

WEATHER ON WINGS



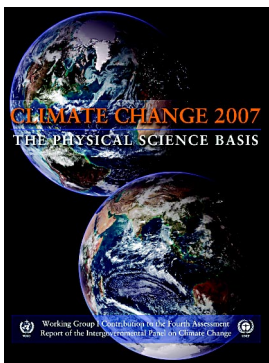
Dial-a-Weather : 187 8200

Home page : <http://www.hko.gov.hk>, <http://www.weather.gov.hk>



2007 Nobel Peace Prize - the HKO connection

LEUNG Yin-kong, John



The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr LAM Chiu-ying, was both a contributing author and an expert reviewer of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report.

and an expert reviewer of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) prepared by Working Group I and released in early 2007. This Working Group focused on the physical science basis of climate change. AR4 also made reference to a research paper written by Observatory staff.

In May 2007, the Co-Chairs of all the three IPCC Working Groups were in Hong Kong to discuss the latest findings of IPCC in the International Conference on Climate Change organized by the engineering community. Dr Rajendra K Pachauri, Chairman of IPCC, also spoke to the conference via a video presentation. In support of the conference, Mr LAM Chiu-ying served in the conference's Organizing Committee, while Mr YEUNG Kai-hing, Assistant Director, served in the Technical Committee.

Climate change and the Nobel Peace Prize may seem entirely unrelated and yet more and more evidence show that climate change has posed a threat to the ecological environment, human health as well as food and water supply. Climate change

The 2007 Nobel Peace Prize was shared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Mr Al Gore in recognition of their contributions to achieving a sharper focus on the processes and decisions that are necessary to protect the world's future climate.

IPCC was established jointly by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environmental Programme in 1988. It provides world leaders and decision makers with the most authoritative scientific evidence on climate change. For years, the Observatory has been contributing to the work of IPCC. The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr LAM Chiu-ying, was both a contributing author

is global in nature and may cause bad harvest of crops and uneven distribution of resources which may result in wars and disorders.

Recognizing the importance of climate change and the impact of human activities on the earth's climate, the Observatory has for a long time been studying climate change and intensified its climate change studies since the early 2000s. A number of technical reports and research papers on the subject were published. The Observatory also invested efforts in promoting public understanding and awareness of the phenomenon. Press conferences were conducted at regular intervals to promulgate the latest findings on climate change and its effects on Hong Kong to the public. Most recently, an educational package on climate change was produced and distributed to schools in Hong Kong. The Observatory has also established a team of professional meteorologists conversant on the subject of climate change to give speeches and lectures to a wider audience.



In the International Conference on Climate Change held in Hong Kong in May 2007, the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, LAM Chiu-ying (2nd right) invited the Co-Chairs of the IPCC Working Group I, QIN Dahe (1st right), Working Group II, Osvaldo F CANZIANI (3rd right) and Working Group III, Ogunlade DAVIDSON (4th right) to talk on the Fourth Assessment Report.

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Hong Kong Community Weather Information Network

TAM Kwong-hung



Figure 1: School members of the HK Co-WIN pictured with the guests at the opening ceremony of the network.

In recent years, more and more weather enthusiasts and schools are setting up their weather stations and post the weather information on the Internet. Nevertheless, there are various problems ranging from data availability to reliability of these stations. On the other hand, there is a growing demand for weather information from the public and even a desire of having weather stations at one's doorstep to provide the latest weather information.

Noting this trend, the Observatory stepped up its efforts two years ago to improve its public weather services through close cooperation with schools and local communities to set up a weather information network. The network aims to provide quality assured weather information gathered from automatic weather stations of its school and community members on the Internet. This initiative was well received by the public. It creates a win-win situation for all partners and a sense of 'ownership' among the players, and helps assure the long-term sustainability and development of the programme. After about two years' time and through the collaborative effort of the Observatory, the Department of Applied Physics of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Hong Kong Joint-school Meteorological Association, the "Hong Kong Community Weather Information Network" ("HK Co-WIN") was officially launched on 24 August 2007 (Figure 1).

The Department of Applied Physics of the Hong Kong Polytechnic

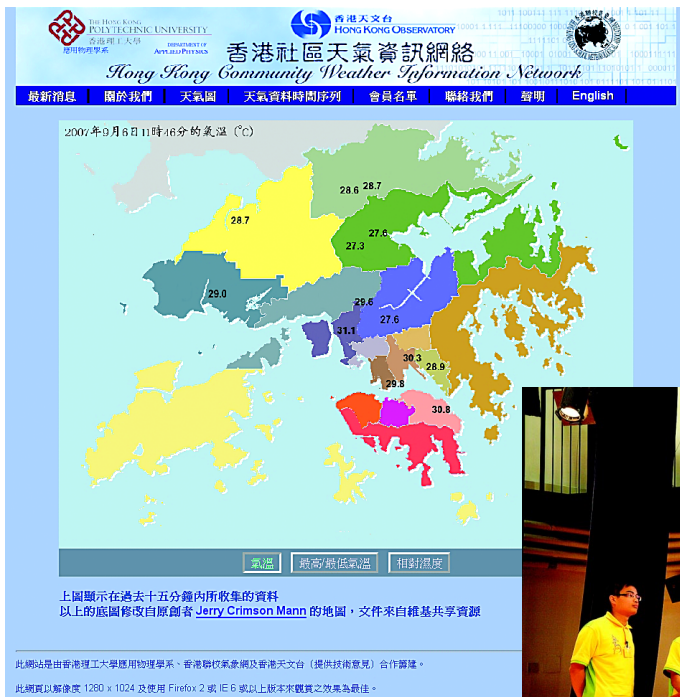


Figure 2: The HK Co-WIN website

University is responsible for establishing and operating the network website, as well as assisting network members in the operation of their weather stations. The Hong Kong Joint-school Meteorological Association is responsible for liaison with front-line school teachers in organising activities to promote weather education in primary and secondary schools. It also co-operates with the Department of Applied Physics in assisting school members in the installation and maintenance of automatic weather stations. The Observatory provides professional advice on the installation and maintenance of the automatic weather stations, and renders technical assistance in setting up the network website. At present, the network has 38 school members and the HK Co-WIN website now provides real-time weather information on temperature, relative humidity and wind speeds recorded at its school members' weather stations (Figure 2).

Looking ahead, weather information such as rainfall, solar radiation and UV index will be added to the website gradually. A user interface will also be developed to allow students to download weather information from the network for carrying out case studies and research. Furthermore, the three collaborating parties will continue to cooperate closely in promoting weather education in Hong Kong through organizing weather related activities such as visits to weather stations (Figure 3), seminars and talks (Figure 4), and developing educational packages on weather.



Figure 3: Teachers and students of HK Co-WIN member schools visiting Tai Mo Shan Radar Station (above) and King's Park Meteorological Station (below) on 7 December 2007.



Figure 4: Students sharing their experience in using weather information of HK Co-WIN in their case studies at a seminar held at Pui Ching Middle School on 3 December 2007.

Observatory won Merit Award in the Civil Service Departmental Service Enhancement Award

TAI Sai-choi

The Observatory was honoured to receive the Merit Award of the Departmental Service Enhancement Award 2007 presented at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on 13 September.

The award aims to commend government departments which have made significant enhancement in their services and have promoted the image of the department or the government etc. in the past two years. The award scheme in 2007 was co-organised by the Hong Kong Management Association (HKMA) and had two major categories viz. the Departmental Awards and Team Awards. All entries had to go through two stages of rigorous and professional assessments. The adjudication panel included Legislative and District Councillors, management professionals and representatives of civil servants.

In past years, large and small departments competed separately for the Departmental Service Enhancement Award. In 2007, however, there

was no such differentiation. As a small department with only around 300 staff, the Observatory is very proud to win the award.



Representatives of the Observatory received the award from Miss Denise Yue, Secretary for the Civil Service.



"A Station to the East, another Station to the West"

CHAN Ying Wa

The Hong Kong Observatory launched the "One District One Station" initiative in 2007, with an aim to operate at least one automatic temperature weather station at each of the 18 districts in Hong Kong. It is hoped that this project would further our co-operation with the district communities, allowing closer integration of weather information with the community to better meet the needs of the public. In 2007, the Observatory opened two automatic weather stations, one at the Central & Western District on 4 September and one at the Eastern District on 17 September. The Chairpersons of the Central & Western District Council and the Eastern District Council, District Officers of the two districts and guests from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) were invited to officiate at the opening ceremony of the two weather stations.

Hong Kong has a densely populated environment. Finding a suitable site for a weather station in the city is not easy. It would not have been possible for the Observatory to establish the automatic weather stations in the Central & Western District and the Eastern District without the full support and co-operation of the two District Councils and the LCSD. The automatic weather stations for the Central & Western District and the Eastern District are very unique as they are the first two stations installed in LCSD facilities



中西區自動氣象站啟用典禮 Official Opening of Automatic Weather Station for the Central & Western District



The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr LAM Chiu-ying (3rd left) and guests officiating at the opening ceremony of the automatic weather station for the Central & Western District.



Acting Director of the Observatory, Dr WONG Ming-chung (6th left) and guests celebrated the inauguration of the automatic weather station for the Eastern District.

among the Observatory's some 100 stations. This is a breakthrough in the cooperation of the two departments.

The automatic weather stations for the Central & Western District and the Eastern District are set up in the Hong Kong Park and the Museum of Coastal Defence respectively and provide the latest temperature readings round-the-clock. The public can access the information from the Observatory's "Regional Weather" webpage at: <http://www.hko.gov.hk/wxinfo/ts/index.htm> or PDA webpage at: <http://pda.hko.gov.hk/regione.htm>. It is also available at the Observatory's "Dial-a-Weather" system at 187 8200. The rainfall information from the automatic weather station for the Eastern District is also used to plot the rainfall distribution map of Hong Kong (website: <http://www.hko.gov.hk/wxinfo/rainfall/isohyete.shtml>).

