

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

總幹事的話



Ms Gilly WONG Fung-han
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In Hong Kong we enjoy easy access to high quality consumer goods from all over the world and as such have become a consumption-oriented community. Whilst benefiting from this accessibility it is important that we recognise our impact on the constrained resources of our planet. Shifting current behaviour towards Sustainable Consumption, which requires making socially and environmentally conscious choices to meet our needs, improve the quality of living and can reduce inefficient use of resources and environmental degradation.


Acknowledging the importance and potential impact of such behavioural changes on our collective future, the Council's triennial Strategic Plan of 2013-16 encouraged consumers to adopt and commit to Sustainable Consumption practices across a range of products and services.

Energy is essential to our daily lives and in June 2015 the Council submitted a response to the public consultation on the Future Development of the Electricity Market advocating regulatory changes to safeguard consumer interest. The Council also proposed the "Energy Efficiency Obligation" as an effective means to finance and encourage households and businesses to reduce energy consumption. Meanwhile, the Council conducted energy efficiency and / or standby energy consumption tests on 12 of the 23 types of electrical / electronic products featured in the CHOICE Magazine in the year to advise the consumers on selecting the most energy efficient appliances / electronics for green living.

生活在香港，來自世界各地的高質素消費品近在咫尺，令香港成為消費型社會。受惠這便利之餘，我們必須認識無度消費對地球有限資源的影響。從現時的消費行為轉變為可持續消費模式，我們需要從社會和環保意識層面考慮，要有既能滿足個人需要，亦能提升生活質素和減少不當使用資源，降低環境損耗的選擇。

消費者委員會意識到該行為變化對我們未來的重要性和潛在影響，在本會2013-16年的3年計劃中，已開始鼓勵消費者通過在選擇各種不同產品和服務時，實踐可持續消費。

能源為日常生活的必需品，在2015年6月，本會回應《電力市場未來發展》的公眾諮詢，倡議改革規管架構以保障消費者權益。同時本會建議引入「能源效益責任」，藉此資助及推動家居和商業用戶減少消耗能源。此外，消委會在本年度《選擇》月刊公布的23種電子產品測試中，針對檢驗12種產品的能源效益及/或備用狀態的能源消耗，建議消費者選擇最具能源效益的電器，活出綠色生活態度。



The Council also believes increased competition in the sector can improve economic efficiency and spur further innovation in energy generation. In this regard we co-hosted the Competition in the Electricity Markets Discussion Forum with the Competition Commission in September 2015, during which experts from Singapore, the European Union, and the United States shared insights and experiences across a range of issues, benefiting all who attended.

The Council's top priority is always the protection and strengthening of consumer safety. When it comes to food safety, we believe the food industry should be more responsive to consumers' health concerns, in addition to their taste preferences.

In November 2015 the World Health Organisation (WHO) launched the World Antibiotic Resistance Awareness Week, warning of a post-antibiotic era within which common infections and minor injuries could lead to death. Collaborating with consumer organisations around the world the Council launched a new campaign aligned with this WHO initiative. We reached out to international chain restaurants in Hong Kong and local fast food chains to understand their policies on, and use of antibiotics, and called for a time-bound action plan on phasing out the use of meat and poultry treated with antibiotics for human use.

Advances in technology have certainly changed the way we live, as evidenced by the surge in recent years of consumers conducting online research and purchase of flight tickets and travel packages. To better help consumers, the Council conducted a survey on online travel services, the results of which showed that behind the attractive headline rates are additional taxes, unclear transaction fees, and pre-selected provisions creating pitfalls for consumers to incur unnecessary charges. In view of these findings the Council urges online travel service providers to enhance transparency on published fares and fees.

Service users also play an important role in protecting their rights and privacy. A simple "Like" on social media can lead to disclosing a wealth of personal data for commercial purposes. Of greater concern is the potential for financial loss as a result of data theft. Consumers need to be mindful and assess the need to share personal data vis-à-vis protection of their privacy.

