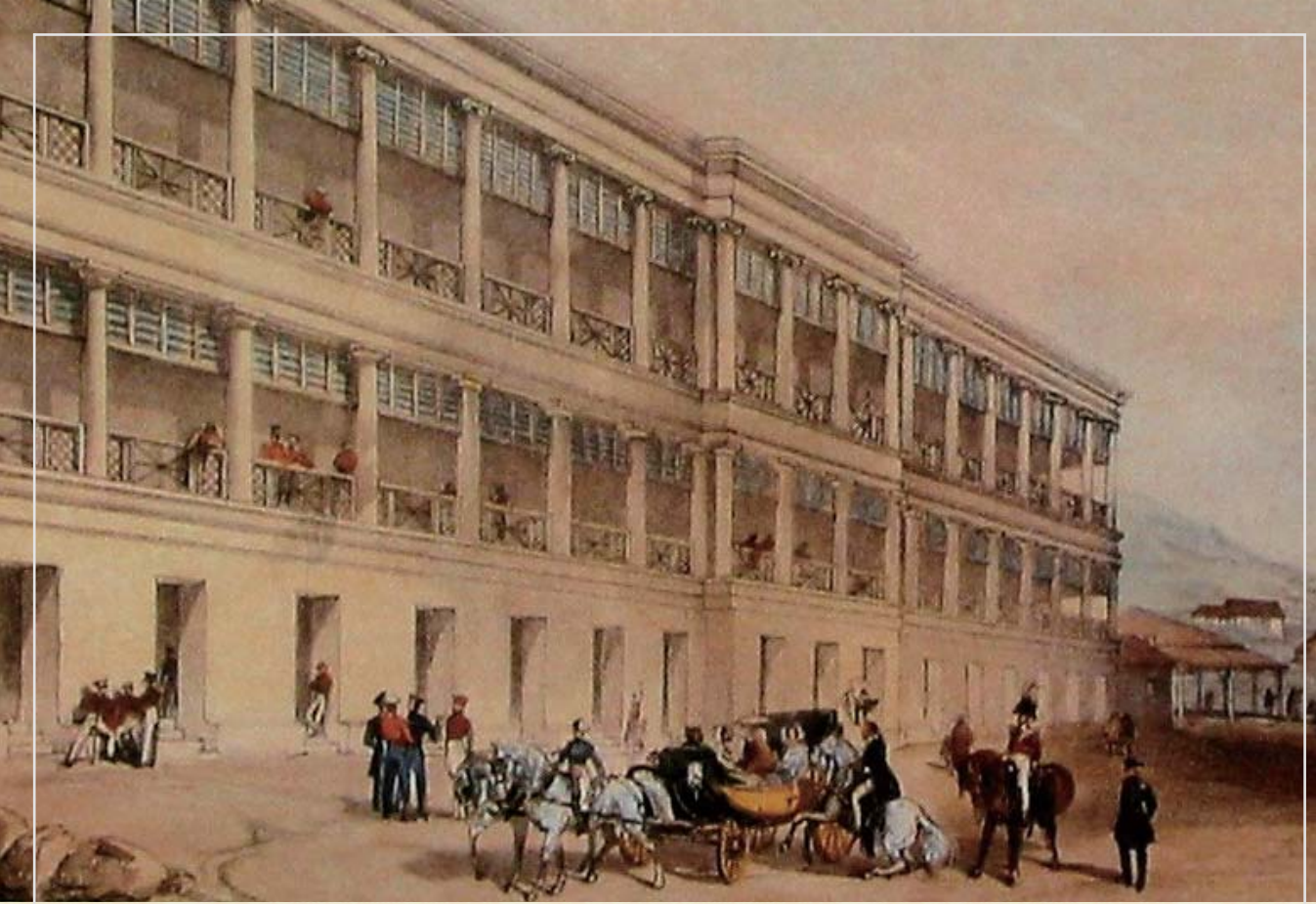




THE
HISTORY
OF RATES IN
HONG KONG



THE HISTORY OF RATES IN HONG KONG



Rating and Valuation Department
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government
Hong Kong, China

The History of Rates in Hong Kong

*A Brief Review of
170 years of Rating in Hong Kong*

Third Edition

By

*Mrs Mimi BROWN, J.P.
BSc(Hons), M.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.*

Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

© Copyright reserved

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the copyright holder.

Notes and Disclaimer

This book is not intended to provide an authoritative interpretation of the law, which is the power of courts of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Views expressed in this publication represent those of the editor and the contributors in their personal capacity. They are not necessarily the views of the Rating and Valuation Department and should not be taken as binding on the editor, the contributors and the Department in any official dealings with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is not responsible for any inaccuracies, errors or omissions in this publication, or for any loss, action, or inaction arising from the use of, or for advice based on, any information therein.

THE HISTORY OF RATES IN HONG KONG

Third Edition by Mrs Mimi BROWN, J.P.
2013

ISBN 978-988-12810-0-5

Published by the Rating and Valuation Department
Printed by the Government Logistics Department
Hong Kong SAR Government

FOREWORD

(Third Edition)

The rating system in Hong Kong is recognised internationally for being a simple, equitable and broad-based system. With a long history, it has become a model for other jurisdictions developing a new property tax system or pursuing property tax reform.

Since this booklet was last updated some eight years ago, there have been substantial changes in rating administration, not only in terms of improvement in operational efficiency but also in making the system more equitable and more customer-oriented.

Using IT extensively in enhancing operational efficiency continues. This includes wider use of geographic information systems to facilitate annual revaluation exercises and development of an ‘Automated Property Valuation System’ to improve valuation accuracy and uniformity.

Major steps started in 2011 to make rating assessment more equitable through increasing valuation transparency. Essential property information such as saleable area is being released to payers when their properties are first assessed to rates. All payers of domestic properties are also given access to their property data on the Property Information Online platform using an access code printed on their quarterly rates demands. Aggregate breakdowns of rateable values of large residential developments have been added to the pool of property information available through the Department’s website. The additional data provides useful references to payers, thereby promoting further valuation and market transparency.

The above initiatives, while making the rating system more equitable, also serve ratepayers, our customers, better. Other new customer services such as electronic rates bills and online rates account confirmation have been rolled out, riding on the Property Information Online – a powerful platform through which voluminous property and related information is communicated to ratepayers and the public. Readers may refer to the latter part of Chapter 3 for details.

While there have not been any major changes to the Rating Ordinance in recent years, granting rates concession has been one of the important fiscal tools since 2007. With the measure being used regularly, though with different extents, it has become a highly anticipated tax reduction in Government's budget proposal.

To enable readers when going through the rating history to picture the old Hong Kong around the time when major changes or adaptations were made to meet new circumstances, this update includes rare photos of historical interest connected with the events.

No doubt, the rating system in Hong Kong will continue to be improved on all fronts in the years ahead. In closing, I would like to record my appreciation to colleagues who have assisted me in producing this update, in particular to Mr P.K. Tang, Deputy Commissioner of Rating & Valuation, Messrs C.H. Tsui and K.L. Ng, Josef, Assistant Commissioner of Rating & Valuation for their tremendous support and Ms M.M. Lau, Amy, Mr Paul Chai and Mr Ken Ng for design, artwork and printing. Special thanks go to the staff of the Translation Unit for their efforts in preparing the Chinese edition of this booklet. I am also indebted to the Information Services Department, the Lands Department, the Government Records Service and the Museum of History for permission to reproduce some of their photographs included in this booklet.

Mrs Mimi BROWN, J.P.
BSc(Hons), M.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.

Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

October 2013



FOREWORD

(Second Edition)

With a long history of 160 years, property rates in Hong Kong dated back to 1845 when the first “Police Rate” was levied to finance the police force, hence the Chinese name " 差餉 ".

This Booklet was originally compiled in 1983 as an internal document and further updated in 1985 and 1987. Substantial revision was subsequently undertaken before it was produced as a publication in 1998. Since then, many important changes have taken place calling for the production of this second edition.

Significant developments in the administration of the rating system over the recent years include the following three major areas:

- the implementation of Annual General Revaluations for rating and Government rent purposes since 1999;
- the continuing enhancement of the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal Systems and the development of an Integrated Property Data Base; and
- the introduction of e-Government services such as the online display and search of the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll, consolidated billing and payment services, electronic submission of statutory forms, etc.

The simple, equitable and broad-based rating system in Hong Kong provides a secure and steady source of Government revenue to finance public expenditure. Further development and enhancement of the system will continue with a view to achieving greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the assessment, administration and collection of rates. Innovative and extensive use of Information Technology plays a key role in meeting the challenges and opportunities in the years to come.

Kenneth T.W. Pang, J.P.
F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S., R.P.S.(GP)
M.P.A.(Harvard University)

Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

February 2005



FOREWORD

(First Edition)

This Booklet has evolved from a paper written by a former Commissioner - Mr F. Shanks - partly from memory and partly from old records and documents. It provides a brief background to the origins of rates in Hong Kong and how they have changed and have been adapted over the years to meet new circumstances.

The review covers the history of rates in Hong Kong by tracing the sequence of events since 1845, recording the main changes and by quoting pertinent remarks made from time to time down the years. It is necessarily rather sketchy in respect of the first hundred years as so many of the old records of the time have been lost or are so scattered that tracing them would be very time consuming. The full story would take too long to compile.

Should readers become aware of items of historical interest connected with rates not covered in the Booklet the department would appreciate being informed as it is proposed to update it from time to time.

B.J.C. Woodroffe
I.S.O., J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.

Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

December 1998



Contents

Chapter 1

Origin and Early Development of Rating 1845 - 1901	1
Police, Lighting, Water and Fire Brigade Rates	2
The “Police Rate” Introduced	2
Addition of the “Lighting Rate”	5
“Water Rate” Added	6
Police Force Ordinance 1862	7
Consolidation of Separate Ordinances Relating to Rates	8
“Fire Brigade Rate” Added	9
Municipal Rates Ordinance 1885	11
Rating Ordinance 1888	12
Penalties and Rateability of Lifts	13

Chapter 2

Consolidation and Amendment 1901 - 1973	17
Amending Ordinances Before Pacific War 1941	17
Rating Ordinance 1901 (No. 6 of 1901)	17
Special “War Rate” 1917	21
The 1921 Resolution	26
The 1930 Resolution	27
The 1931 Resolution	29
Minor Amendments 1938 and 1939	30
Pacific War 1941 - 1945 and Its Aftermath	31
Extension of Rating to the New Territories - Early Development	34
Modified Rating System for the New Territories (1935)	34
Initial Extension of Rating to the New Territories (1955)	35
Declaration of the Valuation List for “Part D” (Phase I)	36
Other Amendments	37
Minimum Rateable Value	37
Exemption by the Governor	37
Building Numbering	37

Chapter 3

The Modern Period 1973 - 2013	47
Rating Ordinance 1973 and Subsequent Amendments until 1980	48
Rating Ordinance 1973	48
Abolition of Refunds for Vacant Domestic Premises	52
Surcharges for Late Payment and Rates Percentage Charges in the New Territories	52
Establishment of the Lands Tribunal	53
Extension of Rating to the New Territories	54
Extension of Rating to the New Territories Phase II	54
Exemption of Village Houses	55
Extension of Rating to the New Territories Phase III and the New “Phasing-in” Policy	56
Extension of Rating to the New Territories Phases IV to VII	57
Other Amendments	58
Rates Relief	58
Miscellaneous Amendments in 1979	59
Amending Ordinances After 1981	59
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1981	59
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1984	60
Rating (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance 1984	61
The 1984-85 Revaluation	61
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1986	61
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1987	61
Rating (Areas of Hong Kong) (Amendment) Order 1987	61
Buildings Ordinance (Application to the New Territories) Ordinance 1987	61
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1990	62
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1991	62
Rating (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance 1991	63
Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1995	63
Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance (Cap. 515)	64
Adaptation of Laws and Change of Titles	64

Recent Major Events	66
Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance (Cap. 515)	66
Annual Revaluation	67
Reorganisation of Provision of Municipal Services	68
Rationalising the Use of Reported Information	68
Rates Rebate and Concessions	69
Impact of SARS on Rateable Values	70
Further Rates Concessions	72
Improvements in Rating Administration	73
Information Technology	73
Improved Customer Services through Electronic Delivery of Services	74
Other Improved Customer Services	76
Flexible Use of Resources to Improve Operational Efficiency	78
Conclusion	79

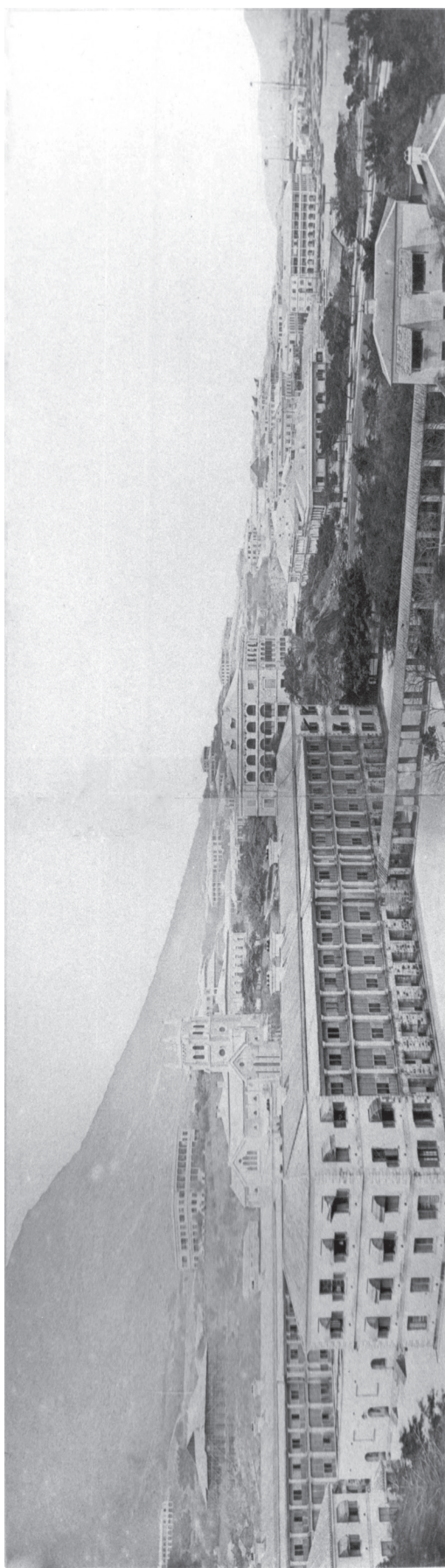
Annexures

- A List of Colonial Treasurers, Assessors, Valuers and Commissioners
- B Major Events from 1845
- C Assessments, Rateable Value and Rates Revenue in Selected Years
- D Numbers of Rating Assessments and Aggregated Rateable Values in the Past 20 Years (1994 - 2013)
- E Rates as a Percentage of Total Government Revenue in the Past 20 Years (1994 - 2013)
- F Rates Percentage Charges since 1931
- G Rates Percentage Charges in the Past 20 Years (1994 - 2013)
- H Progress of Rating in the New Territories
- I Designated Valuation Reference Dates
- J List of Old Rate or Collection Books



HONG KONG
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

The map/aerial photo reproduced with permission of the Director of Lands,
The Government of Hong Kong SAR. Licence No. G04/2013.



Murray Barracks c.1880
After World War II, the building was used by several government departments, including the Rating & Valuation Department, starting from 1963.



Waterfront, Central c.1890

Chapter 1

Origin and Early Development of Rating 1845 - 1901

Rating has a long history in Hong Kong. The first Rating Ordinance, Ordinance No. 2 of 1845, was enacted in that year and related to the Police Rate which was collected to pay the expenses for upholding and maintaining the police force in Hong Kong. Over the following thirty years, the services funded by rating were expanded by several subsequent Ordinances which also made various other related changes. A consolidating Ordinance, the Rating Ordinance 1888, provided the framework for rating not only in the 19th century but also for the present day.

The terms “tenement”, “rateable value” and “interim valuation” which were re-enacted or introduced in the Rating Ordinance 1888 have remained central to rating law in Hong Kong since that time and, although amended many times, the essential meaning has remained the same to the present day.

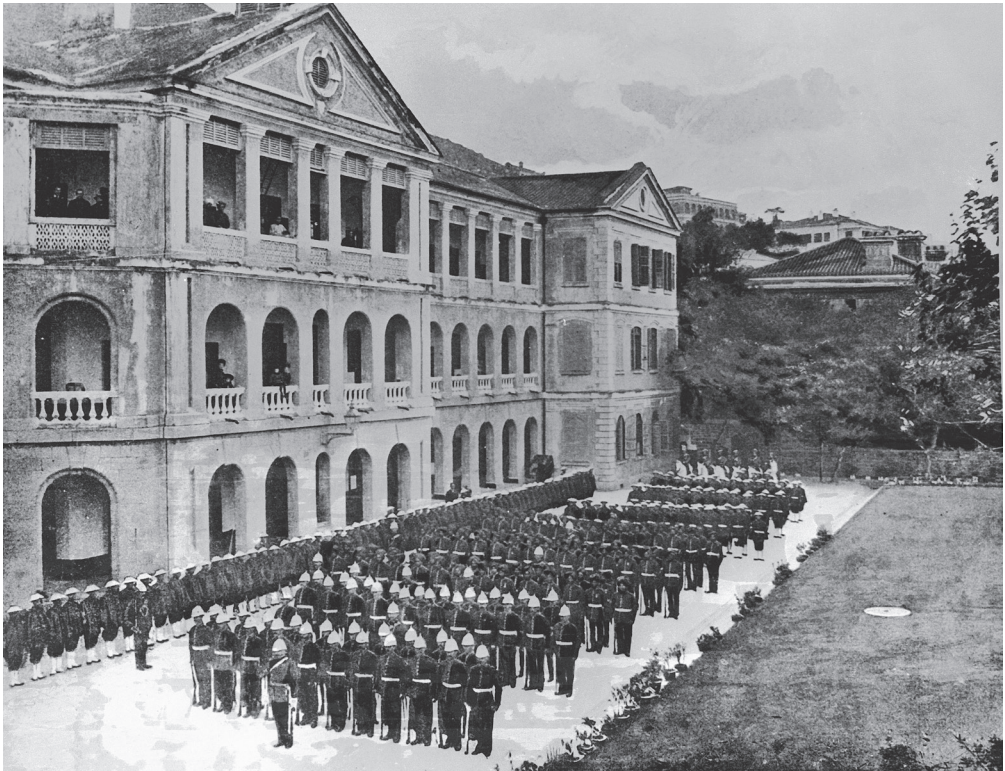


The first Rating Ordinance was enacted on 23 May 1845

Police, Lighting, Water and Fire Brigade Rates

The “Police Rate” Introduced

In 1845, the preamble to Ordinance No. 2 set the background for the establishment of what was to be the beginning of the present rating system, noting that it was deemed expedient and necessary that “the Colony of Hong Kong should defray the Expenses attendant on the upholding and maintaining the Police Force thereof”. The rate was therefore historically known as the Police Rate. In fact the Chinese term for rates (差餉 Chai Heung) means literally “Police Pay”, and so retains its links with the original purpose of this levy.



Rates originally levied as Police Rate
to maintain the police force in the early period

The Police Rate was assessed at a percentage of the annual value of each parcel of ground, house or building and was payable by the owner and occupier. The percentage was determined by the Governor with the advice of the Executive Council. However, the sum should not exceed the expenses of the Police establishment.

