

Head 35 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: BEIJING OFFICE

Controlling officer: the Director, Beijing Office will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2003–04 **\$48.5m**

Establishment ceiling 2003–04 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 17 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2003 and as at 31 March 2004 **\$11.0m**

In addition there will be an estimated three directorate posts as at 31 March 2003 and as at 31 March 2004.

Capital Account commitment balance **\$12.3m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Liaison This programme contributes to Policy Area 28: Constitutional Affairs (Secretary for Constitutional Affairs).

Programme (2) HKSAR Immigration-related Matters This programme contributes to Policy Area 10: Immigration Control (Secretary for Security).

Detail

Programme (1): Liaison

	2001–02 (Actual)	2002–03 (Approved)	2002–03 (Revised)	2003–04 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	32.3	36.1 (+11.8%)	39.3 (+8.9%)	35.5 (–9.7%)

Aim

2 The aim is to enhance liaison and communication with the Central People's Government (CPG) and other Mainland authorities.

Brief Description

3 The Beijing Office's role is to further enhance liaison and communication between the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the CPG and other Mainland authorities. This will enable the Government of the HKSAR to have a better understanding of the policies and practices in the Mainland and to evaluate their possible implications on Hong Kong. Further, as the implementation of "One Country, Two Systems" is unprecedented, it is important that we provide an accurate and up-to-date picture of the HKSAR to the CPG, other Mainland authorities and Mainland residents so that they fully understand how the provisions of the Basic Law, in particular "One Country, Two Systems" and "Hong Kong people running Hong Kong" with "a high degree of autonomy", are being put into practice.

4 The Beijing Office's main responsibilities under this programme are to:

- provide information about the HKSAR to the CPG, other Mainland authorities and non-governmental bodies;
- keep the relevant bureaux and departments of the Government of the HKSAR informed about the latest developments in the Mainland;
- take necessary action with the Mainland authorities on specific issues on the basis of the instructions of the relevant bureaux and departments of the Government of the HKSAR;
- liaise with the CPG and other Mainland authorities;
- liaise with HKSAR non-governmental bodies in the Mainland;
- provide logistical support to visiting delegations of the Government of the HKSAR;
- provide information on Hong Kong to, and handle enquiries and requests for assistance from, the general public; and
- promote Hong Kong in the Mainland with a view to enhancing the Mainland residents' understanding of Hong Kong's systems and latest developments, strengthening trade and economic links, and facilitating exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

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5 In 2002, the Beijing Office maintained close contact with the CPG and other Mainland authorities. The Office enhanced and promoted exchanges and mutual understanding between the Mainland authorities and the Government of the HKSAR. It facilitated the discussion and follow-up of substantive issues between various government bureaux and departments and their counterparts in the Mainland. It monitored closely major developments in the Mainland, in particular the changes in legislation and policies as a result of China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and kept relevant bureaux and departments in the Government of the HKSAR informed of these developments so that they could assess the implications on Hong Kong and disseminate the information to the business community and other parties as appropriate.

6 With the increased official exchanges between the Government of the HKSAR and the Mainland authorities, the Beijing Office has put more emphasis on facilitating such exchanges during the year. It assisted in arranging visits and exchanges for delegations both from Hong Kong and from the Mainland. It provided logistical support to HKSAR Government delegations visiting the Mainland.

7 To mark the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR and to enable the Mainland residents to acquire a better understanding of the developments of Hong Kong, the Office organised a large-scale exhibition in Beijing in June/July 2002. The exhibition was well received and accorded wide publicity locally.

8 The promotion of Hong Kong's businesses and professions has increasingly become a major task of the Beijing Office in 2002. For example, the Office organised two major promotions in Shandong and Jiangsu to promote Hong Kong's financial services, professional services, tourism, as well as various trade and industry sectors. Other relevant activities organised in 2002 included a seminar in Qingdao for Hong Kong professionals to promote their services and a visit to Inner Mongolia for members of major chambers of commerce in Hong Kong. It also maintained close contact with the Beijing Organising Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad with a view to keeping Hong Kong up-dated of the business opportunities arising from the Games and promoting the advantages of Hong Kong companies.

9 The Beijing Office continued to broadcast a weekly radio programme to keep the residents in the southern part of the Mainland abreast of the latest developments in Hong Kong which reached an audience of 1 749 000 in that area. It also handled 774 public enquiries and requests for assistance.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2003–04

10 In 2003–04, the Beijing Office will continue to:

- assist in the implementation of the Government's plan to foster closer co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong;
- further its promotional activities in selected provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities;
- monitor closely the opening-up of the Mainland market following China's accession to the WTO and keep concerned parties in Hong Kong up-dated of the preparatory work of the 2008 Olympic Games; and
- implement the project to acquire permanent accommodation for the Office.

