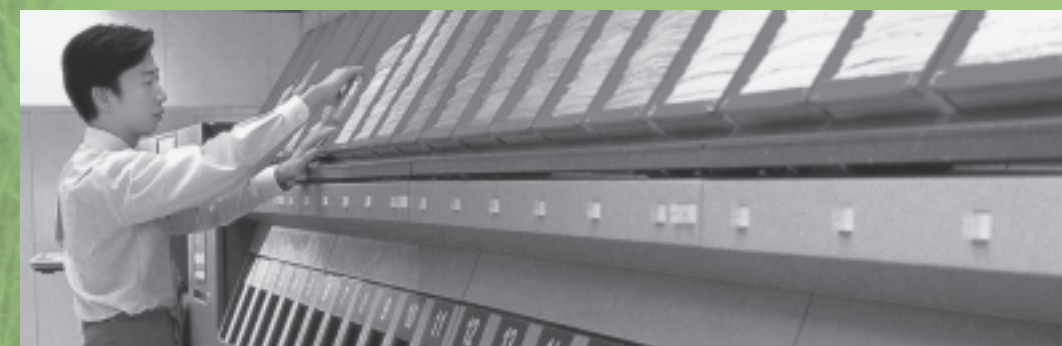


Market Infrastructure



An efficient and robust financial infrastructure is a crucial element in Hong Kong's success as an international city. The implementation of a US dollar clearing system during the second half of 2000 marked an important milestone in the development of Hong Kong's financial infrastructure.

A purple heron forages among reedgrass at Mai Po. Layered against mangrove trees, these densely packed yet flexible plants bind the wetland district together, and provide a rich habitat for birds and insects.