The percentage for the Police Rate first levied in 1845 could not be traced because most of the historical rating records were lost during the Japanese occupation between 1941 and 1945. However, according to the earliest Collection Book of Rate available, the Police Rate was charged at 10% of the annual value in 1858.

The Ordinance also provided that “the said Governor and Council may cause a new valuation to be made annually”. The concept of “annual valuation” remained fundamental to rating in Hong Kong until 1973, and became a rating policy from 1999 onwards. Another equally important concept was “adoption”, which was first introduced in the amending Ordinance of 1851. It empowered the Governor in Council to adopt an existing valuation list, wholly or in part, as the valuation for the next financial year.



Rates Book (Valuation List) of 1858

No. of Grounds	Annual Value	Rate	March
1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
4 5 6	4 5 6	4 5 6	4 5 6
7 8 9	7 8 9	7 8 9	7 8 9
10 11 12	10 11 12	10 11 12	10 11 12

Entries of Rates Book of 1858

As in all rating systems, aggrieved ratepayers must have access to an appeal process, and this was provided when the first Rating Ordinance was enacted. Under Ordinance No. 2 of 1845, appeals to over-valuation must be made to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court within the period of three calendar months after such valuation. The process was simplified through an amending Ordinance in 1851 (Ordinance No. 3 of 1851). Any person may lodge an objection to the assessors within fifteen days from notification of valuation. Failing a satisfactory outcome after fifteen days from the receipt of the objection by the assessor, such person may appeal to the Supreme Court. This amendment facilitated any such appeals and endeavoured to make them less expensive, though it limited the time for appealing to Supreme Court to six weeks.

On 30 May 1854 Ordinance No. 1 of that year was passed to provide for the levying of an additional Police rate because it was considered necessary for a temporary period to maintain and keep on foot an Auxiliary Police Force for the preservation of the lives and property of the inhabitants.

FOR THE TOWNS VILLAGES IN HONGKONG:
POLICE RATE FOR THE YEAR 1866.
Under Ordinance No. 5 of 1863.

Take Notice that a Tenement in your Occupation, specified below, has been valued to the POLICE RATE FOR THE YEAR 1866, at the Gross Annual Rental stated.

TENEMENT;

Street No. 24

Pol. & L. Rate No. for 1866. 15.

Land Lot:

Description

No.

Locality Lai Wai

Description of Tenement Building House

Gross Annual Rental

in Dollars.....

鄉村各並城港香

餉項	差役	六年	六十	八百	一千	估價	例則	五條	年十三	百六	千一	按一
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----	----	----	----

論 知悉爾所住居之屋宇業經估價已定一千八百六十六年之差役餉銀於左

該街門楣號數 15

一千八百六十六年差餉號數 15

或地段號數

街名列下 西灣

此屋貿易或住

擬此屋宇租銀 15 元

本年估價

Notice of Interim Valuation of 1866

In order to raise and maintain this Auxiliary Force an additional three per cent per annum was to be charged forthwith on all property included in the ordinary Police rate valuation list. There was also provision whereby three months after the Ordinance was passed the Officer Administering the Government could levy a further additional three per cent if he found the first three per cent was insufficient. However, the Auxiliary Force was disbanded less than two months later on 5 July 1854 and so this provision for an additional levy could not have arisen. Any excess funds derived from the Ordinance were to be applied to lowering the ordinary Police rate.

Addition of the “Lighting Rate”

In 1856 it was decided that a system of public lighting for the City of Victoria should be introduced and provision to fund this through an additional rate was made in Ordinance No. 11 of 1856 which also stipulated:-

“For defraying the expenses of and incident to the execution of this Ordinance, there shall be levied quarterly, together with and in addition to the Police rate or rates for the year, a further rate to be called ‘the Lighting Rate’, and estimated at one and a half per cent on the gross amount of the property included in the Police rate assessment for the current year; and all the provisions of Ordinance No. 2 of 1845 and No. 3 of 1851 touching valuation, assessment, levy and appeal shall extend and apply to the said ‘Lighting Rate’.”



The Lighting Rate to fund public lighting -
gas street lamp at Queen's Road C., Central in the early period

“Water Rate” Added

With the principle of paying for public services through rates now well established, Ordinance No. 12 of 1860 was enacted with the object of providing a supply of water for the City of Victoria and under it a sum not exceeding thirty thousand pounds was to be appropriated for such purposes. It provided:-

“Upon the completion of the said water works there shall be levied half-yearly on the Crown lessees of all lands in the sub-districts comprised within the District of Victoria, except Wong-nei-chong and Soo-kun-poo a rate to be called a “Water Rate” estimated at two per cent per annum of the gross annual value of property set forth in the Police rate assessment for the current year; and all the provisions of the Ordinances No. 2 of 1845 and No. 3 of 1851 touching valuation, and appeal, shall extend and apply to the said water rate.”



Water Rate for provision of water supply - Pok Fu Lam Reservoir
Hong Kong's first reservoir completed in 1863

Police Force Ordinance 1862

The Police Force Ordinance, No. 9 of 1862, replaced the Police Force legislation of 1844 but it retained the method by which the cost of the Force was to be funded. Section 5 read:-

“The supply required for the payment of the Police Establishment shall be voted annually as heretobefore in the Annual Estimates and Appropriation Ordinances and the ways and means shall be provided as prescribed by Ordinances No. 2 of 1845 and No. 3 of 1851.”



Hong Kong Police in the early period

Consolidation of Separate Ordinances Relating to Rates

It was reported that at that time collecting rates had “proved difficult and frequently impracticable”, although the actual reasons for the problems are not clear. In an attempt to improve the assessment and collection of the Police and Lighting rates, the various Ordinances relating to rates were consolidated, re-cast and added to by No. 5 of 1863.

The charges remained at a rate to meet the cost of the Police Establishment but there was also provision for a fixed Police rate for tenements outside the City of Victoria and a one and a half per cent Lighting Rate.

Though there was no mention of the Water Rate in this consolidation, probably the Waterworks had not been completed at this time, the Waterworks Ordinance (No. 12 of 1860) and the Police Force Ordinance (No. 9 of 1862) were to be construed together with No. 5 of 1863 which was for all purposes to be cited as “The Police and Lighting Rate Ordinance, 1863”.

The 1863 Ordinance introduced the term “tenement” to rating law in Hong Kong. It was defined as - *“to include any house, cottage, shed, apartment, ground or building, or house together with land annexed thereto and ordinarily occupied therewith as garden or pleasure-ground, all outbuildings, stables, warehouses, yards and offices belonging or contiguous to any house and occupied therewith by one and the same person or his servants as one entire concern or undivided tenancy or holding, or not so belonging contiguous or occupied.”*

The word “tenement” is analogous in rating with “hereditament” in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and with “heritage” in Scotland. Although now firmly embedded in rating terminology in Hong Kong, it was perhaps an unfortunate choice because the word is more often construed in its popular sense rather than with regard to its legal significance.

These separate rates were finally levied together as one when, four years later, the Police and Lighting Rate Ordinance of 1863 was amended by Ordinance No. 11 of 1867 in order to make better provision for the collection of rates, recovery of arrears and other incidental matters. Section 3 said:-

“From and after the commencement of this Ordinance the police, lighting and water rates though separately assessed shall be levied as one tax.”

"Fire Brigade Rate" Added

Further consolidation and amendment to the law relating to assessment and collection of rates was introduced by Ordinance No. 12 of 1875. At that time the determination of the percentage charges still rested with the Governor in Council who could levy rates to meet the cost of the police, lighting, water and, for the first time, the fire brigade.

The Police Rate was still directly linked to the cost of the Police Force, as it was not to exceed a rate equal to the expenses of the Police Establishment for the year of assessment. Other rates were based on a percentage of the gross annual rental of the tenements assessed - for the water rate not exceeding two per cent and for the lighting and fire brigade rates not exceeding one and a half per cent and three quarters per cent respectively.

Rates on the above scale were to be charged on all tenements in the City of Victoria, but there remained a provision whereby the Governor in Council could assess any tenement outside the City of Victoria to the Police Rate at a certain fixed amount provided such assessment did not exceed the sum for which the tenement would have been liable had it been within the City.



Fire Brigade was funded by "Fire Brigade Rate" in the early period

The Ordinance retained the provision for the various amounts, though separately assessed, to be levied as one rate.

At the same time the definition of tenement was shortened to read:-

“means any land, with or without buildings, which is held or occupied as a distinct holding or tenancy; and includes piers and wharves erected in the harbour.”

This definition remained basically unchanged until 1973 and even in the 1973 Ordinance the definition retained a marked similarity to the 1875 version.



Western portion of the Central District c.1875

Municipal Rates Ordinance 1885

Ten years later, the 1875 Ordinance was repealed by No. 21 of 1885, entitled “The Municipal Rates Ordinance, 1885”. This appears to have been the first break from budgeting for the actual expenses of the Police Establishment by specifying the rate percentage, thus bringing it into line with the basis of other rates. Further, the rate was no longer to be set by the Governor in Council. In this respect the original Bill of 1885 stated:-

“The amounts of the above Rates may be altered from time to time by a resolution to be passed by the Legislative Council for that purpose.”

In its final form, as section 21 of Ordinance No. 21 of 1885, this provision became:-

“The amounts of the above Rates may be altered from time to time, by Ordinance to be passed for that purpose.”

The rates enacted in 1885 were as follows:-

a) on tenements within the City of Victoria:

For Police Rate	8¾ per cent (8¼%)
For Water Rate	2 per cent
For Lighting Rate	1½ per cent
For the Fire Brigade Rate	¾ per cent

b) on tenements beyond the City of Victoria:

<u>For Police Rate</u>	
At Victoria Peak, Quarry Bay and Pok Fu Lam	8¾ per cent (8¼%)
At all other places	7 per cent (5%)

These could be altered only by amending legislation. (The figures in brackets are those in the Bill where these differed from what were passed.)

This Ordinance also changed the “year of assessment” which formerly commenced on 1 January to 1 July. It appears that this was done, in order that the valuation could be carried out in the cool season!

Rating Ordinance 1888

The Municipal Rates Ordinance of 1885 was repealed after three years by the Rating Ordinance which became law on 5 May 1888, after a reportedly lengthy debate in the Legislative Council. It was said that this Bill was debated probably at greater length than any other rating measures in Hong Kong's history.

This substantially settled the law on rating in Hong Kong for many years and the form of the present Ordinance can readily be discerned in the Ordinance of 1888. The term "rateable value" was introduced and defined in very similar terms to that used in the present day. Another of today's familiar terms first seen in this Ordinance was "interim valuation". However, following a very strenuous debate on the subject, machinery was excluded from assessment.

The Bill of 1888 was drafted to allow the Governor in Council to reduce rates in newly developed or developing districts, with the power to again increase such amounts up to but not exceeding the prescribed percentages. However, this was not enacted and an alternative provision was made whereby charges for rates and the districts to which they applied could, from time to time, be altered by resolution of the Legislative Council, thus reverting to the position in the 1885 Bill.

The 1888 Bill also set out the various rates in detail - Police ($8\frac{3}{4}\%$), Water (2%), Lighting ($1\frac{1}{2}\%$) and Fire Brigade ($\frac{3}{4}\%$), being the same as 1885, but in the course of its passage into law the separate percentage charges disappeared and the consolidated charges for rates became:-

In the City of Victoria	13 per cent
In the Hill District	$8\frac{3}{4}$ per cent
In any other place	7 per cent

(Note: 13 per cent is equal to the sum of all the previous percentages: $8\frac{3}{4} + 2 + 1\frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{4} = 13$)

with the proviso that two per cent of the rates levied in the City of Victoria might, at the Governor's discretion, be disposed of to defray the expenses of the water supply. The Governor was reported in the press of 19 April 1888 as having said in Legislative Council during the passage of the Bill that "while there was a certain convenience in lumping all the rates together, still it was as well to keep in mind what we were paying for water".

This specific provision for water supply still has echoes in modern rating legislation which provides for a reduction in rates payable if a property does not have access to a government water supply.

There was an exception to the percentages enumerated above in that piers were to be charged at a lower rate and in another way provision was also made to accord a certain preference to piers where they were assessed in conjunction with adjoining tenements. The Piers Ordinance of 1889 extended these preferences by exempting most piers from payment of rates. In fact piers have been the subject of a number of changes in policy over the years. They have been alternately exempted then made rateable again on several occasions presumably as a reflection of the prosperity of trade at different times.

Penalties and Rateability of Lifts

Penalties were introduced as part of several minor legislative amendments in 1890 and 1892. These penalties were mainly for providing false information on rents passing and to obtain refunds. The amendments clarified that interim valuations could be made to reflect demolition of properties. Certain rate charges were also amended.

On 6 November 1899, an amending Ordinance was passed to provide that lifts were rateable. The background was explained in the Assessor Report 1900-1901, where it was reported that:-

“Notice of appeal under the Rating Ordinance was lodged against the assessment of a new tenement containing lifts. The appeal was heard by His Honour Mr. Justice Wise, who decided that lifts were “machinery” within the meaning of the Rating Ordinance, and therefore not rateable. The Court made an order reducing the assessment from \$17 830 to \$9 180. An amending Ordinance, defining “Machinery” was passed on the 6th November 1899, under which lifts and machinery used as adjuncts to certain tenements are excluded from “Machinery” exempted from rating by sub-section 5 of section 1 of the Rating Ordinance 1888.”

An amending and consolidating Rating Ordinance was passed as No. 8 of 1901, later to become No. 6 of 1901 by which title it was known until the Law Revision of 1950. This is further described in Chapter 2.

A list of holders of the various posts responsible for assessing/collecting rates is shown at Annex A. Major events from 1845 are summarised at Annex B.

(B. 7.)

季 春

No. 115

HONGKONG VILLAGES.

P. R. No. 2. Receipt, First Quarter, 1895. \$ 1 c. 26

甲午年 月 日

21/5/95

1st January, 1895.

條為據

一季差役餉銀給此收

乙未年三月初六日止

年十二月初六日起至

號屋宇自本

式毫先係香港第

今收到 銀 0 員

泊扶林

[Veronica & Co., Government Printers.]

(B. 7.)

季 夏

No. 116

HONGKONG VILLAGES.

P. R. No. 3. Receipt, Second Quarter, 1895. \$ 1 c. 21

乙未年 月 日

21/5/95

1st April, 1895.

條為據

一季差役餉銀給此收

本年閏五月初八日止

未年三月初七日起至

號屋宇自乙

式毫先係香港第

今收到 銀 0 員

泊扶林

[Veronica & Co., Government Printers.]

Rates Receipts of First & Second Quarters 1895

(B. 7.) 季 秋 No. 116

HONGKONG VILLAGES.
Receipt, Third Quarter, 1895. \$ 1 c. 21

P. R. No. 3

乙未年 月 日

條為據 一季差役餉銀給此收

至本年八月十二日止

未年閏五月初九日起

貳毫先係香港第 號屋宇自乙

今收到 銀 0 員

泊扶林

6-NOV-95

1st July 1895.

(B. 7.) 季 冬 No. 115

HONGKONG VILLAGES.
Receipt, Fourth Quarter, 1895. \$ 1 c. 26

P. R. No. 2

乙未年 月 日

條為據 一季差役餉銀給此收

本年十一月十六日止

未年八月十三日起至

貳毫先係香港第 號屋宇自乙

今收到 銀 0 員

泊扶林

6-NOV-95

1st October, 1895.

Rates Receipts of Third & Fourth Quarters 1895

Chapter 2

Consolidation and Amendment 1901 - 1973

This second period in the history of rating in Hong Kong saw the extension of rating to the New Territories. In 1935 certain parts of the New Territories became subject to a special rating system. This special system was later replaced by the urban rating system but again initially applying only to parts of the New Territories.

The number of assessments grew rapidly during this period, from 9 537 in 1888 to 18 412 in 1925, and then to 312 989 in 1973, an increase of almost 33 times over the 85 years. The average rateable value per assessment was about \$300 in 1888 but this had increased to about \$10 000 in 1973. Details of assessments, aggregated rateable values and rates revenue in selected years are at Annex C. Annex D shows the numbers of assessments and aggregated rateable values in the past 20 years (1994 - 2013) while Annex E shows the contribution of rates towards the total Government revenue for the same period.

Amending Ordinances Before Pacific War 1941

Rating Ordinance 1901 (No. 6 of 1901)

This was mainly a consolidating measure but it introduced for the first time the concept of a minimum rateable value determined by the Governor in Council. The minimum value was later fixed at \$20. It also incorporated the modification introduced in the 1899 amendment on the exclusion of “machinery” from the rateable value by providing that such “machinery” should not include lifts and machinery used as adjuncts of the building. This Ordinance remained in force, although amended from time to time, until it was repealed in 1973.

It re-enacted the earlier provisions by stipulating percentage charges for rates in relation to districts, but the districts enumerated had increased from three to eight, as described in Table 1, with rates of charge of 7 per cent, $8\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, 9 per cent, $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, $10\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, $12\frac{1}{4}$ per cent and 13 per cent.

Table 1 - Rates Charges under the Rating Ordinance 1901

District	Percentage Charges
in the City of Victoria	13 per cent
in that portion of the Hill District bounded on the North, South and West by the 600 feet contour and on the East by a line drawn North and South passing through the Wanchai Gap; and in such other portions of the Hill District as may, hereafter, by order of the Governor, be notified in the Gazette	10¾ per cent
in the remaining portion of the Hill District	8¾ per cent
in Yaumati, Kowloon Point, Hunghom and Hunghom West Nos. 1 to 26	12¼ per cent
in Hunghom West Nos. 27 to 53	8¾ per cent
in Mongkok Tsui	10½ per cent
in Causeway Bay, Kau Kan Ok, Po Kau Wat, San Tsuen (otherwise Tai Hang), Shaukiwan, Shaukiwan West, Whitfield (including North Point), Soo Kon Po, Tsing Shui Ma Tau, Tung Lo Wan, Wongneichong, Kwat Chuen Lung, Sai Wan Ho, Shaukiwan Road, Wongkok Tsui, Aberdeen and Hok Un	9 per cent
in any other place	7 per cent

It will be seen from Table 1 that the percentages applied, except for one area (Mongkok Tsui) charged at 10½ per cent, are all made up from one or more of the former percentages for Police (8¾%), Water (2%), Lighting (1½%) and Fire Brigade (¾%). The reason for this anomaly in respect of Mongkok Tsui is not known. Once again provision was made for applying two per cent of the valuation in any district supplied by the Water Authority to the credit of the “Water Account” referred to in section 17 of the Waterworks Ordinance of 1890.

There were minor amendments in 1902 dealing with the definition of “Victoria” and that of the “Hill District” (Ordinance Nos. 28 and 41 respectively) and in 1909 a section was added whereby the Legislative Council by resolution could exempt from assessment for rates “any village or area in the Colony”. Ordinances No. 13 of 1915 and No. 9 of 1917 related to exemption from rates of the University and certain other educational establishments.



A map with demarcation of
Victoria City of 1903



Central c.1912
with Prince's Building in the middle



Wan Chai c.1910

Special “War Rate” 1917

The next variation in the amount of rates was a product of the First World War. Ordinance No. 18 of 1917 provided for a temporary increase in the rates for the special purpose of “increasing the contributions of the Colony” to the U.K. Government towards the expenses of the war.

The war rate was payable from 1 July 1917 and was charged in addition to the ordinary rates at 7 per cent per annum of the valuation of every tenement in 38 specified districts (which did not include Stanley and Shek O although Police Rates had been charged in these areas from at least the 1860’s).

