

WEATHER ON WINGS



Dial-a-Weather : 187 8200

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



Secretary for the Civil Service Visiting the Observatory

Editorial Board

Miss Denise YUE, the Secretary for the Civil Service, visited the Hong Kong Observatory on the afternoon of 5 March. She toured various offices and was highly appreciative of the dedication and professionalism of the Observatory staff in providing weather services to the public. Before the end of the tour, she met staff representatives and there was an open exchange of views on Government policies on subjects including salary, non-civil service contract staff and staff succession.



Miss Denise YUE, the Secretary for the Civil Service meeting with staff representatives

SWIC Website

Won the Typhoon Committee Award

LEUNG Yin-kong, John

The Observatory won the Typhoon Committee's Dr Roman L. Kintanar Award for 2009. The Typhoon Committee, comprising 14 Members from the Asia Pacific region, presented the annual award to institutes and organizations in recognition of their dedicated effort in mitigating the impact and risks of disasters caused by tropical cyclones. The Observatory was cited for her outstanding contribution in developing and operating the Severe Weather Information Centre (SWIC) website on behalf of the World Meteorological Organization.

The SWIC website (<http://severe.worldweather.wmo.int/>), constructed within an international framework, provides a central store of tropical cyclone information and severe weather warnings from official weather services all over the world with the aim of reducing loss of lives and damage for the benefit of the global community.



Dr LEE Boon-ying (left), Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, receiving the Dr Roman L. Kintanar Award from Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources of Singapore, during the Typhoon Committee 42nd Session Opening Ceremony

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Meeting the Media on World Meteorological Day

Editorial Board

Every year, we celebrate the World Meteorological Day on 23 March. The theme for the World Meteorological Day this year is "60 years of service for your safety and well-being". The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, as in previous years, introduced the major work programmes of the Observatory and reviewed its work last year during the press briefing on the afternoon of 23 March 2010. He also talked about the trend of occurrence of extreme weather events in Hong Kong. The briefing was attended by more than 20 reporters and was televised live.

Dr LEE Boon-ying, the Director, announced that the Observatory would launch several new services on the Internet that day, including radar images within 128km (www.weather.gov.hk/wxinfo/radars/radar.htm), Digital Weather Forecast webpages (www.hko.gov.hk/dfs/main/dfs_tt_e.html) and My Observatory, a location-specific weather service (www.weather.gov.hk/locspc/locspc_portal_e.htm) providing weather data in finer details to meet users' needs.

Dr LEE said that to enhance the operation during the typhoon season, the Observatory would, starting this year, alert relevant departments to make necessary preparations for specific low-lying areas vulnerable to flooding caused by storm surge.

Reviewing the work of 2009, Dr LEE mentioned that the Observatory provided meteorological support to the East Asian Games held in December last year. He said, "The risk of severe weather such as tropical cyclones or rainstorms during the season was not high but intense winter monsoon could still disrupt outdoor events such as windsurfing. To meet the challenge,



The Director (middle) introducing the Observatory's new Internet services to the media

a weather buoy mounted with observation instruments was set up at Tai Tam Bay to provide site-specific observations and for generation of tailor-made forecast products." He added that the 'Wind Forecast for Wind Surfers' website, based on the technology in support of the East Asian Games, was launched in January to provide the public with site-and time-specific weather forecasts for 10 local wind surfing hotspots.

Furthermore, with the opening of the automatic weather station for the Shum Shui Po District, the goal of having temperature stations at all 18 districts under the "One District One Station" programme was accomplished.

Regarding climate change, the Director said that the recent cold weather which affected parts of the mid-latitudes in the northern hemisphere was normal fluctuations in the short-term weather. The long term global warming trend remained unchanged. In Hong Kong, under the influence of global climate change and urbanisation, both the mean temperature and the annual total rainfall at the Observatory Headquarters showed a rising trend. He said, "In the 100 years between 1900 and 2000, the frequency of occurrence of heavy rain in Hong Kong has doubled."

"Looking ahead, on the basis of observed data and computer modeling, the Observatory expects that the number of tropical cyclones affecting Hong Kong in 2010 will be below normal (six or less). The annual rainfall is expected to be near normal (2200 to 2700 millimetres)."

The Director (1st left) enjoying a friendly chat with reporters



Hong Kong Observatory Won Top Award in Hong Kong ICT Awards



Mr John TSANG, Financial Secretary (right, front row) and Professor Timothy TONG, President of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (left, front row) presenting the "Award of the Year" of Hong Kong ICT Awards 2009 to Dr LEE Boon-ying, the Director (middle, front row)

CHAN Pak-wai

The LIDAR Windshear Alerting System (LIWAS) of the Observatory won the "Award of the Year", the top award in the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2009 against more than 600 competitors. At the same time, it also won the "Best Innovation and Research Grand Award" and the "Gold Award for the Open stream".

LIWAS is an automatic system developed by the Observatory to alert windshear at the airport to ensure flight safety. An innovative method was developed using the laser beam of the LIDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) to measure the wind speed variations along the flight paths. A sophisticated computer algorithm has also been developed to automatically generate alerts of windshear. LIWAS is the world-first operational system utilizing the LIDAR technology for automatic detection of windshear, putting Hong Kong at the leading edge of aviation weather services.

Hong Kong Observatory Open Day

Editorial Board

As part of the celebration of the World Meteorological Day on 23 March, the Observatory was open to the public on 27 and 28 March. Around 10,000 people of all ages visited the Observatory headquarters.

This year, the theme of the Open Day was "Braving the storm together for over a hundred years". Through words, pictures and various exhibits, the evolvement of the Observatory was introduced, in respect of coping with societal changes, protecting the safety of the public with science and technology, and contributing towards the well-being of Hong Kong, its neighbouring areas and the international community. Cutting-edge equipment was also on display. The game booths and eco-tour also attracted crowds of visitors.

A visitor, Miss CHEUNG, commented, "the Observatory staff are friendly and helpful. The exhibits are well presented and the games are fun for everyone".

Dr LEE Boon-ying, the Director, autographed for the new book "Director's Blog" during the open day. Many people welcomed this opportunity and posed for a picture with him.

Apart from Observatory staff, more than sixty "Friends of the Observatory" members volunteered to serve as guides on the open day and enjoyed a happy weekend with the visitors.



'Friends of the Observatory' volunteers photographed with the Director (middle, front row)



A 'Friends of the Observatory' volunteer demonstrating the "Flying in Windshear" computer game to a young visitor



A 'Friends of the Observatory' volunteer explaining the principles of operation and applications of meteorological instruments

During the 2009 East Asian Games, the Observatory made use of a high resolution computer model to provide detailed weather forecasts for the windsurfing events. With the benefit of the experience gained, the Observatory launched a new service in January this year to provide weather forecasts and real-time weather observations for 10 windsurfing hotspots over Hong Kong. The weather forecasts are time and location-specific and include weather elements such as wind direction and wind speed. At the media briefing announcing this new service, all the guests, including Mr James CHIK, the Vice-President of the Windsurfing Association of Hong Kong, and local windsurfing enthusiasts, said that the new service would help the windsurfers to find good wind and expressed their appreciation of the effort put in by the Observatory.

The new service is available at <http://www.weather.gov.hk/sports/windsurf.htm>.



Miss Sharon LAU (1st left, back row), Senior Scientific Officer, pictured with guests attending the media briefing



New "Wind Forecast for Wind Surfers" website

YouTube - Weekly Videos

TSANG Shuk-han, Ivy



Staff from different divisions invited for filming the video

In order to let the public learn more about the Hong Kong Observatory, a short video clip has been produced and uploaded to the internet through the YouTube each week since last November.

The content of video clip covers various aspects, such as weekly weather review, weekend weather forecast presented by a scientific officer, theme reports on new developments of the HKO introduced by relevant colleagues.

The production of the video involves careful design of the story, gathering related information, recording the video and sound, creating animations and editing with special effects.

