

# Briefing from the Director

## Editorial Board



The Director, Mr Shun (centre), announcing the launch of the Hong Kong Observatory Facebook page and Instagram platform.

The theme of the World Meteorological Day on 23 March this year was “Weather Ready, Climate Smart”. The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr. Shun Chi-ming, introduced the Observatory’s application of new technologies to develop new services, including the official launch of the microclimate station at the Observatory Headquarters in Tsim Sha Tsui. Other new services provided by the Observatory include maps indicating the affected regions mentioned in the “Announcement on Localised Heavy Rain” and an enhanced version of the “Met on Map” website.

To further promote science education and strengthen communication with the public, the Observatory officially launched the “香港天文台 HKO” Facebook page and the “hk.observatory” Instagram platform on the same day. Mr Shun encouraged the public to follow and “Like” the Observatory’s Facebook page and Instagram account, and actively share relevant information. (See the third and fourth pages of this newsletter for details of the new services.)

## Editorial Board

# Unveiling Ceremony for Long-term Observing Station Plaque

To commemorate the recognition of HKO headquarters by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as one of the first batch of long-term observing stations in the world, Mr Philip Yung, Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), officiated at the Long-term Observing Station plaque unveiling ceremony together with Mr Shun Chi-ming, Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, on 24 March.

During the ceremony, Mr Yung commended HKO’s efforts. “Recognition by WMO as a long-term observation station takes more than a hundred years of observations, it also reflects the professional excellence of HKO in weather and climate forecast and analysis,” Mr Yung said.



The Director, Mr Shun, introduced the microclimate station to the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas Yang Wei-hsiung.

## Editorial Board

# The Secretary for Innovation and Technology Visits the Observatory

The Hong Kong government is actively promoting smart city initiatives. The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas Yang Wei-hsiung, visited the Hong Kong Observatory Headquarters on 26 March to understand how the Observatory uses innovative technology to set up and operate microclimate station to support smart city initiative.

The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr Shun Chi-ming, introduced how the weather data collected by the microclimate stations facilitates analysis of the city’s microclimate. The Observatory will allocate resources, and develop smart city weather monitoring and data sharing platform utilising the latest technology.



The Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), Mr Yung Wai-hung (left), unveiling the long-term observing station plaque, with the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr Shun Chi-ming.







Features

## 2018 Hong Kong Observatory Open Day

Editorial Board



The heroes behind the scenes:  
360-degree group photo of Observatory staff  
and "Friends of the Observatory" volunteers



The 2018 Open Day was held on 24 and 25 March, with nearly 13,000 visitors attending the event. Under this year's World Meteorological Day theme of "Weather Ready, Climate Smart", the use of latest technology in the provision of HKO services was presented. The exhibition also highlighted the historical evolution of HKO in celebration of its 135th anniversary.



Highlights of the Open Day



## The Observatory Participates in the 50th Session of UNESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee

Choy Chun-wing



The Director, Mr Shun, at the High-level Session, introducing the development of the tropical cyclone forecasts and warning services in Hong Kong during recent decades.

The Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr Shun Chi-ming, led the Hong Kong, China delegation to participate in the 50th Session of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) / World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Typhoon Committee and the celebration of the 50th anniversary of its establishment, which were held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 28 February to 3 March. Key members of successive Typhoon Committees were also invited to participate, including Mr Lam Chiu-ying and Mrs Elaine Koo, respectively former Director and former Assistant Director of the Observatory, and Mr Edwin Lai, who served as the Chairperson of the Advisory Working Group. An "Old Friends" panel session was organised for them to share their fond memories and challenging experiences with words of wisdom and enlightenment that pointed the way forward for the future development of the Typhoon Committee.



Gathering of "Old Friends" at the Typhoon Committee, including Mr Lam Chiu-ying (4th from left on the front row), Mrs Elaine Koo (2nd from right on the back row) and Mr Edwin Lai (4th from left on the back row) from Hong Kong, China.

