

Head 35 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: BEIJING OFFICE

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

Estimate 2005–06..... **\$46.1m**

Establishment ceiling 2005–06 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 13 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2005 and as at 31 March 2006 **\$8.5m**

In addition, there will be an estimated three directorate posts as at 31 March 2005 and as at 31 March 2006.

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

	2003–04 (Actual)	2004–05 (Original)	2004–05 (Revised)	2005–06 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	29.4	35.2	32.1 (–8.8%)	33.2 (+3.4%)
				(or –5.7% on 2004–05 Original)

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. In addition, we also update the CPG, other Mainland authorities and Mainland residents on the latest developments of the HKSAR so as to facilitate their understanding of how the provisions of the Basic Law, in particular the principles of "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 about Hong Kong from the general public in the Mainland, and handle requests for assistance (other than those relating to personal safety) from Hong Kong residents in the Mainland; and
- promote Hong Kong in the Mainland with a view to enhancing the Mainland authorities' and general public's 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 2004, the Beijing Office continued to maintain close contact with the CPG and other Mainland authorities. 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, 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 increasing official exchanges between the Government of the HKSAR and the Mainland authorities, the Beijing Office had been called upon to provide more assistance to facilitate such exchanges during the year. It assisted in arranging visits and exchanges for delegations both from Hong Kong and from the Mainland and provided logistical support to HKSAR Government delegations visiting the Mainland. Details of such visits and exchanges are (with number in brackets): visits of officials from the Government of the HKSAR to the Mainland (54), visits of Mainland officials to the HKSAR (31), and visits of Mainland non-governmental bodies to the HKSAR (12).

7 The promotion of Hong Kong's business and professional sectors in the Mainland continued to be a major task of the Beijing Office in 2004. The Office organised three major promotions in Jilin, Chongqing and Tianjin to promote Hong Kong's financial services, professional services, tourism, logistics, infrastructure and professional building services, inward investment, as well as various trade and industry sectors. The effectiveness of these promotions was evidenced by the number, level and representativeness of the attendees, the feedback of participants, media reports, the promotional impact in the relevant region, and attendees' interests in participating in similar activities in future. These promotional activities had received extensive coverage from the central, local and Hong Kong media, and aroused immense interest particularly in the places where the promotion was held. Both local and Hong Kong participants were generally of the view that such activities would enhance mutual understanding and help establish contacts, and were conducive to future economic co-operation between business and professional sectors in Hong Kong and the Mainland particularly under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement. It is understood that some of them had initiated direct contact after the promotions to discuss co-operation projects.

8 The Beijing Office also maintained close contact with the Beijing Organising Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad and kept in view the preparation of the Expo 2010 Shanghai China with a view to keeping Hong Kong up-dated of the business opportunities arising from the Games and the Expo 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. The programme, which was broadcast in Cantonese on China National Radio Hua Xia Zhi Sheng, was estimated to have reached an audience of at least 1 500 000 in that area.

10 The Beijing Office handled 193 enquiries and 214 requests for assistance (other than those relating to personal safety) from the general public in 2004. Details are as follows:

- Public enquiries: trade and business-related enquiries (26), enquiries seeking information on the Government of the HKSAR or organisations in Hong Kong (55), enquiries seeking information on the Mainland (21), miscellaneous enquiries or expression of views (80) and initial enquiries relating to request for assistance (11).
- Request for assistance: business and trade disputes (42), complaints relating to real property in the Mainland (35), complaints against administrative, law enforcement and judicial agencies in the Mainland (93) and others (44).

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2005–06

11 In 2005–06, 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;
- continue its promotional activities in selected provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities taking into consideration the potential for developing business opportunities between Hong Kong and the Mainland location concerned, and interests of the various sectors of the HKSAR;
- keep concerned parties in Hong Kong up-dated of the preparatory work of the 2008 Olympic Games and the Expo 2010 Shanghai China, in particular the related business opportunities; and
- complete the permanent accommodation for the Office.

Programme (2): HKSAR Immigration-related Matters

	2003–04 (Actual)	2004–05 (Original)	2004–05 (Revised)	2005–06 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	11.1	13.1	12.3 (-6.1%)	12.9 (+4.9%)
				(or -1.5% on 2004–05 Original)

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Aim

12 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

13 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 immigration-related enquiries from the general public.

14 In 2004, the Beijing Office received 297 requests for assistance from Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland. Of these, 82 cases involved the loss of travel documents or monies, and 126 cases were from persons who were in danger, involved in traffic accidents, injured or whose relatives had passed away in the Mainland. The remaining 89 cases involved the detention of Hong Kong residents in the Mainland.