We have learnt a lot through the video production. It not only enables us to know more about the various operations of the HKO, but also allows us to experience the spirit of teamwork. It is a great working experience for us.

The website of the video: <http://www.youtube.com/hkweather>

Weather at Your Location

To meet the public demand, the Hong Kong Observatory launched a personalized location-based weather service called "MyObservatory" on 23 March.

By making use of positioning software to estimate the user location, the Observatory's webpage (http://www.weather.gov.hk/locspc/locspc_portal_e.htm) displays the latest weather information including temperature, relative humidity, rainfall, wind direction, wind speed and weather photo from a nearby weather station. It also provides a link to the Location-specific Lighting Alert Webpage with automatic setting of lightning alert over the place where the user is. User can also select locations on his/her own via a map interface or from a table to obtain the latest weather information at these selected locations.

This location-based weather service is also available through personal digital assistant (<http://pda.weather.gov.hk/locspc/locspce.htm>) and iPhone.



"MyObservatory" available in web (left), personal digital assistant (middle) and iPhone (right) versions

Po Shan Seismograph Station

WOO Wang-chun

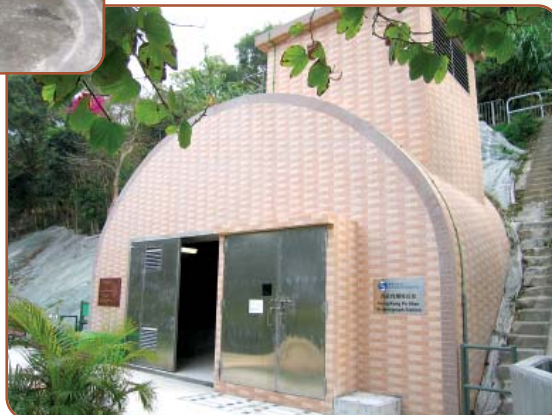
Started Operation



Broadband Seismometer

Po Shan Seismograph Station officially opened on 18 February.

With the consent of Civil Engineering & Development Department, a seismograph station has been set up inside a tunnel for draining soil water, which is located at Po Shan Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong Island, about 300 metres deep inside the hill. Isolated from city traffic and with stable pressure, temperature and humidity, the place is an ideal site for earthquake measurement. The station houses a broadband seismograph for detecting earthquakes up to thousands of kilometres away and a strong motion accelerograph for recording peak ground accelerations in earth tremors, which will be useful to seismic hazard assessment in Hong Kong.



The new seismic data processing system will exchange seismic waveform data with earthquake and tsunami monitoring centres worldwide, enabling more timely and accurate determination of earthquake parameters.

Entrance of Po Shan Seismograph Station

Enhanced Space Weather Webpage Launched

LAM Hok-yin, David

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has recently included space weather in its work schedule. In view of this, the Observatory has enhanced the content of the "Space Weather Webpage" to include information on the impact of space weather on people's daily lives. The webpage also relays the latest warnings of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on adverse space weather so that precautionary measures can be taken in a timely manner.

Extreme solar activities may bring about geomagnetic storms to the Earth, hence the effects on communications, navigation, oil transport,

power supplies as well as polar flights. Hong Kong is located in the lower latitude area and the direct effects of adverse space weather should be minimal. However, as the city has close ties with other parts of the world, effects may be felt locally if an intense activity occurs. Advance technologies such as GPS and mobile phone networks, which have not been tested under stress, may be the most vulnerable. As such, the effects of space weather to Hong Kong should not be neglected.

The enhanced "Space Weather Webpage" is located at http://www.weather.gov.hk/education/edu05spacewx/ele_spwx_curwarn_e.htm.

HKO e-Bulletin for the Marine Community

NG Moon-chiu

HKO e-Bulletin for the Marine Community



Issue No.2 (Mar 2010)

Feedback

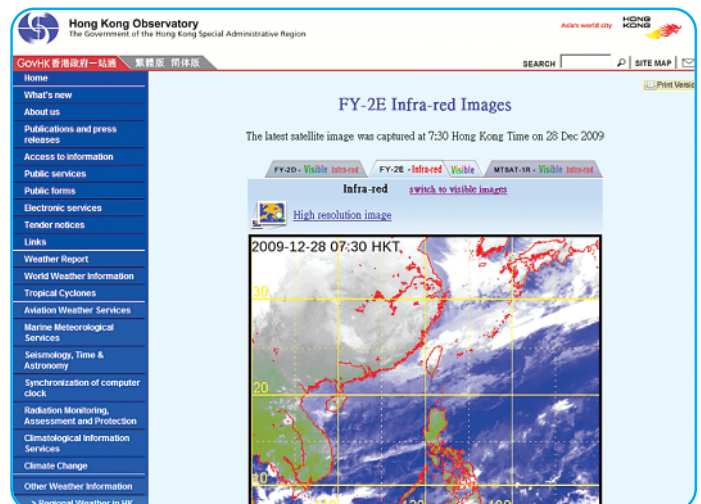
Weather is a crucial factor to safety at sea. Weather information is indispensable to marine activities. To enhance communications with mariners, an e-Bulletin for the marine community has been launched recently on the HKO website to provide readers with news on the latest development of HKO's marine meteorological services.

The e-Bulletin is published once every three months in English, accessible at http://www.weather.gov.hk/wservice/tsheet/pms/bulletin_index_e.html

New Meteorological Satellite Imagery - Fengyun-2E

SO Chi-kuen

The Fengyun-2E (FY-2E) satellite operated by the China Meteorological Administration was put to operation in December 2009, taking over the mission of FY-2C satellite. In the same month, the Hong Kong Observatory launched a new website (http://www.weather.gov.hk/wxinfo/intersat/fy2e/satpic_s.shtml) depicting images from FY-2E. FY-2E is a geostationary meteorological satellite that captures cloud images of the Asia-Pacific region round-the-clock. Like the FY-2D satellite, FY-2E satellite belongs to the same Fengyun-2 series of satellites. Located over the equator at 105 degrees East, FY-2E makes observation once an hour. The frequency of observation will be increased to twice an hour during rainy and tropical cyclone seasons, facilitating the tracking of hazardous weather as well as monitoring of the development of tropical cyclones and rainstorms.



Automatic Weather Station for the Sham Shui Po District

CHOW Siu-wing

The automatic weather station for the Sham Shui Po District was opened on 9 March. With the launch of this weather station, the 'One District One Station' programme has been fully implemented, signifying that there is at least one automatic weather station measuring temperature in each of the 18 Hong Kong districts. The new weather station is located inside the Lai Chi Kok Park and is equipped with instruments for measuring temperature and rainfall. The information from the station serves to provide the residents and visitors with the latest weather conditions in the Sham Shui Po District.

The automatic weather station for the Sham Shui Po District operates round-the-clock. The public can access the information from the Observatory's "Regional Weather" webpage at http://www.weather.gov.hk/wxinfo/ts/display_graph_e.htm?ssp&menu=otherwxi&rx&addbar or PDA webpage at http://pda.hko.gov.hk/regione_ssp.htm. It is also available at the Observatory's "Dial-a-Weather" service at 187 8200. The rainfall information from the station is used for plotting the rainfall distribution map of Hong Kong (webpage: <http://www.hko.gov.hk/wxinfo/rainfall/isohyete.shtml>).



(From left) Dr LEE Boon-ying, Director of the Hong Kong Observatory; Mr WONG Man-kin, District Leisure Manager (Sham Shui Po) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department; Ms CHAN Wing-shiu, District Officer (Sham Shui Po); and Mr CHAN Keng-chau, the member of the Sham Shui Po District Council, officiating at the opening ceremony of the automatic weather station for the Sham Shui Po District

Visibility Monitoring around Victoria Harbour



Visibility Meter at Sai Wan Ho

SIN Kau-chuen

The Hong Kong Observatory has installed an automatic visibility meter at Sai Wan Ho to monitor visibility of the eastern part of Victoria Harbour round-the-clock. Real-time data is made available on the webpage: http://www.weather.gov.hk/wxinfo/ts/display_element_vis_e.htm.

