

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Director of Buildings will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2004–05	\$803.9m
Establishment ceiling 2004–05 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 861 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2004 rising by one post to 862 posts as at 31 March 2005 ...	\$332.8m
In addition there will be an estimated 30 directorate posts as at 31 March 2004 reducing by one post to 29 posts as at 31 March 2005.	
Commitment balance	\$16.6m

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Buildings and Building Works

This programme contributes to Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands and Planning (Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands) and 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)	716.8	769.2	735.7 (–4.4%)	803.9 (+9.3%)
				(or +4.5% on 2003–04 Original)

Aim

2 The aim is to promote building safety, enforce building standards and improve the quality of building development.

Brief Description

3 With this aim, the department provides services to owners and occupants in both existing and new buildings in the private sector through enforcement of the Buildings Ordinance.

4 As regards existing buildings, the services provided include reducing dangers and nuisances caused by unauthorised building works and advertisement signboards; promoting proper repairs and maintenance of old buildings, drainage and slopes; considering and approving alteration and addition works; improving fire safety measures in buildings and providing advice on the suitability of premises for the issue of licences for specified commercial uses.

5 As regards new buildings, the department scrutinises and approves building plans, carries out audit checks on construction works and site safety and issues occupation permits upon completion of new buildings.

6 In 2003, the department continued to take enforcement action against unauthorised building works and step up action on defective drainage in the wake of the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). In addition, the department undertook the following initiatives and measures:

Existing Buildings

- increasing the number of unauthorised building works removed from 37 920 to 49 550;
- taking part in six pilot projects to improve the community hygiene and in the clearance of 85 priority district hygiene blackspots; inspecting the external drainage pipes in 18 000 buildings;
- increasing the number of repair orders on dilapidated buildings, mainly on defective drainage from 670 to 2 670;
- completing the pilot electronic building records management system for storage and retrieval of building plans and records in the form of electronic images covering Yau Tsim, Mongkok, Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and part of Central and Western Districts and rolling it out to public service;
- sustaining a public education and publicity campaign on building safety and maintenance; and
- introducing the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003 covering, inter alia, the statutory control of minor works in existing buildings including alteration and addition, removal of unauthorised building works, and erection and removal of signboards, as well as statutory registration of geotechnical engineers.

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New Buildings

- conducting the second stage review of the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations involving the modernisation of the construction and planning standards;
- introducing performance standards on the provision of natural lighting and ventilation and alternative provision for the control of site coverage on a trial basis;
- streamlining the processing of applications for erection of advertising signboards, contractor shed permits and hoarding permits;
- reviewing the provision of facilities in buildings for persons with a disability and the elderly;
- developing a system for assessing the environmental design and performance of buildings; and
- drawing up guidelines on drainage provisions for enhancement of environmental hygiene.

7 The key performance measures in respect of buildings and building works are:

Targets

	Target	2002 (Actual)	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Plan)
<i>24-hour Emergency Services</i>				
time for responding to emergencies	3 hours	98%	96.6%	100%
<i>Non-emergency services for Reports on Unauthorised Building Works under Construction</i>				
time for responding to reports ϕ	48 hours	—	—	90%
<i>Existing Buildings</i>				
buildings targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works	1 000/year	1 759	1 007	1 000
buildings covered by the co-ordinated maintenance of buildings scheme	150/year Ω	200	200	200Ω
single-staircase buildings improved under rooftop structure clearance operations ...	700/year	632	713	700
prescribed commercial premises inspected for improvement of fire safety measures \dagger	150/year	191	190	190
specified commercial buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures $\dagger\dagger$	140/year	152	169	150
composite buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures.....	900/year	907	800	900
advertisement signboards removed/ repaired	1 200/year	1 917	1 375	1 400
time for advising on restaurant licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system	14 days	95%	94%	95%
time for making existing building records available for public viewing	10 days	92%	95%	93%
<i>New Buildings</i>				
time for processing building plans:				
new submissions	60 days	100%	100%	100%
re-submissions	30 days	99.6%	99.9%	100%
time for processing applications for consent to commence building works.....	28 days	99.5%	99.9%	100%
time for processing applications for occupation permits	14 days	100%	100%	100%

ϕ New target as from 2004.

