services, the congress has adopted a recognition scheme for long-term observing stations. In particular, centennial observing stations will be commended. Based on the recognition mechanism, the Observatory's headquarters will be among the first centennial observing stations recognised by WMO.

Meanwhile, the congress has accepted proposals put forward by Hong Kong, China to enhance the two WMO websites, World Weather Information Service (WWIS) and Severe Weather Information Centre (SWIC), hosted by the Observatory for the provision of authoritative weather forecasts and warnings to the public. At present, 166 WMO members contribute weather information to:



WWIS



SWIC

Rewarding Trip to Taiwan

In late May, a 15-member delegation of the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) and the Hong Kong Meteorological Society visited meteorological and academic organisations in Taiwan for the first time. The visit was marked by an official meeting between Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Director of HKO, and Mr SHIN Tzay-Chyn, representative of weather organisation. During the trip, the delegation visited the Science and Technology Center for Disaster Reduction, the Department of Atmospheric Sciences of the Taiwan University as well as the Research Centre for Environmental Change. Apart from identifying areas of cooperation, namely meteorology, climate and earthquake, the two sides have also exchanged insights and views on disaster response operations and climate change research among other areas.



LI Ping-wah

HKO delegation visiting Taiwan's weather organisation with members of the Hong Kong Meteorological Society



Pursuit of Excellence



Ms Sandy SONG (centre), Senior Scientific Officer, Mr HA Kwai-cheong (right), the producer of "Meteorological Series IV", and programme host Mr LEUNG Wing-mo (left) at the 2014 Best Television Programmes Awards Presentation.

Local and International Awards

LEE Fung-ying

Meteorological Series IV

Bags Local and International Awards

"Meteorological Series IV", a TV documentary series jointly produced by the Hong Kong Observatory and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), received international recognition. The second episode, "Meltdown: Cryosphere under Pressure" won the prestigious Silver World Medal (Environment and Ecology category) at the 2015 New York Festivals World's Best TV and Films competition. In Hong Kong, "Meteorological Series IV" was rated the 8th out of 204 locally produced TV programmes in the 2014 TV Programme Appreciation Index Survey (TVAI).

It is indeed encouraging that the series has received recognition from local and international communities. The successful production and broadcast of the programme is a joint partnership of a number of government departments and organisations, and we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to RTHK, the Geotechnical Engineering Office, the Drainage Services Department, the Water Supplies Department, the Government Flying Service, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, City University of Hong Kong and the host of the programme Mr LEUNG Wing-mo.



Watch Meteorological Series IV

The Observatory Joins Hands with SCHSA in Serving the Elderly

LI Kin-wai

On 23 May, the Senior Citizen Home Safety Association (SCHSA) presented the Outstanding Partnership Award 2014 to the Observatory. Over the years, the partners have conducted joint studies on the impact of weather on the health of senior citizens, while the Observatory regularly provides weather information to SCHSA, so that in times of changing weather, manpower and resources can be allocated well in advance to help and support senior citizens in need.



長者安居協會
2014年度社區與嘉許禮



Mr MOK Hing-yim (right), Senior Scientific Officer, receives the SCHSA Outstanding Partnership Award 2014 on behalf of the Observatory from Mr CHEUNG Kin-chung (left), Secretary for Labour and Welfare.

The Observatory Website Wins Accolades in "Best .hk Website Awards 2014"

TONG Yu-fai

In the "Best .hk Website Awards 2014", the Observatory website won the gold prize under the "Government Departments" category while being voted the "Most Liked .hk Website". This is the third time that the Observatory has been awarded the gold prize in this poll, having won the accolade in 2011 and 2013. The Observatory website was unanimously acclaimed by the Panel of Judges for the continuous improvement of its webpages as well as the introduction of new services to meet diversified user needs.



On 21 April, Mr Stephen MAK, BBS (right), representative of the Panel of Judges, presents the Gold Trophy of the "Best .hk Government Website Award" to Mr TONG Yu-fai (left), the Observatory's representative.