The eastern Victoria Harbour is a major waterway of Hong Kong and is also the only passageway for vessels navigating in and out of Lei Yue Mun. Eastern Victoria Harbour is prone to reduced visibility as a result of sea fog during the fog season. The visibility meter at Sai Wan Ho provides real-time visibility data for the eastern part of Victoria Harbour. Together with the visibility meter at Central, which began operation in 2006, visibility of all of Victoria Harbour can now be monitored effectively. This has further enhanced the

Observatory's service for the marine community and the public.

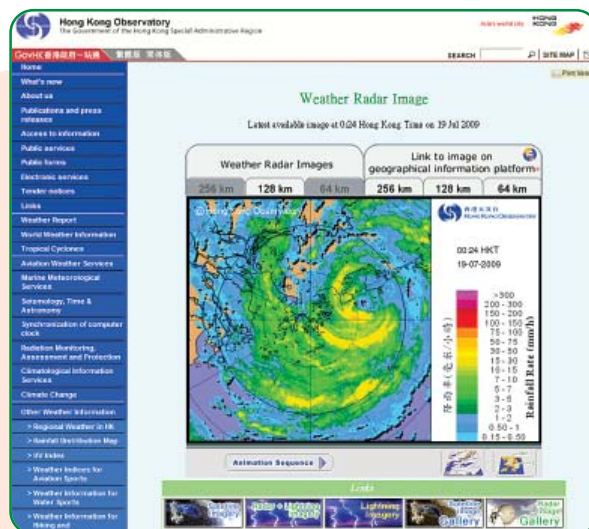


Real-time data of the visibility meter at Sai Wan Ho

Enhanced Weather Radar Image Webpage

SO Chi-kuen

Many people from Hong Kong commute in the Pearl River Estuary for work or tour. To enable the public to know more precisely the rainfall situation in this area, the Observatory launches radar imagery at 128 km range on its Weather Radar Image Webpage (<http://www.weather.gov.hk/wxinfo/radars/radar.htm>) in March. The webpage features still pictures, animation sequence as well as images on geographical information platform. The new 128 km radar product, together with the existing 64 km and 256 km range images, allow people to grasp the rainfall situation far and close. Meanwhile, the Weather Radar Image Webpage was also enhanced to make it more friendly to smart phone users for viewing the movement of rain areas via animation sequence in addition to still pictures.



128 km range weather radar image



Observatory Official Elected President of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology of the World Meteorological Organization

CHEUNG Ping



Mr SHUN Chi-ming (5th left) with Ms JIAO Meiyuan (6th right), the Deputy Administrator of the China Meteorological Administration; Dr LEE Boon-ying (7th left), Director of the Hong Kong Observatory; Mr Ian Lisk (6th left), new Vice President of the Commission, and delegates from China and Macao, China

The Observatory hosted the 14th Session of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology (CAeM) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from 3 to 10 February. This is the first time that a session of the commission was held in Asia. About 120 participants from 56 members of the WMO and seven international organizations attended the session. The Observatory won high accolades from participants after the session for organizing a very successful event.

The session has identified a number of high-priority plans and tasks to further the development of aviation weather services, including assisting WMO members to implement quality management system, developing a competency assessment framework for aeronautical meteorological personnel, and introducing new meteorological services for the terminal area. All these initiatives are aimed to address the pressing need for enhancing weather services for aviation in the 21st Century.

Mr SHUN Chi-ming, the Observatory's Assistant

Director, was elected the President of CAeM during this session. He will lead the work of the Commission in the coming four years. It is the highest position in the WMO that an official has taken up in the history of the Observatory. Mr SHUN said in addressing the participants after the election that it is his great honour to serve as the President of the Commission.

"Being a territorial member with seven million people where East meets West, Hong Kong, China is somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of all WMO members around the world. We are surely not the most advanced member, nor are we the least developed. Recognising where we are, we will apply available science and technologies to enable us to continuously improve our services, while at the same time, we will also bear in mind the needs of the developing world," Mr SHUN said.

He also highlighted the importance of weather services in embracing changes, and becoming more versatile, more innovative and more cost-effective in responding to new challenges.

Ms JIAO Meiyuan, the Deputy Administrator of the Chinese Meteorological Administration and principal delegate of China attending the session, said that she regarded the Observatory highly in taking the lead to enhance aviation weather services. Ms Gaborekwe Khambule, the principal delegate from South Africa said, "Today a vibrant young generation with drive and passion has been elected to the office. Change is always uncomfortable. However it is essential that the leadership of the Commission appointed today be accorded the support and the opportunity to serve for the betterment of the aviation weather services."



Mr SHUN Chi-ming (2nd right), the newly elected President of the Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology and Assistant Director of Hong Kong Observatory, pictured with Mr Carr McLeod (2nd left) and Dr Neil Gordon (1st left), the two former Presidents of the Commission, as well as Mr Ian Lisk (1st right), the newly elected Vice President

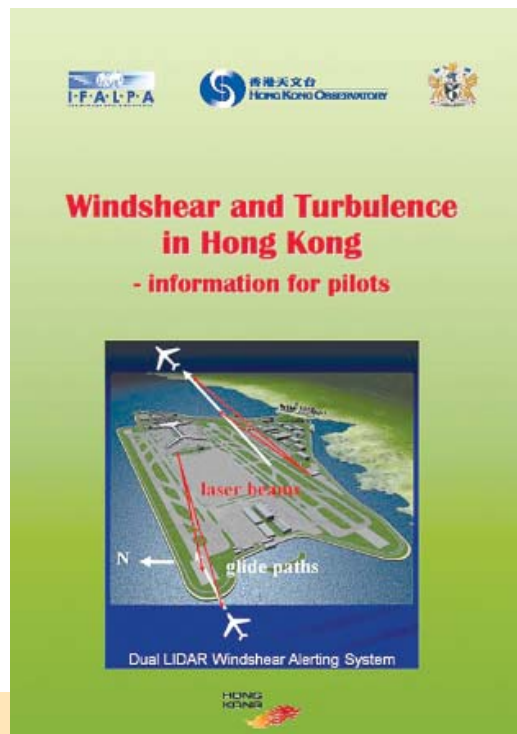
Third Edition of Windshear Booklet Published

LI Ping-wah

The third edition of the booklet: "Windshear and Turbulence in Hong Kong - information for pilots", has been jointly published by the Observatory, the International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) and the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators (GAPAN). Apart from describing the causes of windshear and turbulence at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) as well as the detection and alerting service, the booklet contains information on LIDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) Windshear Alerting System, analysis of aircraft flight data and effects of "gentle windshear". Captain Brent Hawkins, Chairman of Hong Kong region of GAPAN, said, "While most of the information within the booklet may be HKIA-specific, it also provides an overview of how these meteorological hazards could affect other airports that are similarly located adjacent to coastal areas with significant terrain."

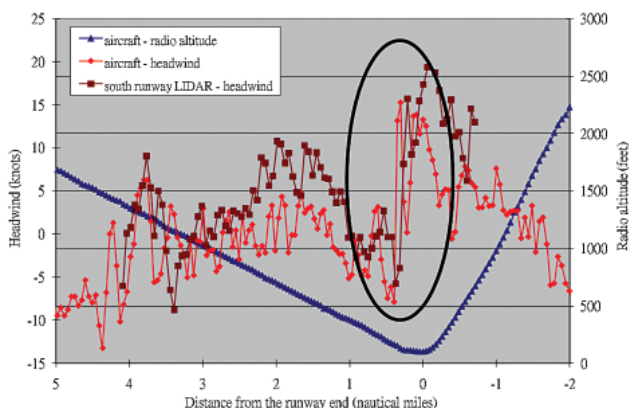
The booklet can be downloaded from the Observatory's website at: <http://www.hko.gov.hk/aviat/articles/WS-turb-booklet-eng-3rd.pdf>, and is also available from the websites of IFALPA (www.ifalpa.org) and GAPAN (www.gapan.org).