15 For cases involving the loss of travel documents and monies, the Beijing Office would, after confirming the identity of the Hong Kong residents, issue Entry Permit for their return to Hong Kong and contact their families in Hong Kong for remittance to settle their expenses incurred in the Mainland. In the event that assistance could not be sought immediately from their family members, the Beijing Office could advance a suitable amount of money to the persons in question subject to their undertaking to repay the advanced sum in full and return to Hong Kong immediately. In 2004, there were five cases requiring provision from the advance account, involving a total of RMB7,578.80.

16 For Hong Kong residents seeking assistance due to traffic accidents, injuries, illness, dangerous situations or fatal cases requiring follow-up actions with their families, etc., the Beijing Office would contact the relevant Mainland authorities to ensure that the following assistance was promptly provided:

- processing the lost documents and assisting Hong Kong residents in applying for entry and exit permits;
- contacting family/travel agencies to arrange for the expeditious return of the injured person(s) to Hong Kong for treatment;
- co-ordinating with relevant departments in the HKSAR Government regarding the necessary arrangements relating to the reception of the injured person(s) in Hong Kong; and
- assisting the families and/or relatives of the deceased Hong Kong residents in completing the procedures for the transportation of their corpses back to Hong Kong and applying for death notarial certificates.

17 For those Hong Kong residents being detained in the Mainland, the Beijing Office would pass on and reflect their requests or their family members' requests to follow up the cases with the relevant authorities, including the Public Security Departments, General Administration of Customs, Committee of Political Science and Law under the Communist Party of China Central Committee, People's Procuratorates, People's Courts, and Bureau for Letters and Calls. In 2004, the number of detention cases for which assistance was sought from the Beijing Office was 89. Those involved in 23 of these cases were released, another 32 of the cases were serving sentences, and the remaining 34 cases were under detention pending charges and prosecution.

- The reasons for detention were as follows: fraud/misappropriation/false official tax receipt (35), smuggling (21), smuggling/manufacturing of narcotic drugs (11), theft/robbery/kidnapping (5), breach of state order/giving away information without authorisation (4), organising for illegal migration (3), fighting (2), gambling (2), visit prostitutes (2), rape (1), corruption (1), traffic accident (1) and escapee (1).
- The places of detention were as follows: Guangdong (55), Beijing (8), Guangxi (4), Fujian (3), Hebei (3), Hubei (2), Hunan (2), Shandong (2), Shanghai (2), Sichuan (2), Yunnan (2), Hainan (1), Henan (1), Xinjiang (1) and Zhejiang (1).

18 The Immigration Section handled 5 480 public enquiries on immigration matters.

19 In 2004, the Beijing Office met all of its performance targets.

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20 The key performance measures in respect of HKSAR immigration-related matters are:

Targets

	Target	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Plan)
average processing time per case unreferred visas/entry permits within three working days (%).....	95	98	98	98
referred visas/entry permits within six weeks upon receipt of supporting documents (%).....	75	85	85	85
normal response time per case assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland within same day upon request (%).....	95	95	96	96

Indicators

	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Estimate)
unreferred visas/entry permit cases received.....	6 074	5 034	5 050
processed	6 074	5 013	5 050
referred visas/entry permit cases received.....	3 810	2 620	2 650
processed	3 659	2 674	2 650
provide practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress in the Mainland, including handling of cases involving the detention of Hong Kong residents	219	297	300

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2005–06

21 During 2005–06, 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	2003-04 (Actual) (\$m)	2004-05 (Original) (\$m)	2004-05 (Revised) (\$m)	2005-06 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Liaison.....	29.4	35.2	32.1	33.2
(2) HKSAR Immigration-related Matters	11.1	13.1	12.3	12.9
	<u>40.5</u>	<u>48.3</u>	<u>44.4</u> (-8.1%)	<u>46.1</u> (+3.8%)
				(or -4.6% on 2004-05 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

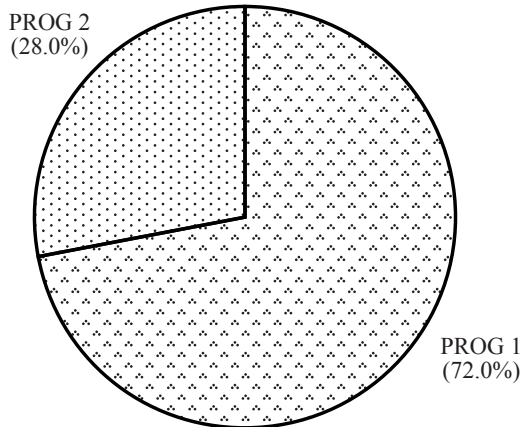
Programme (1)

Provision for 2005-06 is \$1.1 million (3.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2004-05. This is mainly due to the provision required to pay one-off allowances for staff posted to and from the Beijing Office.