Brothers Point Terminal Doppler Weather Radar Wins Commendation Merit Award in Structural Excellence Award



TSE Shuk-mei

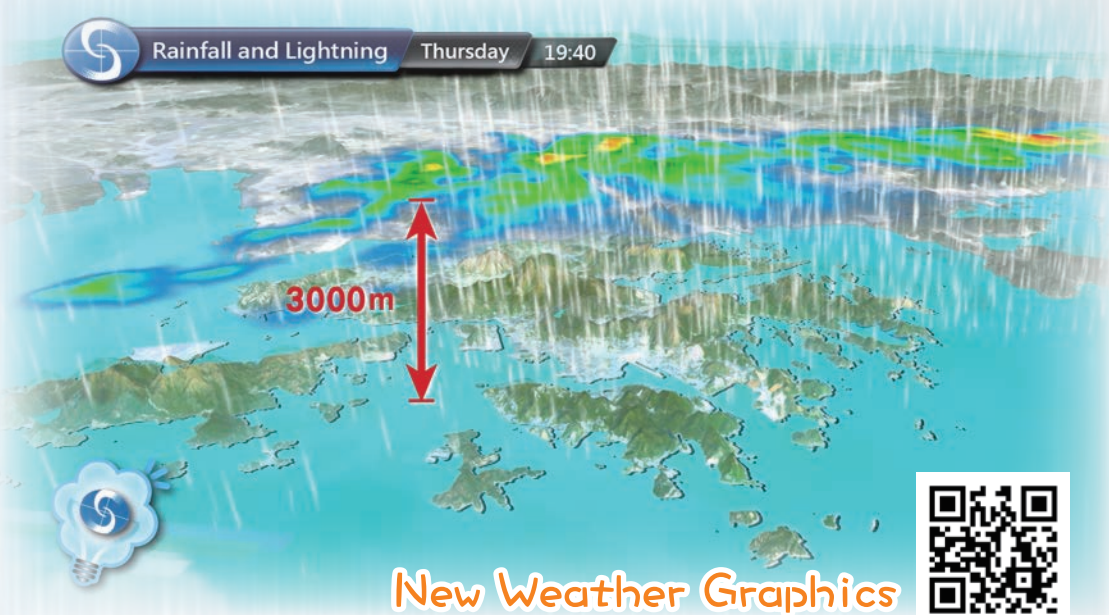
Designed and built by the Architectural Services Department, the Terminal Doppler Weather Radar at Brothers Point is the new home for the Observatory's windshear detection radar. The structural engineers achieved a clever balance between green environment, weight bearing and excavation, among other factors in the building, winning the Commendation Merit Award in the Structural Excellence Award co-organised by the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers and the Institution of Structural Engineers of the United Kingdom.



TV Weather Programme Gets New Look

Linus YEUNG

In late June, The Observatory launched a new graphic weather presentation system for the production of TV weather programmes. Using three-dimensional topographic maps and computer simulation techniques, weather evolution can now be visualised in a more stereoscopic, intuitive and vivid fashion, making it easier for viewers to understand important weather messages. In addition to viewing the new weather graphics on TV or the Observatory's webpage and mobile application, viewers can also enjoy an educational programme introducing the new weather graphics on the Observatory's "Cool Met Stuff" channel.



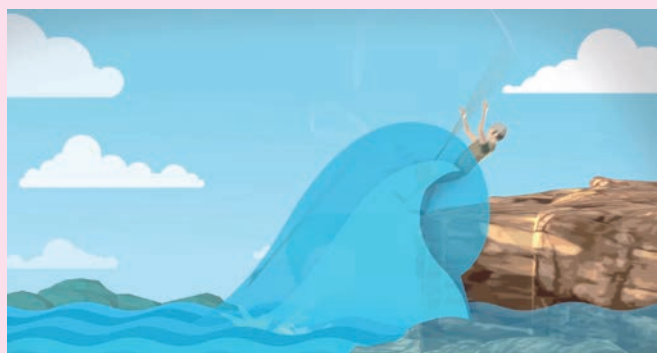
In May, the Observatory launched two new TV Announcements in the Public Interest (API), which combine cartoon animation and live action, in a bid to enhance public awareness on disaster prevention.



Thunderstorm API: Thunderstorm can bring about lightning, squall and hail. When engaging in outdoor activities, members of the public should stay tuned to the Observatory for thunderstorm warnings and related information, including the areas being affected, and take appropriate precautions.



Daniel YEUNG and Ken WONG



Swells API: Swells caused by tropical cyclones are easily overlooked. But they can develop into huge waves when reaching the coast. In case the Observatory issues forecasts and warnings of swells, members of the public should stay away from the seafont.



Apart from the TV APIs, the Observatory has also introduced short videos on hazards from tropical cyclones. Through real-life images of typhoons in recent years, including Morakot, Utor and Haiyan, the videos cover the four major threats caused by tropical cyclones, namely strong winds, rainstorms, huge waves and storm surge.