New edition of the booklet: "Windshear and Turbulence in Hong Kong - information for pilots" (Available in English only)



Windshear Event on 27 December 2009

CHAN Pak-wai



On the morning of 27 December 2009, an early season easterly airstream prevailed over southeastern coast of China. Under a stable atmosphere, terrain-disrupted airflow appeared above the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). There were a total of 25 reports of significant windshear from pilots. Among them, three aircraft could not land on the south runway of HKIA due to significant windshear and had to divert to Shenzhen. According to some airlines, this was the first time that their aircraft diverted to another airport due to significant windshear in a non-tropical cyclone and non-thunderstorm situation.

This windshear event was successfully captured by the LIDAR Windshear Alerting System at HKIA. Timely alerts were issued to the pilots. As shown in the figure, the LIDAR-measured headwind profile was consistent with the aircraft data, indicating that a landing aircraft may encounter windshear of headwind increase of 20 - 25 knots (encircled in black in the figure).

Talk on Aeronautical Meteorology for Air Scouts

HO Ka-leong, Paul

The Observatory has devoted to promoting meteorological knowledge. On 20 February, more than 20 members of the Air Scout Troop of 1661st Kowloon Group of Scout Association of Hong Kong visited the Observatory. Apart from visiting the Central Forecasting Office and the weather observing equipment, the air scouts attended a talk on basic weather observation and forecasting. The air scouts enjoyed the visit very much. Their team leader, Dr Philippe LI, expressed that they had a wonderful time at the Observatory, and the talk was informative yet easy-to-understand. It not only enhanced the meteorological knowledge of the air scouts, but also helped them acquire a Pathfinder Award.

Mr Paul HO (3rd left), Aviation Forecaster of the Observatory, introducing weather observing equipment to the air scouts



ICAO Regional Director Visited the Observatory

SONG Man-kuen, Sandy

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Regional Director of the Asia/Pacific Regional Office, Mr Ahmed AWAN visited the Observatory on 10 March. This was the first time a regional director of the office visited the Observatory. Mr AWAN was impressed by the development and achievements of the Observatory's aviation weather services, like the LIDAR Windshear Alerting System which had won several awards recently. He also commended HKO's active participation in international and regional activities to enhance aeronautical meteorology, and its efforts in developing new meteorological services to enhance the support to air traffic management. He encouraged the Observatory to participate in the coming conference of Director Generals of Civil Aviation in Asia/Pacific region to promote the new development in aeronautical meteorology to senior management of civil aviation.



Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Assistant Director of the Observatory (1st left) introducing the work of the Central Forecasting Office to Mr Ahmed AWAN, the ICAO Regional Director of the Asia/Pacific Regional Office

Meeting of Working Group on Aviation Meteorology in Pearl River Delta

Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Assistant Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, led a delegation to attend the Second Meeting of the Working Group on Aviation Meteorology in Pearl River Delta in Zhuhai, Guangdong on 16 March.

The working group was established in 2009 and its first meeting was held in Shenzhen, Guangdong in July that year. This long-term working group between the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) and the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) aims for collaborative study in aviation meteorology of the Pearl River Delta.

CAAC attached great importance to the working group. Mr. XU Jianliang, Deputy Director of Air Traffic Management Bureau of CAAC, travelled all the way from Beijing to attend the second meeting. At the meeting, CAAC and HKO reported progress and discussed future work plans. In particular, the scheme of data transmission was confirmed, expediting establishment of data exchange link. All these laid an important foundation for future sharing of real-time meteorological data and scientific research co-operation within the Pearl River Delta area.

LEE Shuk-ming, Olivia



Mr SHUN Chi-ming (4th left, front row) and Mr XU Jianliang (4th right, first row) with participants at the Second Meeting of the Working Group on Aviation Meteorology in Pearl River Delta

Hottest Decade in Hong Kong

LI Kin-wai

The World Meteorological Organization announced that 2009 would likely rank among the top 10 hottest years on record.

In Hong Kong, the annual mean temperature recorded at the Hong Kong Observatory in 2009 was 24.1 degrees, ranking the 9th highest on record with 1991 and 2006 (see table). Among the 11 warmest years on record, 6 occurred in this century.

Due to global warming and local urbanization, the average temperature in the decade of 2000-2009 was 23.5 degrees, the highest decadal average on record. The average temperatures in the decades of 1980-1989 and 1990-1999 were 22.9 and 23.3 degrees respectively.

11 highest annual mean temperatures recorded at the Hong Kong Observatory Headquarters

| Year | Annual mean temperature (Degree Celsius) | Year | Annual mean temperature (Degree Celsius) |
|------|--|------|--|
| 1998 | 24.0 | 2001 | 23.6 |
| 2002 | 23.9 | 1994 | 23.6 |
| 1999 | 23.8 | 2009 | 23.5 |
| 1966 | 23.8 | 2006 | 23.5 |
| 2007 | 23.7 | 1991 | 23.5 |
| 2003 | 23.6 | | |

Sand and Dust Weather in March

MOK Hing-yim

Under the influence of the northeast monsoon over eastern China, the sand and dust originated from sandstorms over northern China reached the coast of Guangdong on 21 March. Locally, visibility dropped below 3000 metres that day. The visibility remained rather low the following day, and began to improve slightly over the next two days as the winds turned to southerly.

What is a sandstorm? Sandstorms are characterized by a mass of dust and sand particles lifted to great heights by a strong and turbulent wind. The visibility could sometimes be reduced to below 1000 metres. Although local visibility would be reduced occasionally, sandstorms from the north would have generally lost most if not all their characteristics by the time dust and sand arrived in Hong Kong after travelling a long distance.

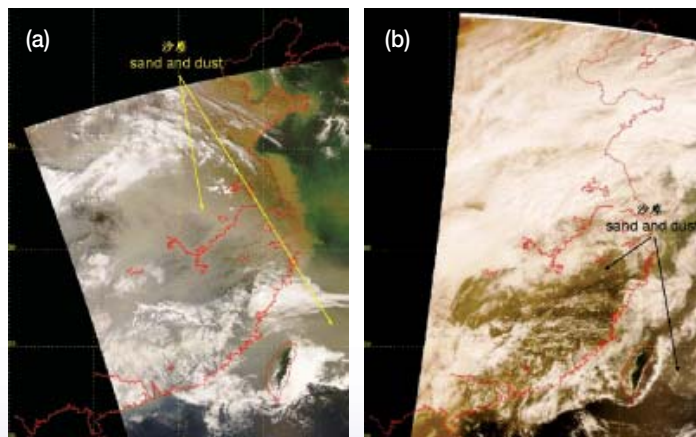


Figure (a) True colour image at 1:06 p.m., 21 March. Sand and dust had spread to central and eastern China.

Figure (b) True colour image at 10:38 a.m., 22 March. Sand and dust spread further to Taiwan and its adjacent waters. As southern China was generally covered by clouds, sand and dust were not observed from the satellite picture.

[The satellite imageries were originally captured by Earth Observing Satellite of U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).]

Partial Solar Eclipse on 15 January

CHEE Shiu-chung

An annular solar eclipse, visible as a partial eclipse in Hong Kong, occurred on 15 January. The partial eclipse began at 3:33pm, reached its maximum at 4:54pm, and ended at 6pm when the sun descended below the horizon. The Observatory captured images of the eclipse with a telescope and, jointly with Hong Kong Space Museum, provided a live webcast of the event.

Before the eclipse began, we briefly discussed and shared experience on astrophotography with colleagues of the Space Museum at their filming location. Images of the eclipse were captured with a telescope and immediately uploaded through a wireless network to the Observatory's website.