The revenue collected by means of this special war rate was at the disposal of the U.K. Government for the prosecution of the war and the rate was to be payable until the end of the quarter in which the war came to an end. By Ordinance No. 15 of 1919 it became payable up to and including the second quarter of 1919.



Queen's Road C., Central c.1919
(Decoration for Celebration of the end of World War I)



Peel Street, Central c.1920



Peel Street, Central today



Queen's Road C., Central c.1920



Queen's Road C., Central today



Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui c.1920



Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui today



Shanghai Street, Mong Kok c.1920



Shanghai Street, Mong Kok today

The 1921 Resolution
(Not implemented)

In 1921 a resolution was made to increase the percentage charge by various amounts. In seconding this resolution the Colonial Treasurer gave details of the way in which the various percentages had been fixed. He said:-

“The basis of the system has been to allot certain percentages to certain services, the total of such percentages being the percentage payable. The services taken for this purpose have been the Police, Fire Brigade, Water and Lighting. At present, Police is taken at $8\frac{3}{4}$ per cent, reduced to 7 per cent in outlying districts; Fire Brigade at $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent; Water at 2 per cent and Lighting at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, making a maximum of 13 per cent. In the last few years the cost of these and other services has greatly increased and the necessity for an increase in revenue has arisen. During the war an extra 7 per cent was added all round and the money received therefrom paid to Imperial Funds. This increase was, however, temporary and ceased on the termination of the war. In increasing the assessed taxes it seems more equitable to follow the system that has stood the test of time and adjust the increases according to certain services received, rather than to add a fixed percentage all round. In the resolution that is before this Honourable Council the existing system has been retained, but the percentages allotted to the various services increased as follows:-

Police from $8\frac{3}{4}$ per cent to 13 per cent; in outlying districts from 7 per cent to 10 per cent.

Fire Brigade from $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Water from 2 per cent to 3 per cent.

Lighting from $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Making a maximum of 20 per cent against a previous maximum of 13 per cent.”

However, on 23 June 1921 the Council rescinded the above resolution and the charges for rates from 1 July 1921 remained the same as those in force before that date. The financial position had been found to be more satisfactory than was thought at the time of passing the original resolution and in view of other revenue prospects "...it was felt that this increase in assessed taxes might stand over, at any rate for the present."

In 1926 a slight amendment was enacted to give the Governor in Council power to order a refund of rates in any case where he thought fit to do so.

The 1930 Resolution

(Superseded by the 1931 Resolution before implementation)

In the 1930 Budget there were proposals for an increase in the percentage charges for the following year (1931). This gave rise to a resolution introduced by the Colonial Secretary on 4 December 1930 to increase the percentage charges by a uniform 4%. The resolution was adopted so the former maximum and minimum percentages of 13 and 7 became 17 and 11 respectively, with varying percentages in-between according to districts, the number of which enumerated had then grown to twenty-seven.



Victoria City c.1930

However, when speaking on this resolution the Colonial Secretary emphasised that the large number of different rates of charge were considered unsatisfactory and that a simpler system was likely to be tabled for discussion by the Council soon afterwards. He said:-

“Our Rating Ordinance - No. 6 of 1901 - gives general power to assess and to demand the payment of rates; but does not differentiate between the public services for which rates are payable. In fact, only in the Water Ordinance are rates connected with any particular service, and there only as a basis for the calculation of the free allowance. The idea, however, seems to have grown (and with it rather a vague practice) that rates are separately calculated and definitely allocated to specific expenditure: but there has been no rule requiring adherence to a uniform percentage in the separate calculation, and variations of percentage have occurred. This practice is no doubt responsible for the very uneven figures that appear in the section of the Ordinance - section 29 - which fixes the actual rates for the Colony. But these figures are figures the Government has now to work on and in tabulating the increase of 4% throughout, the irregularity of the figures must remain for the time.”

“The Government’s view is, however, that the assessed value and consequently the percentage thereon automatically adjusts itself to the amenities provided to property. It is proposed in consequence to review the whole table of figures; and, leaving water apart, as requiring separate treatment, to attempt to find a uniform percentage charge to be leviable in all rated areas for the services provided by the Government. It is anticipated that a new and more simple table will be laid before this Council for their discussion in a few months’ time with a view to bringing it into force as from July 1st, 1931.”

The 1931 Resolution

As promised, a more simple table was laid before Council on 7 May 1931 in the form of a resolution which provided that the annual amount payable as rates should be 17 per cent of the rateable value; reduced to 16 per cent where the supply of government water was unfiltered and to 15 per cent where no provision for such a supply existed.

This resolution was agreed to and it was given legislative effect shortly afterwards in Ordinance No. 16 of 1931. The percentages charged as rates for the districts of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Kowloon remained unaltered for many years thereafter, except for a short period after the Pacific War when 16 per cent was charged pending resumption of a normal water supply.

In moving the resolution on 7 May 1931 the Colonial Secretary said:-

“It will be remembered by Honourable Members that the Acting Colonial Secretary, when moving a resolution in this Council on the 4th December 1930, to increase the assessment rates, referred to the present absence of uniformity in the figures of various localities and he intimated that it was hoped to introduce in time for the quarter beginning on the 1st of July a simpler table of rates. The resolution which I am now moving will, if it is approved, carry that policy into effect.”

“Honourable Members will observe that the only discrimination now proposed is on the basis of the provision of water and that there are only three rates, which vary according to the amount and quality of the water provided, the rate being 17% for a supply of filtered water, 16% for a supply of unfiltered water and 15% where no provision is made for any supply of water from Government Water Works. As was observed in the speech of the Acting Colonial Secretary to which I have already referred, the Government feels that any attempt to reflect by a variety of percentages the provision or non-provision in certain localities of police patrols, street lighting, educational facilities and the like is illogical, as the absence or presence of such amenities is sufficiently reflected in the rateable value of the premises. For this reason Government feels that the raising of the percentage in the case of certain outlying districts which will follow the adoption of the present proposal is entirely equitable.”

Annex F shows the rates percentage charges since 1931. The percentages have been kept at a low level in recent years (see Annex G which shows the rates percentage charges in the past 20 years (1994 - 2013)).

Minor Amendments 1938 and 1939

Other amendments to the Rating Ordinance were made in 1938 and 1939, but they are of little interest. They mainly dealt with penalties, the exemption of parts of tenements purposely designed to afford protection against attack from the air and consequential amendments resulting from the change in 1940 in the financial year of the Colony to the 1 April to 31 March.



Central, Hong Kong c.1940

Pacific War 1941 - 1945 and Its Aftermath

The Japanese occupation lasted from Christmas Day 1941 (when Hong Kong surrendered to the Japanese) until 30 August 1945 - Liberation Day. A Military Administration was set up on 7 September 1945 and this lasted until 30 April 1946. During the Japanese occupation most of the pre-war rating records were lost.

However the Japanese had preserved the last Valuation List made before the war and made use of the note-books prepared for the 1939-40 Valuation Lists which were in use up to the outbreak of hostilities. While they did not collect rates as such they did impose a “house tax” but how this was calculated is not known.

These pre-war note-books have survived to this day together with various Valuation Lists prepared in pre-war years, some of which are over 100 years old and are available in the Public Records Office.

During the short period of Military Administration, the Rating Ordinance was in abeyance, being replaced by the Rating Proclamation of the Military Administration. However, this was in effect a summary of the Ordinance modified for the special circumstances.

The Rating Office set up in September 1945 under the Military Administration was organised on similar lines to the former Assessment Department to enable a smooth return to the Civilian Administration. The Assessment Department was re-established in August 1946 and officially became the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) under the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (the Commissioner) on 31 July 1947.

Rates were collected from 1 October 1945 onwards. The Rating Proclamation remained in effect until 31 March 1947 although administered by the Civilian Authority from 1 May 1946, and the Rating Ordinance was brought back into force on 1 April 1947. There followed a minor amendment in 1948 dealing with piers and, later, small changes resulted from the Law Revision Measures of 1950.



Pottinger Street, Central c.1948



Pottinger Street, Central today



Des Voeux Road C., Central c.1954



Des Voeux Road C., Central today

Extension of Rating to the New Territories – Early Development

Modified Rating System for the New Territories (1935)

In 1935, a modified form of rating based on the capital value of the buildings was introduced to certain areas in the New Territories. It was considered that some form of rating should be applied to some urbanised areas of the New Territories where certain benefits were granted in the way of street lighting, street maintenance, drainage, water supply, scavenging, etc.

Rates became payable in Yuen Long and Tai Po from 1935 and in Tsuen Wan from 1937. They were collected by the respective District Officers.



Early Development of the New Territories —
The Governor, Sir Henry Blake, delivering his address to the gentry and elders of the New Territories communities at Tai Po Market on 2 August 1899

Initial Extension of Rating to the New Territories (1955)

The next important change in rating was effected by the Rating (Amendment) Ordinance of 1954. The main purpose of this amending Ordinance was to pave the way for extending rating on the urban areas to the New Territories by repealing, effective from 1 April 1955, the provisions for the modified rating system which were introduced in 1935.

To soften the blow the Ordinance also introduced a lower rate percentage charge for the New Territories and exempted agricultural land and buildings. The lower percentage charge was also meant to reflect in a very general way the lesser services available there.

There was considerable opposition to the extension of rating to the New Territories. One of the main problems was to honour the undertaking given earlier not to assess traditional village houses and yet no satisfactory definition of a village house could be agreed. Originally, it was hoped that increasing the minimum rateable value would effectively exclude such small premises but it was soon realised that this alone would be insufficient. It was not until 1976 that legal provisions for exempting village houses became effective.

The opportunity was taken in the same Ordinance to make a number of other amendments, the most notable being to the list of exemptions and in particular the withdrawal of the exemption from certain charitable and non-profit-making institutions such as schools, clinics, etc., a measure aimed at avoiding hidden subsidies.

Shek Wu Hui Market
c.1955



Declaration of the Valuation List for “Part D” (Phase I)

In 1956, Valuation Lists were declared and came into force for an area in the New Territories comprising Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and a strip along Castle Peak Road as far as Castle Peak Police Station. This area was termed “Part D” and had been gazetted in 1954 as a part of the Colony which was to be assessed for rating purposes. Because the former modified rating system applicable to Tai Po, Yuen Long and Tsuen Wan ceased to operate effective from 1 April 1955 and the Valuation List for Area D was declared only in 1956, no rates were paid in the New Territories for the year 1955-56.

It was intended that this would be the first stage of a phased programme and that the urban Rating System would be extended to other areas of the New Territories fairly quickly. Yet, in fact no further extension took place until 1974. (Further extension of the Rating System to the New Territories is covered in Chapter 3. The progress of rating in the New Territories is summarised at Annex H.)



Tsuen Wan c.1960

Other Amendments

Minimum Rateable Value

In 1961 an order was made which increased the minimum rateable value exemption limit from \$20 to \$200. This was effective from January 1962. This amount was later increased as follows:-

Minimum Rateable Value	With Effect From
\$1 000	1 April 1984
\$1 200	1 April 1988
\$2 000	1 April 1991
\$2 600	1 April 1994
\$3 000	1 April 1997

Exemption by the Governor

In 1971 a further amendment was introduced which gave the Governor power to order a refund of rates and authorise total or partial exemption from assessment to rates in respect of any tenement. Previously these powers had been conferred only upon the “Governor in Council”, the primary purpose of this change being to implement exemption of tenements occupied by members of the Consular Corps.

Building Numbering

RVD’s responsibility for building numbering dates back to 1888 when the power to number buildings was incorporated into the Rating Ordinance of that year.

It remained as part of the Rating Ordinance until 1 June 1956 when the Buildings Ordinance 1955 came into effect. This repealed the relative sections of the Rating Ordinance but the Commissioner retained responsibility for building numbering in the Urban Areas under the new provisions in the Buildings Ordinance.

With effect from 14 December 1990, the Commissioner became the authority for allocating building numbers for the whole territory by taking over such responsibility from District Lands Offices in the New Territories.



Central c.1961



Central today



Caroline Hill, Causeway Bay c.1965



Caroline Hill, Causeway Bay today



Nathan Road, Tsim Sha Tsui c.1960



Nathan Road, Tsim Sha Tsui today



Kowloon Tong c.1967



Kowloon Tong today

RATES NOTICE. FIRST QUARTER 1948.

THE TREASURY,
PRINCE'S BUILDING,
1A, DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL,
HONG KONG.

Mr. Ng Ting Quai
62 Sai Wan Ho st.
2nd fl.
62 Sai Wan Ho st.

Owner or Landlord of, Agent or Attorney for above Tenements.

Under the Provisions of *The Rating Ordinance, 1901*, the sum of \$.....21..... c. 25... for Rates is payable within the month of January, 1948, at the Treasury of this Colony in respect of the Tenements specified above, for the Quarter ending 31st March, 1948, and these Rates have been charged upon and are recoverable from the Owners or Landlords of, the Agents or Attorneys for such Tenements.

All communications with reference to this Demand Note including Remittances should be addressed to the Accountant-General, Treasury, Hong Kong. Payment should be made at the Treasury, 1A, Des Voeux Road Central and should be accompanied by this notice. Cheques, Drafts and Cashier Orders should be made payable to the "Hong Kong Government" and crossed. They should not be made payable to any individual officer.

Office Hours:—Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Please fill in particulars
of any change of address,
on the reverse side.

H. R. HIRST,
Accountant-General.

PLEASE PRODUCE THIS FORM INTACT AT TIME OF PAYMENT. It will be returned with the receipt machine-printed. Government will not accept any responsibility for any loss incurred through persons not waiting for their receipts.

RECEIVED the
sum here stated
in printed figures.

1

Mr. Ng Ting Quai
62 Sai Wan Ho st.
2nd fl.
62 Sai Wan Ho st.

H	Assessment No.
1-8	11663

Rates Notice of First Quarter 1948
(Front)

Should you wish to obtain a refund of Rates on account of these premises being UNOCCUPIED you must give notice to the Assessor that such is the case not later than the 15th of the first month during which you have no tenant and must apply to the Assessor for the refund between the 1st and 15th of April, 1948. No further notice of vacancy is required so long as the premises continue unlet, but the rates for each quarter must be paid within the first month of that quarter.

No refund of Rates on vacant tenements will be granted unless the Rates shall have been paid in advance within the month of January, 1948.

香港庫務司

通告商業主或承批人或代理人知悉

(一) 單後開列屋宇陽歷一千九百四十八年正月一號至三月三十一號一季內之差餉銀按照一千九百零一年差餉則例各節該於一千九百四十八年正月內赴公庫完納此項差餉例由該屋業主或承批人或代理人負責完繳如不完繳則可按例追究

(二) 凡無人和賃之吉屋如欲領回已繳之差餉則須於未賃之月限至十五號止報知估價官查核然後於一千九百四十八年四月一號至十五號內到庫求領如逾期則不發回其無人和賃之屋如報後仍無人和賃則無庸每月到報但每季之差餉仍須於該季頭一個月內先期清繳

(三) 凡欲領回吉屋差餉必所繳之差餉係一千九百四十八年元月內先期清繳者方准領回

凡關於估價租值或此差餉單或滙款之函件須寫交香港太子行樓下庫務司收

交餉時須携此單到本港德輔道中一號A太子行樓下庫務司署繳納

凡銀則滙單及管銀員之柯打紙須寫明交香港政府及過數人(香港銀行)凡銀則等件不可寫交任何職員收

辦公時間

(星期一至星期五由上午九點鐘至下午四點鐘)
(星期六由上午九點鐘至正午十二點鐘)

祈將爾長居地址填註在此單之下幅處

交餉時須將此單交出不可塗改待繳餉後則此單連同機印收條一並交還存據

To the Accountant-General,

Please serve Rates Notices in respect of the tenements on the reverse side to:—

Name

Address

Signed

署名

地址

姓名

按下列姓名地址派交

凡有關於差餉之通告請

此通告面上所指之屋宇

庫務司鑒

Rates Notice of First Quarter 1948
(Rear)

[illegible]

(由項兩年全日一十三月三年九四九一至日一月四年八四九一計估憑以情詳字屋告報例則餉差年一零九一照按告通爲)

差餉物業估價署通告

按照一九零一年差餉則例之規定業主或租客須將其屋宇詳情依下列格式填寫報告呈交差餉估價署茲限由通告日期起拾日之內仰須遵辦仰即知照

一九四一年 月 日 石 通 告 差餉物業估價署署長發

茲將本港屋宇產業依照例定格式填寫報告如左

1	估價用線圖號	河內道
2	街名	八號
3	地段號數	K.L. 3440
4	業主對該屋宇產業得別另用之號碼或名稱	住宅有花園
5	別墅屋宇產業(一)是否住宅式屋宇有無外廊及花園(二)抑或貨倉或別墅屋宇分租租用者	
6	若前表會則填用答是若干	
7	住客之姓名及稱謂並是房東主或承租人	主業自住
8	該屋若佔分租租則明分租者若干人每人納餉若干	
9	該屋全間本月租金總若干	全間修理費三萬六
10	該屋若佔分租則是否有任何租戶是否已與全租人居住	
11	該屋若佔分租則是否有任何租戶是否已與全租人居住	

一九四九年 月 日

業主(或住客)

署名

注意：

凡業主或租客不遵照或拒不遵照規定報告或遲遲報告或故意作虛假報告者於簡易法庭審訊罪名成立可處以罰金不逾五百元及監禁不逾六個月其不於限期十天之內呈報者罰款於將來估定稅目時得調增更重

Requisition for Particulars of
Tenements 2013 (front)



物業詳情中報表

表格 FORM R1A(D)

REQUISITION FOR PARTICULARS OF TENEMENTS



要收地稅人及/或業權人資料
Change of Recipient's and/or Payer's Particulars

請在下方表格內加上「✓」號及提供有關資料。
Please put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box(es) and provide the information required.

☐ 如收地稅人的資料有所更改如下:
The particulars of the Recipient of this requisition may need to be changed as follows:

- ☐ 繳納人(只限商業用途) - 請列出所有資料發出「繳納人通知」或於表格內註明。 (只限商業用途)
- The payers (only for commercial use) - please list all particulars issued "Payers Notice" or state in the form.
- ☐ 繳納人的資料將予以更改如下: (See Note 1 overleaf)
- The particulars of the Payer need to be changed as follows: (See Note 1 overleaf)

☐ 物業已轉讓(轉讓、繼承、受贈等)
The property was sold/transferred. Particulars of new owner as follows:

要收地稅人: The updated information:

姓名: Name _____

地址: Address _____

電話: (區號) Tel. No. (City/Area) _____

為進行其業務而需佔用，本通知所稱之「個人」，是指以具有商業目的而使用本通知表之主要或顯著用途為使用人或其中一方之代理人。並非如本通知上之任何一類人士，請在上方一欄內提供所資資料，並索取回報表格，以便本署重新發出表格。

下列物業類別之業主或使用者須填報《新物業稅》(第116章)第5條及《交通(評估及徵收)條例》(第515章)第31條的規定，在本表格內填報有關物業類別之資料，並發出日期起計於21日內以電匯或交收方式交回有關長沙灣30號長沙灣警署或第15區物業稅辦事處。中環人士亦可入本署查詢(<http://www.rtd.gov.hk>)，利用本表格的「遞交表格指引」頁面，以電子方式或e-RTR遞交表格資料。

本通知表是供填報之用，並非收據。有關在填報(即本表格填報日期起計於21日內)以書面方式向本署提出查詢或申索，請向本署查詢或向本署索取表格。

For rating and valuation purposes, valuation forms are issued from time to time to obtain up-to-date information relating to tenements. **This form is to be completed by the owner or the occupier or one of their respective agents. If you are none of these persons, please supply new information in the column at the top right corner and return this form, so that a new form will be issued.**

In accordance with Section 5 of the Rating Ordinance (Cap. 116) and/or Section 51 of the Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) (Cap. 616), the owner or the occupier of a tenement is required to submit a valuation form to the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in accordance with the provisions of the Rating and Valuation Department at 15/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon within **TWO MONTHS** from the date of issue. The required information may also be submitted to me by completing a Form e-RVA available at the "Electronic Submission of Forms" service provided at this department's website (<http://www.rvd.gov.hk/>).