Programme (2): HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

	2001–02 (Actual)	2002–03 (Approved)	2002–03 (Revised)	2003–04 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	13.1	14.8 (+13.0%)	14.7 (–0.7%)	13.0 (–11.6%)

Aim

11 The aim is to facilitate the application of foreign nationals in the Mainland for entry visas to the HKSAR and to maintain close liaison with relevant CPG departments as well as foreign diplomatic corps in Beijing on immigration matters.

Brief Description

12 The Immigration Section of the Beijing Office deals with the following HKSAR immigration-related matters:

- processing applications for entry to Hong Kong for visit, employment, investment, training, residence and education in accordance with approved immigration policies and procedures;
- conducting negotiations on visa-free access with foreign diplomatic missions which have embassies only in Beijing but do not have representation in the HKSAR;
- liaising with diplomatic corps in Beijing on HKSAR immigration matters;
- liaising and maintaining contacts with counterparts in relevant CPG departments on immigration and nationality matters;
- providing practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland; and
- providing information to, and handling enquiries from, the general public.

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- 13 The Immigration Section handled 5 283 public enquiries on immigration matters.
- 14 In 2002, the Beijing Office met all of its performance targets.
- 15 The key performance measures in respect of HKSAR immigration-related matters are:

Targets

	Target	2001 (Actual)	2002 (Actual)	2003 (Plan)
average processing time per case				
unreferred visas/entry permits within three working days (%)	95	99	98	98
referred visas/entry permits within six weeks upon receipt of supporting documents (%).....	75	82	85	85
normal response time per case				
assistance to HK residents in distress in the Mainland within same day upon request (%)	95	96	95	95

Indicators

	2001 (Actual)	2002 (Actual)	2003 (Estimate)
unreferred visas/entry permits			
received	12 000	8 038	8 000
processed	11 977	7 956	8 000
referred visas/entry permits			
received	6 154	5 055	5 100
processed	5 800	5 130	5 100
provide practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland, including handling of cases involving the detention of Hong Kong residents.....	224	209	215

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2003–04

- 16 During 2003–04, the Immigration Section of the Beijing Office will:
- maintain its service to the public by processing 98% of unreferred visa/entry permit applications within three working days and 85% of referred visa/entry permit applications within six weeks upon receipt of supporting documents; and
 - continue to provide practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland, including handling of more complicated cases involving detention of Hong Kong residents, and follow-up cases which have been referred to the appropriate Mainland authorities.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2001-02 (Actual) (\$m)	2002-03 (Approved) (\$m)	2002-03 (Revised) (\$m)	2003-04 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Liaison	32.3	36.1	39.3	35.5
(2) HKSAR Immigration-related Matters	13.1	14.8	14.7	13.0
	<u>45.4</u>	<u>50.9</u> (+12.1%)	<u>54.0</u> (+6.1%)	<u>48.5</u> (-10.2%)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

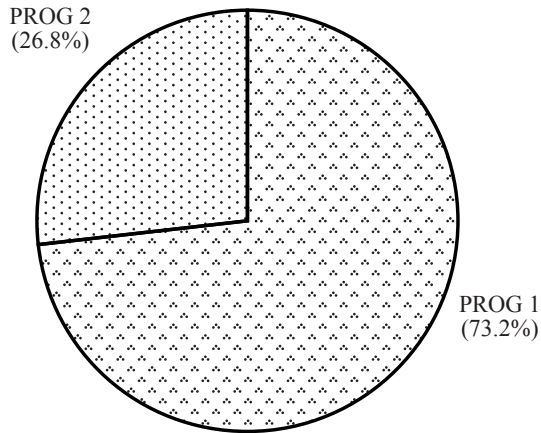
Provision for 2003-04 is \$3.8 million (9.7%) lower than the revised estimate for 2002-03. This is mainly due to decreased requirements for capital expenditure and operating expenses, partly offset by increased provision required for salary increment and adjustments for locally engaged staff.

Programme (2)

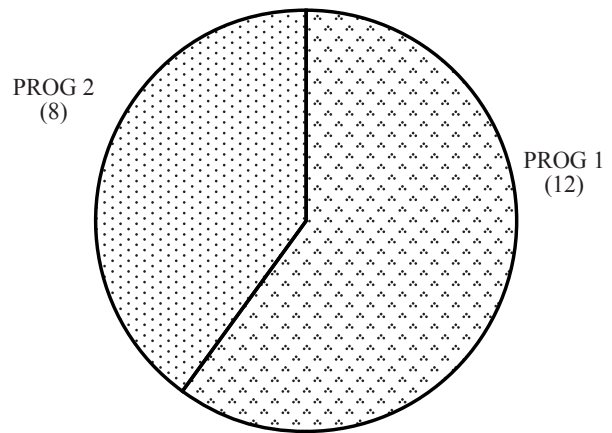
Provision for 2003-04 is \$1.7 million (11.6%) lower than the revised estimate for 2002-03. This is mainly due to decreased requirements for capital expenditure and operating expenses, partly offset by increased provision required for salary increment and adjustments for locally engaged staff.