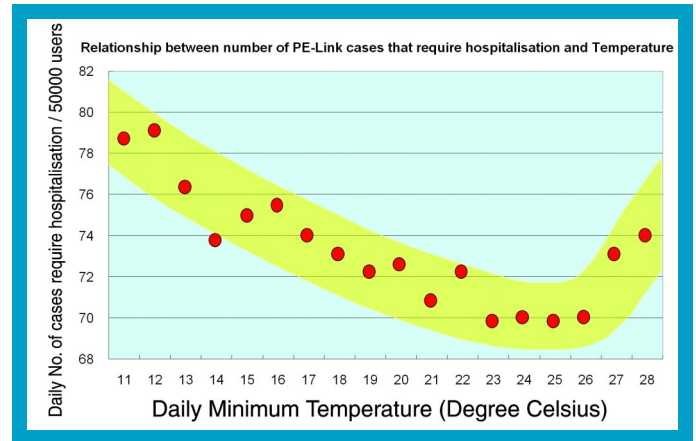
Director of Observatory offers warm words to the elderly in wintry weather

MOK Hing-yim

Commencing with the winter of 2007, the Hong Kong Observatory will collaborate with the Senior Citizen Home Safety Association (SCHSA) to launch a series of services in caring the senior citizens. Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr LAM Chiu-ying, will in his recorded message remind more than 50,000 Personal Emergency Link (PE-Link) users to prepare for the impending wintry weather through the "Caring Message Service".

Besides, the Observatory has partnered with the SCHSA to study the effects of weather on the health of senior citizens. An analysis was carried out using the usage of PE-Link from March 2004 to September 2007 to find out the relationship between air temperature and the number of users pressing the PE-Link and those requiring subsequent hospitalisation. Initial results showed that when the minimum temperature was below 23 degrees Celsius, the number of users pressing the PE-Link and the number of users subsequently hospitalised both increase with falling temperatures. The corresponding figures for cold days (temperatures below 12 degrees) are higher than those of normal days by more than 10%. On average, about 80 people a day require hospitalisation after pressing the PE-Link.

The Observatory and the SCHSA will continue to cooperate in matters related to weather information service, research and education for the safety of senior citizens.



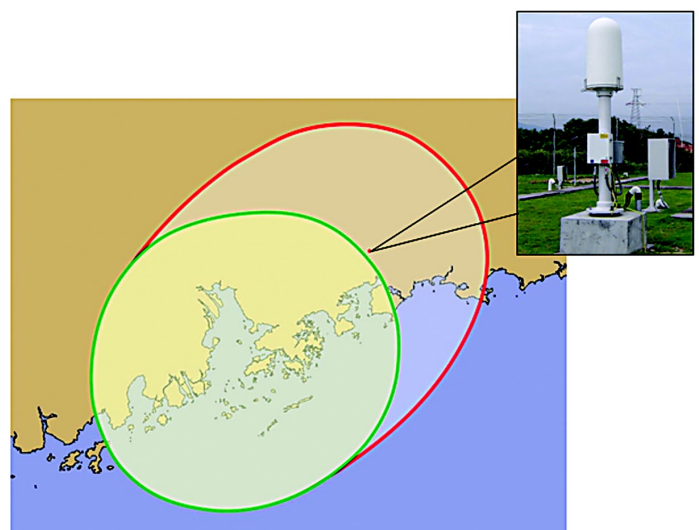
Expanding Detection Coverage of the Lightning Location Network

LEE Lap-shun

Inaugurated in mid-2005, the Observatory's lightning location network is now in its third year of operation. To expand the coverage of the network further to the east, so as to strengthen the monitoring of thunderstorms approaching from the east such as those brought by the outer rainbands of tropical cyclones, the Hong Kong Observatory, Guangdong Meteorological Bureau and Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau cooperated again to set up one more lightning sensor station to the northeast of Hong Kong. The search for a suitable site was no easy task as the site selection criteria were strict. There should not be any electromagnetic interference nor building obstructions nearby. Availability of communication link at the site was another concern. It took several months after several visits to different sites before the Huidong Meteorological Observing Station at Huizhou was chosen as the new lightning sensor station.

The expanded lightning location network comprises six stations. Three were installed within Hong Kong, namely, Chung Hom Kok, Sha Tau Kok and Tsim Bei Tsui. Besides the Huidong station, the remaining two stations are outside the territory, at Sanshui in Guangdong and Taipa in Macao to the northwest and southwest of Hong Kong respectively. The new station at Huidong has expanded the total area of detection coverage of the network by more than 40%, enabling a more comprehensive monitoring of thunderstorm development in the Pearl River Delta, thus contributing towards a better capability in disaster prevention. The new station started operation on 7 September 2007 and immediately contributed in detecting several

thunderstorm episodes in the same month. Besides network expansion, the lightning location information webpage (<http://www.weather.gov.hk/wxinfo/llis/index.htm>) was also enhanced in September 2007.



After the addition of a lightning sensor at Huidong (inset), the total area of detection coverage of the lightning location network has been increased by more than 40%.

Educational Package on Climate Change - Encouraging the Next Generation to Combat Climate Change Proactively

LEUNG Yin-kong, John

The Hong Kong Observatory has produced an educational package on climate change for school children in Hong Kong to promote awareness and understanding of this topic. The package, which contained the latest scientific information on climate change, was distributed to secondary and primary schools to help the younger generation to understand the importance of the problem and to encourage them to combat climate change. The



Acting Assistant Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr LEUNG Wing-mo (3rd left), Principal Assistant Secretary of Education Bureau, Dr Catherine CHAN (3rd right) and teachers introduce the educational package on climate change in a press conference.

Educational Package

Education Bureau has partnered with the Observatory to help teachers and students to make the best use of the information available in the package and apply knowledge of different school subjects in the study of the issue.

Presented in Chinese and English, the educational package consists of a DVD containing an animated cartoon, a cartoon booklet, a CD-ROM containing PowerPoint presentations and a collection of publications and press releases on climate change, as well as another DVD containing the Oscar Award winning documentary "An Inconvenient Truth". The animated cartoon and cartoon booklet present climate change to young people in a medium with which they are familiar. It is hoped that the more lively approach will help to drive home the message to students, in particular the responsibility of individuals in the mitigation of climate change.

Since the publication of the package, the Observatory received many positive responses from school principals, teachers and parents. Besides government departments, many organizations including Green Groups and academic institutions also requested copies of the package.



Observatory's new book

"Basic Meteorological Knowledge" in hot sale

HUNG Fan-yiu

To promote understanding of weather, the Observatory published the book "Basic Meteorological Knowledge" (in Chinese only) in mid-October 2007. In 101 pages, the book explains in layman terms basic meteorological knowledge, techniques in weather observation and analysis, as well as global phenomena such as El Nino/La Nina, greenhouse effects and climate change. Some common weather phenomena in Hong Kong such as the monsoon, thunderstorms, fog, haze and tropical cyclones are also explained using actual cases.

The book gained immediate popularity and had become one of the top ten best selling publications of the Government Bookstore in only a few weeks' time. The Information Services Department has arranged additional printing of several thousand copies to meet the demands.

The book can be purchased at HK\$40 from the Hong Kong Observatory Resource Centre, the Publications Sales Unit of the Information Services Department, General Post Office, Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office, Tuen Mun Central Post Office and Sha Tin Central Post Office. It can also be purchased online at the Government Bookstore website at <http://bookstore.esdlife.com>.



Front cover of "Basic Meteorological Knowledge"

20th Anniversary of TV weather programmes

TAI Sai-choi



The early days : The first-generation weather host Mr LEUNG Wing-mo shooting weather programme at ATV studio.

advanced. Not only has the Observatory set up its own studio with almost fully automatic production, the TV companies have also installed remote-controlled cameras for daily shooting. TV weather programmes hosted by scientific officers have permeated into people's daily lives, and many of the weather hosts have their own fans. Now the three major TV companies are routinely producing and broadcasting such weather programmes, and the number of programmes has increased from once a week 20 years ago to 27 nowadays. To a lot of citizens, it has become almost a routine to watch a scientific officer explain the weather forecast before going out in the morning. Central briefings given by senior scientific officers are more or less an essential TV programme during inclement weather.

At the 20th anniversary, we wish TV weather programmes hosted by professional meteorologists could continue to develop and improve.



Nowadays: Experimental Officer Mr Dickson LAU producing weather programme all by himself at the Observatory's own studio.

Twenty years ago, a scientific officer of the Observatory started hosting a weekly weather programme on Asia TV, breaking the monopoly by weather girls.

"The production of weather programmes at that time was like teaching in a classroom. We posted the weather charts on a board and pointed them with a wooden stick to explain the weather to the audience," recalled Mr Leung Wing-mo, one of the first batch of weathermen from the Observatory. In spite of the relatively primitive facilities, they have stepped out the first step towards hosting TV weather programmes by professional meteorologists. "Back in the 80s, the Observatory strived for cooperating with TV stations to let professional meteorologists host weather programmes. It is hoped that through providing the public with professional analyses of the weather, they may have a better understanding of the weather forecasts and warnings and as a result know more about how to respond. This is especially important during severe weather," added Mr Leung.

After twenty years, the production of weather programmes has greatly

The Observatory organises training course for World Meteorological Organization

HUNG Fan-yiu



Participants paying a site visit to a meteorological station

The Observatory continues to contribute towards the Voluntary Cooperation Programme (VCP) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) by running a training course on "Automatic Weather Station Network" from 26 to 30 November 2007. This is the tenth time that the Observatory has organised professional training courses for the WMO since 2000. The VCP is a technical cooperation programme maintained by voluntary contributions from WMO Members. The objective is to enhance Member's capability to implement scientific and technical development.

Hong Kong Observatory has been operating automatic weather stations for many years. Currently, the weather information gathered from local automatic weather stations is made available in real-time on the Internet. The detailed and timely weather information service is among the frontrunners in the world.

The "Automatic Weather Station Network" training course was attended by nine overseas meteorologists. During the course, the latest technology on automatic weather station network was explained in detail, experience was shared and future developments were discussed. This training course helped participants develop their own automatic weather observing systems upon returning to their home countries.

The Hong Kong Observatory established a Voluntary Outreach Team on Climate Change

LEUNG Yin-kong, John

The Hong Kong Observatory established a Voluntary Outreach Team on Climate Change in September 2007. Members of the team are professional meteorologists with a drive to deliver talks to schools and organizations and to promote a green living for combating climate change. The aim of establishing the team is not limited to conveying scientific knowledge about climate change to the public. More importantly, the team aims at arousing the public's concern that the impact of climate change is already making an adverse impact.

