

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2005–06	\$768.3m
Establishment ceiling 2005–06 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 830 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2005 reducing by three posts to 827 posts as at 31 March 2006	\$306.0m
In addition, there will be an estimated 30 directorate posts as at 31 March 2005 and as at 31 March 2006.	
Commitment balance	\$16.2m

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

	2003–04 (Actual)	2004–05 (Original)	2004–05 (Revised)	2005–06 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	689.5	803.9	777.4 (–3.3%)	768.3 (–1.2%)
				(or –4.4% on 2004–05 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 2004, the Department continued to take enforcement action against unauthorised building works and follow up action on defective drainage following the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). In addition, the Department:

Existing Buildings

- introduced a new service standard to inspect unauthorised building works under construction within 48 hours;
- continued to enforce outstanding removal orders with 25 570 orders issued in or before 2004 complied with;
- increased the number of prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders on unauthorised building works from 684 to 1 664;
- commenced a project to extend the electronic records management system for storage and retrieval of building plans and records in the form of electronic images to cover all districts of the territory;
- commenced the operation of the Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 2004 covering, inter alia, the issue of warning notice against unauthorised building works, the mandatory provision of emergency vehicular access in new buildings, the statutory registration of geotechnical engineers and the increase in fines for certain offences under the Buildings Ordinance;

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

- commenced the operation of the joint office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department as a pilot project in an urban district to handle public complaints about water seepage problems; and
- took follow up action on the outstanding drainage repair orders, arising mainly from the survey of all private buildings to detect defective drainage pipes in the wake of SARS outbreak, including initiating enforcement action to rectify defective drainage in private buildings, and clearing 175 hygiene blackspots.

New Buildings

- drafted the framework of a green labelling system, with a view to further encouraging the construction of environmentally-friendly buildings;
- drafted new guidelines on the provision of facilities in buildings for persons with a disability and the elderly;
- continued the second stage review of the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations involving the modernisation of the construction, drainage and planning standards; and
- issued new codes of practice on foundations, structural use of concrete, wind effects on buildings and demolition of buildings.

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

Targets

	Target	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Plan)
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>				
responding to emergencies within three hours (%)	100	96.6	96.9	100
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction</i>				
responding to reports within 48 hours (%)..	100	—	97.4	98
<i>Existing buildings</i>				
buildings targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works.....	1 000/year	1 007	1 027	1 000
buildings covered by the co-ordinated maintenance of buildings schemeΩ	150/year	200	0	150
single-staircase buildings improved under rooftop structure clearance operations....	700/year	713	714	700
prescribed commercial premises inspected for improvement of fire safety measuresΔ.....	150/year	190	216	190
specified commercial buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures¶.....	140/year	169	159	150
composite buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures	900/year	800	1 007	900
advertisement signboards removed/ repaired	1 200/year	1 375	1 496	1 400
advising on restaurant licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 14 days (%)	100	94	95	95
making existing building records available for public viewing within ten days (%)...	100	95	94	94
<i>New buildings</i>				
processing building plans:				
within 60 days for new submissions (%)	100	100	100	100
within 30 days for re-submissions (%).....	100	99.9	100	100
processing within 28 days applications for consent to commence building works (%).....	100	99.9	99.9	100
processing within 14 days applications for occupation permits (%).....	100	100	100	100

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

- Ω This target was introduced in 2000 for a pilot scheme. The planned target for 2004 has not been materialised pending a review of the pilot scheme in 2004. The planned target for 2005 is to be implemented under a new modality.
- Δ Under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, prescribed commercial premises refer to 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.
- ¶ Under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, specified commercial buildings refer to commercial buildings constructed or designed on or before 1 March 1987 for office, business, trade or any entertainment use.

Indicators

	2003 (Actual)	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Estimate)
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>			
emergency reports attended to	883	872	900
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction</i>			
reports attended to	—	3 037	3 000
<i>Existing buildings</i>			
<i>unauthorised building works</i>			
reports from members of the public attended to	25 816	24 577	25 000
warning notices issued ^β	—	—	10 000
removal orders issued	24 003	27 805	25 000
prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders	684	1 664	3 000
unauthorised structures removed and irregularities rectified	49 556	41 210	40 000
<i>dilapidated buildings</i>			
reports from members of the public attended to	8 334	11 685 [#]	8 000
repair orders issued	2 676	1 593 [^]	800
buildings repaired	667	2 194 ^α	1 000
<i>dangerous slopes</i>			
repair orders issued	131	160	140
dangerous slopes repaired	139	137	140
<i>prescribed commercial premises</i>			
fire safety directions issued [¶]	189	200	200
fire safety directions discharged [¶]	288	113	100
<i>specified commercial buildings</i>			
fire safety improvement directions issued [¶]	3 537	3 082	3 000
fire safety improvement directions discharged [¶]	1 351	1 598	1 500
<i>composite buildings issued with advisory letters to improve fire safety</i>	800	1 000	900
<i>licence/registration applications processed (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools etc.)</i>	6 857	7 743	7 500
<i>Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme</i>			
loan applications processed	2 811	2 796 [§]	2 800 [§]
loan applications approved	2 588	2 439 [§]	2 500 [§]
total amount of loans committed (\$m)	77.8	68.9 [§]	70.0 [§]
<i>New buildings</i>			
new building proposals approved	198	204	210
plans received and processed	10 824	11 118	11 000
occupation permits issued	197	231	240
gross floor area of new building proposals approved (in 1 000 m ²)	2 696	2 202	2 400
site audit checks made	6 769	6 331	6 300
sites inspected	1 199	1 184	1 200