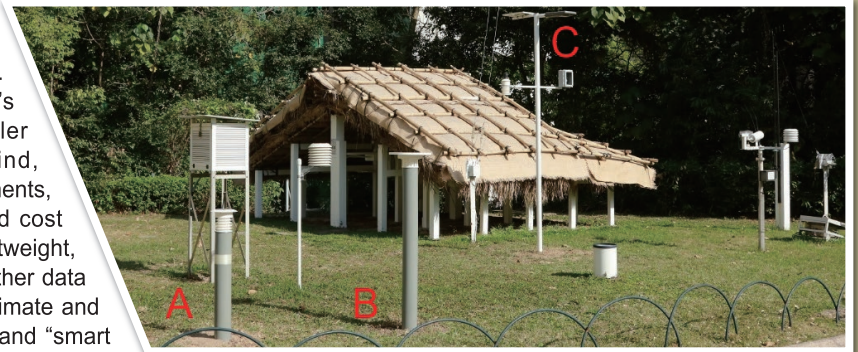




Chan Yuk-hing

# Launch of the Microclimate Station at the Observatory Headquarters

The microclimate station at the Observatory Headquarters in Tsim Sha Tsui was officially launched as a demonstration project on 23 March. New technologies have been adopted for the station's equipment including an open-source microcontroller as well as microsensors for measurement of wind, temperature, relative humidity and other weather elements, which help reduce the size, power consumption, and cost of the station, making it more power-efficient and lightweight, thus easier to integrate into its surroundings. The weather data collected is not only used to analyse the city's microclimate and weather changes, but also helps "big data" analyses and "smart city" planning.



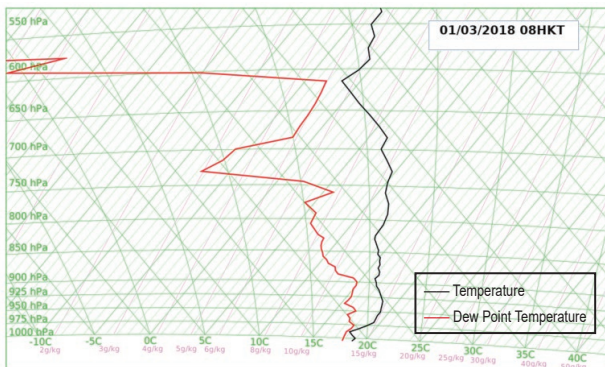
Microclimate sensors on bollards (A & B) and lamp poles (C)



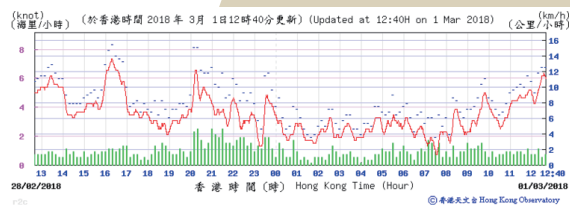
# The Observatory Enhances the "Weather Information for Aviation Sports" Service

Cheung Ping

Starting from 1 March, the Observatory enhanced its "Weather Information for Aviation Sports" webpage which features twice daily vertical profiles of temperature and humidity, in the form of tephigram, up to an altitude of around 5,000 metres above ground level based on balloon sounding measurements obtained at King's Park, and real-time time series of wind gusts for selected automatic weather stations in Hong Kong.



Paragliding enthusiasts said the new information would be very useful to assess whether the weather is favourable to do paragliding. In addition, the Observatory has added the "Weather Forecast for Local Aviation" issued at 12:30 pm, to provide users with the latest weather information for the afternoon and the night.



Tephigram (left) and time series of maximum gust and mean wind speed (right)



# The Observatory Launches Facebook Page and Instagram Account

## Editorial Board

The "香港天文台 HKO" Facebook page and the "hk.observatory" Instagram account have been launched to enhance public communication, public awareness and understanding on weather and climate.

The Facebook page will post information in the event of adverse or extreme weather, such as heavy rain (especially red or black rainstorms) and tropical cyclones, to alert the public on weather hazards. It will also launch quizzes from time to time; winners will receive souvenirs from the Observatory.