Since its establishment, the team has received an overwhelming response and invitations from over 70 schools and organizations to deliver talks. Through the talks, members of the outreach team share their experience and views, and motivate the audience to try every possible means to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. The effect of climate change is global. Under the same blue sky, no one can stand aloof. Let's not under-estimate individual efforts. Our endeavors today may spark off a "Butterfly Effect"!



The author delivered a talk to teachers and students of Ying Wah College on how to mitigate climate change from an individual perspective.



Observatory renders full support to 2008 Olympics

Editorial Board

China is going to host the Olympic Games for the first time in August 2008. While Beijing and athletes around the world are busy preparing for the competitions, the Hong Kong Observatory is also working hard to render its best meteorological support to the games on three fronts.

Following the success of the first attempt to offer meteorological services to the Hong Kong windsurfing team in the Athens Olympics, the Observatory takes honour to support the team once again this

year. The equestrian events in Hong Kong will be the focus of attention and the Observatory is proud to be one of the supporting departments. Lastly, amongst a few world-class meteorological services, the Hong Kong Observatory has been invited to provide forecasts of severe weather for the main Olympic venues in Beijing. The following articles give an account of the Observatory's preparatory work for the "One World, One Dream".

Pledging support one more time to the Hong Kong Windsurfing Team

TONG Yu-fai

The 2008 Olympic Sailing events, which include windsurfing, will take place in Qingdao. The organizing committee held an Olympic test regatta on 9 - 24 August 2007 in Qingdao to help athletes warm up for the 2008 Olympic competition. The Observatory provided specialized meteorological support for the Hong Kong Windsurfing Team to compete in the test regatta and to make race strategy.

To help the windsurfing team prepare for the Olympic test regatta, the Observatory conducted studies on the environment and climatology of Qingdao, and before the event explained to the athletes local climatology



Observatory meteorologists met with Mr Daniel Lam (1st left), the Team Manager of the Hong Kong Windsurfing Team and Mr Rene Appel (2nd left), the Chief Coach of the windsurfing team to review the meteorological support during the Olympic test event.

and the characteristics of terrain-induced winds. A numerical weather prediction system adapted to the Qingdao region was set up to provide the team with hourly forecasts of local wind direction, wind speed and air temperatures on the day of the race. Weather forecasts and other meteorological information were uploaded to a dedicated website specially set up for the windsurfing team, allowing the athletes to access up-to-date weather information at their convenience. During the regatta, weather forecasters carried out timely analyses based on actual observation data and the output of the numerical weather prediction system, and sent the weather forecast for the day together with a 4-day outlook to the windsurfing team by email in the morning.

At the completion of the test regatta, Rene Appel, the Chief Coach of the windsurfing team, said during a press interview that he mainly made reference to the Observatory's detailed weather information and praised the Observatory for its accurate forecasts. The test event had enabled the Observatory to better understand the characteristics of the wind shift at the race venue and enhance the forecast techniques so as to better assist the Hong Kong Windsurfing Team to compete in the 2008 Olympic events.



The Observatory set up a dedicated website for the Hong Kong Windsurfing Team.

"Good Luck Beijing" - A warm-up exercise for the 2008 Equestrian Events

NG Ping-wing

In August 2007, the Hong Kong Equestrian Company held an international equestrian event dubbed "Good Luck Beijing" as a test and warm-up exercise for the 2008 Olympic Equestrian Events. The Observatory provided meteorological support to the competition, which included dressage, jumping and eventing. The venues were at the Sports Institute of Sha Tin and Beas River of Sheung Shui.

Just before the start of "Good Luck Beijing", approach of Severe Tropical Storm Pabuk brought cloudy and rainy weather and necessitated the issuance of Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal number 8. Of course, the organizer was very concerned and the forecasters of the Observatory demonstrated their

competence during this critical situation. The event was completed successfully and everybody was very happy.

In the review of the event, the Veterinary Technical Delegate of the International Federation for Equestrian Sports, Professor Leo Jeffcott commented, "Weatherwise, we have it all nearly. In terms of weather services, your weather website and forecasters are first class." HRH Princess Haya, the President of the the Veterinary Technical Delegate of the International Federation for Equestrian Sports, also wrote an e-mail to express her appreciation for our precious contribution.

Rendezvous of Cutting Edge Nowcasting Systems in Beijing

YEUNG Hon-yin

During the Olympic Games in 2008, the Observatory will deploy its nowcasting system, SWIRLS (Short-range Warning on Intense Rainstorms in Localized Systems) to Beijing to participate in the Beijing 2008 Forecast Demonstration Project (B08FDP)¹. Joining forces with the forecasting systems of other advanced meteorological organizations, the nowcasting synergy aims at providing severe weather forecast and warning services for all the Olympic venues in and around the Beijing area.

Following the first B08FDP trial in 2006, another trial took place on-site in Beijing during July-August 2007. Compared with 2006, more severe weather occurred in 2007 in terms of number of cases and variety. Apart from heavy rain, severe squalls intense enough to cause the collapse of a huge crane were reported over the western part of Fourth Ring Road, and hailstones fell near the Dong Zhi Men district of Beijing according to local news reports. SWIRLS successfully captured these two severe weather events, albeit with some room for improvement in terms of the forecast rain location and intensity.

The Beijing version of SWIRLS successfully generated various types of forecast products during the trial in 2007 (see Figure 1). The forecast performance was found to be stable, especially in localized heavy rain situations. The forecasters of the Beijing Meteorological Bureau (BMB) generously bestowed a vote of confidence on SWIRLS. "During the various rain events, the rainfall distributions were generally well captured by SWIRLS (see Figure 2). The user interface was simple and easy to learn and operate. No wonder forecasters love using it!" commented Kong Rong, the representative of BMB forecasters.

An International Workshop of B08FDP was held in late September 2007 in Qingdao to examine the readiness of various participating forecasting systems, and to conduct a preliminary review of the forecast performance. Generally speaking, apart from a newly arrived system, all the B08FDP systems ran smoothly and disseminated products in conformity with the agreed standards. The objective forecast verification results presented at the Workshop indicated that SWIRLS achieved reasonably good skill scores in quantitative precipitation forecasts (QPF), particularly for longer lead times and in the heavier rain regimes.

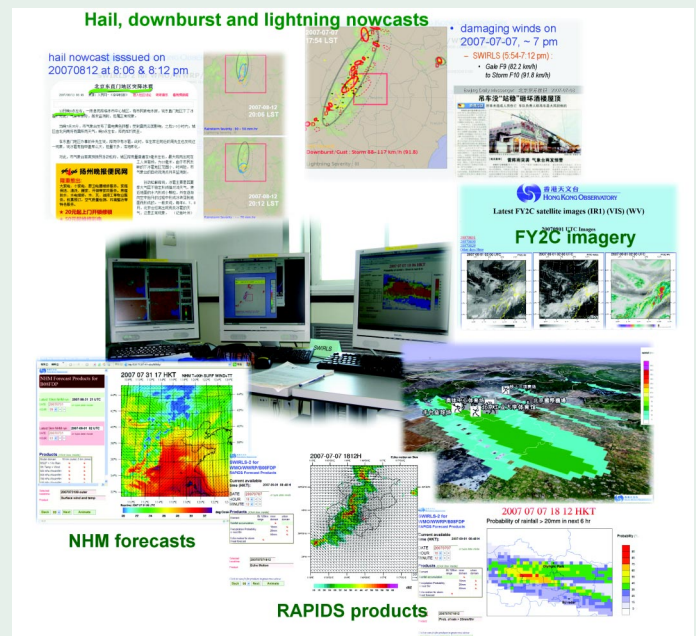


Figure 1: The Beijing version of SWIRLS and its comprehensive bundle of nowcast products.

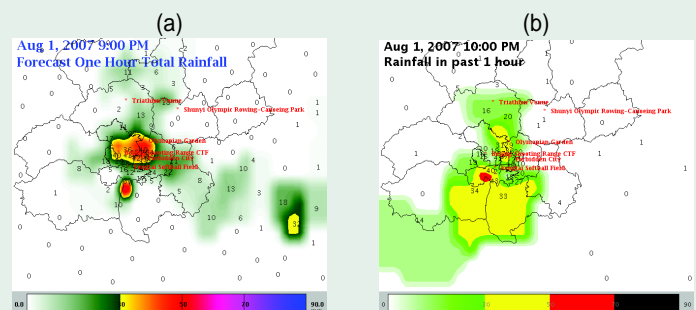


Figure 2: Samples of QPF maps produced by the Beijing version of SWIRLS: (a) forecast 1-hour rainfall distribution issued at 9 pm; and (b) actual 1-hour rainfall distribution as recorded at 10 pm on 1 August 2007. The rainfall unit is millimetre (mm).

¹ The B08FDP is a joint effort of the "World Weather Research Programme" of the World Meteorological Organization and the China Meteorological Administration. The project started in 2005 and is due for completion in 2009. Further details can be found at the official website: <http://www.b08fdp.org>.

Observatory's Wind Shear Work Won Civil Service Outstanding Service Award

CHAN Pak-wai



Figure 1: WMO's newsletter reported HKO's winning of the award.

The Light Detection And Ranging (LIDAR) system uses a laser beam to measure the winds up to 10 km away in non-rainy weather condition. HKO is the first meteorological service in the world that introduced the LIDAR for airport weather alerting. Making use of the LIDAR data collected along the airport glide paths (Figure 2), HKO developed the world-first LIDAR-based wind shear alerting system and put it into operational use at the Hong Kong International Airport in 2005. HKO's achievements in the applications of the LIDAR have been reported in renowned international magazines including

In September 2007, the LIDAR Wind Shear Alerting Service of the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) won the championship of the "Specialized Service" category of the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2007 (<http://www.csb.gov.hk/english/admin/hrm/1042.html>). This was also reported by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in its online Media Centre (http://www.wmo.ch/pages/mediacentre/news/index_en.html) as well as in its newsletter "MeteoWorld" (http://www.wmo.ch/pages/publications/meteoworld/_en/news.html) (Figure 1).

"Aerospace America" of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in late 2006 and "ICAO Journal" of the International Civil Aviation Organization in early 2007 (http://www.icao.int/icao/en/jr/2007/6202_en.pdf).