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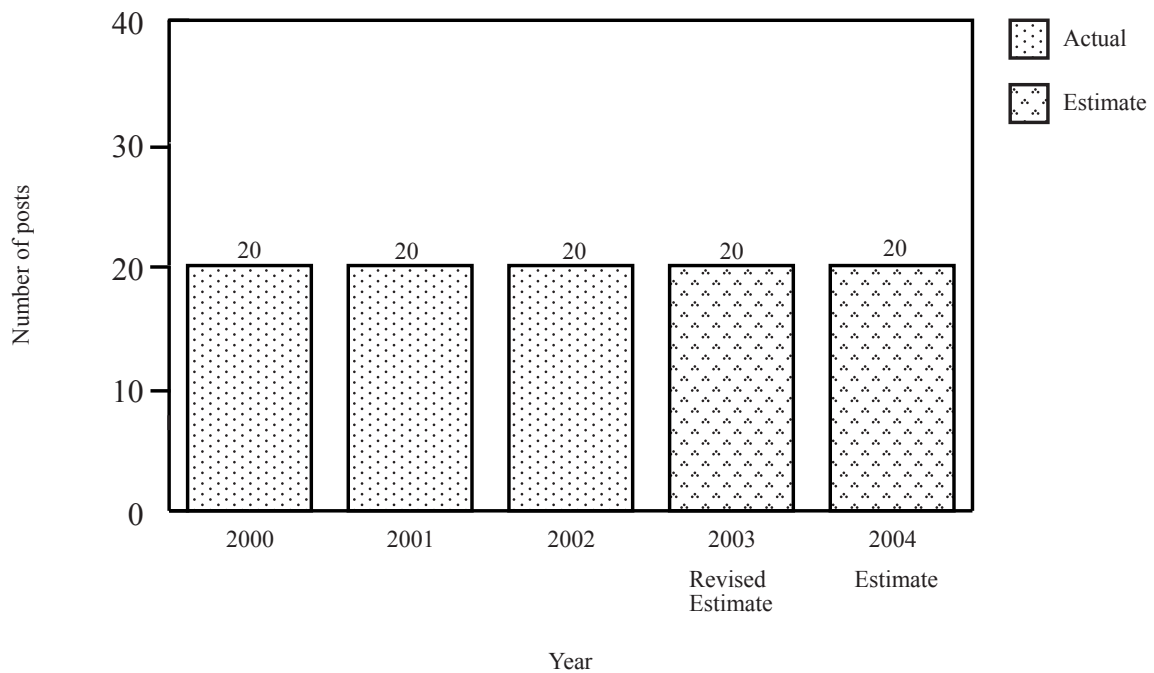
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2003-04)*



*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2004)*



*Changes in the size of the establishment
(as at 31 March)*



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2001-02	Approved estimate 2002-03	Revised estimate 2002-03	Estimate 2003-04
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Recurrent Account				
000	Operational expenses.....	—	—	48,457
	Salaries	16,489	16,457	—
	Allowances	12,780	14,945	—
	Hire of services and professional fees	1,447	1,685	—
	General departmental expenses	10,051	11,983	—
	Publicity	3,700	4,000	—
	Total, Recurrent Account	44,467	49,070	48,457
Capital Account				
II — Other Non-Recurrent				
700	General other non-recurrent	941	1,850	60
	Total, Other Non-Recurrent	941	1,850	60
	Total, Capital Account	941	1,850	60
	Total Expenditure.....	45,408	50,920	48,517

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2003–04 for the salaries and expenses of the Beijing Office is \$48,517,000. This represents a decrease of \$5,451,000 against the revised estimate for 2002–03 and an increase of \$3,109,000 over actual expenditure in 2001–02.

Recurrent Account

2 Provision of \$48,457,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries and allowances of staff of the Beijing Office and its other operating expenses.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2003 will be 20 permanent posts. No change in establishment is expected in 2003–04. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated powers create or delete non-directorate posts during 2003–04, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$10,961,000.

4 An analysis of financial provision under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is as follows:

	2001–02 (Actual) (\$'000)	2002–03 (Original Estimate) (\$'000)	2002–03 (Revised Estimate) (\$'000)	2003–04 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	16,489	16,457	16,258	16,544
- Allowances.....	12,780	14,945	14,178	13,961
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees.....	1,447	1,685	1,685	1,903
- General departmental expenses.....	10,051	11,983	11,983	11,749
Other Charges				
- Publicity.....	3,700	4,000	4,000	4,300
	44,467	49,070	48,104	48,457

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Capital Account

Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2002	Revised estimated expenditure for 2002-03	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
700		<i>General other non-recurrent</i>				
	001	One-off setting-up expenses	40,972	27,502	1,165	12,305
		Total	40,972	27,502	1,165	12,305