Ω This target was introduced in 2000 for a pilot scheme. The planned target for 2004 is subject to a review of the pilot scheme in early 2004.

\dagger Under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, fire safety improvement is required for premises used for banking, off-course betting, jewellery or goldsmith's business, supermarket, department store or shopping arcade, with a floor area exceeding 230 m².

$\dagger\dagger$ Under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, fire safety improvement is required for commercial buildings constructed or designed on or before 1 March 1987 for office, business, trade or any entertainment use.

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Indicators

	2002 (Actual)	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Estimate)
<i>24-hour Emergency Services</i>			
emergency reports attended to.....	836	883	900
<i>Non-emergency services for Reports on Unauthorised Building Works under Construction</i>			
reports attended to φ.....	—	—	2 200
<i>Existing Buildings</i>			
reports from members of the public on unauthorised building works attended to.....	15 555	25 816@	30 000@
removal orders issued on unauthorised building works.....	54 010	24 003	28 000
prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders on unauthorised building works φ.....	466	684	1 000
unauthorised structures removed and irregularities rectified... reports from members of the public on dilapidated buildings attended to.....	37 923	49 556	38 000
repair orders issued on dilapidated buildings.....	5 496	8 334#	5 500#
dilapidated buildings repaired.....	671	2 676^	800^
repair orders issued on dangerous slopes.....	517	667	2 000α
dangerous slopes repaired.....	222	131Δ	120Δ
prescribed commercial premises issued with fire safety directions.....	97	139	120
specified commercial buildings issued with fire safety improvement directions.....	120	120	120
composite buildings issued with advisory letters to improve fire safety.....	141	140	140
licence/registration applications processed (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools etc.).....	900	800	900
7 428	6 857	7 000	
<i>Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme</i>			
loan applications processed.....	3 408	2 811	3 000
loan applications approved.....	2 830	2 588	2 800
total amount of loans committed (\$m).....	83.8	77.8	87.0
<i>New Buildings</i>			
new building proposals approved.....	361	198	200
plans received and processed.....	11 401	10 824	11 000
occupation permits issued.....	234	197	200
gross floor area of new building proposals approved (in 1 000 m ²).....	3 187	2 696	2 800
site audit checks made.....	6 326	6 769	6 000
sites inspected.....	1 299	1 199	1 200

φ New indicator as from 2004.

@ The sharp increase in the number of reports in 2003 was due to the outbreak of SARS in 2003. The increase in the number of reports in 2004 is due to additional resources for clearing outstanding cases.

The sharp increase in the number of reports received in 2003 was due to public awareness of drainage defects in the wake of SARS outbreak. It is estimated that the number of reports in 2004 will return to 2002 level.

^ The increase in the number of repair orders issued in 2003 was due to stepped up inspection of external drainage pipes under Team Clean initiatives. It is expected that the number of repair orders will return to normal in 2004.

α An increase in the number of dilapidated buildings repaired in 2004 is expected because of the large number of repair orders issued in 2003 arising from the inspection of external drainage pipes.

Δ The decrease in the number of repair orders issued on dangerous slopes is due to the decrease in the number of private slopes requiring repair based on a safety-screening, and in the number of landslips that occurred on private slopes.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2004–05

8 During 2004–05, the department will take forward initiatives in all areas of its work. In particular, it will:

- sustain action to improve building safety, targeting 1 000 buildings for carrying out blitz clearance of unauthorised building works on the external walls, and 700 single-staircase buildings for clearance of illegal rooftop structures;

