

# Hi-Energy Empowers Hong Kong

**A**N ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY PIONEER, The Hongkong Electric Co., Ltd. (HEC) was incorporated in 1889. It has seen many changes since then.

HEC's substations illustrate one of the most visually striking changes. A vital part of the supply process, substations gather and distribute electricity for a given population area.

**Then ...** In the early 1920s, when land was needed for substations, Hong Kong's prime real estate prices were probably the highest in the world. So even though the first substations required sites of just 1,200 sq ft – and HEC had fewer than 50 then – they often had a dual purpose. In many of them, the upper floors were used as living quarters for staff. Other substations served as retail shops.

**Now ...** The impressive tower that is the HEC Tamar Substation on a 20,000 sq ft site on Hong Kong Island, shows how things have changed. It is one of HEC's most modern substations – out of more than 3,000 – and almost indistinguishable from the surrounding commercial high-rises. Tamar is truly a power house, whose 240 megawatt-ampere capacity meets the huge demand for electricity from the Central, Admiralty and Wan Chai districts.

And this giant facility can even be operated unmanned: all switching is handled by a remote system control centre on the other side of Hong Kong Island. A far cry indeed from the days when Hongkong Electric's engineers were literally "living over the shop"!