The Council works relentlessly to protect and strengthen the rights of vulnerable consumers within our community, one group being the elderly. Increasing affluence coupled with advancements in medical technology mean our senior citizens can enjoy a longer, more enriched retirement life. This has led to a growth in the senior-related travel industry, yet the Council has found that many related insurance products have a maximum age limit for coverage. We believe that relevant insurance products should be designed to cater to the specific needs of older travellers and should be clearly explained so as to facilitate informed and fair purchase.

本會亦相信增加電力市場競爭能夠提升經濟效益，進一步推動市場為消費者創優增值。有見及此，本會在2015年9月與競爭事務委員會合辦「電力市場之競爭」論壇，並邀來新加坡、歐盟及美國專家就議題交換意見及經驗，令與會者獲益良多。

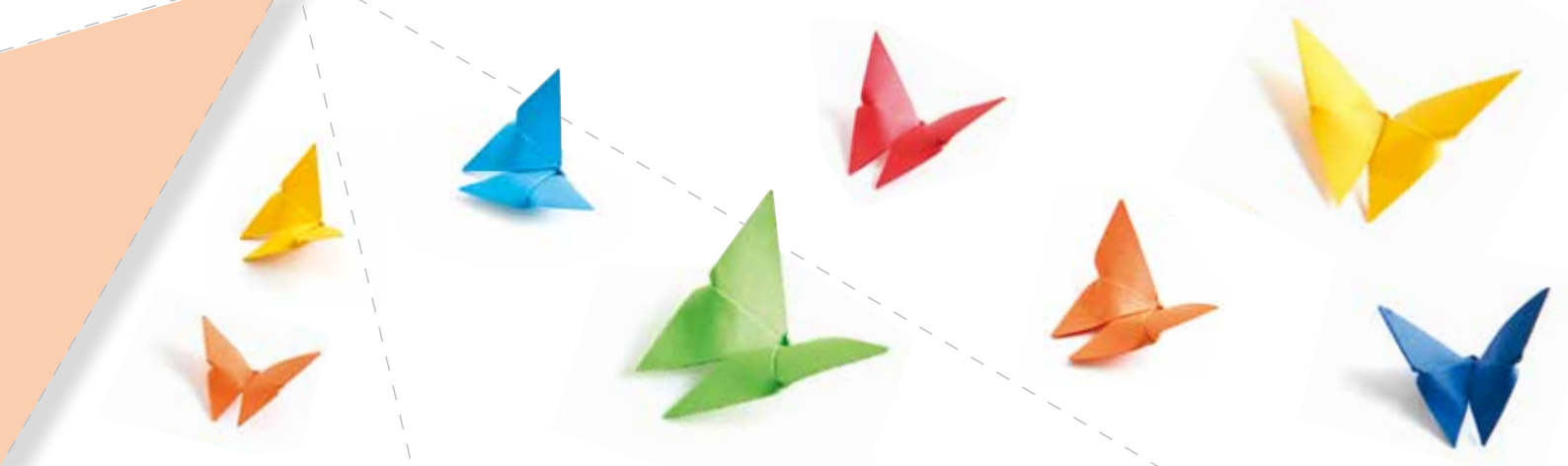
一直以來，本會的重點工作是保障及增強消費安全。當涉及食品安全時，我們相信食品業界除了要顧及消費者的口味，更應迅速回應他們對健康的關注。

在2015年11月，世界衛生組織發起「世界提高抗生素認識周」，警告在後抗生素年代，即使普通感染和輕微損傷都可能導致死亡。本會與全球其他消費者組織攜手推展一個與世衛互相呼應的行動。我們接觸在港營業的國際連鎖快餐集團，以及本地連鎖快餐集團，了解它們採購的政策，呼籲它們制訂有時限的行動計劃，逐步停止採購常規地使用人用抗生素飼養禽畜的肉類。

科技的進步無疑改變我們生活方式，這從近年愈來愈多消費者選擇以互聯網搜尋和購買機票，以及旅遊套餐可見一斑。為協助消費者在這方面精明消費，本會進行了一項關於旅遊服務網站的調查，結果顯示，在具吸引力的標示價格背後，暗藏額外稅款、未能釐清的交易費用和預設付款項目等陷阱，令消費者付出不必要的開支。有見及此，本會促請網上旅遊服務提供者增加票價和收費的透明度。