Engaging Youth

Sea Level Measurement Device Design Competition

TAM Kwong-hung and Daniel YEUNG

To promote interest and knowledge among the younger generations in meteorological instrumentation and the application of information technology, as well as increase public awareness on sea level rise caused by global warming, the Hong Kong Observatory, the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Meteorological Society jointly organised the Sea Level Measurement Device Design Competition. Over 200 students from 25 primary schools, secondary schools and international schools participated in the competition funded by the Knowledge Exchange Fund of the University Grant Committee. On 3 May, an exhibition and award presentation ceremony was held in Loke Yew Hall of the University of Hong Kong.

The champion of the Junior Category, students of Our Lady of China Catholic Primary School, said they learned to use environmentally friendly materials to create the measurement device and gained insights on how global warming caused sea-level rise continuously.

During the design and research processes, the champion of the Secondary Category, students of Aberdeen Technical School, learned that storm surge caused by tropical cyclones had become more serious as a result of sea-level rise, inflicting more damage on society.



Champion of the Junior Category (from left), HE Wing-hei, YAM Ka-yee and LAU Wan-him from Our Lady of China Catholic Primary School.

Interview with the champions



Champion of the Senior Category, CHU Sheung-fung (left) and WONG Sze-yui from Aberdeen Technical School.

Weather Observation Competition 2015

To promote students' understanding on weather observation through creative activities, the Observatory, Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre, the Hong Kong Meteorological Society and the Community Weather Information Network (Co-WIN) jointly organised the Weather Observation Competition 2015. A total of 46 teams of senior secondary students from 31 schools were required to submit investigative study reports and one-minute videos on weather-related topics as they competed for various awards. The final assessment and award presentation ceremony was held on 9 May with more than 300 teachers and students attended. During the ceremony, Mr LEUNG Wing-mo, former Assistant Director of the Observatory, was invited to host a seminar entitled "Climate Apocalypse", in which climate change and related issues were discussed with the teacher and students.

TAM Kwong-hung



Mr TSUI Kit-chi (first from left), Assistant Director of the Observatory, presents the prize to the champion of the "One-minute Video" competition, St Stephen's Girls' College.



Never-ending Passion

"Sky Dragon" Visits Macao

HKO Staff Association



"Sky Dragon" sets out to race

After making its debut in April, "Sky Dragon", the Observatory's dragon boat team, took part in the 2015 Hong Kong Macao Civil Servant Interport Small Dragon Boat Race of the Macao International Dragon Boat Races on 14 June at the invitation of the Macao Sport Development Board.

As the Cantonese saying goes, "only fierce dragons dare to cross the river". The high-spirited members of "Sky Dragon" have shown remarkable improvement in paddling and acceleration techniques. Each member contributes their own strength to the team and complements one another in a perfect display of team spirit. On the day of the competition, "Sky Dragon" competed with six teams from Macao and five other teams from Hong Kong under very hot weather. The team members exerted their full power and finished the race with a new team record time. They were deeply moved by the Director of the Observatory, colleagues, families and friends, who travelled all the way to Macao in order to show their support. To members of "Sky Dragon", the training and experience gained during the competition were truly unforgettable.



Director of the Observatory with members of Sky Dragon and the cheers squad



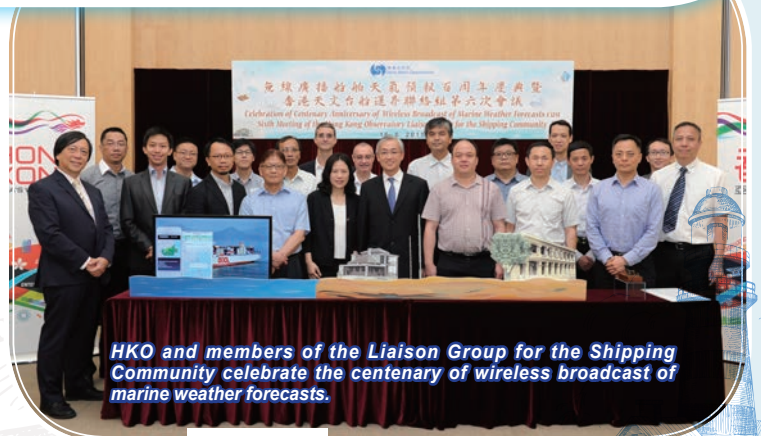
LUI Wing-hong



Centenary of Wireless Broadcast of Marine Weather Forecasts

On 16 June, the Observatory and the shipping community met for the 6th meeting of the Liaison Group for the Shipping Community, and celebrated the centenary of wireless broadcast of marine weather forecasts in Hong Kong. One hundred years ago, marine weather forecasts for ships were broadcast by means of radio telegraphy for the first time when a wireless telegraphy station went into operation at Cape D'Aguilar on Hong Kong Island.