If you have any difficulties in completing and submitting the form within the period specified, you must apply to me in writing within **21 days** from the date of issue before the **expiry of the period of return of the form**. The RVN/GR/VS-09/0801 is the official form for the return of the form.

發出日期 Date of Issue	食物衛生督察署牌照申請表 Mrs Mini BROWN Commissioner of Rating and Licensing
本申請表格指物業單位的地址或名稱、地址或 description of the TENEMENT to which this regulation relates	
聲明 DECLARATION 謹此聲明，據此，我們向所附：本表格所填報的資料，全是真實無欺，並無欺騙。 We hereby declare that the information provided in this form is, to the best of my/our knowledge and belief, true and complete. 簽署 Signed 日期 Date 姓名 (中/英) Name in Chinese Name in English 署署人的身分 My/our position ☐ 業主 owner ☐ 業主代理人^a agent for owner ☐ 署署人 occupier ☐ 署署人代理人^a agent for occupier	
^a 由代理人簽署的申請表格：謹此聲明，我們已取得物業業主/署署人授權簽署本申請表。(見附頁第 2 頁) ^a If regulation completed by agent: We hereby declare that I/we have been authorized by the landowner/s to complete this regulation. (See Note 2 overleaf)	

REMARK: 根據《香港條例》第40(九)條(評估及徵收)條的規定，任何人士明知或在本港作出虛假陳述或提供錯誤資料，以圖取利，一經定罪，可處罰款或監禁25,000元或10個月，或兩者兼施。該等罰款中有一部份須撥充慈善用途。此外，當局亦會對因向少數族裔索取捐款而受欺騙的人士進行調查。

PLEASE Under the Rating Ordinance or the Government Rate (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance, any person who knowingly makes a false statement or refuses to furnish any of the particulars specified in the form shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a maximum fine of \$25,000 or 10 months, or both. A portion of any such fines imposed will be applied towards charitable purposes. In addition, the district council may also conduct investigation into persons who are deceived by requests for donations from ethnic minorities.

NOTE: Under the Rating Ordinance or the Government Rates Ordinance, any person who knowingly makes a false statement or refuses to furnish any of the particulars specified in or by both of the above Ordinances shall be liable to an additional fine equivalent to 3 times the amount of rates and/or government rate undercharged. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the district council disclaims liability for any loss or damage suffered by any person who relies on the information contained in this notice.

[illegible]

7. 凡有「已」項目，請在適當方格內填上「是」或「否」。如未能就緒的「已」欄數目或程度補充資料，請予以低級處理。

(a) 申請人、僱主或經理人：如有任何與有關勞工之「已」欄有關之「已」欄數目或程度補充資料，請予以低級處理。

8. 使用自願轉職的人員應注意：如有必要就該名遞交通知書上的登記號碼人員者，先將他的轉職表填寫妥當並動效，因而以其他方式造成延誤／不滿意，這類的行為將會被視為違規行為。

9. 凡屬下列情況，則須填妥表格：

(a) 各僱主的僱用紀錄文件(不論紙質或電子)，及僱主紀錄(綜合)、僱主紀錄(混合)及(包括)《勞務合約》的轉職表；以及可能相關的轉職表。

(b) 由本局發出的「未獲許可轉職通知書」給予某人的人士，及由本局發出人士轉職後轉往新僱主作出通知書。該通知書可於本局網頁www.e-employment.gov.hk下載。

(c) 由本局發出的「未獲許可轉職通知書」給予某人的人士，及由本局發出人士轉職後轉往新僱主作出通知書。該通知書可於本局網頁www.e-employment.gov.hk下載。

10. 請參閱表格的附註，有關本單索取其具效後之用法及注意事項。

NOTES

1. Where provided with a box, please tick or append as appropriate. If space is insufficient or if you wish to give additional information, please give details on separate sheets and attach them to this form.

2. The agent who completes the report on behalf of the non-contractor of the tenement referred to in the requirement must have been so authorized. Such proof of authorization must be submitted with the report.

3. For attention of users by Autonomy arrangement : If you make a change in the Registered Payee's name shown on the demand, the previous Autonomy arrangement will be voided and a new one must be made by another person registered and enters a new Autonomy arrangement.

4. Personal Information
(a) Information provided by you will be used for the purpose of carrying out the requirements of the Rating Ordinance, the Landlord' Tenancy (Consolidation) Ordinance and the Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance, and may be forwarded to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue for the assessment and collection of taxes.

(b) Apart from the purpose stated above, personal information will not be transferred to any other parties, unless such parties are authorised by law and request the information. Under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, you have a right to request access to and correction of your personal data. Such requests may be made in writing to the Information Privacy Officer, at the Customer Service Offices, 33 Cheung Shue Wan Road, Kowloon or by email to enquiries@ipr.gov.hk.

5. Receipt of this form will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Requisition for Particulars of Tenements 2013 (rear)

Chapter 3

The Modern Period 1973 - 2013

During this period, there were some significant changes in rating administration to reflect the changing environment in Hong Kong. The major changes were:-

- The Rating Ordinance 1973 was enacted to consolidate the previous amending Rating Ordinances. The 1973 Ordinance is the backbone for the present rating legislation.
- Rating was extended to all areas of the New Territories.
- The Lands Tribunal was set up in 1974 to hear and adjudicate, inter alia, rating appeals.
- The concept of designating a valuation reference date for revaluations was introduced and first became effective for the 1984-85 revaluation.
- The computer-assisted valuation approach was introduced gradually to the review of rateable values and RVD's computerised property database was established.
- Rateable values were used for non-rating purposes such as the assessment of Crown rent/Government rent, classification of domestic premises and determination of compensation under the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance.
- The Commissioner assumed the billing and accounting function for rates payment in 1995.
- The two Municipal Councils were dissolved from 1 January 2000 and since then rates revenue has become part of the general revenue of the Government.

A series of rates rebate or concession schemes were launched in 1998 - 2013 to address the economic downturn and other hardship encountered by ratepayers or as a budgetary measure.

There were also significant improvements in the administration of the rating system in recent years, focusing on efficiency gain and delivery of quality customer services.

Rating Ordinance 1973 and Subsequent Amendments until 1980

Rating Ordinance 1973

In April 1973 a new Rating Ordinance came into effect. The former Ordinance which it replaced was dated 1901 although it had been revised many times since then. The purpose of the new Ordinance was to update existing legislation and streamline procedures. The following were the major changes:-

General Rates and Urban Council Rates

The percentage charge for the urban areas was reduced from 17% to 15%. Henceforth rates in the Urban Areas were to be in two parts i.e. “General Rates” to be paid into general revenue and “Urban Council Rates” (initially fixed at 6%) to be paid to the reconstituted Urban Council. All rates payable in the New Territories were to be “General Rates” and paid into general revenue.

Refund of half of the rates paid for unoccupied premises

The policy on refund of rates was changed so that only half the rates paid for unoccupied premises would now be refunded. The main reason for this change was that, as vacant premises enjoyed some services e.g. fire services, police, it was reasonable that some payment should continue to be made, even though Government had already established that rates were not directly related to such services.

It was also considered that the provision would be a deterrent factor against landlords keeping their premises vacant. Coupled with this was provision for an initial “rates free” period of six months for vacant units in new buildings, from the date of issue of the occupation permit by the Building Authority.

Tone of the list

“Tone of the list” provisions were introduced for the first time. These were similar to the provisions which had been in existence in the U.K. legislation for some time. This meant that, when a tenement was first assessed to rates, its value should not exceed the level of comparable tenements already included in the Valuation List. Thus the principle of fairness between ratepayers was to be maintained.

Proposals, objection and appeals

A simple and less costly means of objecting to assessments was introduced. Whereas previously ratepayers could only appeal directly to the District Court, the 1973 Ordinance provided for proposals and objections to be lodged in the first instance with the Commissioner. Decisions on these were to be made by a Senior Rating and Valuation Surveyor or above and it was only at the further appeal stage that the case would go to the District Court.

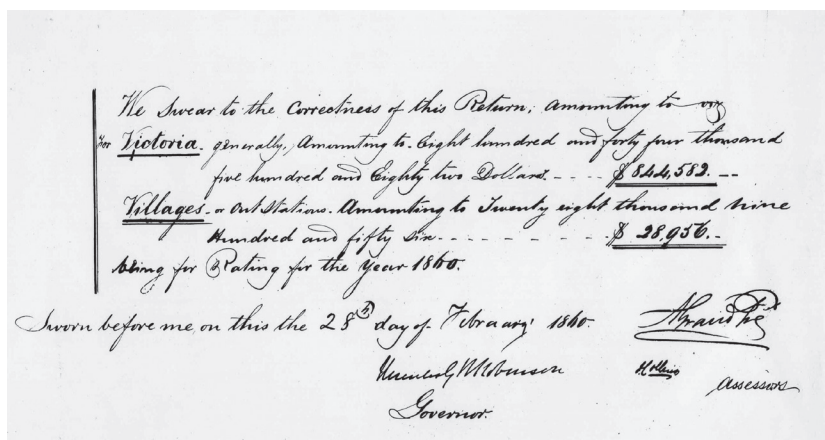
Valuation List

The requirement for the Commissioner to carry out a revaluation of all tenements each year was discontinued and henceforth a Valuation List would remain in force until a new one was declared. However, the Lists were to be open for public inspection for 21 days each year, during which period proposals for alterations to the List could be made. This only gave effect to the actual situation as revaluations had not been carried out annually for some time before this. (In years when no revaluation had been carried out the Governor would “adopt” the existing Valuation List as the List for the following year.)

Declaration of Valuation List

The requirement for the Commissioner to declare a newly completed Valutaion List before the Colonial Secretary was simplified. Dated back to 1863 when the Ordinance No. 5 of 1863 was enacted, section 9 of the Ordinance required “*When ... the valuation of the tenements ... shall be completed, the person so appointed to make such valuation shall prepare and make out a list or table of the several tenements so valued and of their respective valuations and shall lay the same before the Governor and shall at the foot of such list or table make and subscribe in the presence of the Governor or Colonial Secretary a declaration to the effect that the same contains a true account of all valuations made by such person and that the said list or table is to the best of his knowledge and belief correct in all other particulars.*”. Ordinance No. 12 of 1875 later changed the requirement of laying the valuation list before the Governor to “*deliver the same to the Colonial Secretary*” and the declaration was to be made before the Colonial Secretary only. The consolidated Rating Ordinance 1973 only required, under section 13, “*The Commissioner shall, when he has completed the preparation of a list under section 12, sign a declaration...*”. There was no longer the requirement that

the declaration be witnessed. Notwithstanding, RVD continued the tradition of holding declaration ceremony, with representatives from the policy bureau witnessing the declarations. With general revaluation being carried out annually from 1999 onwards, such ceremony became an annual event but was discontinued in 2013 so as streamline the process and save resources. The Commissioner, upon completion of the new Valuation List for 2013-14, simply signed the declaration.



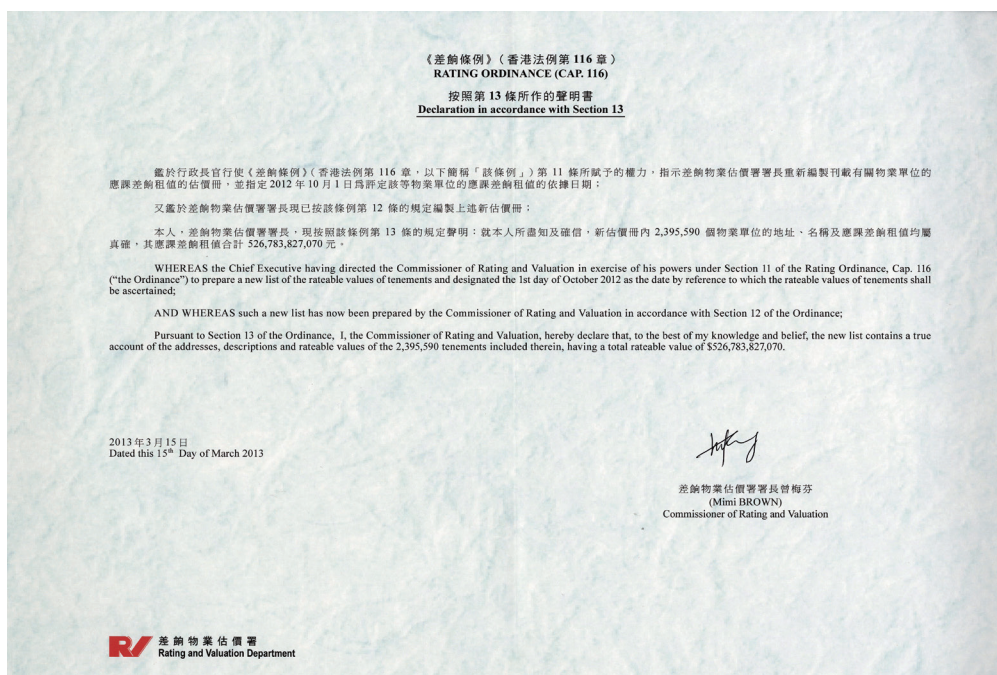
Declaration of Rates Book (Valuation List) of 1860, witnessed by the Governor



Declaration of 1969-70 Valuation List by Mr N. Cooke, the Commissioner
Mr H. Wardle, the Accountant General, awaiting to receive the List



Declaration of 2012-13 Valuation List by Mrs Mimi BROWN, the Commissioner, witnessed by Mr Stanley YING, the Permanent Secretary for Financial Services & the Treasury (Treasury)
Declaration ceremony was discontinued thereafter



Declaration of Valuation List of 2013-14

Abolition of Refunds for Vacant Domestic Premises

Refund of rates for vacant domestic premises was abolished from 1 January 1974 by another amending Ordinance, enacted in 1973. The purpose was to encourage the full utilisation of housing resources. At the same time, the “rates free” period for newly constructed vacant domestic premises was reduced from six to three months. The period for non-domestic premises remained at six months due to the generally longer time needed for fitting out.

Surcharges for Late Payment and Rates Percentage Charges in the New Territories

In order to discourage long-outstanding arrears of rates, in 1974 the Collector of Rates was empowered to impose a further surcharge of 10% for any amount of rates in default for more than six months after the due date for payment. Also in that year a further Ordinance was enacted which increased the percentage charge in the New Territories from 11% to 15%. Provision was made for newly rated areas to be charged at 11% for their first four years of assessment. However, in practice, this provision would only apply to Area E as a different phasing in system was established for later phases of the extension exercise. See Annex F for further notes regarding the rates percentage charges.

Establishment of the Lands Tribunal

In 1974 the Hong Kong Lands Tribunal was established, charged with the responsibility of determining disputes between claimants and the Crown concerning land matters. Appeals under the Rating Ordinance (other than those on refusal to grant refunds) were thereafter to fall within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal instead of the District Court. The Tribunal was modelled on the U.K. Lands Tribunal, which is an independent and specialist judicial body, to deal with appeals quickly and inexpensively.

Under the Rating Ordinance, ratepayers could lodge appeals with the Lands Tribunal within the prescribed period after service of respective notices of decision, if they are not satisfied with the Commissioner's decision arising from the objections or proposals.

The Tribunal consists of a President, who is the judicial head, and legal and surveyor members.



Lands Tribunal, established in 1974

Extension of Rating to the New Territories

The progressive extension of rating to the New Territories came to standstill after the completion of the First Phase in 1956 when the urbanised system was extended to Tsuen Wan and Kwai Chung, because of problems already explained in Chapter 2. The momentum was picked up in 1974 when the problems were gradually resolved.

Extension of Rating to the New Territories Phase II

The extension programme resumed in 1974, with the declaration of the Valuation List for Area E which was a coastal strip around Tsing Yi Island comprising mainly factories, boat-yards and a Power Station. This was the second phase of the programme commencing in 1956.



PANORAMA OF TAI PO - 1953



PANORAMA OF TAI PO - 1976

Exemption of Village Houses

In 1975 two amending Ordinances were passed. The first of these enacted a number of minor amendments, the more important ones being a simplification of the procedures for revising the rates percentage charges, a provision exempting cemeteries and crematoria and a measure to ensure that tenements in Valuation Lists for new rating areas were valued in line with those in existing Lists.

The second mainly concerned with the further extension of rating to the New Territories then in hand and, exempted from rates agricultural dwellings and village houses in the New Territories. Village houses were to be exempted only if situated within areas designated by the Governor. Both exemptions took effect from 1 April 1976.

Traditional Village House
in the New Territories

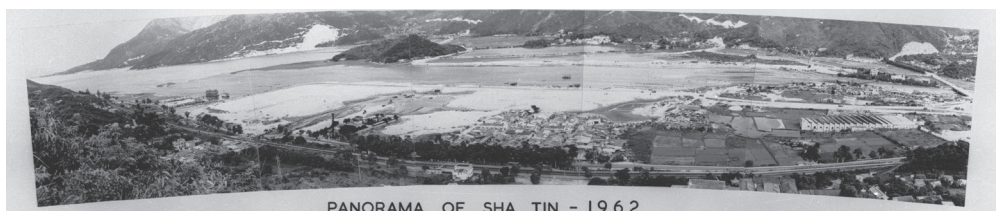
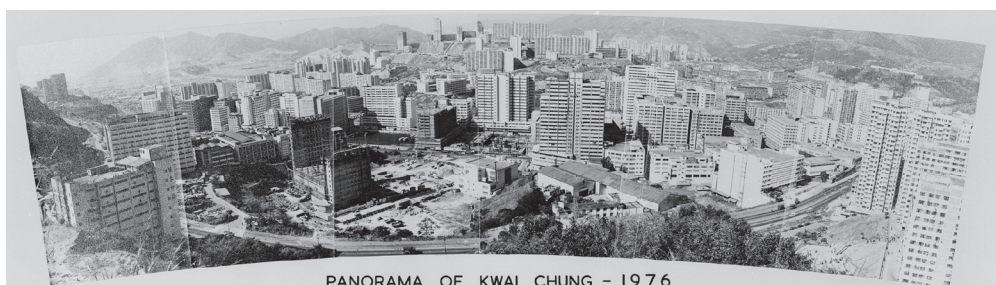
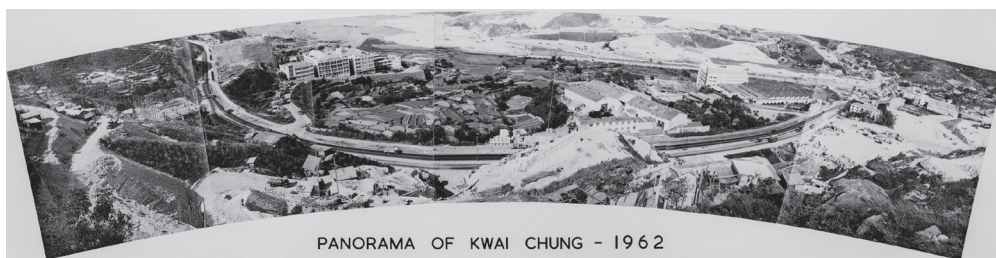


Modern Village House
in the New Territories

Extension of Rating to the New Territories Phase III and the New “Phasing-in” Policy

A major extension of rating to the New Territories occurred in 1976 with the completion of Phase III programme upon the declaration of the Valuation List effective from 1 April 1976 for districts including Yuen Long and Tai Po.