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- follow up on 2 000 repair orders, arising mainly from the survey of all private buildings to detect defective drainage pipes in the wake of SARS outbreak;
- in respect of the removal of unauthorised building works, take vigorous enforcement action, including instigating more prosecutions which are estimated to be 1 000 and 2 000 in 2004 and 2005 respectively, deal with the surge in number of reports on unauthorised building works from an average of 15 000 to 30 000 in 2004, and ensure compliance of outstanding removal orders;
- step up drainage inspection and enforcement action to rectify defective drainage in buildings;
- assist the Home Affairs Department in the clearance of additional environmental hygiene blackspots;
- provide assistance to building owners in maintaining their buildings by the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme;
- commission a project to extend the electronic building records management system to cover all districts of the territory;
- sustain a public education and publicity campaign on the need for timely safety inspection and maintenance of buildings;
- upgrade the fire safety standards of old composite buildings in collaboration with the Fire Services Department;
- introduce an integrated supervision plan system for building works and street works after enactment of the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003;
- establish statutory registers of geotechnical engineers and minor works contractors, and commence a new control system of minor building works subject to the enactment of the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003; and
- complete a study on a green labelling system, with a view to further encouraging the construction of environmentally-friendly buildings.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

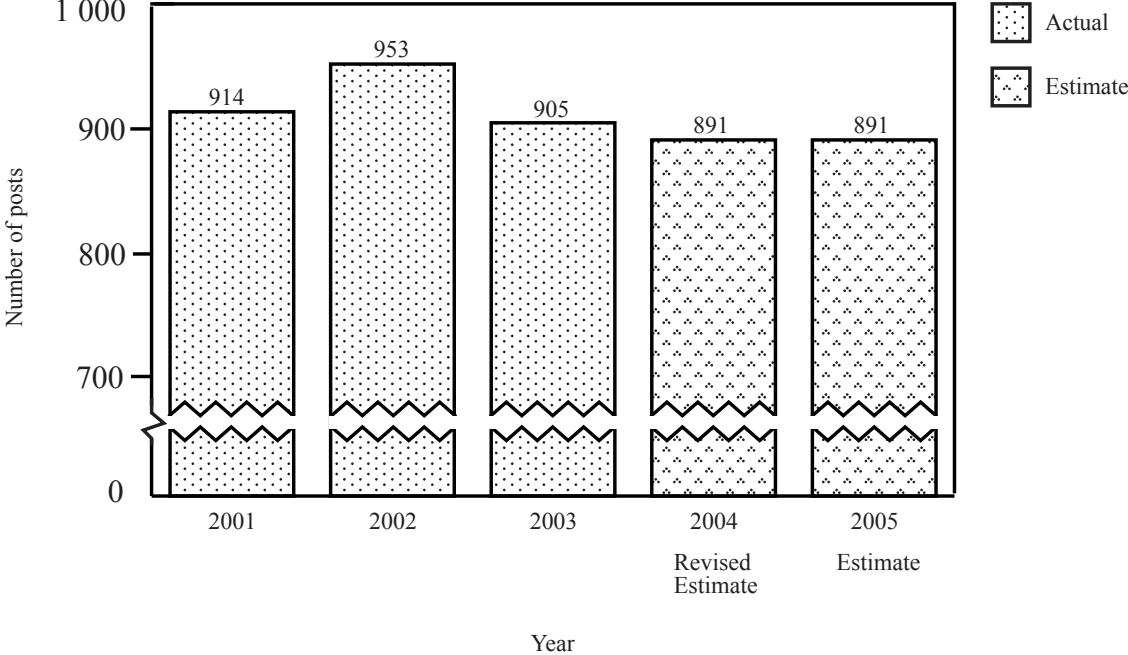
Programme	2002-03 (Actual) (\$m)	2003-04 (Original) (\$m)	2003-04 (Revised) (\$m)	2004-05 (Estimate) (\$m)
Buildings and Building Works.....	716.8	769.2	735.7 (-4.4%)	803.9 (+9.3%)
				(or +4.5% on 2003-04 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2004-05 is \$68.2 million (9.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2003-04. This is mainly due to the additional provision for accelerating enforcement action on unauthorised building works, clearing outstanding removal orders and stepping up action on drainage defects in private buildings and unauthorised building works in rear lanes and blackspots, partly offset by the effect of the 2004 and 2005 civil service pay cut and reduced cashflow requirement in consultancy studies.