^β New indicator as from 2005

[#] The increase in the number of reports received in 2004 was due to public awareness of drainage defects in the wake of SARS outbreak. It is estimated that the number of reports will return to normal in 2005.

[^] The decrease in the number of repair orders issued in 2004 compared with those in 2003 was due to gradual completion of inspection of external drainage pipes under Team Clean initiatives. It is expected that the number of repair orders, including those issued for external drainage pipes, will return to normal in 2005.

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

- α The increase in the number of dilapidated buildings repaired in 2004 was due to the large number of repair orders issued in 2003 for the repair of external drainage pipes. It is expected that the number of dilapidated buildings repaired will return to normal in 2005 as most of the repair orders issued have been complied with.
- Ψ New indicators as from 2005 to replace respectively 'prescribed commercial premises issued with fire safety directions' and 'specified commercial buildings issued with fire safety improvement directions'. Fire safety directions discharged include those directions withdrawn after completion of modification works or cessation of business.
- § The decrease in number of applications and amount of loans was due to the less than expected number of applications arising from fire safety upgrading directions. It is expected that the number of applications will increase in 2005 when warning notices will be issued against unauthorised building works and the fines for certain offences under the Buildings Ordinance will be increased, with the implementation of the Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 2004.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2005–06

- 8 During 2005–06, 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;
 - in respect of the removal of unauthorised building works, take vigorous enforcement action, instigate more prosecutions from 1 664 in 2004 to 3 000 in 2005, deal with the large number of reports on unauthorised building works in 2005, and ensure compliance of outstanding removal orders;
 - continue to assist the Home Affairs Department in the clearance of environmental hygiene blackspots;
 - provide assistance to building owners in maintaining their buildings under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme;
 - roll out a web-based system for retrieval of building plans and records in the form of electronic images;
 - upgrade the fire safety standards of old composite buildings in collaboration with the Fire Services Department;
 - introduce a proposed integrated site supervision system for building works and street works to replace the existing site supervision system;
 - develop a performance-based regulatory system to facilitate modern and innovative building design;
 - introduce proposed amendments to the Buildings Ordinance to provide for the statutory control of minor works in existing buildings including, inter alia, alteration and addition, removal of unauthorised building works, and erection and removal of signboards;
 - assist the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in the implementation of the Team Clean's measures for food business premises;
 - formulate the mode of operation of the joint office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to handle public complaints about water seepage problems having regard to the experience gained from the pilot project;
 - establish a statutory register of geotechnical engineers and issue warning notices against unauthorised building works in accordance with the Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 2004;
 - sustain a public education and publicity campaign on the need for periodical safety inspection and maintenance of buildings;
 - complete a new code of practice on the structural use of steel to replace the existing one issued in 1987; and
 - collaborate with the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Urban Renewal Authority in speeding up the rehabilitation of old buildings.