At the same time, our colleagues used a telescope and a digital camera to shoot the eclipse on the roof of the Centenary Building. The video clip was subsequently uploaded to YouTube. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8NLKFasPjo>)



Image of the solar eclipse photographed by the Observatory's telescope at 4:54pm

Annual Outlook for 2010

LEE Sai-ming

Just like years before, the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory revealed the annual outlook for 2010 in his report of the work programmes of the Observatory at the media event held on 23 March. The total rainfall of Hong Kong this year is forecast to be near normal (between 2200 and 2700 millimetres) while the number of tropical cyclones coming within 500 km of Hong Kong will be below normal (6 or less).

Since last year, the Observatory has been making use of climate model predictions to forecast the annual rainfall. The Observatory made a further step forward to extract effective information or factors from model output using advanced statistical methods and then construct the regression equation for forecasting. From this year onwards, this approach is also adopted to forecast tropical cyclone activities. Verification results showed that the new method outperformed the climatological forecast.

| Annual Outlook for 2010 | |
|--|---|
| Annual rainfall in Hong Kong | Near normal (between 2200 and 2700 mm) |
| Number of tropical cyclones entering 500 km of Hong Kong | Below normal (6 or less) |

Annual outlook for 2010

Tips for Protecting Children from the Sun in Summer

The risk of adverse health effects from UV radiation exposure is cumulative. Children commonly love playing outdoors in summer. If one is over-exposed to UV radiation during childhood, the chance of skin cancer occurring later in life may increase. Therefore, parents should pay particular attention to protect their children from overexposure to UV radiation. Some tips to protect children from the sun are suggested below.

Firstly, parents should schedule outdoor activities to avoid peak UV radiation periods during the midday. Furthermore, children should be protected from the sun by the use of hats, umbrellas, sunglasses or sunscreen lotions. In addition, children should not be left in the sun for extended periods of time and should be encouraged to play in the shade.



Children should have enough protections from UV radiation under the sun

“Clouds in Hong Kong” Series - Cirrus

Cirrus belongs to the high cloud group with cloud base height of 6000 meters or above. It is commonly observed in Hong Kong all year round and is particularly noticeable in autumn and winter when the lower and middle atmosphere is dominated by dry and almost cloud free conditions.

“Cirrus”, in Latin means curl or hair-like. Its most distinguishable feature is the delicate filaments or narrow bands with fibrous texture which look like feathers or tenuous trail (Figure 1). Up in the higher portion of the troposphere, the depth of cirrus is quite limited, making it rather translucent. Cirrus, which forms at the level with air temperature of -20°C or below, is almost exclusively composed of highly-reflective tiny ice crystals. It is usually in bright white colour against a background of deep blue sky. In fact, cirrus is generally whiter than clouds in the lower or middle levels (Figure 2). When sunlight is shining from the horizon, cirrus can be tinted orange or faint red (Figure 1).

Cirrus is very high in the sky where little moisture is present. Even if the cirrus turns into water droplets, they tend to evaporate out before reaching ground. Generally speaking, cirrus is associated with fine weather at least for a few hours. On some occasions, it can be seen as a precursor of an approaching thunderstorm, tropical cyclone or cold front. An example is shown in Figure 2 which was taken on the morning of 20 October 2002. On that morning, the atmosphere was rather unstable with warm southeasterly winds prevailing over Hong Kong, and cumulus clouds occupied almost half of the lower atmosphere. Well above the cumulus, cirrus was observed which originated from a cold front, some 200 km to the north of Hong Kong, spreading south (Figure 3). In less than 20 hours, the cold front swept across the coast of Guangdong, bringing thunderstorms and showers to Hong Kong.



Figure 2: Cirrus clouds (bright white at the upper portion) and cumulus clouds (greyish at the lower level) observed to the north of the Hong Kong International Airport on 20 October 2002.

HUI Tai-wai, David



Figure 1: Cirrus clouds observed near Lantau Island on 13 January 2004.

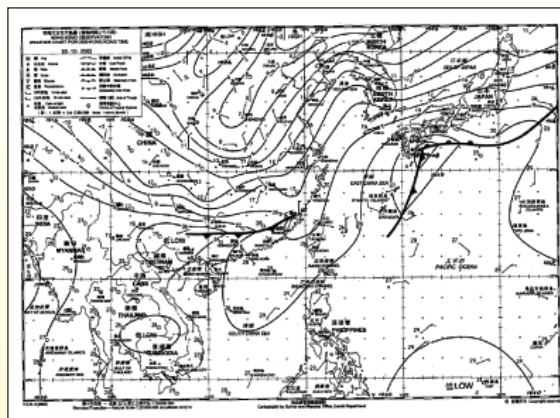


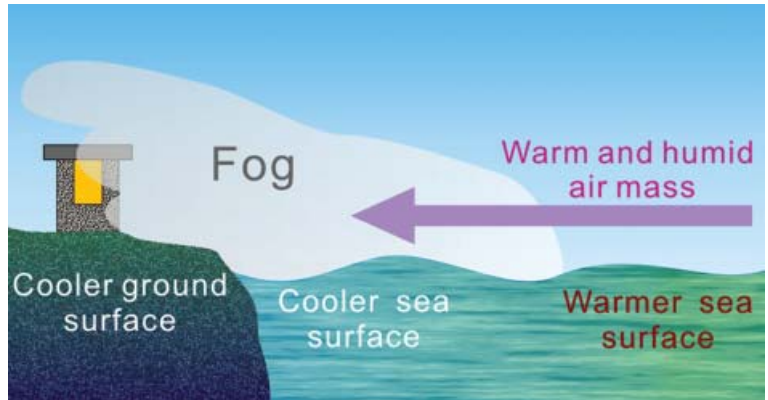
Figure 3: Weather chart at 8:00am, 20 October 2002, showing a cold front located some 200km to the north of Hong Kong.

Water in Four Seasons - Spring

We call the envelope of air surrounding the Earth the atmosphere. It is closely related to human and all kinds of living beings. Just as fish which cannot live without water, we all live in the bottom of the atmosphere and cannot leave it for a second. The atmosphere has various physical properties such as temperature, humidity, wind speed, air pressure and precipitation. Their variations can affect our lives and even existence. Through a series of articles, we will introduce the various elements or properties of the atmosphere in different seasons of the year. To begin our journey, let us start with the characteristics of water in springtime.

The atmosphere is in motion all the time so that heat and moisture around the world can be exchanged. Hong Kong's climate is subtropical with different features in each of the four seasons. In springtime, Hong Kong is occasionally affected by cold fronts followed by dry northerly winds. On the other hand, it is sometimes affected by warm and humid maritime airstream, causing very humid weather and even the occurrence of mist or fog. In Hong Kong, the most common type of fog in spring is advection fog. During this time, as the water along the coast of Guangdong is still rather cool, the warm and humid air coming from the distant ocean will be cooled by the underlying water. This results in condensation of water vapour into droplets and hence formation of fog (see the figure).

You may recall that February this year was more humid than usual, with the refrigerators, washing machines or walls "sweating", i.e. water droplets forming on the surfaces. This phenomenon is called "Huinan" in Putonghua by the locals, which means backing to the south. From the perspective of meteorology and physics, this happens when cold air recedes and another warm and humid maritime airstream comes in rapidly. As the surface temperatures of walls, floors and outdoor glasses still remain low, water vapour in the warmer air can easily condense into tiny water droplets. The low water-absorbing capacity of these surfaces favours the aggregation of tiny droplets into water droplets, which are visible to us. However, as temperatures rise later on, moisture begins to vaporize and the weather phenomena of "Huinan" will disappear gradually.