At the celebration ceremony held before the meeting, Mr SHUN Chi-ming, the Director of the Observatory, looked back on the Observatory's collaboration history with the shipping community since its establishment in 1883. He pointed out that marine weather forecasts and warning services are now disseminated through multiple channels, such as the Observatory website, the mobile application "MyObservatory" as well as the Marine Department's automated NAVTEX broadcast system. Mr ZHOU Wei, member of the Liaison Group, remarked that the celebration has marked the joint achievement between the Observatory and the shipping community in the past century as a result of partnership.



HKO and members of the Liaison Group for the Shipping Community celebrate the centenary of wireless broadcast of marine weather forecasts.



Weather Information for the Marine Community
The Observatory Website

The Observatory and the Shipping Community Working Together to Enhance Meteorological Observation over the South China Sea

LAM Hok-yin, FUNG Kwok-chu and Dickson LAU

In June, the Observatory and Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) Limited, a member of the Hong Kong Observatory Shipping Community Liaison Group, joined hands to conduct trial studies in making use of ocean-going vessels to enhance meteorological observation over the South China Sea. The results and outcome were very satisfactory.

From 13 to 18 June, Dr LAM Hok-yin, Scientific Officer, and Mr FUNG Kwok-chu, Senior Scientific Assistant, went aboard the OOCL container vessel "M.V. OOCL Busan". During its voyage from Hong Kong to Singapore, seven weather balloons carrying radiosondes were successively launched from a portable upper-air sounding system to collect meteorological data such as air temperature, humidity, wind direction and wind speed in the upper atmosphere over the South China Sea.



Positions of radiosonde balloon release and path of the drifter buoy



Just before its launch, the balloon carrying the radiosonde goes pear-shaped under the influence of strong winds.

Meanwhile, the Observatory engaged another OOCL container vessel "M.V. OOCL ATLANTA", to deploy a drifter buoy, equipped with air pressure and sea surface temperature sensors, over the central part of the South China Sea on 26 June. The buoy, carried along by ocean currents over a data-sparse sea area, was able to take in-situ air pressure and sea surface temperature measurements and transmitted the data to the Observatory via satellite on an hourly basis.

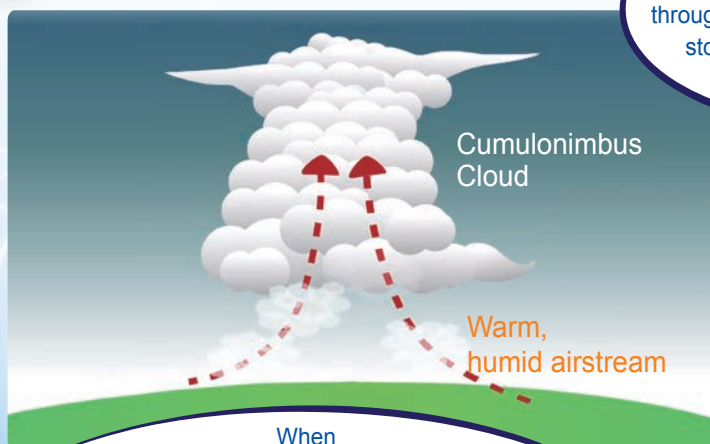
These two trials were the result of fruitful collaboration between the Observatory and the shipping community, and represented new milestones for the Observatory in marine meteorological observations. The gathering of more meteorological data will support weather monitoring over the South China Sea and the surrounding areas, enhance the forecasting capability of tropical cyclones and contribute to navigation safety in the region.



The drifter buoy being thrown into the sea by ship crew and carried along by ocean currents.