The judges of the Award Scheme from both the private and public sectors commended that HKO's LIDAR project had a very clear development strategy and its LIDAR team made good use of various channels to obtain user requirements and feedback. This project is a showcase of HKO's quest for excellence in the provision of weather services. "We are very delighted to get such positive comments from the adjudication panel of the Award Scheme. The fact that such a highly specialized project won recognition from the public is of particular meaning to us as professional meteorologists," said Mr. C.M. Shun, Senior Scientific Officer of HKO and leader of the LIDAR team. "We look forward to sharing our experience in wind shear with other meteorological services in the world", Mr. Shun added.

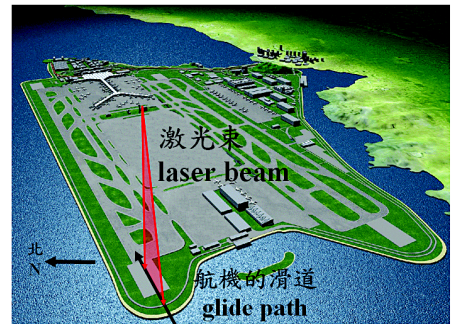


Figure 2: The laser beam of the LIDAR scans towards the airport glide paths to determine the wind shear, i.e. headwind change, to be encountered by the aircraft.

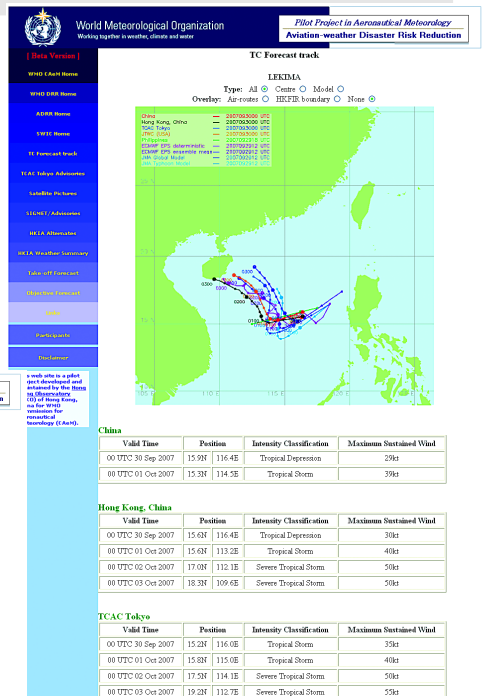
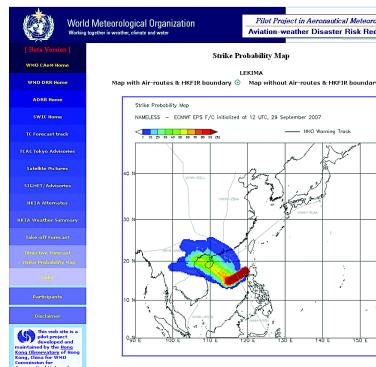
The Observatory sets up dedicated website for WMO's Aeronautical Meteorology Programme Pilot Project

SONG Man-kuen, Sandy

Led by the Hong Kong Observatory, a pilot project on "Aviation-weather Disaster Risk Reduction" in the Asia and South-West Pacific regions has been established by the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology (CAEM) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). In this project, the Observatory set up a website (<http://addr.weather.gov.hk>) dedicated to the aviation community. The website has been put on trial since September 2007. It provides tropical cyclone warnings issued by weather services in China, Hong Kong, Japan, the Philippines and the Joint Typhoon Warning Centre of USA. It also displays numerical forecasts of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts. Such tropical cyclone forecast information is useful to flight planning and decision making by aviation users and is highly appreciated by the airlines and pilots. Captain Brian Greeves of the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) complimented the website for enabling pilots to better observe tropical cyclone developments, thereby contributing to more timely flight planning. WMO has also issued a letter to encourage weather services in various countries to apply for access to the website through the Observatory.

The launch of the website for trial use by WMO members and aviation users has been recently reported by WMO in its online Media Centre (http://www.wmo.ch/pages/mediacentre/news_members/newsfromMembers_en.html).

Forecast tracks of tropical cyclone Lekima shown on pilot project website.



70th Anniversary of the Observatory's Aviation Weather Services

SONG Man-kuen, Sandy

In 1937, the Hong Kong Observatory officially started its aviation weather services with the posting of a forecaster and an assistant to the Kai Tak Airport. 70 years on, the Observatory organized a series of activities to celebrate its 70th anniversary of aviation weather services in 2007. These activities included a visit of Observatory staff and their family members to the Airport Meteorological Office on 1 December and a cocktail reception on 18 December to celebrate with users and partners including the Airport Authority, Civil Aviation Department, Government Flying Services, airlines, pilots and the general aviation community. During the reception, Miss Yvonne Choi, Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), Director of the Hong Kong Observatory and representatives of the six aviation weather services partners lit up a rainbow to express their wish to continue the close co-operation to build a better future.

At the reception, Miss Choi gave a speech to the guests and Observatory staff. She commended the Observatory's achievements in aviation weather services, such as the Observatory's LIDAR Windshear Alerting Service which won the championship of the 2007 Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme (Specialized Service). These achievements realised the



Observatory staff and their family members visited the Airport Meteorological Office on 1 December 2007.

Observatory's conviction of pursuing outstanding aviation weather services through science. She also applauded the Observatory's commitment to building close partnership with users through enhancing communications and collaboration - a vital link to the provision of quality aviation weather services.

In his speech, Mr Lam led the audience to a journey through time back to the days in the old Kai Tak and to relive the hard work of the Observatory staff on the remote Chek Lap Kok Island some 19 years before the opening of the new international airport there. He praised the staff for their team effort, positive and enduring spirits in setting up meteorological observing equipment to ensure continuous weather observations at the remote island. The data collected became the building block for the subsequent meteorological studies and provision of meteorological information for the new airport. Mr Lam said the outstanding achievements and international recognition attained by the Observatory in aviation weather services were the culmination of many years of teamwork. He paid tribute to the Observatory staff and expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the aviation community partners and users for their unfailing support to the Observatory.

Looking forward, the Observatory will continue to strive for better quality aviation weather services for Hong Kong.

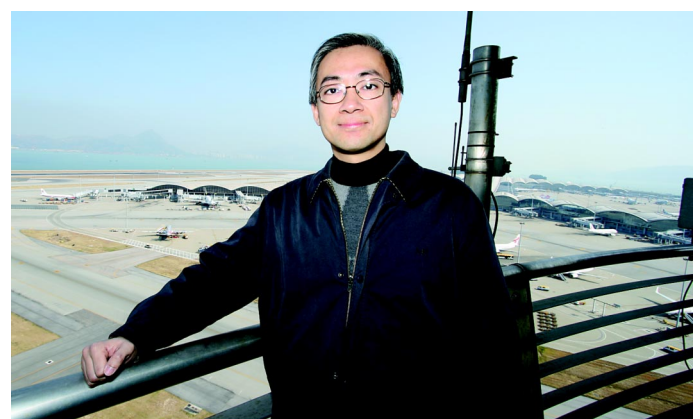


Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism) Miss Yvonne Choi (4th left), Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (4th right) and representatives of the aviation weather community lit up a rainbow at the ceremony.

Post Change in Aviation Meteorological Services

SONG Man-kuen, Sandy

Mr SHUN Chi-ming took over the post of Assistant Director (Aviation Meteorological Services) from Mr WAI Hon-gor on 1 December 2007. Mr Shun joined the Observatory in 1986 and had worked in weather forecasting, radiation monitoring and seismology. In 1993, he started to work in the area of aeronautical meteorology, and had since introduced the weather radar and Light Detection And Ranging (LIDAR) systems for wind shear detection at the Hong Kong International Airport. In the international arena, apart from his active participation in the work of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) as vice-chairman and member of various expert groups, he was also elected the vice-president of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) in 2006. Mr Shun is confident about further development of aviation meteorology. He hopes that, continuing the spirits of science and professionalism as foundation, colleagues will achieve new heights in the Hong Kong aviation weather services.



Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Acting Assistant Director (Aviation Weather Services).