A new “Phasing-in” system was established at this time whereby, in the first year, rates would be charged at 50% of the standard rate charge for the New Territories, 60% for the second year, 70% for the third year and so on until 100% was payable in the sixth year. Extensions to areas were brought in at the same percentage as was payable in the area extended.



Extension of Rating to the New Territories Phases IV to VII

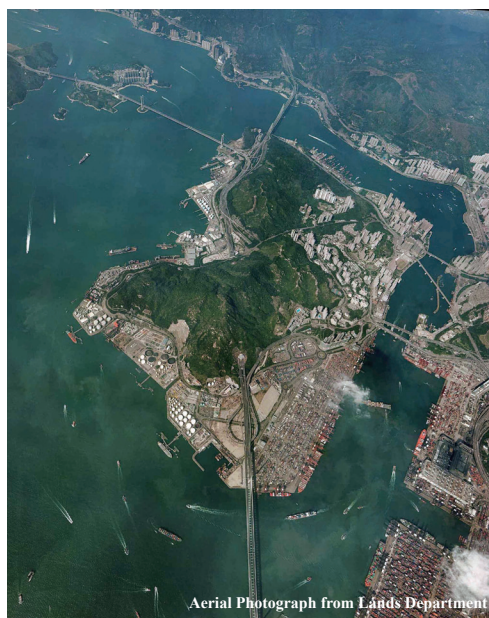
Extension of rating to the New Territories continued to move by phases since the completion of Phase III in 1976. Until 1988, the urban rating system has covered all the remaining areas in the New Territories. Details of districts and the effective dates of the respective Valuation Lists are set out at Annex H.

The Rating (Areas of Hong Kong) (Amendment) Order 1987 extended rating to the remaining areas of the territory with effect from 1 April 1988. Since then, the whole of Hong Kong has been subject to rates.

Consequently, the former provisions for preparation of Valuation Lists only in specified rating areas were repealed in 1990 together with the corresponding subsidiary legislation, the Rating (Areas of Hong Kong) Order. Valuation Lists were prepared for Urban Council area and Regional Council area only instead of separate Valuation Lists for 47 Rating Areas.



Tsing Yi c.1977



Tsing Yi today

Other Amendments

Rates Relief

In 1977, an amendment was made to cushion the impact of increased rates payable in respect of certain tenements due to the revaluation effective for that year. This basically set a limit of 33.33% increase in the rates in 1977 and a further similar increase in 1978. Thereafter, the relief ceased except in respect of pre-war rent controlled premises for which annual increases were limited to 33.33% until the full rates became payable. The revaluation resulted in a large number of proposals against the level of the new rateable values, with some ending up as appeals to the Lands Tribunal.

Rates relief was again introduced to cushion the impact of the Revaluation which took effect on 1 April 1984. The Rates Relief Scheme was provided through the Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1984, and for the year 1984-85, it limited the increase in rates payable to a prescribed 20 per cent of the rates payable in the immediately preceding year.



Mid-level, Central c.1977

The scheme continued in 1985-86 and 1986-87, but was then abolished by the Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1987 with effect from 1 April 1987. A similar scheme was re-introduced by the Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1991 with effect from 1 April 1991. The following table shows the percentage limit on increase from 1991-92: -

Year	Limit of % increase of rates payable in the preceding year
1991-92*	25%
1992-93	Not applicable
1993-94	Not applicable
1994-95*	20%
1995-96	20%
1996-97	Not applicable
1997-98*	20%
1998-99	20%

* Revaluation took effect on 1 April 1991, 1 April 1994 and 1 April 1997.

Miscellaneous Amendments in 1979

In 1979 minor amendments were made to the Ordinance to clarify certain matters such as the admissibility of requisitions as evidence in appeals, effective dates of interim valuations of certain buildings in the New Territories without occupation permits and the requirements for service of notices. Refunds for vacant car-parking spaces were abolished.

Amending Ordinances After 1981

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1981

The Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1981 introduced a new concept for revaluations which gave the Governor, when directing that a new Valuation List be prepared, the power to designate a reference date for valuation purposes. This followed similar provisions in the United Kingdom. The first valuation lists to which these provisions applied came into force on 1 April 1984.

The Ordinance also made a number of amendments to rating law of a mainly administrative nature. An important change related to ensuring that the practice of maintaining a computerised Valuation List, rather than a printed List, complied with the law. The Ordinance also extended to two years the period for which back rates could be demanded on interim valuation.

The more important of the other administrative changes were: Valuation Lists were only to be displayed immediately before they first took effect; exemption arrangements were made more logical as between those tenements exempted from assessment and those exempted only from payment; a number of minor amendments related to the objection and appeal procedures.

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1984

Most of the provisions in this amending Ordinance became effective on 1 April 1984 when the new 1984-85 valuation lists took effect. The main changes were:-

- a) The rateable value on a proposal or interim valuation shall be, instead of the previous 'not exceed', the value which would have been ascribed thereto on the relevant (designated) date.
- b) Instead of a fixed reduction of one or two percentage points in the rates percentage charge in calculating the rates for tenements having an unfiltered water supply or no water supply, the reductions were to be calculated at a percentage prescribed by resolution of the Legislative Council of the amount of rates payable. (With effect from 1 April 1984, the reductions were set at 7.5% for unfiltered water supply and 15% for no water supply.)
- c) Extending and revising the rates relief scheme to cover all tenements from 1 April 1984. The maximum prescribed increase in rates from year to year was 20%.
- d) Provision for updating the minimum rateable value from time to time by resolution of the Legislative Council. (This was set at \$1 000 effective from 1 April 1984).

Rating (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance 1984

This Ordinance which came into effect on 1 August 1984 clarified the surcharge provisions.

The 1984-85 Revaluation

This was the first occasion on which an antecedent valuation reference date - 1 July 1983 - had been employed. Rateable values were substantially increased (by an average of 3.6 times) and there were 99 588 proposals against the new rateable values of which a few (under 300) proceeded to appeals to the Lands Tribunal.

A list of the designated valuation reference dates since the 1984-85 revaluation is at Annex I.

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1986

This Ordinance which took effect from 1 April 1986 introduced Regional Council rates, payable in the New Territories, to provide the main source of finance for the newly established Regional Council.

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1987

This Ordinance abolished the rates relief scheme with effect from 1 April 1987.

Rating (Areas of Hong Kong) (Amendment) Order 1987

This order extended rating to all the remaining areas of the territory. The resulting valuation lists took effect on 1 April 1988.

Buildings Ordinance (Application to the New Territories) Ordinance 1987

This Ordinance made a number of minor amendments to the Rating Ordinance in relation to exemption of village houses.

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1990

a) *Specified areas repealed*

The former provisions for preparation of Valuation Lists only in specified areas were repealed because all remaining areas had been included since 1988. Valuation Lists were to be prepared for Urban Council area and Regional Council area only instead of the Valuation Lists for 47 separate Rating Areas which were declared in 1988. The Rating (Areas of Hong Kong) Order was also repealed.

b) *Notice of rateable value following the revaluation*

The arrangements for notifying ratepayers of the result of the revaluations were modernised by combining the notice into the rates demands.

Consequent on the new notification arrangements, it was necessary to change the period for public inspection of the Valuation Lists and lodging of proposals. This was changed from March to April and May of the year in which the new Valuation List took effect. The latest date for issuing notices of decision was amended to before 1 December in a revaluation year and before 1 September in a non-revaluation year.

c) *Others*

Other minor amendments related to recovery of rates and the mode of service of notices.

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1991

The rates relief scheme was re-introduced but under the new provisions application of the scheme and the percentage limit on increases had to be brought into effect each year by resolution of Legislative Council. See page 59 for the percentage limits for 1991-92 and thereafter.

Rating (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance 1991

a) Definition of plant

This amendment confirmed the existing practice of including the value of plant such as cables, ducts, pipelines, railway lines, tramway lines and oil tanks in the rateable value of certain tenements.

b) Valuations to be separate except in certain cases

This was to regularise the practice of providing cumulo assessments for major utilities such as electricity, gas and telephone systems.

Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1995

The main purpose of this amending Ordinance was to provide for the Commissioner to take over the responsibility for billing and accounting for rates payment from Collector of Rates (the Director of Accounting Services). The Ordinance also provided for the abolition of the refund of half rates for vacant non-domestic premises.

Other important amendments were:

- to give greater flexibility to computerisation of the Valuation Lists;
- to standardise the effective date of interim valuations by regulations made by Governor in Council;
- to provide for sealed offers and hold-over orders in relation to rating appeals; and
- to permit the Commissioner to vary the frequency of issue of rates demands.

Other minor amendments related to:

- aggregation of the rateable value of each of the tenements valued separately;
- objection period (extended from 21 to 28 days);
- lodging of proposals after declaration of Valuation Lists;
- service of notice of interim valuations;
- assessment of parts of a tenement; and
- application of Lands Tribunal Rules to rating appeals.

Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance (Cap. 515)

Consequential amendments to the Rating Ordinance were required following the enactment of the Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance (Cap. 515), which included empowering the Commissioner to make an appropriate amendment to the Valuation List if alteration was made to the entry of a “non-identical” tenement in the Government Rent Roll and to issue combined demands for rates and Government rent.

Adaptation of Laws and Change of Titles

To bring certain laws of Hong Kong into conformity with the Basic Law and with the status of Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, a series of minor amendments to the terms and titles of offices were effected. These included the change of “Governor 總督” to “Chief Executive 行政長官” and “Her Majesty’s forces 女皇陛下部隊” to “the Hong Kong Garrison 香港駐軍”; and some Chinese terms such as “財政司” (the Financial Secretary) to “財政司司長”, “上訴法院” (the Court of Appeal) to “上訴法庭”.



Handover ceremony on 30 June 1997



Handover celebration on 30 June 1997

Recent Major Events

Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance (Cap. 515)

This Ordinance was enacted on 30 May 1997 and the associated regulations were made by the Governor in Council on 6 June 1997.

The Ordinance in large part follows the Rating Ordinance and provides that the rateable value for every tenement to which it applies shall be entered into the Government Rent Roll. Government rent is payable as a result of Annex III of the Joint Declaration and Article 121 of the Basic Law. In brief non-renewable Government leases which expired after 27 May 1985 and having been extended to 30 June 2047 and all leases newly granted after 27 May 1985 are liable to pay Government rent of 3% of rateable value from the date of extension or 1 July 1997, as the case may be. Also all non-renewable leases extended, and leases newly granted, from 1 July 1997 are subject to a rent of 3% of rateable value from the date of extension or grant and are subject to the Ordinance.

The main provisions of the Ordinance and associated regulations are as follows:-

- a) In accordance with the Joint Declaration and Article 122 of the Basic Law rural holdings are exempted from the Ordinance while they remain in the ownership of indigenous villagers. Rural holdings include old schedule lots, village lots, small houses and similar rural holdings.
- b) Government rent is payable quarterly in advance.
- c) The Commissioner may demand the Government rent together with the rates where a tenement is liable to pay both rates and Government rent.
- d) The provisions for preparation of and correction to the Government Rent Roll and for interim valuations and deletions are similar to those for the Rating Ordinance.
- e) Proposals and objections for identical tenements can only be made against the entry in the Rating Valuation List.

- f) Provisions for objections and appeals for non-identical tenements are similar to those in the Rating Ordinance. Appeals against the decisions of the Commissioner go to the Lands Tribunal.

Annual Revaluation

In the first Rating Ordinance, Ordinance No. 2 of 1845, it was provided that “the said Governor and Council may cause a new valuation to be made annually”. However, it would be very difficult to carry out annual revaluations due to resource constraints. In 1851, the amending Ordinance introduced the concept of “adoption” of an existing valuation, thus avoiding the need for annual revaluation. The “adoption” provision remained a feature in the rating system in Hong Kong until 1973.

The Rating Ordinance 1973 removed the requirement for the Commissioner to make a valuation of the tenements in the Colony each year. Henceforth a Valuation List would remain in force until a new one was declared. This reflected the reality as revaluations had not been carried out annually for some time before this. The Lists were open for public inspection for 21 days in March each year, during which period proposals for alterations to the List could be made.

The long lapse of time between revaluations had resulted in large increases in rateable values. For example, the Valuation Lists which took effect from 1 April 1984 had the rateable values increased by 260% on average. In view of this problem, the Financial Secretary in his Budget Speech in March 1984 announced that revaluations in future would be carried out at three-yearly intervals, although the first one would take four years to complete. Pursuant to this policy statement, new valuation lists were prepared to take effect from 1988, 1991, 1994 and 1997.

In November 1998, Government announced that new Valuation Lists would be prepared to take effect from 1 April 1999 and revaluations would thereafter be conducted on an annual basis. The primary purpose of annual revaluations is to update the rateable values of properties so as to distribute the rates and Government rent burden equitably according to their prevailing market rental levels.

Reorganisation of Provision of Municipal Services

From 1 July 1997, the two Municipal Councils, viz. Urban Council (UC) and Regional Council (RC) elected during British administration, were replaced by the Provisional Urban Council and Provisional Regional Council. This was an interim arrangement pending elections to be held. After a review in 1998, the Government decided to introduce structural changes to the framework for delivery of municipal services. Upon the reorganisation, the former Municipal Councils were dissolved and their functions were transferred to the Government and other statutory bodies with effect from 1 January 2000. The reorganisation brought about the following changes to the rating law:

- There would not be any distinction between UC and RC areas, and hence a single valuation list would be prepared for the whole area of Hong Kong.
- It was no longer necessary for the Government to prescribe UC rates and RC rates, and all rates revenue would go to the general revenue as General Rates without the need for apportionment between the Government/UC and Government/RC.

Rationalising the Use of Reported Information

The Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Ordinance 2002, among other things, made changes to the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance, the Rating Ordinance and the Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance by clarifying the power of the Commissioner in disclosing information obtained under these ordinances.

Provisions were made to define the specified persons to whom the Commissioner was empowered to disclose the information for specified purposes. The scope of the specified persons was subsequently reduced upon the enactment of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) (Amendment) Ordinance 2004, which removed the security of tenure of domestic tenancies. As landlord and tenant are no longer required to apply to the Lands Tribunal for a renewal of the tenancy, they are removed from the list of specified persons.

The types of requisitions returned to the Commissioner which would be admissible as evidence of facts were also enlarged to include requisitions issued by the Commissioner under the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance and the Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance.

Rates Rebate and Concessions

To soften the rates burden of payers affected by economic downturn and other hardship, special relief measures by way of rates rebate and concessions were introduced during the period 1998 to 2003.

Rates Rebate 1998

Government announced a rebate of the rates paid for the quarter from 1 April 1998 to 30 June 1998. This was effected by means of a refund of rates for the said quarter under the Rating Ordinance.

Rates Exemption 1999

Government exercised the power given by the Rating Ordinance to exempt all tenements from the payment of half of the rates payable in respect of the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 September 1999.

Rates Concession 2002

A rates exemption was made under the Rating Ordinance to exempt all tenements from the payment of the full amount of rates payable in respect of the whole period from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002, subject to a ceiling amount of \$2 000. The concession ceiling was raised to \$5 000 with effect from 1 April 2002. About 85% or 2.3 million ratepayers did not pay any rates in 2002 while the remainder enjoyed the full concession of \$5 000.

Rates Concession 2003 - SARS

To provide immediate relief for the community to tide over the difficulties due to the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Rating (Exemption) Order 2003 was made by giving ratepayers a one-off rates concession equivalent to the rates payable for the July to September 2003 quarter, subject to a maximum amount of \$1 250 for each domestic property and \$5 000 for each non-domestic property. About 90% of ratepayers did not have to pay any rates for the period.

Impact of SARS on Rateable Values

The SARS epidemic spread rapidly in the Southeast Asia in early 2003, Hong Kong being no exception. SARS broke out on 10 March 2003 in Hong Kong. The new rateable values for 2003-04 took effect on 1 April 2003 following the annual revaluation. RVD received over 77 000 proposals seeking to reduce the new rateable values, doubling the number received in the previous year (39 000). The impact of SARS was invariably referred to as one of the grounds of objection.

The Commissioner was unable to take into account the sudden economic impact of SARS in reviewing these objections because, under the Rating Ordinance, the 2003-04 rateable values were assessed by reference to market rental values prevailing at the valuation reference date of 1 October 2002. Any changes in the general economic environment after the date, as in the case of SARS outbreak in March 2003, could only be considered in the next annual revaluation.

Yet, in response to the community's call for relief and support from Government, the Government announced a package of relief measures on 23 April 2003. Certain specific concessions were applied to rates. These comprised:

- (1) a one-off concession of the rates payable for the July to September 2003 quarter up to certain amounts for domestic and non-domestic properties respectively (see Rates Concession 2003 above); and
- (2) for the April to June quarter rates payments due on 30 April 2003, the 5% surcharge on overdue payments would be waived for 3 months; those who had already paid the rates for the quarter were entitled to apply for a refund and to pay again by the deferred due date without penalty.

On 23 June 2003, the World Health Organisation declared Hong Kong as a SARS-free area. Soon after overcoming the epidemic, Hong Kong launched a series of economic revival measures including the Mainland/Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA). The economy experienced a rapid rebound. With improved economic indicators and renewed activities in the property market, the year 2003 ended with a positive sentiment.



The World Health Organisation declared Hong Kong as a SARS-free area on 23 June 2003



The strong economic recovery from SARS especially in the retail sector was exemplified in the annual revaluation for 2004-05, the valuation reference date being 1 October 2003 and the revaluation took effect on 1 April 2004. For 92% of properties, the rateable values were reduced by 11% on average while 7% had no change in rateable values; the remaining 1% of properties, mainly shops and commercial premises, had their rateable values increased by about 12% on average.

Further Rates Concessions

Rates Concession 2007-08

No further rates concessions were given in subsequent years until 2007-08. With substantial recovery in economy, Government decided to share wealth with the community by waiving rates for the first two quarters of 2007-08 subject to a ceiling of \$5 000 per quarter for each rateable tenement. About 99% of domestic properties and 86% of non-domestic properties were subject to no rates for the two quarters. In response to appeals from Legislative Councillors, the rates concession arrangement was extended for a further period (January to March 2008) after a break of one quarter.

Rates Concessions 2008-09

Rates concession continued to be granted in 2008-09 with the aim of leaving wealth with the people. Rates were waived for the whole year, subject to a ceiling of \$5 000 per quarter for each rateable tenement. About 99% of domestic properties and 85% of non-domestic properties were subject to no rates in the year.

Rates Concessions 2009-2013

As a result of the financial tsunami triggered by the US sub-prime mortgage problem, the Hong Kong's economy suffered a heavy blow in the latter half of the 2008 but resumed positive growth in late 2009. At the same time, rounds of quantitative monetary easing introduced by some economies resulted in a surge in global liquidity and increased the risks of inflation and asset-price bubbles in Asia, including Hong Kong, against a backdrop of recovery in the economy.

