A Community Weather Information Network
and Further Development of the AWS Network in Hong Kong

(Abstract Only)

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Abstract

With heightened awareness towards weather and climate in the community, the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has stepped up its effort to outreach to the society. The first initiative, the “One District One station” programme launched in 2007, seeks to implement additional weather stations through close cooperation with district authorities to ensure that all administrative districts in Hong Kong are covered in weather monitoring. The second initiative involves the establishment of a Hong Kong Community Weather Information Network (HK Co-WIN) in August 2007. The network is a collaborative effort of the Hong Kong Observatory, the Department of Applied Physics of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Hong Kong Joint-school Meteorological Association. The network gathers weather information from automatic weather stations of its school and community members, carries out data quality assurance and makes available the weather information on the Internet for use by the public. The Observatory gives professional advice on the installation and maintenance of the automatic weather stations as well as data quality assurance, and provides technical assistance in the setting up of the Network’s website. Both initiatives were well received by the public. They created a win-win situation for all partners and generated a sense of ‘ownership’ among the players. This helps assure the long-term sustainability and development of the programmes.

During 2007, HKO’s own AWS network has also been enhanced with additional sensors, including visibility meters, network cameras and heat stress monitoring equipment to address public information needs and growing concerns on weather-related health impacts. During the development of HK Co-WIN, the HKO has taken advantage of the latest development in electronics and information technology to upgrade its AWS network to accommodate new sensors and new communication means available from the evolving mobile communication networks.