Combined effect of the northeast monsoon and tropical cyclone

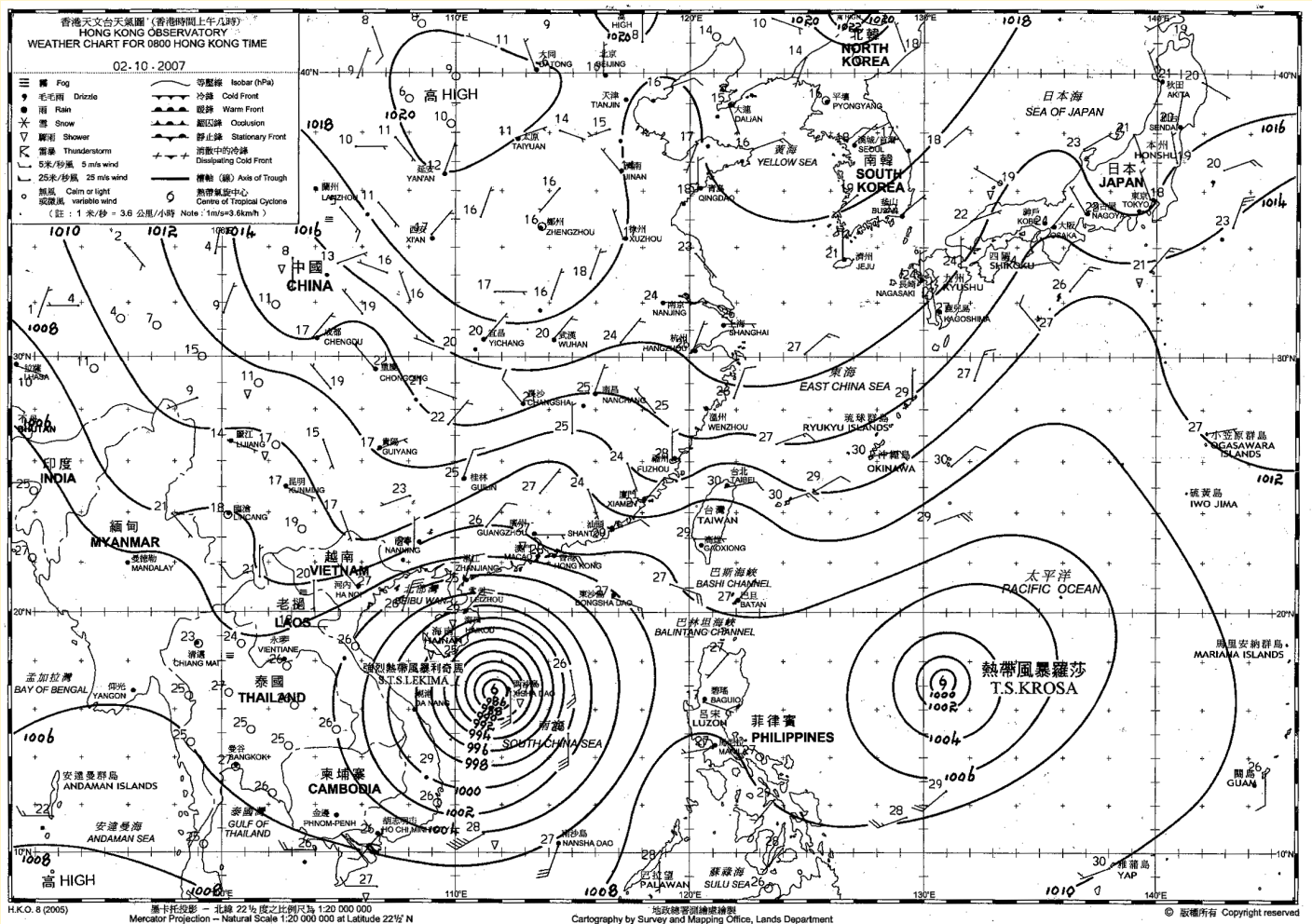
KWOK Yuen-ha, Janet

Situated in the subtropical region, Hong Kong is affected by tropical cyclones during May to November. On the other hand, as it is in the southeastern coastal region of the Asian continent, it is dominated by the Asian Winter Monsoon in winter.

Occasionally, a tropical cyclone may traverse the South China Sea while the winter monsoon is affecting the south China coastal areas. The area of high pressure associated with the monsoon in the north coupled with the tropical cyclone in south brings about a large pressure difference over the region - a recipe for strong winds in Hong Kong. This phenomenon is not uncommon in early autumn.

When winds exceeding 40 kilometres per hour due to the northeast monsoon are blowing near sea level anywhere in Hong Kong, the Observatory issues the Strong Monsoon Signal to warn the public via radio and television to take precautionary measures.

In early October 2007, the combined effect of the northeast monsoon and Severe Tropical Storm Lekima over the northern part of the South China Sea brought strong winds and squally showers to Hong Kong. Winds over offshore waters and high ground reached gale force. The Observatory issued the Strong Monsoon Signal for 48 hours. Under windy conditions, a cargo ship sank near Tolo Harbour and there were more than ten reports of collapsed trees in the territory. We should be aware of the potential danger caused by the combined effect of the northeast monsoon and tropical cyclone. When the Strong Monsoon Signal is issued, the public should take note of the latest wind information provided by the Observatory and take appropriate precautionary measures against strong gusty winds.



The weather map of 8 a.m. on 2 October 2007 shows that Severe Tropical Storm Lekima was traversing the South China Sea while the northeast monsoon was affecting southern China. Pressure difference over the South China coastal region was large (i.e. tightly packed isobars), strengthening the winds over the region.

Zero Carbon Charter - A Pledge to Nature

TAI Sai-choi

The Professional Green Building Council (PGBC) and the Observatory co-organized the launch of the Zero Carbon Charter and a symposium on 6 October 2007. Participants were invited to sign the Zero Carbon Charter.

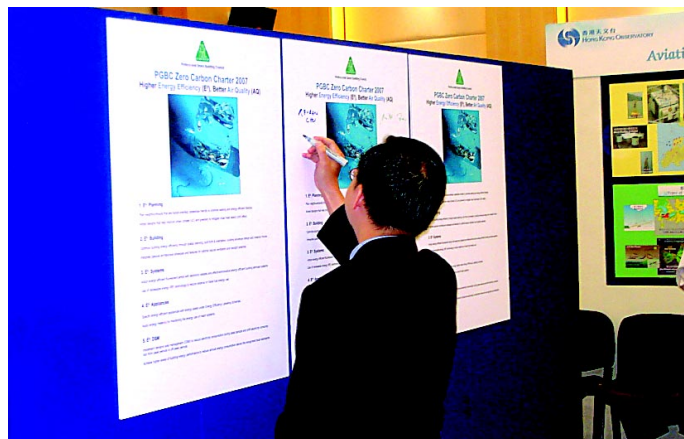
What is Zero Carbon Charter?

In human activities, we inevitably leave traces of carbon on earth, in particular the release of carbon dioxide, the well known culprit of global warming. Building is one of the main systems that release carbon dioxide. The Zero Carbon Charter promotes the integration of energy smart strategies in the planning, design, construction and operation of our built environment, and to foster a new culture of "low/zero carbon emissions" in the development sector. The Charter is indeed a pledge to Nature made by local building and related professions.

In our daily lives we inadvertently leave our carbon footprints on earth, just as we leave our footprints when we walk on the beach. For example, whenever we turn on air-conditioners and other electrical appliances at home, the power plant is releasing carbon dioxide for generating the required electricity. When we travel overseas, the airplane that we take also releases large amount of carbon dioxide. According to United Nations, each Hong Kong citizen on average released 5.4 tons of carbon dioxide in 2004, the 72nd highest in the world and on top of China.

Want to measure your carbon footprint? Try the 'carbon calculator' recently launched by the World Wild Fund (WWF) ([http://www.](http://www.climateers.org/eng/change/carbon.htm)

[climateers.org/eng/change/carbon.htm](http://www.climateers.org/eng/change/carbon.htm)), then work out a plan to gradually reduce carbon release. Let's all make a pledge to Nature and leave the lightest possible carbon footprints on earth.



Acting Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Dr. LEE Boon-ying, signed the "Zero Carbon Charter".

Numerical Tsunami Modelling

LI Kin-wai

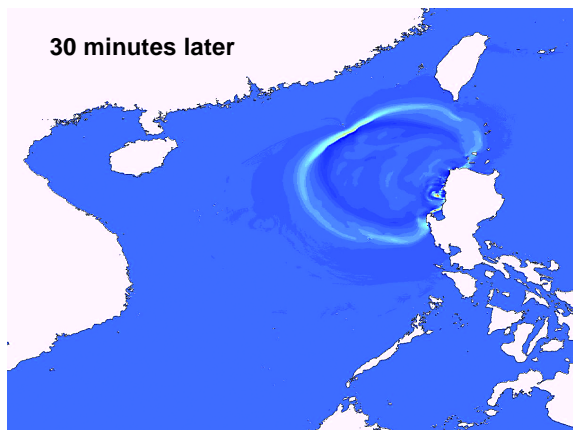
A tsunami is commonly caused by a submarine earthquake, or much less frequently by an enormous underwater landslide, a submarine volcanic eruption or a meteorite impact in ocean. Most tsunamis occur in the Pacific Ocean which is surrounded by major tectonic plate boundary where violent earthquakes occur frequently. Hong Kong is located far away from this circum-Pacific seismic belt and also sheltered by Taiwan and the Philippines, therefore the chance of Hong Kong being affected by a large tsunami is very small. However, we still need to be vigilant for the possible danger.

Hong Kong Observatory started to provide tsunami warning service in Hong Kong in the 1960s. To strengthen the ability to forecast tsunami, the Observatory recently adapted through the Intergovernmental Oceanographic

Commission a numerical tsunami model and incorporated the local high resolution bathymetry and topography data from Marine Department and Lands Department into the model. The model is capable of simulating the propagation of tsunamis caused by the earthquakes in the South China Sea and illustrating the tsunami heights along the coast.

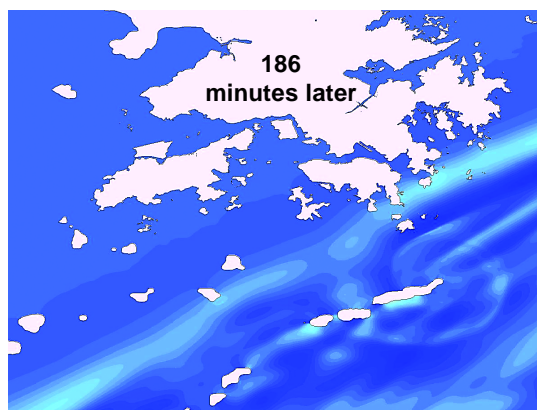
Because of lengthy computation time, it is not feasible to produce timely simulation results by running the model after the occurrence of a tsunami. We therefore have run a large number of tsunami simulations for different locations in the South China Sea and various hypothetical earthquake scenarios in advance and developed a tsunami prediction system based on the results of these simulations. The system can provide promptly the information on arrival time of tsunami in Hong Kong and tsunami heights along the coast to assess the impact of the tsunami to the coast of Hong Kong and form the basis of issuing the tsunami warnings.