Facing the above challenges, the Government continued to provide rates concessions in the financial years 2009 to 2013. Rates concession of different levels subject to varying ceilings as shown below were provided as relieves to the Hong Kong people.

<u>Financial Year</u>	<u>Concession Ceiling Per Quarter</u>	<u>% of Tenements Not Subject to Payment of Rates</u>	
		Domestic	Non-Domestic
2009-10	\$1 500	90%	58%
2010-11	\$1 500	90%	58%
2011-12	\$1 500	86%	55%
2012-13	\$2 500	93%	66%
2013-14	\$1 500	80%	49%

Given that rates concessions have been given every year since 2007-08, the concession has become a much anticipated tax reduction by the public.

Improvements in Rating Administration

Apart from conducting annual revaluations since 1999, significant improvements have been achieved in the administration of the rating system over the years. Information technology has been extensively applied to enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the assessment and collection of rates and Government rent. Many e-Government initiatives have been launched to meet customer needs and to provide value-added services.

Information Technology

Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA)

RVD had started to use the CAMA techniques in assessing properties to rates since the 1980s.

Through valuable experience built up over the years coupled with the on-going development of advanced techniques and the establishment of comprehensive databases, its CAMA system is well-established and caters for the valuation needs of over 2.4 million properties in Hong Kong. The Department also developed an Automated Property Valuation System to check the level and consistency of the results of mass valuation.

Integrated Property Data Base and Geographic Information System

To add value to the text-based property data bank, RVD started in 2004 implementing an Integrated Property Data Base (IPDB) to establish a consolidated textual and graphic repository of property information. Upon completion in 2005, the process in rating and

valuation work has been substantially streamlined with improved efficiency. Integrating Geographic Information System (GIS) with the IPDB, RVD has developed various GIS-based valuation modules to facilitate the valuation of retail properties, advertising signs and miscellaneous properties. With assessment results together with the comparables as references shown geographically on digital maps, the systems facilitate fine-tuning of valuations much more readily. Both IPDB and GIS also enable the transfer, exchange and sharing of property data within and outside of the Department in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Improved Customer Services through Electronic Delivery of Services

ESD Scheme

RVD was one of the early participants in the first phase of the Government's Electronic Services Delivery Scheme (ESD Scheme) which was launched in December 2000. Since then, payment of rates and Government rent, checking of the relevant account details, change of payers' names and addresses can be conducted electronically on an "anywhere, anytime" basis. The service was originally delivered and managed by a private company under a Public Private Partnership model. Since migrating to a new Government platform in 2008, the system has been expanded and enhanced to handle increased transaction volume and a lot more services under various service clusters tailored to the needs of different customers.

Online Display of the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll

As one of RVD's e-Government initiatives in electronic delivery of public services, the rateable values in both the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll could be accessed and searched by the public through the Internet for the first time in April and May of 2001 when the documents are "open for inspection" under the relevant Ordinances. This service was enhanced in 2002 to facilitate public searches of the new rateable values by reference to address or district in addition to by assessment number. In line with Government's green policy, hard copies of the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll were dispensed with in 2005. In March 2009, this online function was migrated to the Department's newly developed Property Information Online, supported by a powerful bilingual search engine with flexible search options.

E-forms Service

Following the coming into operation in June 2004 of the Electronic Transactions (Amendment) Ordinance 2004, RVD's statutory forms and notices once required to be served by personal service or by post under the Rating Ordinance, Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance and the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance can be submitted by the public through electronic means. Starting from January 2005, various electronic forms are put into use by stages. Continuous improvements to the e-forms service have been made such as providing online endorsement of notices of new letting or renewal agreement and the collection of payment for late submission of the notices.

Electronic Demands for Rates and/or Government Rent

To further promote green management, the Department launched its "eRVD Bill" service in December 2010, enabling subscribed payers to receive their quarterly demands for rates and/or Government rent via the Internet with option to dispense entirely with their paper bills. The service also includes alerting subscribers on the receipt of their e-bills and when they are due for payment. Subscribers can settle their e-bills online since July 2011.

Property Information Online

The Property Information Online (PIO) is RVD's flagship property information dissemination system. Launched in February 2009, the public can obtain, at a small fee, information on saleable area, year of completion and permitted use of residential properties over the Internet round-the-clock. It replaced RVD's telephone-based Info-hotline service, which had been providing the same information to estate agents over telephone from 1999 to meet the statutory requirements under the Estate Agents Practice (General Duties and Hong Kong Residential Properties) Regulation. Featured with a powerful bilingual search engine and a robust architecture, PIO is capable of handling multiple searching criteria and vast number of concurrent users. The public can also retrieve free of charge the 2.5 million aligned property address records of RVD and the Land Registry and conduct online search of assessments in a New Valuation List and Government Rent Roll.

At present, the following service items are provided under the PIO:

- Enquiry on saleable area, age and permitted occupation purposes of domestic properties;
- Public inspection of the newly declared Valuation List and Government Rent Roll during the proposal period (free of charge);
- Enquiry on rateable values contained in the Valuation Lists and Government Rent Rolls for the last 3 years;
- Enquiry on rates and/or Government rent accounts; and
- Enquiry on property data for individual rates or Government rent payer.

It is planned that further new services will be introduced through the PIO platform.

Other Improved Customer Services

Bilingual Valuation List and Government Rent Roll

Bilingual Valuation List and Government Rent Roll were introduced in March 2004. Rates and Government rent demand notes with bilingual property addresses and building names have been implemented since April 2004. From October 2004, payers were invited by phases to choose to receive either English or Chinese bills.

Automated Issue of Rates/Government Rent Payment Confirmation and Replacement Demand

RVD's 24-hour automated telephone enquiry system was enhanced in 2002 to provide automated issue of rates/Government rent payment confirmation and replacement demand. The information would be sent to the enquirer by facsimile instantly or by post as desired.

Consolidated Billing and Payment Service

Launched in January 2004, this service offers payers with multiple properties a consolidated bill listing out the rates and Government rent payable for all their properties to facilitate processing and payment. This efficient service has been well-received since its launch as payers no longer have to handle separate demands for individual properties. As at October 2013, there were 1 870 consolidated accounts comprising some 145 900 properties.

1823 Call Centre Service

RVD joined the Government's 1823 Call Centre service in March 2002 as one of the pioneer departments. By March 2004, the 1823 Call Centre had taken over from RVD all of its public telephone enquiries, providing 24-hour operator answering service. The Call Centre also helps handling simple rates and Government rent account enquiries as well as requests for change of payers' correspondence addresses and replacement demands by email or facsimile.

Customer-focused Home Page

RVD revamped its Internet Home Page in 2012 by changing the design and layout from traditional service orientation to customer-centric approach, thereby facilitating users with different needs accessing the required information and services more readily.

Performance Pledge

Performance Pledge is RVD's commitment on service level to ensure the timely completion of its major functions. Performance targets are set at the beginning of each year and the achievements are published at year end. The effectiveness of RVD's Performance Pledge is reviewed annually with new performance targets incorporated when appropriate to meet public expectations. Performance achievements are now published at quarterly interval instead of annually to enable the public's closer monitoring of RVD's performance.

Improved Transparency on Valuation Work

To improve valuation transparency, since November 2011 crucial property information such as saleable area is released to the payers of new properties when they are first assessed to rates. With effect from April 2013, payers of all domestic properties have been given specific access code printed on their quarterly demands for retrieval of similar property information as provided under the PIO free of charge.

Flexible Use of Resources to Improve Operational Efficiency

Outsourcing

RVD has been exploring innovative ways to enhance operational efficiency in addition to the use of Information Technology. Outsourcing has proved to be an effective way in meeting seasonal activities as well as saving resources in handling simple but voluminous and labour-intensive tasks, by leveraging resources, expertise and new technology available in the private sector. Over the years, the following tasks of RVD have been successfully outsourced:

- Printing and enveloping of quarterly rates/Government rent demand notes (since 1997);
- Vacancy survey for the Department's publication – Property Review (since 2001);
- Valuation of village houses (since 2002);
- Updating of changes in payer's records (since 2004);
- Valuation of advertising signs (in 2007 and 2008);
- Printing and enveloping of bulk issue of requisition forms (since 2010);
- Rolling programme to review the physical data/value patterns of units in residential buildings (2012); and
- Building Numbering Campaign to inspect display of building number (2013).

Conclusion

Since its first introduction in 1845, the Rating System in Hong Kong has undergone significant changes, developments and improvements over a long period of nearly 170 years. With changing economic and social environments, new issues and problems have been resolved effectively through administrative measures or statutory amendments to the rating laws.

Being simple and broad-based, property rates in Hong Kong remain to be an equitable and effective indirect tax which is well-recognised by both taxpayers and the Government as a reliable and stable source of public revenue.

A successful property tax system well-proved, rating in Hong Kong riding on its strong foundation will continue to be fine-tuned with time. In pursuit of excellence in assessment, collection and administration, the Department will strive to enhance work efficiency, achieve cost-effectiveness and deliver better services tailored to the need of customers.

Headquarters of Rating and Valuation Department



Old General Post Office Building
"Assessment Department" in the 1930s



Old Prince's Building
"Rating Office" set up in 1945
"Assessment Department" re-established in 1946



Old Windsor House
"Rating and Valuation Department" established on 31 July 1947



Old Man Yee Building
RVD in the 1950s



Murray House situated in Central
RVD Headquarters in 1963 - 1981



The Governor of Hong Kong Sir David Trench with
locally-trained Surveyors of RVD in Murray House, September 1971



Murray House situated in Stanley
(Under reconstruction in July 2000)



Hennessy Centre
RVD Headquarters in 1981 - 2000



Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices
RVD from 2000 onwards

Annexures

- A List of Colonial Treasurers, Assessors, Valuers and Commissioners
- B Major Events from 1845
- C Assessments, Rateable Value and Rates Revenue in Selected Years
- D Numbers of Rating Assessments and Aggregated Rateable Values in the Past 20 Years (1994 - 2013)
- E Rates as a Percentage of Total Government Revenue in the Past 20 Years (1994 - 2013)
- F Rates Percentage Charges since 1931
- G Rates Percentage Charges in the Past 20 Years (1994 - 2013)
- H Progress of Rating in the New Territories
- I Designated Valuation Reference Dates
- J List of Old Rate or Collection Books

**LIST OF COLONIAL TREASURERS,
ASSESSORS, VALUATORS AND COMMISSIONERS**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Name of Officer</u>
1844 9 May	Colonial Treasurer	R.M. MARTIN
1845 7 Aug. - 1846	Acting Colonial Treasurer	W.J. MERCER
1847 1 Jul. - 1848	Assessor and Collector of Police Rates	G.E. HARRISON and Charles MAY
1849 21 Jun. - 1854	Assessor and Collector of Police Rates	D.R. CALDWELL and Charles MAY
1855	Assessor and Collector of Police Rates	Charles MAY
1856 28 Nov.	Assessor and Collector of Police and Lighting Rates	G. DUDELL and J.C. POWER
1857 9 May - 1860	Colonial Treasurer	Frederick H.A. FORTH
1857 19 Jul.	Collector of Police and Lighting Rates	G. DUDELL
1858 1 Jan. - 1859	Collector of Police and Lighting Rates	Alexander GRAND-PRE
1860 - 1863	Assessor and Collector of Police and Lighting Rates (This office was abolished from 30.6.1863 and the duties were modified and transferred to the Colonial Treasury.)	Alexander GRAND-PRE
1864 - 1867	Valuator of Property for the Police and Lighting Rates	James COLLINS
1868	Valuator of House Property	C.H. HORDEN

<u>Year</u>		<u>Post</u>	<u>Name of Officer</u>
1869	- 1870	Valuator of Police and Lighting Rates	W. PRESTAGE
1871		Valuator of Police and Lighting Rates	W. PRESTAGE and R.G. ALFORD
1872		Valuator of Police and Lighting Rates	R.G. ALFORD
1873	- 1876	Police Rate Valuator	A.R. MADAR and John GERRARD
1877		Police Rate Valuator	A.R. MADAR
1878		Police Rate Valuator	P.M. ALVES
1879		Police Rate Valuator	G.L. TOMLIN
1880	- 1881	Police Rate Valuator	P.M. ALVES
1882		Colonial Treasurer	The Hon. James RUSSELL
1883	- 1886	Colonial Treasurer	The Hon. Alfred LISTER
1887		Assessor of Municipal Rates	Augustus Shelton HOOPER
1888		Assessor of Rates	Augustus Shelton HOOPER
1889 12 Oct. - 1920		Assessor of Rates	Arthur CHAPMAN, V.D. (Retired on 5.10.1920)
1921	- 1931	Assessor of Rates	Charles McIlvaine MESSER, O.B.E. (Retired on 28.6.1931)

Annex A - 3

<u>Year</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Name of Officer</u>
1931 28 Jun. - 1937	Assessor of Rates	Edwin TAYLOR, C.M.G. (Retired on 18.11.1937)
1938 1 Jan. - 1946	Assessor of Rates	Julius RING, BSc, F.R.I.C.S., A.M.I.STRU. E., A.M.I.MECH. E.
1947 31 Jul. - 1951	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Julius RING, BSc, F.R.I.C.S., A.M.I.STRU. E., A.M.I.MECH. E.
1951 15 Apr. - 1967	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Frederick SHANKS, O.B.E., J.P., BSc, F.R.I.C.S.
1967 28 Apr. - 1971	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Norman COOKE, J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.R.V.A.
1971 16 Sep. - 1984	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Raymond Alfred FRY, O.B.E., E.D., J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.R.V.A., F.H.K.I.S.
1984 30 Jun. - 1989	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Gordon Penrhyn BLENKINSOP, I.S.O., J.P., F.C.A., A.C.I.S
1989 16 Oct. - 1999	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Barry Jonathan Clayton WOODROFFE, S.B.S., I.S.O., J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Name of Officer</u>
1999 22 Feb. - 2006	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Kenneth T. W. PANG, S.B.S., J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S., R.P.S.(GP), M.P.A.(Harvard)
2006 29 Nov. - 2008	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	H. C. LO, S.B.S., J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.
2008 15 Jan. - Present	Commissioner of Rating and Valuation	Mrs Mimi BROWN, J.P., BSc(Hons), M.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.

COMMISSIONERS OF RATING AND VALUATION
(1947 - 1989)



1947-1951
Mr J. RING
BSc, F.R.I.C.S.,
A.M.I. STRU. E., A.M.I. MECH. E.
(Also Assessor of Rates 1938-1946)



1951-1967
Mr F. SHANKS
O.B.E., J.P., BSc, F.R.I.C.S.



1967-1971
Mr N. COOKE
J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.R.V.A.



1971-1984
Mr R. A. FRY
O.B.E., E.D., J.P., F.R.I.C.S.,
F.R.V.A., F.H.K.I.S.



1984-1989
Mr G. P. BLENKINSOP
I.S.O., J.P., F.C.A., A.C.I.S.

COMMISSIONERS OF RATING AND VALUATION
(1989 - PRESENT)



1989-1999
Mr B.J.C. WOODROFFE
S.B.S., I.S.O., J.P.,
F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.



1999-2006
Mr Kenneth T. W. PANG
S.B.S., J.P., F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.,
R.P.S.(GP), M.P.A.(Harvard)



2006-2008
Mr H. C. LO
S.B.S., J.P.,
F.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.



2008-Present
Mrs Mimi BROWN
J.P., BSc(Hons),
M.R.I.C.S., F.H.K.I.S.

MAJOR EVENTS FROM 1845

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
1845	Ordinance No. 2 of 1845. The “Police Rate” introduced.
1851	Ordinance No. 3 of 1851. Amendment to provide an improved appeal procedure.
1854	Ordinance No. 1 of 1854. Provided for levying an additional rate to pay for an Auxiliary Police Force. (But the Auxiliary Police Force was disbanded in July 1854 so this Ordinance did not have much material effect).
1856	Ordinance No. 11 of 1856 introduced an additional “Lighting Rate” to pay for street lighting.
1860	Ordinance No. 12 of 1860. Introduced an additional “Water Rate”.
1862	Ordinance No. 9 of 1862. This was a new Police Force Ordinance but retained the same method of financing the Force (i.e. from the Police Rate).
1863	The Police and Lighting Rate Ordinance 1863 (No. 5 of 1863). This consolidated and improved the previous Ordinances on rating and introduced the term “tenement”.
1867	The Police and Lighting Rate Amendment Ordinance 1867 (No. 11 of 1867). Under this Ordinance the three separate rates (Police, lighting and water) were to be collected as one tax.
1875	The Rating Ordinance 1875 (No. 12 of 1875). Introduced “The Fire Brigade Rate” and further consolidated rating law.
1885	The Municipal Rates Ordinance 1885 (No. 21 of 1885). Further codified rating law.
1888	The Rating Ordinance 1888 (No. 15 of 1888). This was a major reform to the general rating law in Hong Kong. The various rates were combined into one. Although rates for separate services were no longer shown the percentage charge still varied between districts.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
1890	Minor amendments relating the definition of owner.
1892	Minor amendments regarding definition of interim valuation, rates percentage charge and refund.
1899	Minor amendment relating to lifts and machinery. Lifts and machinery used as adjuncts to a tenement to be treated as a part of tenement and thus reflected in the rateable value.
1901	The Rating Ordinance 1901 (No. 6 of 1901). This was a further consolidating measure and remained in force until 1973 (apart from during the Pacific War and its aftermath).
1902	Ordinance Nos. 28 & 41 of 1902. Amended the definition of “Victoria” and “Hill District”.
1909	Ordinance No. 24 of 1909 provided for exemption of a village or area by the Governor-in-Council.
1917	Ordinance No. 18 of 1917. Special “War Rate” introduced.
1919	Ordinance No. 15 of 1919. “War Rate” abolished.
1926	Ordinance No. 3 of 1926. Governor-in-Council given the power to order a refund.
1931	Ordinance No. 16 of 1931. This gave effect to a Resolution to change the various percentage charges to a uniform rate of 17% but with reductions to 16% if an unfiltered supply and 15% if no Government water supply was available.
1935	Ordinance No. 10 of 1935. Introduced a special rating system in the New Territories.
1938) 1939)	Minor amendments relating to penalties, exemption of air raid shelters and change of the financial year of the Colony to 1 April to 31 March.
1941	Surrender of Hong Kong to Japanese on 25 December.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
1945	Liberation of Hong Kong from Japanese on 30 August 1945. Rating administered by the Military Authorities from 7 September 1945 until 30 April 1946. Rating Proclamation replaced the Rating Ordinance.
1947	1 April. Rating Ordinance brought back into force. 31 July. Rating and Valuation Department established.
1948) 1950)	Minor amendments regarding piers and other Law Revision measures.
1954	Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1954 (No. 30 of 1954). Repealed the provisions for a special rating system in the New Territories. Provided for a lower rate of charge (11%) in the New Territories. Other changes made. Mainly these were to the exemption provisions.
1955	The special rating system in the New Territories ended.
1956	Rates charged in “Part D” i.e. Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and Castle Peak Road (New Territories).
1961	Order made changing the exemption limit from \$20 to \$200 rateable value.
1971	Ordinance No. 47 of 1971. Gave the Governor the power to exempt a tenement from <u>payment</u> of rates and also to order a refund in any case.
1973	Rating Ordinance 1973 (No. 11 of 1973). This repealed Ordinance No. 6 of 1901. Made a number of changes to the law and introduced a separate “Urban Council Rate”. Total rate charge reduced to 15%. Ordinance No. 74 of 1973 (Effective 1 January 1974). Refunds abolished for domestic premises and “rates free” period for vacant domestic premises reduced.
1974	Ordinance Nos. 34 & 35 of 1974. Surcharge provisions amended and also the percentage charge in the New Territories increased. Tsing Yi Island (part) charged rates. Lands Tribunal established (Ordinance No. 62 of 1974).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
1975	Procedures for altering the percentage charges simplified. Village house exemption introduced and a number of other minor changes (Ordinance Nos. 1 & 82 of 1975).
1976	Valuation Lists for a number of new rating areas declared. A revised “phasing-in” system introduced for rates charges in new rating areas.
1977	Temporary rates relief introduced resulting from a revaluation that year (Ordinance No. 33 of 1977).
1979	Ordinance No. 45 of 1979. Made a number of minor amendments to clarify certain issues and to discontinue refunds on vacant car parking spaces.
1981	Ordinance No. 33 of 1981. Provision for a reference date for revaluations introduced. Also changes to exemption arrangements and a number of other minor changes to the law.
1984	Ordinance Nos. 9 and 53 of 1984. Ordinance No. 9 of 1984 provided that the rateable value determined for an interim valuation or a proposal, shall be the value which would have been ascribed thereto on the relevant (designated) date. A revised rates relief scheme was introduced. Some other minor amendments were made including a change of the exemption limit from \$200 to \$1 000 effective 1 April 1984. These changes were made to coincide with the revaluation which took effect on that day. Ordinance No. 53 of 1984 clarified the surcharge provisions.
1986	Ordinance No. 1 of 1986 amended the Rating Ordinance consequent upon the establishment of the Regional Council, introduced a separate “Regional Council Rate” and made changes relating to Urban Council rates. Most of the provisions became effective on 1 April 1986.
1987	Ordinance No. 11 of 1987 abolished the Rates Relief Scheme with effect from 1 April 1987.