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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2002-03	Approved estimate 2003-04	Revised estimate 2003-04	Estimate 2004-05	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses.....	667,193	682,218	664,976	749,539
227	Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services.....	34,069	60,454	45,587	42,924*
	Total, Recurrent	<u>701,262</u>	<u>742,672</u>	<u>710,563</u>	<u>792,463</u>
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent.....	15,031	25,802	25,152	11,469
	Total, Non-Recurrent	<u>15,031</u>	<u>25,802</u>	<u>25,152</u>	<u>11,469</u>
	Total, Operating Account.....	<u>716,293</u>	<u>768,474</u>	<u>735,715</u>	<u>803,932</u>
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	544	760	—	—
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works	<u>544</u>	<u>760</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
	Total, Capital Account	<u>544</u>	<u>760</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
	Total Expenditure.....	<u><u>716,837</u></u>	<u><u>769,234</u></u>	<u><u>735,715</u></u>	<u><u>803,932</u></u>

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2004–05 for the salaries and expenses of the Buildings Department is \$803,932,000. This represents an increase of \$68,217,000 over the revised estimate for 2003–04 and of \$87,095,000 over actual expenditure in 2002–03.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$749,539,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Buildings Department. The increase of \$84,563,000 (12.7%) over the revised estimate for 2003–04 is mainly due to the additional provision for accelerating enforcement action on unauthorised building works, clearing outstanding removal orders and stepping up action on drainage defects in private buildings and unauthorised building works in rear lanes and blackspots, partly offset by the effect of the 2004 and 2005 civil service pay cut.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2004 will be 891 permanent posts. No change in establishment is expected in 2004–05. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2004–05, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$332,837,000.

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

	2002–03 (Actual) (\$'000)	2003–04 (Original) (\$'000)	2003–04 (Revised) (\$'000)	2004–05 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	462,504	475,517	447,566	438,286
- Allowances.....	7,142	7,895	6,560	6,540
- Job-related allowances	13	2	18	18
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	—	418	418	418
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees.....	5,339	3,349	36,174	86,021
- Contract maintenance.....	2,751	3,132	2,834	2,743
- General departmental expenses.....	189,444	191,905	171,406	215,513
	667,193	682,218	664,976	749,539

5 Provision of \$42,924,000 under *Subhead 227 Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services* is for the payment of fees to the Land Registry and Companies Registry for providing ownership information and registration of orders/notices/directions. The decrease of \$2,663,000 (5.8%) against the revised estimate for 2003–04 is mainly due to reduced requirement for registration of removal orders as a result of a higher compliance rate for removal orders issued in 2003 on unauthorised building works and illegal rooftop structures in single-staircase buildings.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2003	Revised estimated expenditure for 2003-04	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	003	Contracting out microfilming of building records	31,260	27,152	2,210	1,898
	007	Translation and production of codes of practice and design manuals in Chinese	500	64	—	436
	011	Consultancy to compile a full list of existing private buildings in Hong Kong	3,300	—	550	2,750
	012	Consultancy to review Code of Practice for Fire Safety in buildings and renovation works.....	9,900	2,375	5,605	1,920
	013	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on lighting and ventilation of buildings	6,000	4,496	1,197	307
	014	In-situ tests on cantilevered slab canopies	5,700	3,428	797	1,475
	015	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on drainage of buildings.	4,000	1,042	1,431	1,527
	016	Consultancy for water seepage and drain leakage investigation	3,200	2,331	—	869
	019	Consultancy study on the seismic effects on buildings in Hong Kong.....	5,000	488	4,392	120
	020	Consultancy study to draft a Comprehensive Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme for Buildings.....	5,600	418	3,135	2,047
	021	Consultancy study to draft a Design Manual on Barrier Free Access and Facilities for Persons with a Disability and the Elderly	4,500	—	2,700	1,800
	022	Consultancy to draft a Limit-State Code for Structural Use of Steel in Hong Kong	3,200	—	1,760	1,440
		Total.....	82,160	41,794	23,777	16,589
			82,160	41,794	23,777	16,589