Fig. 1



Simulation of a tsunami originated from Manila Trench propagating in the South China Sea (Fig. 1) and approaching the coast of Hong Kong (Fig. 2)

Fig. 2

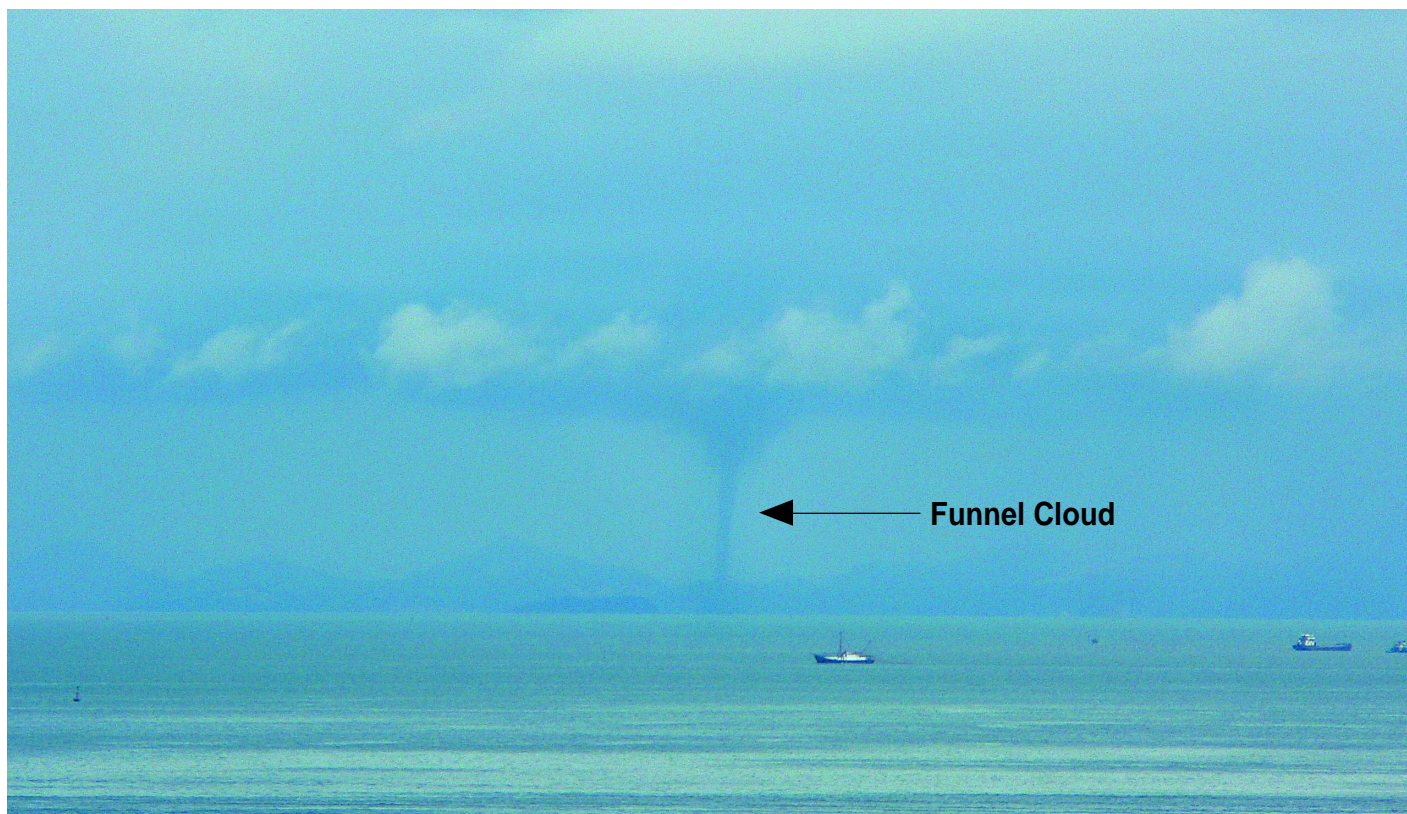


Funnel Cloud Spotted over Waters of Western Pearl River Estuary

CHAN Pak-wai and LI Ping-wah

At about 9:45 a.m. of 26 June 2007, the weather was unstable over Hong Kong due to a southerly airflow. The Observatory's duty Weather Observer at the Airport Meteorological Office spotted a funnel cloud at about 35 kilometres to the northwest, i.e. over the coastal waters of western Pearl River Estuary. The funnel cloud had a narrower base and a wider top, like an inverted triangle. The cloud base developed downwards to the sea surface, appearing as a funnel hanging in the air. Moving gradually from southwest to northeast, the funnel cloud evolved and dissipated rapidly in a few minutes.

Funnel clouds occur in unstable weather conditions. When the cloud develops further downwards and touches the sea surface, a waterspout is formed. Since 1959, there were 38 reports of waterspouts and 15 reports of suspected funnel clouds within 460 km from Hong Kong. The previous report of funnel cloud was on 24 August 2005, at 4 to 5 kilometres to the southwest of the airport.



The funnel cloud over the coastal waters of western Pearl River Estuary photographed at 9:45 a.m., 26 June 2007.

Last time it snowed in Hong Kong

WONG Tak-kan

Hong Kong's climate is sub-tropical, tending towards temperate for nearly half the year. During November and December there are pleasant breezes and plenty of sunshine with comfortable temperatures. January and February are cloudier, with occasional cold fronts followed by dry northerly winds. It is not uncommon for temperatures to drop below 10°C in urban areas. The lowest temperature ever recorded at the Observatory was 0°C on 18 January 1893. Sub-zero temperatures could occur on high ground and in the New Territories, where there were occurrences of frost and even snow. From 1967 to 1975, there were 4 days with snow reported in Hong Kong (see table). Although frost still occasionally occurred in winter, there was no more report of snow during the period from 1976 to 2006.

Date of snow report	Place of snow report
---------------------	----------------------

2 February 1967	Cape Collinson
-----------------	----------------

13 December 1967	Tai Mo Shan
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29 January 1971	Tai Mo Shan
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14 December 1975	Very widespread throughout New Territories
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"Science in the Public Service" won 2nd runner-up of "Partnership Award" in Civil Service Award Scheme

LAM Hok-yin

The "Science in the Public Service" campaign won the second-runner up in the "Partnership Award" in the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2007. The award was voted by LegCo and District Council members and was presented by the Chief Executive, Mr Donald Tsang on 13 September at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The "Science in the Public Service" campaign is jointly organised by a number of government departments. The objective is, through a wide variety

of activities, to let people know more about scientific work of various government departments, and the application of science and technology in providing public services. The campaign was inaugurated in early 2006. The number of campaign partners has since increased to 43, including government bureaux and departments and other collaborating organisations.

For details of the "Science in the Public Service" campaign, please visit <http://www.science.gov.hk>.



A group photo of the Science in the Public Service campaign partners and the Chief Executive at the award presentation ceremony. (Front row, 7th right, Dr LEE Boon-ying, Assistant Director of Hong Kong Observatory)

Observatory co-organised Mountaineering Safety Promotion Day

TAI Sai-choi



Visitors queued up at the Observatory's booth for the rainstorm computer game.

To enhance public awareness of mountaineering safety, the Civil Aid Service joined hands with seven government departments and four non-governmental organisations to hold the "Mountaineering Safety Promotion Day" on 23 September 2007 (Sunday). On that day, the organizers displayed and demonstrated a variety of advanced mountaineering instruments and systems, including digital maps, global positioning systems, night vision equipment and computerized weather maps, etc. Visitors could also participate in interactive activities such as abseiling, climbing and orienteering.

Safety talks on mountaineering safety were also held. First aid, prevention and handling of accidents, hiking safety, basic mountain search skills and sport climbing were introduced. A major talk on how government departments jointly conduct emergency search and rescue operations was also delivered. There were also performances by Police dogs, bicycle stunts and marching bands.

As one of the co-organisers, the Observatory set up a booth to introduce weather related to mountaineering and hiking, and gave talks on mountaineering and weather. Several "Friends of Observatory" volunteers helped man the booth and enjoyed a happy day with the visitors.

Radiation Protection Expert delivering lecture at the Observatory

LEE Lap-shun

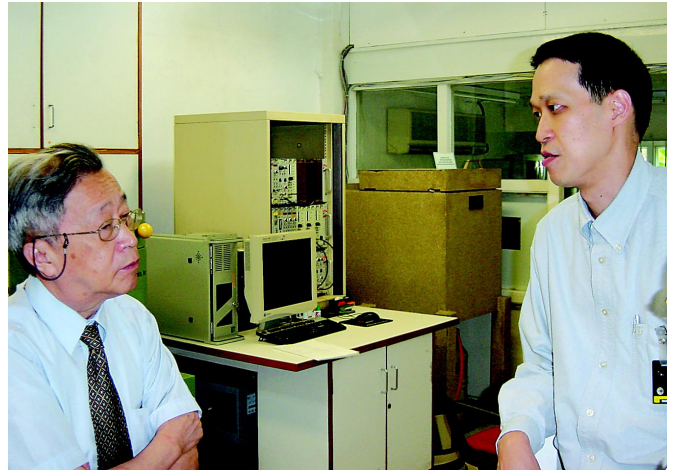
Professor Pan Zi-qiang, an expert on radiation protection, came to Hong Kong again on 14 September 2007 since he visited us three years ago. Besides visiting the Observatory's radiation monitoring station at King's Park and the Radiation Health Unit of the Department of Health at Sai Wan Ho, Professor Pan also delivered a lecture on the latest development of radiation protection in the world, in particular the recommendations on radiation protection newly proposed by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). The talk attracted about 30 officers from 11 other government departments/organizations.

Professor Pan is a renowned international expert on radiation protection. He is a member of the ICRP Main Commission and the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR). He is also a scientific advisor of the Hong Kong Observatory, an Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and the President of the China Radiation Protection Association. Professor Pan has been making important contributions to various fields such as radiation protection, health physics and environmental protection for more than 40 years. He has published a number of academic essays and research reports and attained great achievements in both theoretical and practical aspects.

The visit of Professor Pan deepened our understanding on the recommendations on radiation protection newly proposed by the ICRP. His invaluable advice will be of much help to our work on radiation protection as well as emergency response in the future.



The talk of Professor Pan Zi-qiang at the Observatory attracted about 30 officers from 11 other government departments/organizations.



Professor Pan Zi-qiang (left) visited the Observatory's radiation monitoring station at King's Park.

Scientific Advisor Professor Ding Yuan-zhang's visit to the Hong Kong Observatory

WOO Wang-chun



Professor Ding delivered lecture to the Observatory staff.

At the invitation of the Hong Kong Observatory, Professor Ding Yuan-zhang delivered a lecture at the Observatory on the geology, historical earthquakes and seismic hazard in the vicinity of Hong Kong on 6 September 2007. He also offered invaluable advice on the seismological work of the Observatory.

Professor Ding is a renowned expert in seismology. He was the Director of the Earthquake Administration of Guangdong Province and has published many research papers and monographs, including "Introduction to Seismic Hazards of Guangdong and Hong Kong". He has been the Observatory's scientific advisor since 1996.

I felt greatly benefited from the lecture as it deepened my understanding on the seismic hazard in the vicinity of Hong Kong and Guangdong. It should be very helpful to my work in the future.

FRIENDLY VISITS

Editorial board

Secretary for the Environment Mr Edward Yau (2nd right) paid a visit to the Observatory on 28 August 2007.