Schematic diagram showing formation of advection fog

Climate Change FAQs

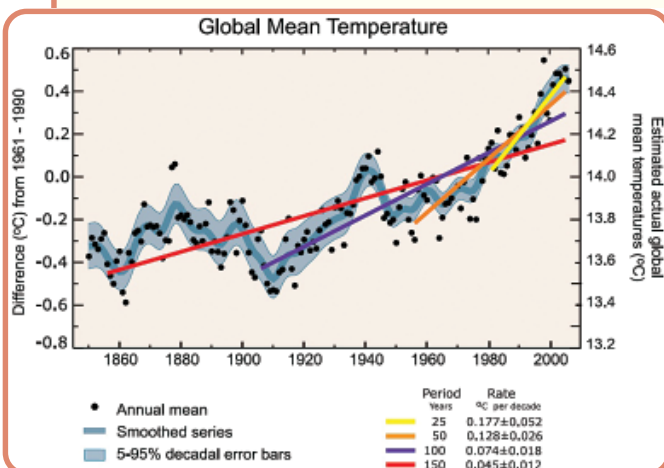
CHAN Kin-yu

Q: How do human activities contribute to climate change?

A: Rapid development of economic and industrial activities since the 18th century has resulted in abundant use of energy and resources. In particular, the burning of fossil fuels (such as coal and oil) emits large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The increase in anthropogenic (human induced) greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere enhances the greenhouse effect. This can be visualized as the thickening of an invisible blanket covering the earth, resulting in global warming. The human impact on climate during this era greatly exceeds that due to known changes in natural processes, such as solar changes and volcanic eruptions. The main greenhouse gases added through human activities, including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, will reside in the atmosphere for decades or even centuries. The resulting global warming and its effect are thus long lasting.

Q: How are temperatures on Earth changing?

A: According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the global mean temperature rose by 0.74°C during the hundred year period between 1906 and 2005. The rising rate was 0.13°C per decade in the 50 years from 1956 to 2005, nearly twice the rate in the past 100 years.



Observed changes in global average surface temperature. Changes are relative to corresponding averages for the period 1961-1990. Smoothed curve represents decadal averaged values while circles show yearly values. The shaded areas are the uncertainty intervals. (Source: IPCC, 2007)

The Observatory Participated in WWF Earth Hour 2010 Kick Off

LEE Tsz-cheung

Mr SHUN Chi-ming, Acting Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr Eric BOHM, Chief Executive Officer of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) - Hong Kong, and Mr Ben HUNG, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited, officiated in the WWF Earth Hour 2010 Kick Off ceremony on 21 February. Through this event, WWF encouraged the public to adopt a low-carbon lifestyle and show their support to the Earth Hour 2010 campaign by turning off lights for one hour at 8:30 pm, 27 March. The Observatory also joined the campaign in response to the appeal by WWF.



Mr SHUN Chi-ming (2nd right, back row), Mr Eric BOHM (3rd right, back row), and Mr Ben HUNG (3rd left, back row) officiated at the WWF Earth Hour 2010 Kick Off ceremony

Reaching out to Fiji

CHENG Yuen-chung

Mr CHENG Yuen-chung (2nd right, front row) together with the participants of the workshop



At the invitation of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Mr CHENG Yuen-chung, Scientific Officer of the Observatory, travelled to Fiji to deliver a series of lectures in a training workshop in early February this year. 16 meteorologists and officers of disaster management authorities from 9 Pacific Island Countries attended the workshop. The lectures focused on the important role of public weather services in support of disaster prevention and mitigation, particularly in the communication and coordination between meteorological services and disaster management authorities. The invitation of Mr Cheng to the workshop demonstrated the international recognition of the Observatory's expertise in public weather services.

Winning of “Meritorious Website Award” and “Web Care Award”

NG Pui-man

In early 2010, Hong Kong Observatory website was granted some trophies again. The website with an annual access rate of over 1.5 billion times won the 2009 Meritorious Website Award and silver prize of Web Care Award 2009. These awards represented the public's appreciation and recognition of Observatory's work.

Meritorious Website Contest was judged by public online voting and a Professional Adjudication Panel with reference to the information content and user-friendliness of the websites while the Web Care Award aimed to promote among public and private organizations the importance of barrier-free websites in addressing the Digital Divide in the society. The latter was achieved through providing the physically impaired with equal opportunities to reap the benefit of the information shared on the Internet.



Meritorious Website Award (left) and Silver prize of Web Care Award (right) were awarded by Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority and Internet Professional Association respectively

Finale of “Wetlands in My Eyes” Inter-school News Reporting Contest

LEE Tsz-cheung

The 2nd “Wetlands in My Eyes” Inter-school News Reporting Contest which was co-organized by Hong Kong Wetland Park, Hong Kong Observatory, Hong Kong Professional Teachers’ Union, Ming Pao Daily News and life.mingpao.com came to a successful completion with the awards presentation ceremony held on 6 February at Hong Kong Wetland Park. The contest was well received with 40 entries of news reports echoing the theme “Wetlands, Biodiversity, and Climate Change”.

The winning entries are available at the website:

http://www.wetlandpark.com/wwd2010/en/programmes_es_newsreporting.html

Opening Ceremony of “Automatic Weather Station for the Elders”

TAM Kwong-hung

In order to arouse the awareness of the elders on daily weather changes which may affect their health, the HKSXH Lady MacLehose Centre (Dr Lam Chik Suen District Elderly Community Centre) joined the Community Weather Information Network (Co-WIN) in September 2008 and formed the “Interest Group on Digital Weather”. With the assistance of the Observatory and the Department of Applied Physics of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, an automatic weather station was set up at the Centre. On 8 March, Dr LEE Boon-ying, Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, visited the Centre and officiated at the opening ceremony of the “Automatic Weather Station for the Elders”. He also shared the experience in weather observations with the elders.

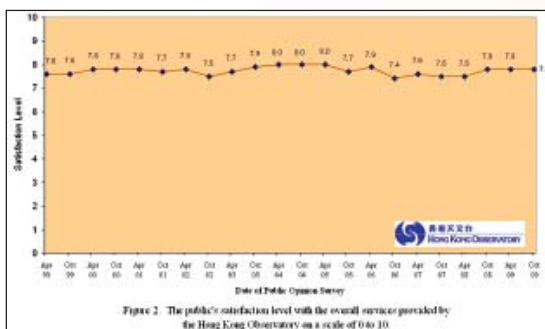


A member of the “Interest Group on Digital Weather” carrying out outdoor weather observation near the elderly centre

Dr LEE Boon-ying (middle), Mrs YUK FUNG Yin King, Director of the Centre (2nd right), Dr ONG Chung-wo of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (2nd left) and representatives of the elders officiated at the opening ceremony of “Automatic Weather Station for the Elders”

Public opinion survey in October 2009

Editorial Board



In the public survey conducted in October last year, 91.7% of the respondents considered the forecasts and warnings on typhoons “accurate” or “somewhat accurate”. This is higher than that in the October survey in 2008 by more than 10 percent, and the highest since October 2005. Also, 87.8% of the respondents considered the forecasts and warnings on rainstorms “accurate” or “somewhat accurate”, also higher than that in the October survey in 2008 by more than 10 percent.

Regarding the overall service provided by the Observatory, respondents gave an average score of 7.8 (out of 10), comparable to that of the last survey carried out in April 2009.

The Hong Kong Observatory commissions an independent consultant to conduct public opinion surveys twice a year to gauge the public perception of the accuracy of weather forecasts and warnings and the level of public satisfaction with its overall service.

Observatory’s colleagues received excellent paper award

WONG Wai-kin

A paper published by the Observatory’s colleagues Messrs WONG Wai-kin and YEUNG Hon-yin together with Drs WANG ing-chun and CHEN Min of the Institute of Urban Meteorology, China Meteorological Administration, Beijing, on a technique of blending nowcasting and numerical weather prediction (NWP) received an excellent paper award in the “2009 Academic Activity on City Development Informatization -

Paper Contest” on 11 December 2009 in Shenzhen. The aim of the contest was to promulgate applications of information science research. The paper discussed the use of NWP model and nowcasting techniques applied by the Observatory and the Beijing Meteorological Bureau during the WMO Beijing 2008 Forecast Demonstration Project to enhance the forecast of rainstorms and severe convective weather.