The Instagram platform focuses on sharing of photos and videos on special weather and optical phenomena, as well as highlights of activities and Observatory equipment.

Anyone interested in weather is invited to "like" the page and follow the account.



"香港天文台 HKO" Facebook page

"hk.observatory" Instagram platform

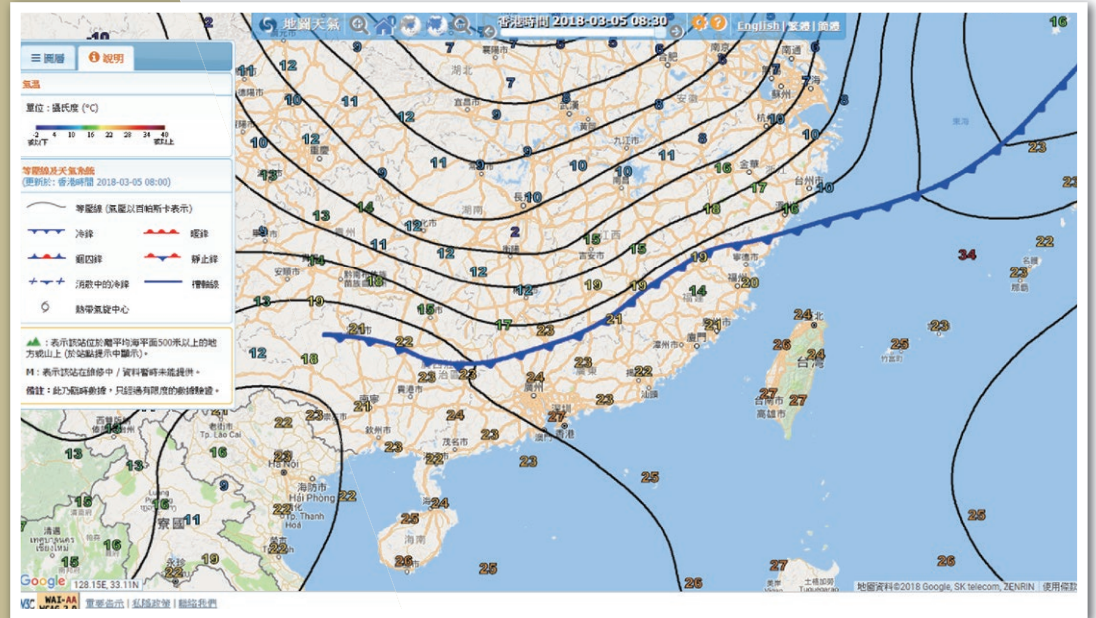


# Enhancing the “Met on Map” Service



Pan Chi-kin

In March 2018, the Observatory enhanced its “Met on Map” webpage with more weather observations. In addition to various weather and geophysical information, the web portal now features observations including wind speed and wind direction, air temperature and visibility from airports around the globe. The total number of observing stations has increased by more than 1500, representing a rise of about 30%.



Yeung Kwok-chung

## Tracking Winds and Clouds: A Century of Archived Stories of the Observatory



The Director of Administration, Ms Kitty Choi (left), and the Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Mr Shun Chi-ming, officiating at the exhibition opening ceremony.

To celebrate the 135th anniversary of the Observatory’s establishment, the Observatory and the Government Records Service co-organised the “Tracking Winds and Clouds: A Century of Archived Stories of the Observatory” exhibition, to display precious historical archives and meteorological records, hoping that through the exhibition, members of the public could learn from history, raise awareness of weather hazard prevention, and tackle climate change proactively. The roving exhibition is conducted at several venues – in the Hong Kong Public Records Building and various public libraries – during 6 February and 31 December.







Climate



# ANNUAL OUTLOOK for 2018

Lee Sai-ming

In March, the Observatory issued the annual outlook for 2018. Taking a number of factors including the status of La Niña, climate model predictions and other objective guidance into consideration, it is expected that five to eight tropical cyclones will come within 500 kilometres of Hong Kong, which is normal to above normal. The tropical cyclone season will probably start in or before June. With the effect of global warming, the annual mean temperature in 2018 is expected to be above normal, with a medium chance of reaching the top 10 years on record.