All remaining areas of the New Territories became subject to rating.

Ordinance No. 60 of 1987 made a number of minor amendments to the Rating Ordinance in relation to exemption of village houses.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
1988	Extension of rates to the New Territories completed. All of Hong Kong became subject to rating when new valuation lists came into force on 1 April.
1990	Ordinance No. 54 of 1990. Main provisions: a) the whole territory was divided into Urban Council area & Regional Council area replacing all previously specified areas; b) service of notices of rateable value on ratepayers was not necessary following the declaration of a new Valuation List; and c) period for lodging proposals to alter rateable values was changed from March to April & May.
1991	Ordinance No. 10 of 1991 confirmed the practice of including the value of plant such as cables and ducts in the rateable value of certain tenements. The Commissioner was empowered to assess two or more properties together if they are used together and affect the value of one another. This confirmed the practice of assessing electricity and telephone systems under one cumulo assessment.
1995	23 May 1995 was the 150th anniversary of the enactment of the first Rating Ordinance in HK. Ordinance No. 22 of 1995 was enacted in April 1995. The main provisions included the following: a) the abolition of half refund of rates formerly allowed for vacant non-domestic premises; and b) the transfer of the billing and accounting functions relating to rates from the Director of Accounting Services to the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation.

The Rating (Effective Date of Interim Valuation) Regulation also took effect. This fixed the interim dates by reference to the Occupation Permit or Letter of Compliance or Consent to Assign.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
1997	The Government Rent (Assessment and Collection) Ordinance and associated regulations providing for the collection of this rent at 3% of the rateable value under Annex III to the Sino-British Joint Declaration came into force on 30 May 1997 and 6 June 1997 respectively. The Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was formed on 1 July 1997.
1998	Government announced a rebate of the rates for the quarter from April to June 1998 to soften the burden of payers affected by economic downturn due to Asian financial turmoil.
1999	Annual revaluations are conducted after the 1999 revaluation took effect. Government announced an exemption of half of the rates for the quarter from July to September 1999.
2000	The Provisional Urban Council and Provisional Regional Council were dissolved with their functions transferred to the Government and other statutory bodies from 1 January 2000. Thereafter, the distinction between Urban Council area and Regional Council area is no longer necessary. A single valuation list is sufficient to cover all properties in Hong Kong. Electronic Services Delivery Scheme was launched in December 2000. RVD was one of the pioneer departments in the scheme. Payment of rates and Government rent, checking of account, change of payer's name and addresses could be conducted electronically.
2001	Government announced a rates concession scheme by an exemption of the amount of rates payable for Year 2002 subject to a ceiling of \$2 000. Starting from April 2001, both the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll could be searched online through the Internet.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
2002	Government raised the rates concession ceiling to \$5 000 in respect of the rates concession scheme announced in 2001. RVD enhanced its 24-hour automated telephone enquiry system to provide automated issue of rates/Government rent payment confirmation and replacement demand. The electronic access to the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll was enhanced by building in searches of new rateable values through address or district in addition to by assessment number.
2003	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in Hong Kong in March 2003. Government announced a package of relief measures on 23 April 2003, including the exemption of rates payable for July-September 2003 capped at a ceiling of \$1 250 for each domestic unit and \$5 000 for each non-domestic unit. On 23 June 2003, the World Health Organisation declared Hong Kong as a SARS-free area.
2004	The first phase of the Integrated Property Data Base was implemented to provide a consolidated textual and graphic repository of property information. Bilingual Valuation List and Government Rent Roll were introduced in March 2004. Rates and Government rent demand notes with bilingual property addresses and building names were implemented in April 2004. RVD launched the Consolidated Billing and Payment Service to allow payers with many properties to apply for a consolidated bill of all their properties to facilitate payment and account management. RVD was ready to accept electronic submission of specified forms.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
2005	The newly declared Valuation List recorded for the first time an average increase of 7% in rateable values after successive reductions in the last 6 annual revaluations. Pursuing Government's "green" policy, RVD compiled a "paperless" electronic Valuation List and Government Rent Roll for public inspection, dispensing with the printed copies. Payers could choose to receive the Rates and Government rent demand notes which showed property addresses, payers' names and correspondence addresses in Chinese only. The year 2005 commemorated the 160th anniversary of rates in Hong Kong. To mark the occasion, RVD organised a series of activities including exhibitions, commemorative stamp issuance and publishing pictorials.
2006	RVD completed a strategic Information Technology Plan as a blueprint to align itself with the new e-Government environment and utilise information technology to introduce customer-centric services as well as to enhance business operations. Valuation capability of the "Integrated Property Data Base" was further enhanced by the incorporation of Geographic Information System Valuation Modules.
2007	Rates concession was given to all ratepayers to offset the rates payable for the first, second and fourth quarters of the financial year 2007-08, subject to a ceiling of \$5 000 per quarter.
2008	Rates concession was granted to all ratepayers to offset the rates payable for the financial year 2008-09, subject to a ceiling of \$5 000 per quarter. RVD's electronic services provided under the Government's Electronic Service Delivery Scheme were migrated to a new e-Government platform with expanded capability to handle increased number of transactions. Government online services were grouped under various clusters tailored to the needs of different customers.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
-------------	--------------------

2009	The first phase of RVD's Property Information Online (PIO) was launched in February, providing round-the-clock convenient service to the public for access of property information through Internet.
------	--

In March, the statutory service to provide public inspection of Valuation List and Government Rent Roll following the declaration of the Valuation List and Government Rent Roll in mid-March up to 31 May was migrated to the PIO, supported by a powerful bilingual search engine with flexible search options.

Rates concession was given to all payers to offset the rates payable for the financial year 2009-10, subject to a ceiling of \$1 500 per quarter.

2010	From March, the public could make round-the-clock online enquiry in the PIO on rateable values contained in the Valuation Lists and Government Rent Rolls for the last 3 years of assessment.
------	---

The service of PIO was expanded in December to enable the public to check round-the-clock any outstanding liability in rates and Government rent relating to a property online.

Rates concession was granted to all ratepayers to offset the rates payable for the financial year 2010-11, subject to a ceiling of \$1 500 per quarter.

The "eRVD Bill" service was launched in December. Payers could opt for receiving the quarterly demands for rates and/or Government rent via the Internet.

2011	Rates concession was given to all ratepayers to offset the rates payable for the financial year 2011-12, subject to a ceiling of \$1 500 per quarter.
------	---

To provide a seamless billing and payment service, e-Payment platform was implemented in July, and payers could settle their electronic demands online instantly.

In November, RVD started to inform payers of newly completed domestic properties of the saleable area and ancillary accommodation of their properties at the time of issuing Notices of Interim Valuation.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Event</u>
2012	Rates concession was given to all ratepayers to offset the rates payable for the financial year 2012-13, subject to a ceiling of \$2 500 per quarter. The re-designed Department's homepage was launched in December, changing the design and layout from traditional service orientation to customer-centric approach.
2013	Rates concession was given to all ratepayers to offset the rates payable for the financial year 2013-14, subject to a ceiling of \$1 500 per quarter. In April, individual payers could retrieve property information of their residential properties from the PIO free of charge. The holding of declaration ceremony for new Valuation List and Government Rent Roll discontinued as preparation of a new Valuation List and Government Rent Roll has become an annual event. The Commissioner, upon completion of the 2013-14 new Valuation List, simply signed the declaration.

**ASSESSMENTS, RATEABLE VALUE AND RATES REVENUE
IN SELECTED YEARS**

Year ⁽¹⁾	Assessment (No.)	Rateable Value (\$million)	Rates Revenue (\$)
1845	1 874 ⁽²⁾	- ⁽³⁾	2 540 ⁽⁴⁾
1850	2 610 ⁽²⁾	- ⁽³⁾	12 500 ⁽⁴⁾
1858	3 407	- ⁽³⁾	63 750 ⁽⁴⁾
1860	4 359	0.9	76 905 ⁽⁴⁾
1875	- ⁽³⁾	- ⁽³⁾	186 100 ⁽⁴⁾
1888-89	9 537	3.1	377 490
1901	- ⁽³⁾	6.9	708 360
1925	18 412	27.3	3 297 790
1940-41	35 962 ⁽⁵⁾	44.2	7 377 150
1947-48	27 581 ⁽⁵⁾	52.1	9 984 660
1950-51	33 956	136.2	27 253 350
1956-57	51 523	301.4	56 706 450
1961-62	100 435	593.7	116 298 750
1965-66	138 480	1 045.3	224 022 850
1973-74 ⁽⁶⁾	312 989	3 343.9	576 205 190
1977-78	450 873	9 159.1	1 068 875 730
1981-82	604 426	12 307.3	1 490 691 690
1984-85	740 558	54 736.5	2 354 346 260
1988-89	966 407	78 159.3	4 812 441 960
1991-92 ⁽⁷⁾	1 134 737	169 199.1	8 394 004 000
1994-95	1 338 475	257 146.5	12 587 107 000
1997-98	1 563 249	325 148.3	16 340 808 000
1999-2000 ⁽⁸⁾	1 693 399	281 146.8	12 766 644 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2000-01	1 780 259	270 795.6	14 428 229 000
2001-02	1 889 207	282 520.6	12 727 140 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2002-03	1 997 356	274 536.4	8 923 261 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2003-04	2 089 090	261 933.3	11 166 687 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2004-05	2 133 656	253 857.5	12 640 083 000
2005-06	2 202 777	276 102.1	14 146 318 000
2006-07	2 246 563	308 596.5	15 467 273 000
2007-08	2 284 830	340 568.1	9 494 544 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2008-09	2 309 837	375 765.1	7 174 835 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2009-10	2 332 208	368 701.8	9 957 161 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2010-11	2 350 445	378 143.2	8 955 850 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2011-12	2 369 205	425 392.1	9 722 268 000 ⁽⁹⁾
2012-13	2 385 288	475 433.5	10 939 000 000 ⁽⁹⁾⁽¹⁰⁾
2013-14	2 400 530	527 851.6	12 971 000 000 ⁽⁹⁾⁽¹⁰⁾

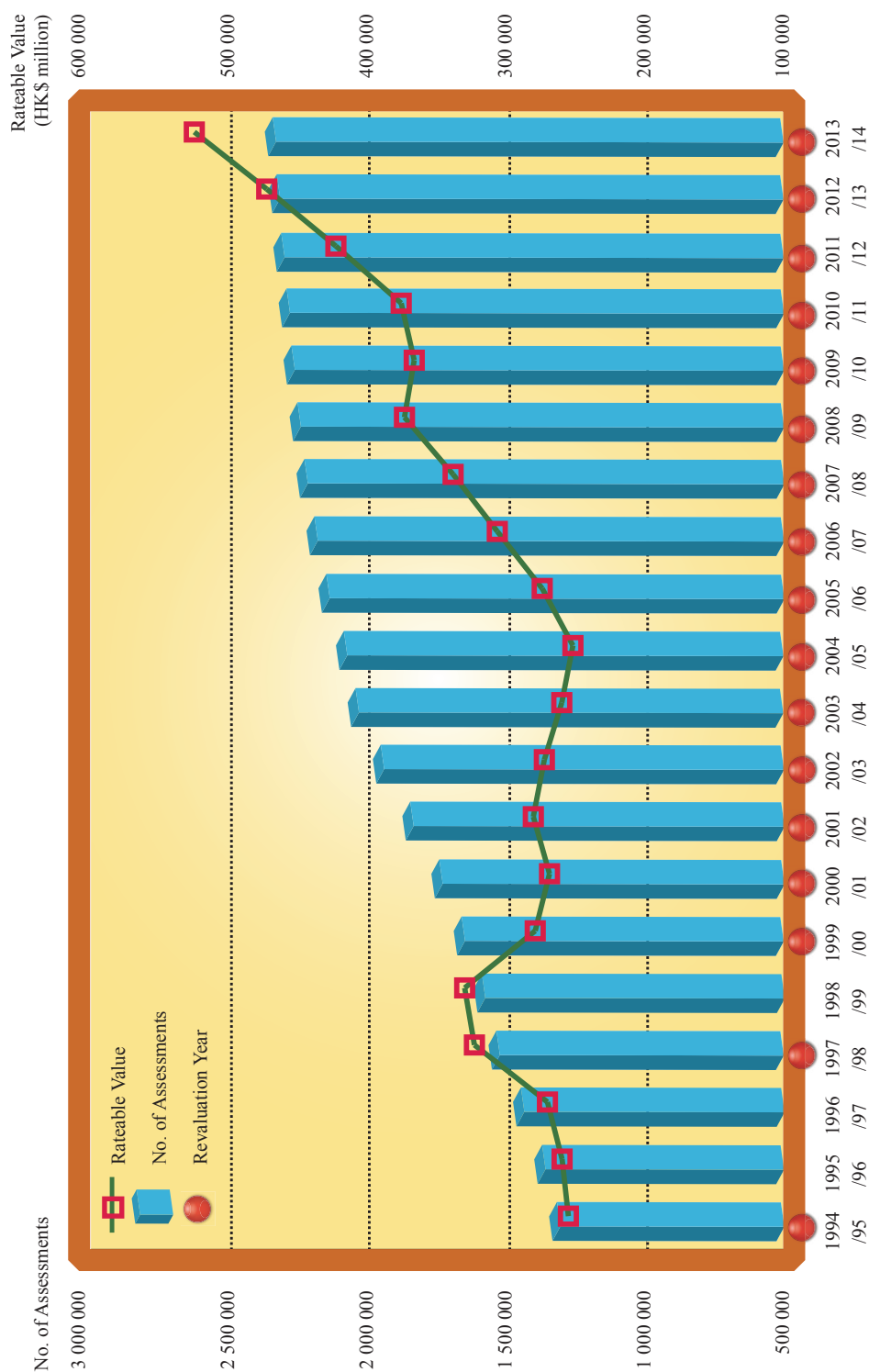
Notes

- (1) Number of assessments and total rateable value are at the beginning of the year in question.
- (2) Numbers of assessments in 1845 and 1850 denote numbers of buildings.
- (3) The following old records have been lost or are incomplete:-
 - Numbers of assessments/buildings in 1875 and 1901; and
 - Total rateable value in 1845, 1850, 1858 and 1875.
- (4) Rates revenue in 1845, 1850, 1858, 1860 and 1875 was recorded in GBP. It has been converted to HKD at the rate of £1=HK\$4.80.
- (5) The number of assessments dropped after the Pacific War 1941-1945, i.e. from 35 962 in 1940-41 to 27 581 in 1947-48 due mainly to bomb damage.
- (6) Rates revenue from 1973-74 includes Urban Council rates.
- (7) Rates revenue from 1991-92 is rounded to the nearest \$1 000.
- (8) All rates revenue goes to the general revenue from 1 January 2000 upon the dissolution of the two Municipal Councils.
- (9) Rates revenue in 1999-2000, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2007-08 to 2013-14 was exclusive of rates concessions.

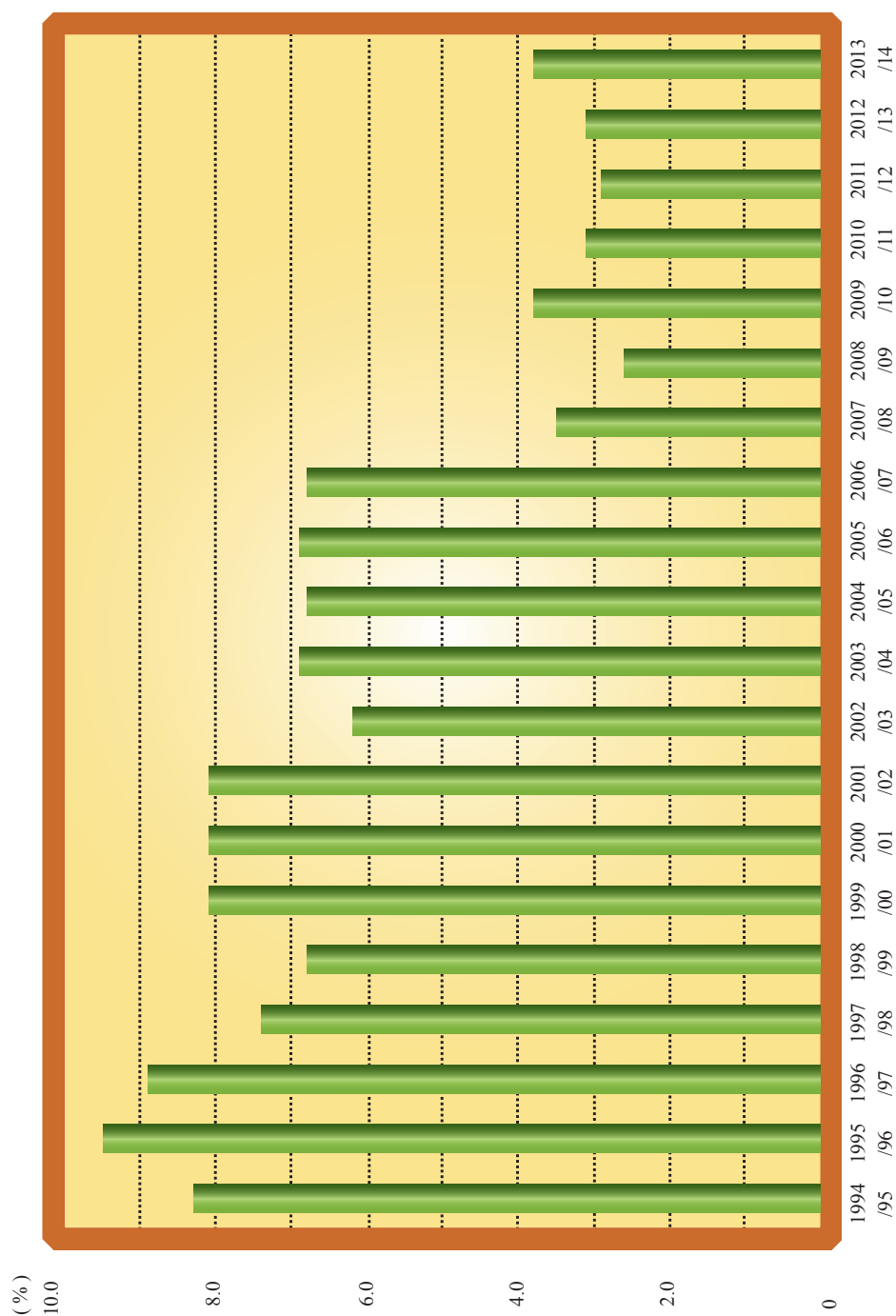
<u>Year</u>	<u>Rates Concessions (\$million)</u>
1999-2000	1 753
2001-02	2 094
2002-03	5 091
2003-04	1 986
2007-08	7 839
2008-09	11 260
2009-10	8 473
2010-11	8 932
2011-12	9 930
2012-13	12 522
2013-14	11 552 ⁽¹⁰⁾

- (10) Estimated figure.