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

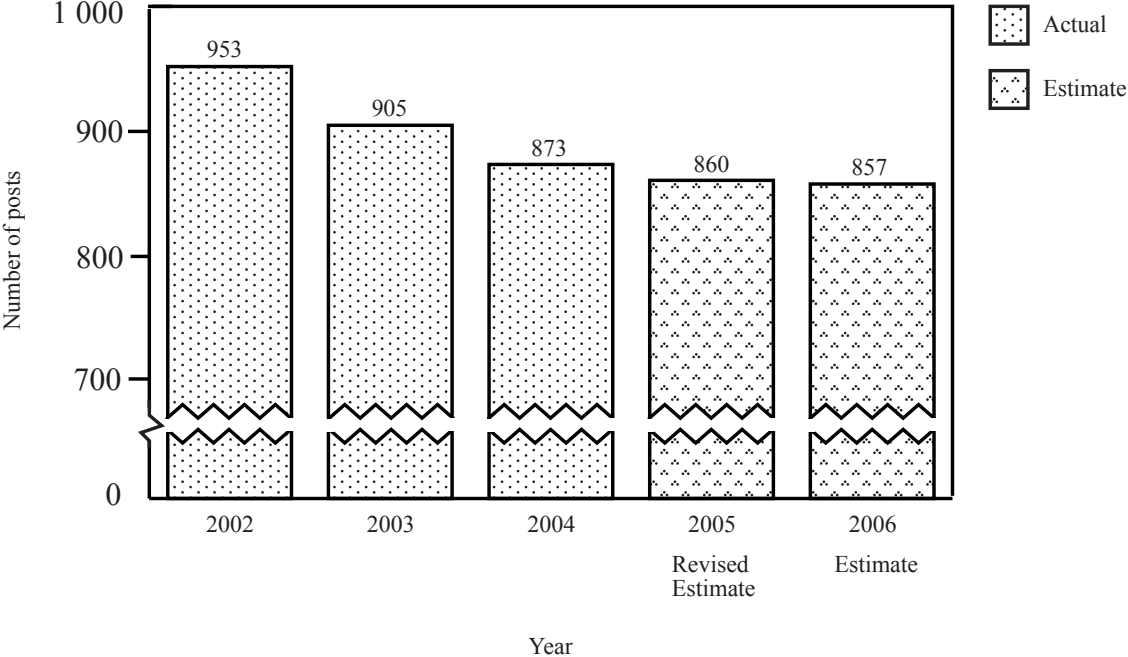
Programme	2003-04 (Actual) (\$m)	2004-05 (Original) (\$m)	2004-05 (Revised) (\$m)	2005-06 (Estimate) (\$m)
Buildings and Building Works	689.5	803.9	777.4 (-3.3%)	768.3 (-1.2%)
				(or -4.4% on 2004-05 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2005-06 is \$9.1 million (1.2%) lower than the revised estimate for 2004-05. This is mainly due to the full-year effect of the 2005 civil service pay cut, deletion of three posts, reduced provision for inspections of drainage defects in private buildings, and reduced cash flow requirement in consultancy studies. The decrease is partly offset by additional provision for setting up a joint office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in 2005-06 to handle public complaints about water seepage problems.

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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



Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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	646,171	749,539	730,096	721,163
227	Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services	33,044	42,924	32,105	40,184*
	Total, Recurrent	679,215	792,463	762,201	761,347
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	10,323	11,469	15,193	6,909
	Total, Non-Recurrent	10,323	11,469	15,193	6,909
	Total, Operating Account	689,538	803,932	777,394	768,256
Total Expenditure					
		689,538	803,932	777,394	768,256

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2005–06 for the salaries and expenses of the Buildings Department is \$768,256,000. This represents a decrease of \$9,138,000 against the revised estimate for 2004–05 and an increase of \$78,718,000 over actual expenditure in 2003–04.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$721,163,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Buildings Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2005 will be 860 permanent posts. It is expected that there will be a deletion of three posts 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 \$306,004,000.

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	446,068	438,286	426,526	417,476
- Allowances	6,115	6,540	6,379	6,253
- Job-related allowances	17	18	18	18
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	430	418	435	435
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees	27,715	86,021	70,638	78,570
- Contract maintenance	2,358	2,743	2,831	2,839
- General departmental expenses	163,468	215,513	223,269	215,572
	646,171	749,539	730,096	721,163

5 Provision of \$40,184,000 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 increase of \$8,079,000 (25.2%) over the revised estimate for 2004–05 is mainly due to increased requirement for ownership check and registration of warning notices on unauthorised building works as a result of the implementation of Buildings (Amendment) Ordinance 2004.

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2004	Revised estimated expenditure for 2004-05	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	003	Contracting out microfilming of building records.....	31,260	29,244	890	1,126
	007	Translation and production of codes of practice and design manuals in Chinese.....	500	64	110	326
	011	Consultancy to compile a full list of existing private buildings in Hong Kong.....	3,300	—	—	3,300
	012	Consultancy to review Code of Practice for Fire Safety in buildings and renovation works.....	9,900	3,946	3,084	2,870
	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	4,211	600	889
	015	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on drainage of buildings.....	4,000	1,485	837	1,678
	016	Consultancy for water seepage and drain leakage investigation.....	3,200	2,331	87	782
	019	Consultancy study on the seismic effects on buildings in Hong Kong.....	5,000	1,708	3,172	120
	020	Consultancy study to draft a Comprehensive Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme for Buildings.....	5,600	1,255	2,300	2,045
	021	Consultancy study to draft a Design Manual on Barrier Free Access and Facilities for Persons with a Disability and the Elderly.....	4,500	738	1,476	2,286
	022	Consultancy to draft a Limit-State Code for Structural Use of Steel in Hong Kong.....	3,200	1,280	1,440	480
		Total	82,160	50,758	15,193	16,209