

Head 62 — HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Housing) will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2004–05 **\$333.0m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Squatter Clearance and Squatter Control

This programme contributes to Policy Area 31: Housing (Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands).

Detail

	2002–03 (Actual)	2003–04 (Original)	2003–04 (Revised)	2004–05 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	384.8	378.0	345.1 (–8.7%)	333.0 (–3.5%)
				(or –11.9% on 2003–04 Original)

Aim

2 Under this Programme, the Housing Department acts on behalf of Government to clear land for development or other purposes and to prevent new squatting on government land and leased agricultural land in the New Territories. It also maintains in good repair the facilities provided under the department's Squatter Area Improvement Programme.

Brief Description

3 The work involves:

- surveying of domestic structures, business undertakings etc. within clearance zones;
- screening of clearerees and rehousing of genuine occupants within the clearance zones;
- deterring, detecting and demolishing new illegal structures;
- investigation of cases in which squatters have applied for public rental housing or subsidised home ownership schemes with a view to boarding up or demolishing squatter structures so vacated;
- providing assistance in rehousing the occupants of unauthorised rooftop structures displaced by the Buildings Department's enforcement actions;
- assisting the Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Civil Engineering Department to carry out non-development clearances of squatter structures on slope safety grounds;
- assisting the Environmental Protection Department to demolish compensated livestock structures on government land;
- assisting the Lands Department to enforce compliance with licence conditions issued on government land and leased agricultural land;
- registration of victims of natural disasters for subsequent rehousing and arrangement of temporary shelter; and
- maintenance of squatter area improvement facilities.

4 In 2003–04, the department reviewed the staffing establishment and streamlined operational procedures. In view of the stable squatter population, rigorous squatter control and clearance operations and the reduction in squatting activities, the number of staff deployed on squatter control and clearance duties were reduced from 885 by 550 to 335 staff. 92 posts were deleted mainly due to retirement under various schemes. 458 surplus staff were progressively redeployed on duties in public housing estates, initially to prepare temporary isolation quarters for medical staff due to the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and subsequently in support of Team Clean initiatives.

5 Major clearance projects completed in the year included:

- Deep Bay Link clearance project for construction of Shenzhen Western Corridor;
- Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur line for construction of Kowloon-Canton Railway Extension;
- Yuen Long Bypass Floodway; and
- Route 9 between Cheung Sha Wan and Shatin.

Head 62 — HOUSING DEPARTMENT

6 The key performance measures in respect of this programme are:

Targets

	Target	2002 (Actual)	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Plan)
screening of domestic clearances' rehousing eligibility after clearance announcement.....	not more than 8 weeks	100%	100%	100%
arrival time of staff at the scene upon receiving message of occurrence of natural disasters.....	within 1 hour	100%	100%	100%

Indicators

	2002 (Actual)	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Estimate)
programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances			
people relocated	1 300	1 700	1 200
structures cleared†	2 200	5 900	1 700
unauthorised rooftop structure clearances			
people relocated	1 100	2 600	2 300
buildings with rooftop clearance completed†	840	880	700
squatter control#			
non-urban (excluding islands areas) squatter population	190 800	190 000	189 600
illegal structures demolished	460	370	370
cases investigated for squatters who have applied for public rental housing or subsidised home ownership schemes†	3 740	1 840	1 840
emergency†			
emergency incidents such as rainstorms, flooding, fires, landslips attended to and immediate rehousing assistance to the victims provided.....	20	26	26

† New indicators as from 2004.

Squatter control duties in urban and islands areas have been taken up by the Lands Department w.e.f. 1 April 2002.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004–05

7 During 2004–05, the department will:

- critically review the operations and the staffing establishment;
- continue to undertake development and non-development clearance projects to be announced in 2004;
- continue the patrolling work of some 366 500 squatter structures and prevention of illegal squatting activities in the New Territories;
- assist the rehousing of illegal rooftop occupants displaced by the Buildings Department's intensified enforcement actions;
- support the Drainage Services Department in flood hazard studies in squatter areas;
- assist the Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Civil Engineering Department to set up the database for non-development clearances by the use of Geographical Information System;
- continue the work on control and prevention of dengue fever in squatter areas in the New Territories; and
- redeploy staff to duties in public housing estates in support of Team Clean initiatives.

Head 62 — HOUSING DEPARTMENT

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2002-03 (Actual) (\$m)	2003-04 (Original) (\$m)	2003-04 (Revised) (\$m)	2004-05 (Estimate) (\$m)
Squatter Clearance and Squatter Control..	384.8	378.0	345.1 (-8.7%)	333.0 (-3.5%)
				(or -11.9% on 2003-04 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2004-05 is \$12.1 million (3.5%) lower than the revised estimate for 2003-04. This is mainly due to decrease in operating expenses and deletion of 92 posts in 2003-04 and eight posts in 2004-05. It comprises salaries and operational expenses for 335 staff deployed under the programme of squatter clearance and squatter control, and salaries of 450 surplus staff who are redeployed to duties in public housing estates in support of Team Clean initiatives.

Head 62 — HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2002-03	Approved estimate 2003-04	Revised estimate 2003-04	Estimate 2004-05
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses.....	—	378,010	345,072	332,952
003	Recoverable salaries and allowances (General).....				
					3,207,874
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements.....		—	—	—
					<i>Cr.3,207,874</i>
	Clearance and squatter control	384,767	—	—	—
		<u>384,767</u>	<u>378,010</u>	<u>345,072</u>	<u>332,952</u>
	Total, Recurrent	384,767	378,010	345,072	332,952
	Total, Operating Account.....	384,767	378,010	345,072	332,952
<hr/>					
	Total Expenditure.....	<u>384,767</u>	<u>378,010</u>	<u>345,072</u>	<u>332,952</u>

Head 62 — HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2004–05 for the expenses of those activities of the Housing Department that are funded from General Revenue is \$332,952,000. This represents decrease of \$12,120,000 against the revised estimate for 2003–04 and of \$51,815,000 against actual expenditure in 2002–03.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$332,952,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses incurred by the Housing Department under the programme of squatter clearance and squatter control. It includes the salaries of 450 surplus staff redeployed to duties in public housing estates in support of Team Clean initiatives.

3 Gross provision of \$3,207,874,000 under *Subhead 003 Recoverable salaries and allowances (General)* is for salaries and allowances for civil servants working in the Housing Authority including those work under the programme of squatter clearance and squatter control. Expenditure under this subhead is reimbursed by the Authority.