服務用戶同樣在保障其個人權利和私隱上扮演重要角色。即使簡單如在社交媒體上「讚好」，都可以為商業活動提供大量有價值的個人資料。更令人關注的是，一旦這些資料被盜取，有可能令消費者蒙受金錢損失。所以消費者需要留意，在分享個人資料和保障個人私隱上作出權衡。

本會致力加強對社會上弱勢消費者權利的保障，當中重要的一群是長者。財富增長，加上醫療技術的進步，令長者相較以往享受更長而豐盛的退休生活。此現象亦帶動與長者相關旅遊業的增長，但本會同時發現，不少旅遊保險產品卻設有最高年齡限制。我們認為相關保險產品的設計必須滿足年長旅客的需要，同時應該向他們清楚解釋細節，以促進其知情權和公平交易。



As our senior citizens age they, or their family members, may opt for accommodation within elderly homes. The Council conducted a survey on elderly homes to highlight to consumers the importance of making informed decisions on service providers and how to safeguard their rights.

In other areas the Council continued to foster fair trade practices in different industries, and in the year jointly introduced a first-of-its-kind code of practice with the Laundry Association of Hong Kong to facilitate the industry's self-regulation and commitment to enhancing service quality.

Effective and efficient information dissemination is key to the Council's communication with consumers and we adopt a multi-pronged communications strategy towards ensuring consumers can access important information in a timely manner. In the year under review we continued to optimise the Council's website, providing more visually engaging content such as videos and infographics as well as enhancing barrier-free features catered to the hearing and visually impaired - all of which is designed to more easily convey key messages to a broader consumer base. Additionally we have uploaded videos onto YouTube and continue to work with local media to expand the platforms upon which consumer information can be delivered.

Understanding that the community has high expectations of the Council, we introduced a Code of Conduct for Staff during the year under review, honouring our commitment to remaining a well-governed organisation. Internally, the Council also introduced structured staff development and training programmes, aimed at enhancing our organisational strengths and capabilities in order to better serve the public sustainably.

The Council's contributions towards the community are results of the excellent guidance from the Chairman and Members, together with the dedication of Council staff. Looking ahead the Council will continue our consumer protection efforts, identifying and exposing unscrupulous practices and providing education and information to enhance consumers' knowledge. Through my appointment as the Vice President of Consumers International, I look forward to representing Hong Kong in active participation and contribution to the development of regional and international consumer protection initiatives.



Gilly WONG Fung-han
Chief Executive

長者年歲日增，他們或其家人可能會選擇護老院住宿服務。本會進行了一項針對護老院的調查，點出消費者必須蒐集足夠資訊和選擇服務提供者的重點，以及保障自身權益的方法。

此外，本會繼續傾力推動優良的營商手法。年度內，本會與香港洗衣商會攜手推出首個營商實務守則，協助業界實踐自我規管，提升服務質素。

本會不遺餘力，為消費者發放有用和有效的信息，並採取多管齊下的溝通策略，確保消費者能及時獲取重要的資訊。年內，我們逐步改善本會的網頁，提供短片及信息圖表等在視覺上更具吸引力的內容，同時增強無障礙功能，以迎合聽障和視障消費者的需求；以上每項工作均旨在以更高速度，能廣泛地向消費者傳達重要信息。與此同時，我們將短片上載至YouTube，並與本地媒體保持合作，擴闊向消費者發放信息的平台。

無疑，社會對我們寄予厚望。本會在年內推行一套嶄新員工行為守則，以實踐對維持本會優良管治架構的承諾。對內方面，本會亦有系統地推出員工發展及培訓計劃，竭力提升機構優勢和能力，務求可持續和有效地服務大眾。

本會對社會的建樹，實有賴主席及各委員的諄諄教誨和指導，以及本會一眾竭誠盡責員工的努力。展望未來，本會將秉承保障消費者的使命，辨識並揭發不良營商手法，透過教育和資訊，提升消費者的知識。本人亦熱切期待以國際消費者聯會副主席的身分代表香港，積極參與和發展區內及國際的消費者權益保障，並對此作出貢獻。



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消費者委員會管理層

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