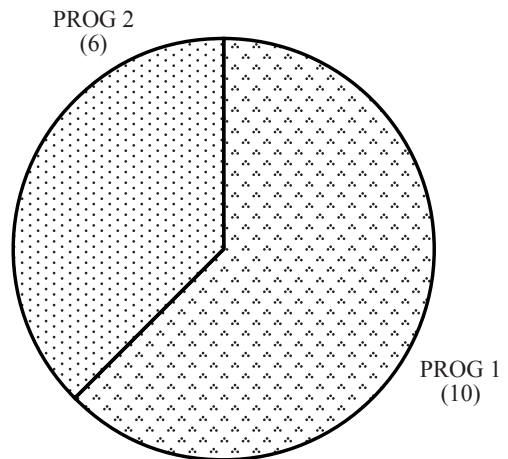
Programme (2)

Provision for 2005-06 is \$0.6 million (4.9%) higher than the revised estimate for 2004-05. This is mainly due to the provision required to pay one-off allowances for staff posted to and from the Beijing Office.

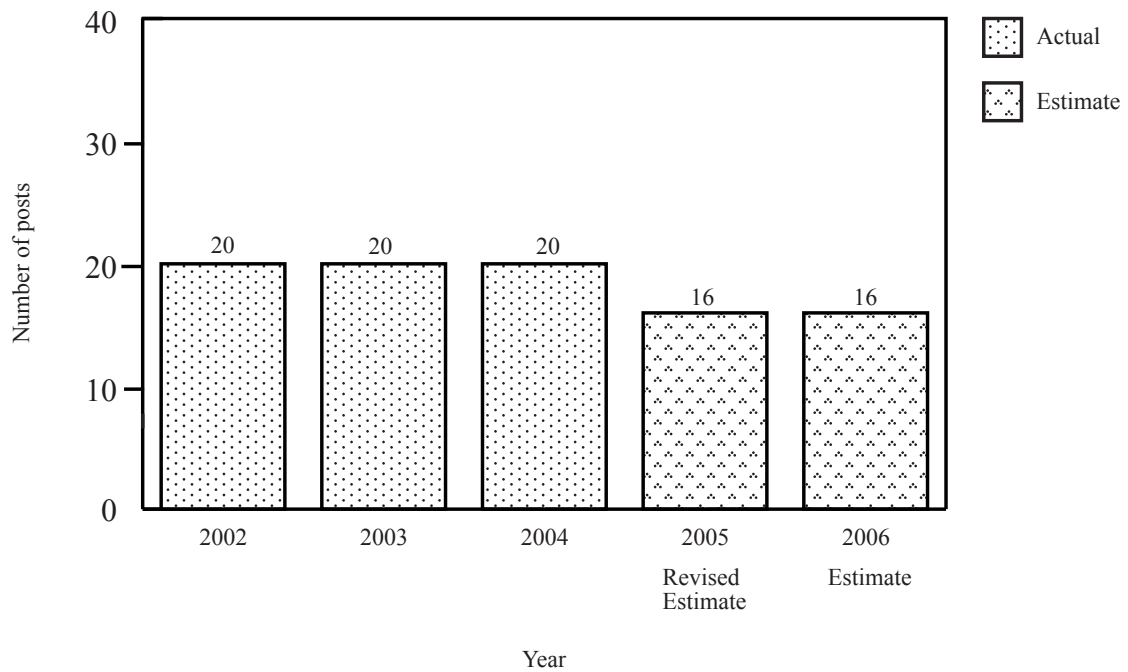
Allocation of provision to programmes (2005-06)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2006)



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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2003-04	Approved estimate 2004-05	Revised estimate 2004-05	Estimate 2005-06
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account				
Recurrent				
000 Operational expenses	40,417	48,256	44,380	46,104
Total, Recurrent	<u>40,417</u>	<u>48,256</u>	<u>44,380</u>	<u>46,104</u>
Non-Recurrent				
General non-recurrent	35	—	—	—
Total, Non-Recurrent	<u>35</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
Total, Operating Account	40,452	48,256	44,380	46,104

Total Expenditure	<u>40,452</u>	<u>48,256</u>	<u>44,380</u>	<u>46,104</u>

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2005–06 for the salaries and expenses of the Beijing Office is \$46,104,000. This represents an increase of \$1,724,000 over the revised estimate for 2004–05 and of \$5,652,000 over actual expenditure in 2003–04.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$46,104,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Beijing Office.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2005 will be 16 permanent posts. No change in establishment is expected in 2005–06. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2005–06, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$8,499,000.

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

	2003–04 (Actual) (\$'000)	2004–05 (Original) (\$'000)	2004–05 (Revised) (\$'000)	2005–06 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries	16,231	16,477	14,730	15,242
- Allowances	11,626	13,069	11,360	12,278
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	—	—	6	6
- Disturbance allowance	—	613	670	991
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees	1,634	2,209	1,990	2,095
- General departmental expenses	6,881	11,588	11,324	11,192
Other Charges				
- Publicity	4,045	4,300	4,300	4,300
	40,417	48,256	44,380	46,104