Dr YEUNG King-kay (3rd left) and Mr LEUNG Yin-kong (2nd left) of the Climate Change and Climate Forecasting Division visited the Guangdong Meteorological Bureau for technological exchange on 4 September 2007.

The Chairman of the Public Service Commission Mr Nicholas Ng (right) visited the Observatory on 14 September 2007.



Two aviation meteorologists from Thai Meteorological Department visited the Observatory in September 2007 to inspect and learn from the quality management system set up for the Airport Meteorological Office.

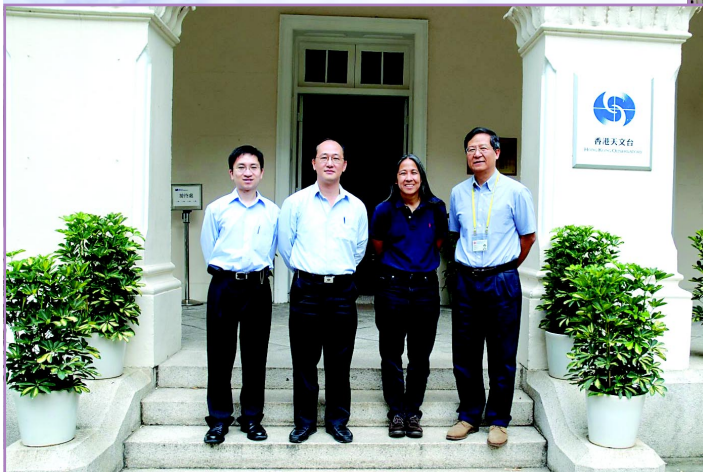
FRIENDLY VISITS

Editorial board



Representatives of the Hong Kong Observatory and the State Oceanic Administration attended the first liaison meeting on cooperation in oceanography at Zhuhai, Guangdong on 12 October 2007.

On 16 October 2007, the Observatory staff gave a briefing to colleagues of the Airport Fire Station on weather that may affect the airport.



Dr Laura Kong (2nd right), Director of the International Tsunami Information Center of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, paid a visit to the Observatory on 27 October 2007.

Two weather forecasters (middle) from Vietnam came to the Observatory on 5-15 November 2007 to learn tropical cyclone forecasting skills.



Dr Tokiyoshi Toya (middle), WMO Regional Director for Asia and South West Pacific, visited the Observatory on 19 November 2007.



Retirement of Assistant Director Mr YEUNG Kai-hing

WONG Wai-kin (Grade Representative of the Scientific Officer)

After serving Hong Kong Observatory for 33 years, Assistant Director Mr YEUNG Kai-hing started his pre-retirement leave in September 2007. During the farewell dinner hosted by colleagues from Scientific Officer grade, Mr Yeung shared with us his anecdotes in the Observatory. Mr Yeung had worked in variety areas in the Observatory including development of the first automatic weather station (AWS) in Hong Kong, the AWS network, a meteorological data display system, the seismological monitoring network and development of the aviation meteorological service for the new airport. In recent years, Mr Yeung concentrated his effort on climate monitoring and prediction and climate change, and attained many achievements for HKO. In 2005, serving as an expert of the World Meteorological Organization, Mr Yeung participated in a mission for establishment of a tsunami warning system for the Indian Ocean. After that, he was also invited to visit the Department of Meteorology of Sri Lanka to draw up a strategy and action plan to enhance the capability of the country to cope with natural disasters in future.

Mr Yeung also lectured in an atmospheric science course in the University of Hong Kong. Some colleagues were in fact his students and during the farewell dinner they enjoyed recollecting the pleasant moments in the course. We would like to express our heartiest wish to Mr Yeung to have a happy and wonderful life after his retirement.



Mr YEUNG Kai-hing (middle, front row) in the farewell dinner.

Cordial Friendship with the "Friends of the Observatory"

WONG Mei-shing



Photo of the new couple with colleagues and volunteers of the Friends of the Observatory.

2 December 2007 was a big day for Scientific Officer LEE Kwok-lun, Alan as he tied the knot with his girl friend. On that day, I had lunch with two friends of the "Friends of the Observatory" before Alan's wedding ceremony. When I arrived, a dozen of ardent volunteers of the Friends of the Observatory (FoOb) as well as our Director and some colleagues were already there to congratulate the new couple.

Time flies. Alan worked in the Service Promotion Section for more than 7 years, and has established hearty friendship with many active members of the FoOb, which is part of the linchpin in promoting our services to the public. It is lucky that we have so many enthusiastic and competent volunteers to support us. Apart from taking part in the annual Open Day, some of them also worked as docents of the Observatory Public Guided Tours and other outreach activities. They also served in focus groups to give comments on our new services.

In mid. 2007, Alan was posted to the Central forecasting Office as Duty Forecaster. In spite of this, his friendship with the FoOb will never fade out in time!

"Master Ng" honoured before retirement

SIN Kau-chuen



Master Ng receiving the award from the Chief Executive, Mr TSANG Yam-kuen.

Mr Ng Tim-hung, Works Supervisor II of the Hong Kong Observatory, is affectionately called by other colleagues as "Master Ng" for his excellent craftsmanship and sophisticated Kung Fu skills. As the officer-in-charge of the Mechanical Workshop, Master Ng is a gentle fellow who never says "NO" and dedicates himself wholeheartedly to his work throughout his career. His consistently meritorious performance and helpful character have won the support and respect of all colleagues.

You would find Master Ng's products in use everywhere around the workplace of the department, including the wooden stand for supporting mercury-in-glass thermometers under the Thatched Shed in the Observatory Headquarters and wooden bridges for placing documents on the desk tops of individual staff. Master Ng is a pioneer in heritage conservation too. He successfully restored the Observatory's pendulum clock to its original look and resumed its normal operation. Master Ng is also proud of his unique design of water supply installation for wet bulb temperature sensors. The device was selected as one of the items placed inside the time capsule during the 120th anniversary of the Hong Kong Observatory in 2003.

Another innovative design by Master Ng is anemometer masts that can be tilted for easy access of wind cups and wind vanes, bringing about great convenience in the maintenance of automatic weather stations. He also ingeniously used everyday material to fabricate a heat stress measurement system to provide the necessary meteorological information

in support of the Olympics Equestrian events. The system has enhanced the professional image of the Observatory. In 2005, Master Ng used recycled materials to assemble a solar cart, named as "Solar Wind", for colleagues to take part in the Solar Cart Race organized by the "Friends of the Earth". In 2007, Master Ng made another award-winning solar cart "Solar Wind II" and he himself drove the vehicle during the competition.

Master Ng is a Chinese Kung Fu expert and a seasoned hiker. He takes time after office hours to organize martial arts lessons for colleagues. He also helps the Observatory's Staff Association running outdoor activities periodically for colleagues and their families to have close encounters with the nature. Due to outstanding performance, Master Ng was awarded the 2007 Chief Executive's Commendation for Government/Public Service on 17 October 2007.

In what appears to be a fleeting moment, Mr Ng has been serving the department for nearly 37 years and is due to retire in January 2008. No doubt, his diverse interests will add colourful days to his retirement life. All the best to Master Ng!



A heroic picture of Master Ng driving "Solar Wind 2".

Observatory Staff Awarded the Secretary for the Civil Service's Commendation

CHAN Wing-shan, Angel

One more Observatory staff is commended for outstanding performance. Mrs Ng Chan Kam-chu, Mirinna, Senior Draughtsman of the Observatory was awarded the 2007 Secretary for the Civil Service's Commendation because of her persistent outstanding performance. Mirinna received the award from the Secretary for the Civil Service, Miss Denise Yue, at the Award Presentation Ceremony on 15 November 2007.

The drawing work by Mirinna and her colleagues was largely replaced by computer graphics and digital photography in recent years. Undaunted by this changing situation, she re-defined the nature of her work by changing her role from "Draughtsman" to "Graphic Designer", and successfully added value of her team's work. Now she is a linchpin of event organization in the Observatory. She has been very successful in decorating the venues to exquisitely match the themes of the events. Moreover, she is an active member of the Observatory team of volunteers to help the under-privileged outside office hours.

This award is more than a recognition of her personal achievement, it is also a pride and encouragement of the whole team.



Mirinna received the award from the Secretary for the Civil Service, Miss Denise Yue.

Outgoing Deputy Departmental Secretary sentimentally attached to the Observatory



WONG Mei-shing

Winnie Yiu, who had worked in the Observatory as Deputy Departmental Secretary for more than 5 years, was transferred to the Food And Environmental Hygiene Department to take up the post of District Secretary in Eastern District Environmental Hygiene Office in October 2007.

Winnie was in charge of administration and personnel affairs in the Observatory. She was also the officer in-charge of the Hong Kong Observatory Volunteer Movement. She worked very well with other colleagues and had built up close friendship with the volunteers. Apart from performing voluntary duties, the volunteers also got together from time to time, including a cozy weekend in Cheung Sha government bungalow with Winnie before her departure.

Before she left the Observatory, Winnie conveyed her heartfelt thanks to colleagues for their guidance and understanding. Although she had not been working in the civil service for a long time, she felt that the Observatory was indeed an outstanding department. Moreover, the friendliness and harmony of the colleagues impressed her most. In fact, her posting to the Observatory was an envy to many friends of hers.

We wish Winnie a prosperous future with delights in the new post.

Former and incumbent Deputy Departmental Secretaries photographed outside the 1883 Building (left : Winnie; right : incumbent Deputy Departmental Secretary Ms CHAN Wing-shan, Angel).

Hong Kong Observatory ranked Number One in the Yahoo! Hong Kong's Search

Editorial Board

Right after the Observatory website achieved a record breaking page visits of over 1 billion in late November 2007, it won the Yahoo! BUZZ Award 2007 in the category of "government department" in mid-December. This award was presented to the highest searched websites by Internet users using Yahoo! Hong Kong's search engine.

Although the Hong Kong Observatory is a small department, our work is close to the people in all walks of life. We strive hard in terms of information dissemination to meet the needs of different sectors and built up various channels to provide a wide range of services. The high frequency of searching "Hong Kong Observatory" as keyword by citizens is the most convincing evidence of their support and recognition. Indeed, our website has long been one of the favourites among government departments. This award is a recognition of our effort and drives us to further improve our services through the website.