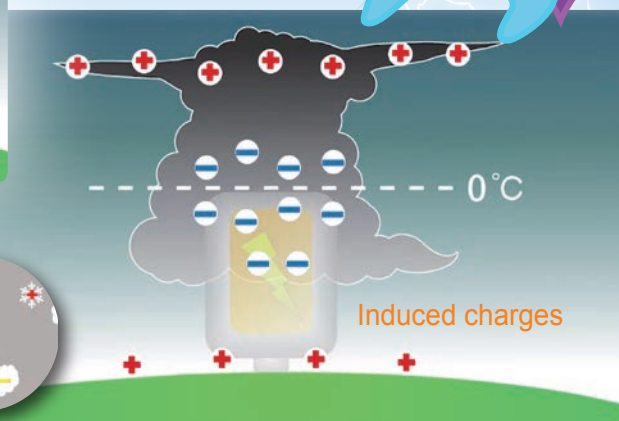


Ask Dr Tin



When supported by other factors that destabilize the atmosphere, the updraft could become stronger and cause the ice crystals of various sizes in the cumulonimbus cloud to collide and rub against one another, producing positive and negative charges. As a consequence, different electric poles will be produced in the cloud.

A cumulonimbus cloud is like a gigantic battery spanning through the entire atmosphere. It can store large amounts of electric charges.

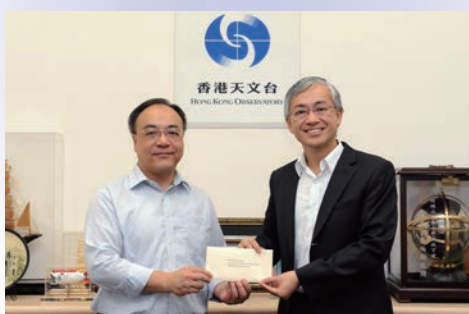


HKO Sidelights

Staff Promotions



Mr TSANG Moon-tong (left) was promoted to Senior Scientific Assistant on 1 May.



Mr Paul HO (left) was promoted to Chief Experimental Officer on 3 May.

Observatory Staff Commended by the Public

Staff of the Observatory who received words of thanks and commendation from the public or organisations during April to June 2015:

Dr LI Ping-wah
(Senior Scientific Officer)

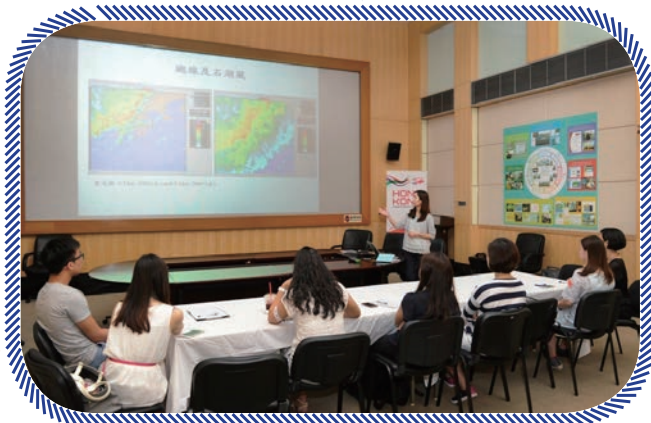
Mr LEE Kwok-lun,
Mr SHUM Chi-tai
(Scientific Officer)

Mr FUNG Kwok-chu,
Ms LEUNG Man-yee
(Senior Scientific Assistant)

Ms MOK Wai-ling
(Scientific Assistant)



On 16 June, the Director of the Observatory hosted a dinner gathering for 80 Friends of the Observatory volunteers to thank them for their support on the Observatory's 2015 Open Day. Certificates of merits for outstanding docents and volunteers in 2014 were also presented at the event.



On 16 and 26 June, the Observatory organised two meteorological talks for the media. The lectures discussed common meteorological terminologies, interpretation of the 5-day tropical cyclone track forecast track map as well as climate myths, with a view to promoting understanding of meteorology among journalists.



On 19 June, Mr MOK Hing-yim, Senior Scientific Officer, attended the kick-off meeting of the collaboration project on "Land-sea joint measurement of the 3-dimensional crustal structure and fault lines in the Pearl River Estuary Region" at the Earthquake Administration of Guangdong Province.

Happy Business

On 8 May, Observatory staff visited CLP's GreenPlus Resort and hydroponic farm in Kwu Tung. Having learnt about various energy saving measures and different ways of hydroponic farming, the participants gained a deeper understanding on the use of renewable energy.



For details of the activities, please visit:
<http://www.hko.gov.hk/wisnew.htm>
<http://www.hko.gov.hk/hkone/news/indexe.htm>