Editorial Board

# Rainstorm Blog Post

The latest blog post, "Let's Talk about Rainstorm Warnings", has been uploaded to the Observatory website. The establishment of the rainstorm warning system resulted from a record-breaking rainstorm on 8 May 1992, and the system has been implemented for more than 25 years! Global warming will increase the frequency of extreme weather, with black rainstorm warnings issued for five consecutive years (2013-2017). A more in-depth understanding of the origin and significance of the rainstorm warning system will help everyone to promptly respond during adverse weather.

What does the Observatory have to consider in issuing rainstorm warnings? Can the red and black rainstorm warnings be issued earlier? Is it possible to implement a district-level rainstorm warning? The blog post gives answers to these and other questions.



HKO Sidelights

## Observatory Staff Commended by the Public

Observatory staff who received words of thanks and commendation from the public or organisations from January to March 2018:

**Mr Woo Wang-chun**  
(Scientific Officer)

**Mr Yung Chung-hoi**  
(Experimental Officer)

**Ms Yu Mei-fung**  
(Chief Scientific Assistant)

**Ms Mak Man-yi**  
(Senior Scientific Assistant)

**Mr Chee Shiu-chung, Ms Lam Mei-sim**  
(Scientific Assistants)

## Staff Retirement



Chief Experimental Officer Mr Li Kin-wai, and Senior Experimental Officer Mr Wong Kwun-wa started their pre-retirement leave on 4 April and 9 April, respectively. We wish them a joyful retirement.



HKO Sidelights



On 22 January, meteorological and public health experts from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao gathered at the Hong Kong Observatory to take part in the first ever "Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Climate and Health Seminar".



In a management forum on 2 February, Mr Stephen Chan (2nd from left in the front row) and Mr Ken Kwok (3rd from right in the front row) shared experience to manage media and crisis with the Observatory staff.



On 3 February, "Friends of the Observatory" visited Tai Mo Shan Radar Station to learn about the operation of radar.



On 30 January, the Observatory's "Radiation and Upper-air Meteorological Measurement Services" and "Automatic Wind Measurement Services for the Operation of the Tropical Cyclone Warning Services in Hong Kong" both received ISO (International Organization for Standardization) 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems certification, for providing professional, high-quality services.



On 2 February, HKO Staff Club and Credit Union co-organised the "Success in the Year of the Dog" dinner gathering in the Headquarters Conference Hall, allowing staff and friends to gather to celebrate the Chinese New Year.



On 24 February and 3 March, the Observatory organised the 2018 "Training Course on Weather Observation". About 130 weather enthusiasts participated in the course.





On 3 March, HKO Staff Club and Government Executive Grade Association played a friendly football match. The players in both teams are pictured here before the match.



On 9 March, the Hong Kong Observatory Volunteer Team arranged the "2018 Flag Day – Sales of Golden Flag Campaign for the Hong Kong Society for the Blind" at the Headquarters. The money raised will be used to support the Hong Kong Society for the Blind in providing visually impaired services, and public education. Many colleagues enthusiastically supported and participated in the flag day. With the kindness and generous donations from various parties, we were able to benefit more visually impaired people.



During a management forum at the Observatory on 15 March, Mr Leung Kam-chung (2nd from right in the front row) shared his vast experience of serving in the fields of government, business and social welfare, his psychological journey throughout the trials in his life, and his global view.



On 22 March, a climate change exhibition on "Vanishing Glaciers", jointly organised by the Jockey Club Museum of Climate Change of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Project Pressure (a UK-based non-profit arts organisation) and the Hong Kong Observatory, was launched.



On 22 March, the Chief Experimental Officer of the Observatory, Mr Sham Fu-cheung, delivered a climate change lecture and debunked some common climate myths in the School of Nursing of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.



On 26 March, six participants from the Wan Chai District Council and Home Affairs Department visited the Observatory. They were left with a strong impression of how the Observatory serves the public by adopting science and technology.



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