Mr WAI Hon-gor, Assistant Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (left) and Dr TAM Cheuk-ming, Senior Scientific Officer of the Hong Kong Observatory (right) received the Yahoo! BUZZ Award 2007 (government department)

Observatory Staff Receiving Praise

Staff of the Observatory receiving words of thank
and commendation from the public or organisations
during the period September - December 2007:

Mr GINN Wing-lui	Senior Scientific Officer
Mr LEUNG Wing-mo	Senior Scientific Officer
Dr YEUNG King-kay	Senior Scientific Officer
Mr HUI Tai-wai	Scientific Officer
Mr LEUNG Wai-hung	Scientific Officer
Mr TAI Sai-choi	Scientific Officer
Mr TAM Kwong-hung	Scientific Officer
Mr LEUNG Yin-kong	Scientific Officer



Public Weather Service Award Winners 3rd Quarter, 2007

Best TV Weather Programme Presenter:
Mr HUI Tai-wai, David

"Solar Wind 2" Takes Gold

WONG Yang-tze

The Observatory's "Solar Wind 2" won a Gold Award in the Best Car Decoration category of the Open Group in the 2007 Hong Kong Renewable Energy Car Technology Showcase & Design Competition. The objectives of participating in the Competition were to raise public interest on Climate Change and to promote public awareness in protecting our environment.

The Observatory has been making use of renewable energy since the 1980s such as using solar energy and wind energy to power automatic weather stations in Hong Kong. Furthermore, the sun and the winds are two basic elements affecting the weather and the climate: hence the name "Solar Wind" for the renewable energy car designed by the Observatory.

"Solar Wind 2" is a four-wheeled fully electric vehicle capable of using solar energy and wind energy at the same time. It has a race-car design. In addition to installing two solar panels on both sides, we have also fabricated three solar panels into a stabilizer to enhance the maneuverability, stability and appearance of the car. To commensurate with its name, "Solar Wind 2" is also equipped with a mini wind power generator to power its brake lamp. The car reflects the Observatory's years of effort in using solar energy and wind energy.

The streamlined design of the car helps to reduce air friction and maintain an elegant appearance. The eye-catching logo of the Observatory is placed in the middle at the front of the car with the symbols "Science" and "Service" on the sides. This not only demonstrates our value of "Service based on Science", but also includes an implicit meaning of "SOS" to remind people to save the Earth and care for our environment. Moreover, the ribbons in red, yellow and blue, the primary colours of art, on both sides of the car make "Solar Wind 2" an exquisite design.

"Solar Wind 2" was among the 16 teams in the competition, including power companies, commercial firms, tertiary institutes and government departments. The Observatory was well represented with two smart drivers and a professional crew, who were enthusiastically egged on by a 17-member cheering team. Although the event was not a timed race, "Solar Wind 2" did not disappoint us. Operated smoothly in a respectable speed, it was maneuvered diligently and the race was completed in style.

"Solar Wind 2" marks the Observatory's continuous effort and development in the use of renewable energy.



"Solar Wind 2" taking the Gold Award

07 Prize Harvest Celebration Party

CHOI Siu-chuen

It's the end of the year, and it's harvest time again. In 2007, the Hong Kong Observatory has won a number of awards. A Celebration Party was thus held on 21 November to commemorate the victories of Observatory staff. There were eight achievements to celebrate in the event (See Table). The Director invited the awardees on stage to share with us their feelings and to receive the congratulations of the colleagues. With the good food funded by the prize awards and the exciting Super Lucky Draw, all HKO colleagues shared the joy of HKO's victories.

After the Celebration Party, the Director wrote an e-mail to all staff to illuminate the meaning of these achievements: while the Hong Kong Observatory is a small department, it has achieved such remarkable results because our colleagues strive hard for our common goals, with the five core values of the Observatory, **namely, Passion, People, Scientific Spirit, Teamwork and Foresight**, in our heart. At the end of the e-mail, the Director inspired the colleagues to always bear the society's common good in mind, to honour our duty and to work as a team with a view to continually letting the glory of the Observatory shine.

Best wishes to the Hong Kong Observatory in the year 2008! May she keep on the footsteps of 2007 and provide the best quality services to our society!



Director giving a speech in the Celebration Party



Director and the awardees' representatives at the roast-pig cutting ceremony

Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme 2007

1. Champion of Team Award (Specialised Service)
2. Second Runner-up of Departmental Partnership Award
3. Merit Award of Departmental Service Enhancement Award

Chief Executive's Commendation for Government/Public Service

Secretary for the Civil Service's Commendation Award

World Weather Information Service

Cities providing official weather forecasts exceed 1200

"Hong Kong Family Movement" organised by the Hong Kong Charitas and Hong Kong Catholic Church

Happy Family Promotion Enterprise Award

"Community Assistance Raised by Employees" organised by the Hong Kong Community Chest

Highest Contribution per-capita in Government Departments for five consecutive years

Table: Celebration Items in the '07 Prize Harvest Celebration Party

Observatory Staff Association promotes sports to welcome Beijing Olympic Games

HO Ka-hon

In the countdown to the Beijing Olympic Games, the Hong Kong Observatory Staff Association held The Director Cup Badminton and Basketball Competitions in August and October 2007 respectively to promote colleagues' interest in sports and their physical fitness. The games were not only enjoyable, they also helped foster team spirit and friendship.

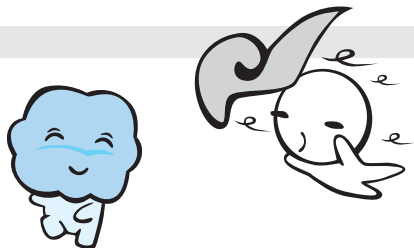
Thanks to the support of colleagues, the competitions were accomplished in joyful ambience. Special thanks are due to our Director Mr LAM Chiu-ying and Assistant Directors Dr WONG Ming-chung and Dr LEE Boon-ying for presenting the prizes and sponsoring the winning cups and medals. This year the Development, Research and Administration Branch won the Director Cup of Badminton, while the Radiation Monitoring and Assessment Branch snatched the Director Cup of Basketball.



Director Mr LAM Chiu-ying (5th left, 2nd row) took photos with participants after the prize-giving ceremony.

Happy Family Working Day

CHENG Chi-tat



The Observatory organised two Happy Family Days during the Summer Vacation, inviting family members of our colleagues to come and spend a working day together so as to understand the working environment of their beloved ones. The response was overwhelming. Nearly 40 colleagues and their family joined the programme, including a 5-year-old little girl and an 80-year-old.

This is the second time we organized the Happy Family Working Day. This time the programme was enriched with more activities and doubled in duration. Participants visited the Exhibition Hall and History Room to have a glimpse of the Observatory's all-rounded services and our hundred years of rich history. Then they went to the TV studio, and had a try to be a TV weather presenter. The heart of HKO - the Hong Kong Meteorological Center is the highlight of the visit, and the participants were privileged to attend the Daily Weather Conference with the Director. What they could not afford to miss was their family members' office, where they could see with their own eyes the friendly working environment of the Observatory.

The 2007 Happy Family Day went beyond HKO Headquarters. Participants visited one of the outstations, to have an idea of the different working environment. They rode on a 16-seat light bus and climbed to the radar station at Tai Mo Shan, the highest peak in Hong Kong. Before the climb, the sun was shining and there were light breezes. All changed after a

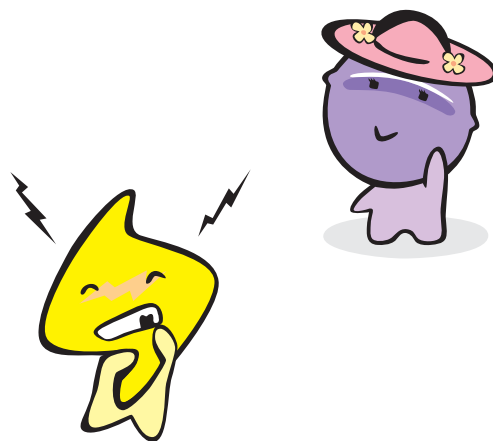


Braving the strong winds at Tai Mo Shan!

drive up the crooked mountain road : gone were the lights, with the wind unbelievably strong and gusty. After the visit, participants fully understood the very different weather conditions in different parts of Hong Kong, and got to appreciate the difficulty their family members had in forecasting the weather.

The final event of the Happy Family Day was tea time with the Director. Over a cup of tea, the Director, colleagues and their family members chatted freely on topics ranging from work, family to hobbies. The Director shared many interesting little stories which he encountered during his long service in the Observatory. The participants also took the opportunity to ask the

Director their various puzzles on the weather and the department. They also expressed to the Director their feelings of having their family members working in the Observatory. Amidst the laughter of the Director and the participants, the 2007 Happy Family Day concluded, leaving everyone a stronger bonding with their family.



Happy Family Photo on the Happy Family Day

Fishing Squid in Sai Kung

LI Yuet-sim

Summer is the season for squid fishing ! The Hong Kong Observatory Staff Association organized a squid fishing trip in Sai Kung on the evening of 24 August 2007. Over 20 colleagues and their family members joined the activity.

Navigating the Sai Kung waters in the dark, everybody could not wait

but start fishing when the floodlights were just on. It was exhilarating whenever a squid was caught. The screaming and hailing broke the silence of the night. As a novice, I caught two little squids but got inked all over my clothes. At the end, the boat owner cooked our catch for us. It was so delicious and we all enjoyed the night very much!



Over 20 colleagues and their family members had fun in squid fishing.

Educational Seminar on Mental Health

CHENG Chi-tat

While many colleagues are very concerned about their physical health, it appears that less attention is given to mental health. The Administration Division and the Civil Service Bureau co-organised an educational seminar on mental health in August 2007 to provide colleagues with the concept of mental health and an understanding of the relationship between work pressure and mental/emotional diseases. The seminar was delivered by a social worker from the Christian Family Service Centre. The speaker introduced effective ways of preventing mental and emotional diseases, and taught our colleagues the art of maintaining mental health with a balanced life. A mental test was also conducted during the seminar, through which colleagues could recognize their level of mental health. During the two hours of talks and games, colleagues understood thoroughly their mental condition and mental needs, and learned how to maintain mental health. They were also better equipped to battle against pressure, and be able to live happier and healthier.



Colleagues listening carefully in the Seminar.