NUMBERS OF RATING ASSESSMENTS AND AGGREGATED RATEABLE VALUES IN THE PAST 20 YEARS (1994 - 2013)



RATES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
GOVERNMENT REVENUE IN THE PAST 20 YEARS (1994 - 2013)



RATES PERCENTAGE CHARGES SINCE 1931

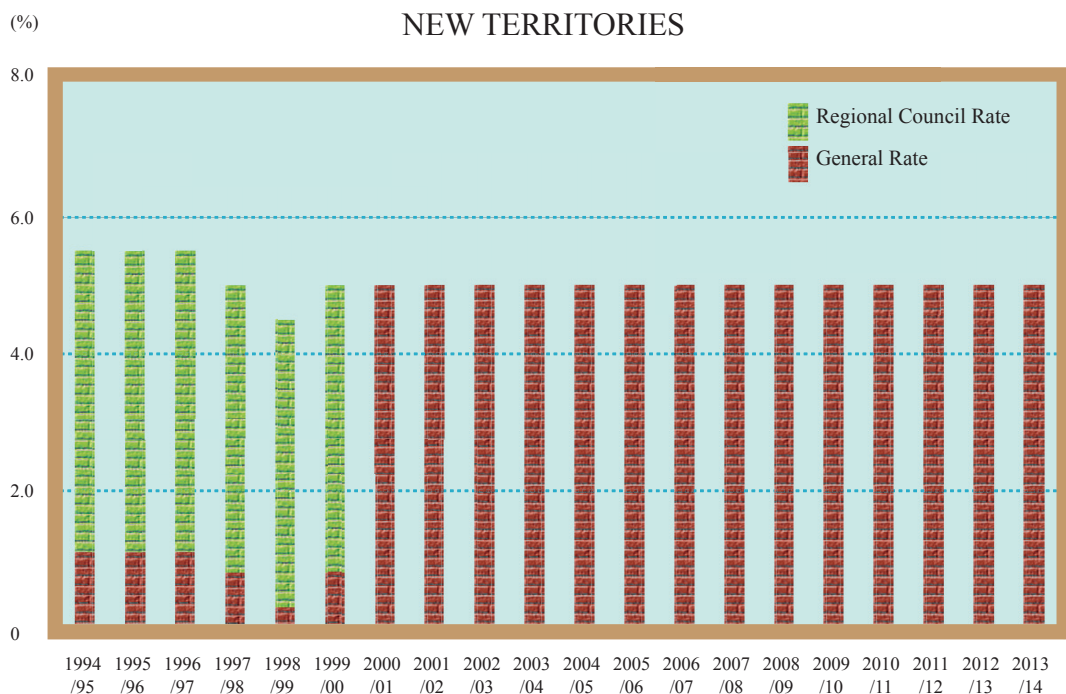
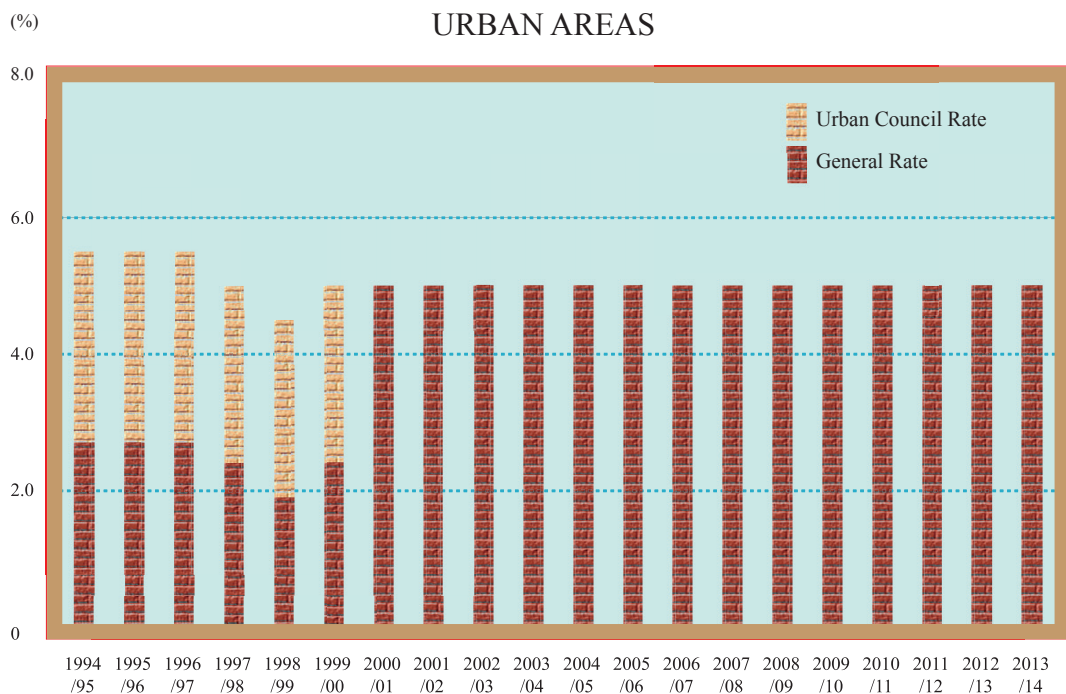
The percentage charge in the Urban Areas remained at 17% from 1931 until 1973 apart from a short period after the war. Since then there have been several changes in both the urban and New Territories rates as follows:-

Effective from	Urban Areas			New Territories		
	General Rate (%)	Urban Council Rate (%)	Total (%)	General Rate (%)	Regional Council Rate (%)	Total (%)
1.7.1931	17 ⁽¹⁾	-	17 ⁽¹⁾	-	-	-
1.4.1956	17	-	17	11	-	11
1.4.1973	9	6	15	11	-	11
1.4.1974	9	6	15	15	-	15
1.4.1975	11	6	17	17	-	17
1.4.1976	12	6	18	18	-	18
1.4.1977	7.5	4	11.5	11	-	11
1.4.1982	3.5	8	11.5	11	-	11
1.4.1983	5.5	8	13.5	13.5	-	13.5
1.4.1984	3	2.5	5.5	5.5	-	5.5
1.4.1986	2.5	3.5	6	-	6	6
1.4.1988	2.5	3.5	6	-	6	6
1.4.1990	4	3.5	7.5	1.5	6	7.5
1.4.1991	2.5	3	5.5	1.75	3.75	5.5
1.4.1994	2.7	2.8	5.5	1.1	4.4	5.5
1.4.1997	2.4	2.6	5	0.8	4.2	5
1.4.1998	1.9	2.6	4.5	0.3	4.2	4.5
1.4.1999	2.4	2.6	5	0.8	4.2	5
from 1.4.2000 to present	5	Upon the dissolution of the Provisional Urban Council and Regional Council on 1 January 2000, all rates received on or after 1 January 2000 become general rates which apply uniformly to all areas in Hong Kong.				

Notes

- (1) The 17% rate in the Urban Area remained unchanged from 1931 apart from a brief period after the Pacific War (from 1.10.1945 to 30.9.1946) pending resumption of normal water supplies. No rates were payable during the Japanese occupation.
- (2) Special rating system in Yuen Long, Tai Po and Tsuen Wan from 1935 - 1955.
- (3) Regional Council Rate was introduced with effect from 1 April 1986.
- (4) The percentage charge in Area E remained at 11% from 1.4.1974 to 31.3.1983. The charges in Area F-S (New Territories rating areas) varied from year to year based on a “phasing-in” system instituted in 1976 – see page 56. However, effective 1 April 1985 all such phasing-in had been completed.

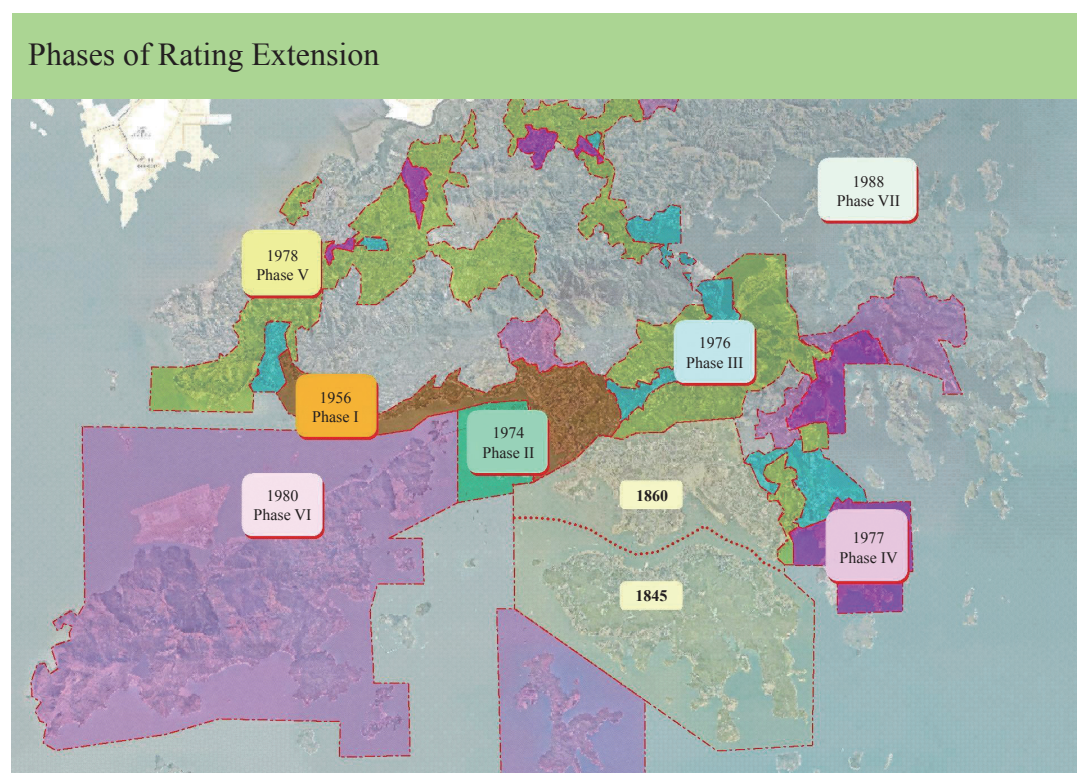
RATES PERCENTAGE CHARGES IN THE PAST 20 YEARS (1994 - 2013)



PROGRESS OF RATING IN THE NEW TERRITORIES

A special rating system for the New Territories came into effect in 1935 and lasted until 1955. It applied only to the townships of Yuen Long, Tai Po and Tsuen Wan. Urban-type rates became payable in “Part D” on 1 April 1956; thereafter no further extensions occurred for 18 years although planning and preliminary work was undertaken on a number of occasions.

A phased programme was instituted in 1972 to bring all the developed and developing areas of the New Territories into the rating system between 1974 and 1988.



A brief summary of rating in the New Territories is as follows:-

Phase	Effective Date of Valuation List	Rating Area	Brief Description
-	1.7.1935	Yuen Long, Tai Po	Special rating system operated by District Offices.
-	1.6.1937	Tsuen Wan	Special rating system extended to Tsuen Wan.
-	(1.4.1955)	-	Special rating system abolished.
I	1.4.1956	Area D (originally termed "Part" D)	Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and Castle Peak Road as far as Castle Peak Police Station.
I (Rev.)	1.11.1973	Area D (re-specified)	Revised plan for Area D.
II	1.4.1974	Area E	Tsing Yi Island (coastal strip only).
III	1.4.1976	Areas F1, G1-4, H1-2, J1, K1, L1-L3, M1-3	Yuen Long, Tai Po, Luen Wo Market, On Lok Tsuen, Shek Wu Hui, Tuen Mun, Sha Tin, Clear Water Bay Road.
IV	1.4.1977	Areas F2-4, H3-4, J2, M4, N1, Area E (extended) Areas A, B, C and D (re-specified)	Sai Kung (added) and other small mainland extensions. Whole of Tsing Yi Island included. Urban areas re-specified by relation to plans. Revised plan for Area D.
V	1.4.1978	Areas F5-7, G5, H5, J3, K2, L4-5, M5, N2-3	Extensions of mainland rating areas.

Phase	Effective Date of Valuation List	Rating Area	Brief Description
VI	1.4.1980	Areas P, Q, R, S Areas D2, J4, N4-5 Area E (re-specified)	Cheung Chau, Peng Chau, Lantau and Ma Wan and Lamma Islands. Other small extensions also included.
VII	1.4.1988	Area T	All remaining areas of the New Territories.
-	20.7.1990	Rating Areas abolished	Rating Ordinance applies throughout Hong Kong. Separate Valuation Lists to be prepared for Urban Council Area and Regional Council Area (Ordinance No. 54 of 1990).

DESIGNATED VALUATION REFERENCE DATES

<u>Revaluation Effective Date</u>	<u>Designated Valuation Reference Date</u>
1 April 1984	1 July 1983
1 April 1988	1 October 1986
1 April 1991	1 July 1990
1 April 1994	1 July 1993
1 April 1997	1 July 1996
1 April 1999	1 October 1998
1 April 2000	1 October 1999
1 April 2001	1 October 2000
1 April 2002	1 October 2001
1 April 2003	1 October 2002
1 April 2004	1 October 2003
1 April 2005	1 October 2004
1 April 2006	1 October 2005
1 April 2007	1 October 2006
1 April 2008	1 October 2007
1 April 2009	1 October 2008
1 April 2010	1 October 2009
1 April 2011	1 October 2010
1 April 2012	1 October 2011
1 April 2013	1 October 2012

The Rating (Amendment) Ordinance 1981 introduced a new concept for revaluations which gave the Governor, when directing that a new Valuation List be prepared, the power to designate a reference date for valuation purposes. The first valuation list to which these provisions applied came into force on 1 April 1984.

LIST OF OLD RATE OR COLLECTION BOOKS

These are kept in the Public Records Office.

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1858	1	Victoria City
1860	1	Hong Kong
1865	1	Victoria Hong Kong
1867	1	Hong Kong
1868	1	Victoria Hong Kong
1869	2 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Town & Villages Hong Kong
1870	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Victoria Hong Kong
1871	1	Victoria Hong Kong
1871-72	1	Villages Hong Kong
1872	2 (1 (1	Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong
1873	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1874	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1875	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1876	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1877	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1878	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1879	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Villages Supplementary Valuation
1880	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Town & Villages Hong Kong Town & Villages Kowloon
1881	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Hong Kong & Villages Hong Kong Kowloon & Villages Kowloon Supplementary Valuation
1882	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Town & Villages Hong Kong Town & Villages Kowloon
1883	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Town & Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1884	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1885	3 (1 (1 (1	Hong Kong Villages Victoria Hong Kong Kowloon Villages
1885-86	3 (1 (1 (1	Hong Kong Kowloon Villages Hong Kong Villages
1886-87	4 (1 (2 (1	Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Kowloon Villages
1887-88	3 (1 (1 (1	Hong Kong Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Villages
1888-89	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1889-90	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1890-91	3 (1 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation
1891-92	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation
1892-93	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation

Annex J - 4

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1893-94	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation
1894-95	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation
1895-96	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation
1896-97	3 (1 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Interim Valuation
1897-98	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1898-99	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1899-1900	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1900-01	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1901-02	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1902-03	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1903-04	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1904-05	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1905-06	1	Victoria Hong Kong
1906-07	2 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1907-08	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1908-09	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria City Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1909-10	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1910-11	1	Villages Hong Kong
1911-12	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1912-13	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1913-14	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon

Annex J - 6

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1914-15	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1915-16	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1916-17	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1917-18	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1918-19	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1919-20	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1920-21	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1921-22	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1922-23	3 (1 (1 (1	Victoria Hong Kong Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon
1923-24	3 (1 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon New Territories

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1924-25	2 (1 (1	Villages Hong Kong Villages New Territories
1925-26	5 (2 (1 (1 (1	City of Victoria Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon New Territories
1926-27	5 (1 (1 (1 (1 (1	Hong Kong City of Victoria Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Villages New Territories
1927-28	5 (2 (1 (1 (1	City of Victoria Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon New Territories Villages
1928-29	2	City of Victoria
1929-30	2 (1 (1	City of Victoria Villages of Kowloon & New Territories
1930-31	2 (1 (1	City of Victoria Villages of HK, New Territories, Kowloon
1931-32	4 (1 (1 (1 (1	City of Victoria Villages Hong Kong Villages Kowloon Villages New Territories
1932-33	2 (1 (1	City of Victoria Villages Kowloon
1933-34	2 (1 (1	Villages of HK & City of Victoria Villages of Kowloon & New Territories

Annex J - 8

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Books</u>	<u>Districts</u>
1934-35	3 (1 (1 (1	Hong Kong Kowloon Interim Assessment
1935-36	2 (1 (1	Hong Kong Kowloon
1939-40	5 (3 (2	Hong Kong Kowloon
1939-41	2 (1 (1	Hong Kong Interim Assessment
1941-42	3 (1 (2	Hong Kong Kowloon
1945-47	2 (1 (1	Hong Kong Kowloon
1947-48	4 (3 (1	Hong Kong Kowloon
1947-51	1	Interim Assessment
1948-49	7 (4 (3	Hong Kong Kowloon
1949-50	7 (4 (3	Hong Kong Kowloon
1950-51	7 (4 (3	Hong Kong Kowloon
1951-55	1	Interim Assessment
Total	232	

The Past and the Present



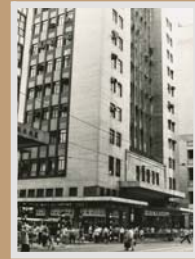
1930s



1940s



1940s



1950s



1960s - 1970s



1980s - 1990s



2000 onwards

Introduced in 1845, the rating system in Hong Kong has a history of nearly 170 years. Property rates were originally levied in the form of the Police Rate to pay the expenses for upholding and maintaining the police force in Hong Kong. The Chinese term for rates 差餉 (“Chai Heung”), literally means “Police Pay”. This book traces the origin of rates, the early and on-going development of the rating system.



Rating and Valuation Department
Hong Kong SAR Government

ISBN 978-988-12810-0-5