VISITS, COURSES, TALKS, SEMINARS



16 to 19 November 2009 Mr CHAN Sai-tick, Scientific Officer (3rd right, front row) was invited to serve as an instructor in the Typhoon Committee seminar in Nanjing to share his expertise and experience in the field, with particular focus on analysis and forecasting of high-impact weather associated with tropical cyclones.



19 November 2009 Professor Lord Julian Hunt (2nd left) from University College London visited the Observatory and gave a talk on "Climate Change Highlights and New Roles for Meteorologists." Professor Hunt discussed about science and policy of climate change in his talk.



20 November 2009 Dr LAU Ka-ming William, Chief of the Laboratory for Atmospheres of NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and Scientific Advisor of the Observatory, gave a talk on the latest results in climate study. Dr LAU spoke highly of the Observatory's work on climate change research and public education. His remarks were encouraging.

24 November 2009 Professor HO Kai-ming (left), Distinguished Professor of the Iowa State University, USA and a senior physicist at the Ames Laboratory of the US Department of Energy, visited the Observatory and shared with our colleagues his views on the current energy crisis as well as his experience in applying frontier material science research results to increase the efficiency of solar power generation.



30 November and 1 December 2009 Dr LEE Boon-ying (3rd right), the Director and Mr SHUN Chi-ming (2nd left), Assistant Director photographed with Dr ZHENG Guo-guang (3rd left), the Administrator of China Meteorological Administration (CMA) during their trip to CMA and the Air Traffic Management Bureau (ATMB) of the Civil Aviation Administration of China. They visited the Civil Aviation Meteorological Centre, North China Regional ATMB Meteorological Centre and Beijing Area Control Centre, and established the direction for further cooperation and exchange in the future.



5 December 2009 The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers visited the Observatory.



16 December 2009 Mr WONG Wah-kay (3rd right), Director of Broadcasting visited the Observatory. The Director of the Observatory (1st left) explained the daily operation of the forecasting office.



5 January 2010 Professor LAU Ngar-cheung (left), the scientific advisor of the Observatory, visited the Observatory and delivered a lecture on impacts of El Niño on the Asian monsoon. Observatory colleagues also took the opportunity to discuss with Professor LAU on the future development of climate related research. Colleagues of the Observatory benefited greatly from his visit.

7 to 8 January 2010 The Observatory hosted the Fourth Guangdong - Hong Kong - Macao Seminar on Earthquake Science and Technology. More than 30 experts and technical staff from the Observatory, the Earthquake Administration of Guangdong Province, the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau, the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University as well as Civil Engineering and Development Department and Buildings Department participated in the Seminar.



10 to 13 January 2010 At the invitation of the World Meteorological Organization, Mr MOK Hing-yim (2nd right), Senior Scientific Officer of the Observatory, joined an expert mission to visit the Kuwait Meteorological Department to draw up recommendations on enhancing the meteorological services of Kuwait.



18 January 2010 Mr TANG Kwok-kong, MH, JP (4th right), the Chairman of the Kwai Tsing District Council led a delegation to visit the Observatory. The Director (3rd right) briefed the guests on the work of the Observatory. This was followed by a guided tour of the Forecasting Office, the Radiation Monitoring and Assessment Centre, the TV studio, the Earthquake and Time Services Division, and the History Room.

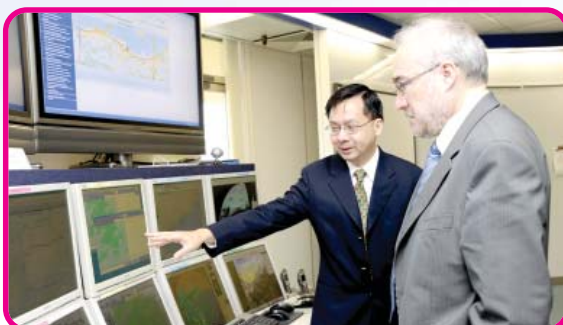


14 January 2010 Professor Tony F CHAN (1st left), the President of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, visited the Observatory. The Director (2nd left) briefed him on the work of the Observatory.



20 January 2010 The Director (middle) led an 8-member delegation to the 15th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Operational Cooperation Meeting held in Shenzhen. The meeting reviewed the work of the three meteorological services in the past year, and confirmed the items of cooperation in the coming year. It provided a framework and direction

for further collaboration for the purpose of enhancing weather services in the Greater Pearl River Delta area.



4 February 2010 Mr Michel Jarraud (right), the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), visited the Observatory while he was attending the 14th Session of the WMO Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology (CAeM) held in Hong Kong. The Director introduced to him the Observatory's history and the work of the forecasting office.





5 February 2010 A “Teacher seminar” was held by the Observatory. Mr LUI Wing-hong, Chief Experimental Officer, explained weather forecasting and application of weather radar.



7 February 2010 Participants of 14th Session of the WMO Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology (CAeM) visited the Observatory to learn more about our daily work.



27 February 2010 15 members of the Royal Aeronautical Society (Hong Kong Branch), including pilots, air traffic controllers and airline staff, visited the Central Forecasting Office.



4 March 2010 Mr CAO Jian-lin (3rd left), Vice Minister of Science and Technology of China, visited the Observatory to understand our future development.



4 March 2010 The Director (middle) was interviewed by 17 members from the Student Reporters of Ming Pao. The students were impressively attentive throughout, actively raising questions, taking notes and photos, demonstrating good potential to become true reporters.



24 March 2010 The Director was invited by Towngas to deliver a talk on climate change.



8 to 12 March 2010 Mr WAI Hon-gor (2nd right), Assistant Director, was invited by World Meteorological Organization to have a fact-finding mission to Bhutan for the enhancement of meteorological services.



Mr CHAN Pak-wai (right) receiving the promotion letter from the Director

Mr CHAN Pak-wai was promoted to Senior Scientific Officer on 1 January. He oversees the Meteorological Forecast Systems of Aviation Weather Services Branch responsible for the development and operation of numerical prediction systems, airport windshear and turbulence alerting services and airport meteorological observing systems.



Ms LEUNG Man-ye (right) was promoted to Senior Scientific Assistant

Ms LEUNG Man-ye was promoted to Senior Scientific Assistant on 14 January and would engage in Environmental Radiation Monitoring and Meteorological Measurements.

Keep going -

Scientific Officer

Dr YEUNG King-kay, Senior Scientific Officer, who had worked at the Observatory for more than 20 years, began his pre-retirement leave on 7 April. Before his retirement, he headed the Environmental Radiation Monitoring and Meteorological Measurements Division. He was also the ex-chairman of the HKO Credit Union, serving our colleagues throughout the years.

While Dr YEUNG was on his pre-retirement leave, five new officers joined the forecast team. Young officers including Messrs HON Kai-kwong, CHEUNG Sai-kit, OR Ming-keung, KOK Mang-hin and YEUNG Wai-lung are now receiving meteorological training outside Hong Kong and will be serving the public in the near future.



Dr YEUNG King-kay, Senior Scientific Officer



From left: Messrs HON Kai-kwong, CHEUNG Sai-kit, OR Ming-keung and KOK Mang-hin



Colleagues Receiving Praises

Colleagues who received words of thanks and commendation from the public or organizations during January-April 2010:

Dr LEE Boon-ying (Director)

Mr MOK Hing-yim (Senior Scientific Officer)

Mr TAI Sai-choi (Scientific Officer)

Mr LEE Kwok-lun (Scientific Officer)

Mr YEUNG Kwok-chung (Scientific Officer)

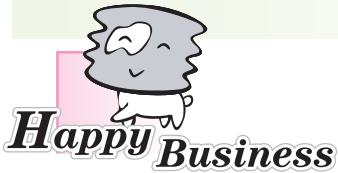
Mr LAM Hok-yin (Scientific Officer)

Mr WONG Tak-kan (Experimental Officer)

Best TV Weather Programme Presenters

1st Quarter, 2010

Mr WOO Wang-chun



Volunteer Campaign

CHOW Chi-kin

HKO Volunteer Team paid a visit to "Li Ka Shing Care and Attention Home of the Elderly" in Kowloon Tong on 17 January. During the visit, we played games and sang old songs with the elderly. We also presented some hand-made scarves and other souvenirs to them. The room was full of smiling faces when the activities ended. All of us enjoyed this Saturday afternoon very much.



Veteran Architect Shared Managerial Experience with Observatory Staff

CHIU Hung-yu

- The Observatory holds a management forum every month to promote sharing of insight and experience in management. The speaker this February was Mr FUNG Wing-kee Raymond, a multi-talented architect, designer and artist. Architecture as well as research and development are closely linked with innovation and good management. This forum provided a very good opportunity for us to realize the significance of creativity in public architecture and management. The passion shown by Mr FUNG on his work as well as his sincerity greatly impressed colleagues present in the forum.



Mr FUNG Wing-kee Raymond lecturing in the management forum

Observatory's Staff Sharing

LEE Lap-shun, LI Ping-wah, NG CHAN Kam-chu

Experience in Service Delivery



Mr LEE lap-shun (middle), Dr LI Ping-wah (right) and Mrs NG CHAN Kam-chu (left) attending the CSTDI award-showcase seminar as guest speakers

The Observatory has won a number of awards in the 2009 Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme, including the Champion in the Service Enhancement Award (Small Department). At the invitation of the Civil Servant Training and Development Institute, Mr LEE Lap-shun, Senior Scientific Officer, Dr LI Ping-wah, Scientific Officer, and Mrs NG CHAN Kam-chu, Senior Draughtsman, attended a seminar on 4 February and shared with other civil servants the Observatory's strategies in developing public services, such as how to make use of information technology to provide timely, updated and quality weather services, as well as how to utilize different channels to collect opinions from members of the public during the development process. They also briefed the audience about how the Observatory launched a number of innovative and cost-effective services without additional financial resources. Many participants stayed behind after the seminar to further exchange views with the three speakers, indicating their appreciation of the work of the Observatory.

Celebration Party

IP Ching-lan, May

8 March was a day of celebration for the Hong Kong Observatory. A celebration party was held for a total of 11 prizes and awards recently won including the 2009 Hong Kong Information and Communications Technology Awards - "Award of the Year" and also the "Best Innovation and Research Award". HKO was also selected to take part in the national contest for China's entry in the United Nation World Summit Award Contest.

The excited awardees received from the Director and colleagues their congratulations and praises. A grand roast-pig cutting ceremony was held to wish for more success for the Observatory in the future.





Mr TAM Cheuk-ming, ex-colleague, took the first prize

Three ex-Directors (from left, Mr LAM Chiu-ying, Mr LAM Hung-kwan and Mr SHAM Pak) together with Mr WONG Kwok-bun (right), the Deputy Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce & Industry), attending the Christmas party



Christmas Party

WONG Man-ting

The annual Christmas Party was held on 24 December last year. Apart from the colleagues and their family members, guests including representatives from the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, HKO retirees and three ex-Directors also joined the Party. The opportunity was also taken to present the Long and Meritorious Service Award, prizes for the Departmental Commendation Letter Scheme, Environmental Protection Suggestion Scheme and Staff Suggestion Scheme to staff who made outstanding contributions in the different areas last year.

Thanks to the fine dishes and entertaining games like short quizzes, joyfulness filled up the venue quickly. The atmosphere turned tense when it came to the grand finale which was the lucky draw. The jackpot of the lucky draw was a notebook, and our ex-colleague, Mr. TAM Cheuk-ming, was very lucky to take home his new notebook.

Planting Day

The annual HKO Planting Day held in King's Park Meteorological Station this year, attracted more than 20 colleagues and their family members. Species like Madagascar Jasmine, Rhododendron and Chinese Ixora were planted on the Day, and we would expect to see a more colourful King's Park Meteorological Station soon.

Three colleagues brought their lovely dogs to the station to enjoy the breeze and the sunshine. Thanks to the effort of the three special "team members", the Planting Day was very joyful, and the participants enjoyed a healthy and fruitful weekend morning.



LEI Chi-lap, Jacky

Pudding Making Class for the Lunar New Year

Staff Association

The Staff Association of the Observatory organized a class on making turnip pudding and taro pudding before the Lunar New Year. The class attracted many colleagues who would like to enjoy good food. Oh! It's not easy to make good turnip pudding and taro pudding. A lot of experience was required to grasp the skill. The instructor was very humorous and had many special techniques. Would you like to try to join us next time?



Let's try

Car-free Day

LEE Kwong-chueng, Francis

To show the support to conserve the environment, Hong Kong Observatory has set the third Thursday of each month as a "Car-free Day". Staff have reacted positively to the campaign. Many of us have opted to use public transportation for traveling on that day. In fact, on days apart from the "Car-free Day", we should also use public transport as far as possible to protect our environment, so as to create a better place to live.

Badminton Tournament cum Family Fun Day

The Staff Association of the Observatory regularly arranges different kinds of recreational activities for staff. As badminton is one of the most welcomed activities, the Staff Association would reserve courts every month for our members. Near the end of last year, we organized the Director Cup Badminton Tournament cum Family Fun Day. With the generous sponsorship of Dr LEE Boon-ying, the Director, prizes and so on were of course abundant. Colleagues and their family members responded warmly and we all enjoyed a pleasurable morning.



Group photo of the Director (middle, front row) and the athletes

Friendly Basketball Match between Hong Kong Observatory and Inland Revenue Department

Staff Association



A group photo of HKO and IRD teams

Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) and Inland Revenue Department (IRD) are two government departments with few business interactions. However, we do have something in common - both of us have staff interested in basketball games. We will come together from time to time to play and polish our skills. The friendly match held recently on 21 December 2009 was one of the occasions.

The IRD team was strong, skillful and well-trained, and has a clear edge over the HKO team. Apart from the early minutes, the IRD team held the lead for the rest of the match. The HKO team however did not give up but tried their best to fight back, though finally lost the game by 51 to 70.

It does not matter to win or lose a match. The most important thing is to enjoy the fun in the game. Friendly matches, as they always are, provide a good opportunity to build our friendship.

Director Cup Soccer Game

Staff Association

Days before the first sound of the whistle of the Director Cup soccer game was heard, there was already a growing battle cry. Everyone was pretty psyched up in the expectation of witnessing something special - putting their foes and nemesis to their swords. Now, finally, the crimson sunlight subsided in the Victoria Harbour, and the lights blazed the Tsz Wan Shan soccer field. Inside and outside the field, the spirit was high. With adrenaline boiling, players traded blow for blow, piercing through the defense of the other side. They had the finesse of the body and deftness of the foot to create goals in the blink of an eye. Offensive in one minute, defensive in the next, but all the time they probed all parts of the field and looked for an opening to put the ball in the net. It was enthralling soccer, the young and the not-so-young trying out their repertoire of shots with conviction, accuracy and prowess. In the end, there was the killer blow. An arm was broken, and a match was lost. Jubilant of a win or bewildered at a defeat, they are our heroes 'cause they'd tried their best.



Group photo of the soccer players

Mailing Address

Observatory Spring Outing

CHAN Man-ye, Eliza



Hong Kong experiences occasional showers and thunderstorms from April to September. Tropical cyclones usually affect the territory between June and early October. The weather between late October and March next year is generally most suitable for outdoor activities. Therefore, the Hong Kong Observatory Staff Association picked 14 March for our Spring Outing this year. Colleagues were enthusiastic to have the opportunity to relax in rural surroundings and get away from their busy work. Close to 60 colleagues with their family members and friends joined the tour. The one-day trip included visit to a goat farm, a lotus garden and a strawberry field, in addition, delicious seafood lunch at Lau Fau Shan and lucky draw. When we arrived at the goat farm, small children were all curious but also a little bit afraid when they touched baby goats for the first time. Later when we visited the strawberry field, we all became half-day farmers busily finding ripe fruits in the field. At around 4pm, all of us boarded our coach for home with hand-picked strawberries and happy memories.

