

Head 22 — AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2006–07	\$956.3m
Establishment ceiling 2006–07 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 1 883 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2006 reducing by 60 posts to 1 823 posts as at 31 March 2007	\$393.7m
In addition, there will be an estimated seven directorate posts as at 31 March 2006 and as at 31 March 2007.	
Commitment balance	\$360.4m

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets	This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food).
Programme (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks	This programme contributes to Policy Area 5: Travel and Tourism (Secretary for Economic Development and Labour) and Policy Area 23: Environmental Protection and Conservation (Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works).
Programme (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services	This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food), Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands and Planning (Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands) and Policy Area 32: Environmental Hygiene (Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food).

Detail

Programme (1): Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

	2004–05 (Actual)	2005–06 (Original)	2005–06 (Revised)	2006–07 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	183.0	164.2	203.6 (+24.0%)	376.1 (+84.7%)
				(or +129.0% on 2005–06 Original)

Aim

- 2 The aim is to facilitate agricultural and fisheries production and improve productivity.

Brief Description

- 3 The Department's work in pursuit of its aim involves:
 - the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen;
 - the conduct of adaptive and technical studies and introduction of modern technology and practices to facilitate efficient production and improve the quality of agricultural and fisheries products;
 - the planning and implementation of effective management activities and services for promoting sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries;
 - the provision of administrative and technical support to the operation of the Vegetable Marketing Organization and the Fish Marketing Organization; and
 - the management of government fresh food wholesale markets and overseeing the reprovisioning of outdated fresh food wholesale markets.

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4 The performance targets of the programme were generally achieved in 2005. The overall agricultural production and fisheries production remained steady in general.

5 The key performance measures in respect of agriculture, fisheries and fresh food wholesale markets are:

Targets

	Target	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Plan)
<i>Agriculture</i>				
accredited vegetable farms				
(total no.)#.....	214	231	229	214
(total hectares)^.....	1 860	1 515	1 590	1 860
<i>Fisheries</i>				
mariculture farms adopting environmentally-friendly practices				
(total raft area).....	14.2 ha	14.1 ha	14.2 ha	14.2 ha

The target has been revised from 236 to 214 with effect from 2006.

^ The target has been revised from 1 550 to 1 860 with effect from 2006.

Indicators

	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Estimate)
<i>Agriculture</i>			
composite productivity index (100 in 1985).....	208	216	216
production			
vegetables (tonnes)	26 000	25 000	22 000
(\$m)	70	78	64
livestock (tonnes).....	53 000	61 000	56 000
(\$m)	800	900	850
throughput at Vegetable Marketing Organization market			
(tonnes).....	237 000	214 000	222 000
(\$m)	784	845	823
new loans			
(no.)	256	231	170
(\$m)	21.3	17.6	13.0
<i>Fisheries</i>			
production			
capture (tonnes)	167 500	162 000	162 000
(\$m)	1,552	1,573	1,570
culture (tonnes).....	3 725	3 567	3 600
(\$m)	120	113	115
throughput at Fish Marketing Organization markets			
(tonnes).....	56 900	53 600	53 600
(\$m)	1,517	1,450	1,450
new loans			
(no.)	527	560	560
(\$m)	35.3	51.3	65.0
<i>Government fresh food wholesale markets</i>			
annual throughput (tonnes).....	509 000	513 000	513 000
rental market stall space occupied (%)	89.9	88.9	88.9
area of wholesale markets managed (m ²)	295 645	295 645	295 645

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2006–07

6 During 2006–07, the Department will give emphasis to:

- assisting farmers to capture high-value-market niches by providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production;
- implementing a voluntary scheme for live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters by which they would be granted ex-gratia payment in return for opting to cease their business permanently;

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- formulating measures to promote sustainable development of the fishing industry and to conserve fisheries resources in Hong Kong waters;
- assisting fishermen to develop offshore fishing and other sustainable fisheries through technical support services and credit facilities; and
- promoting environmentally-friendly culture practices and stepping up monitoring of aquaculture environment and fish health management.

Programme (2): Nature Conservation and Country Parks

	2004–05 (Actual)	2005–06 (Original)	2005–06 (Revised)	2006–07 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	407.9	389.6	401.3 (+3.0%)	415.2 (+3.5%)
				(or +6.6% on 2005–06 Original)

Aim

7 The aim is to conserve flora, fauna and natural habitats; to designate and manage country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserves; and to control international trade in endangered species of animals and plants in Hong Kong.

Brief Description

8 The Department's work in pursuit of its aim involves:

- the management and protection of country parks, special areas, marine parks and marine reserves under the Country Parks Ordinance and the Marine Parks Ordinance for the purpose of nature conservation, recreation, tourism and education;
- the enhancement of biodiversity and promotion of compatible use of country and marine parks;
- the identification of sites of high scientific value for listing as Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- the provision of nature conservation advice on development proposals, planning studies and environmental impact assessments;
- the monitoring and auditing of ecological mitigation measures for development projects approved under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance;
- the promotion of public awareness of nature conservation and enforcement of nature conservation legislation;
- the licensing control of international trade in endangered species and curbing of illegal trade in endangered species in Hong Kong;
- the conservation and management of the Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay Ramsar site; and
- the planning and management of the Hong Kong Wetland Park.

9 The performance targets of the programme were satisfactorily achieved in 2005.

10 The key performance measures in respect of nature conservation and country parks are:

Targets

	Target	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Plan)
country parks and special areas managed (hectares)	41 644	41 582	41 644	41 644
marine parks and marine reserves managed (hectares).....	2 430	2 430	2 430	2 430
no. of Sites of Special Scientific Interest listed	64	64	65	65
issue of certificates in respect of endangered species (working days).....	2	2	2	2

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Indicators

	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Estimate)
seedlings produced	529 000	578 000	580 000
seedlings planted	877 000	871 000	900 000
ecological impact assessment applications and studies handled	160	164	160
participants in educational activities	200 000	200 000	200 000
visitors to country parks (million)	12.0	12.2	12.2
hill fires attended to	67	44	60
endangered species licences/certificates	22 652	24 632	17 000
endangered species inspections	20 201	17 932	20 000
endangered species prosecutions	278	217	200

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2006–07

11 During 2006–07, the Department will give emphasis to:

- the enhancement of biodiversity in country parks and special areas;
- the implementation of a territory-wide survey programme to collect information required for establishing and updating an ecological database;
- the monitoring and auditing of ecological mitigation measures as a consequence of development projects;
- stepping up education and publicity on endangered species protection while continuing to take enforcement action against illegal trade in endangered species;
- the planning and management of the Hong Kong Wetland Park;
- the maintenance of government slopes in country parks;
- the promotion of public education and publicity on nature conservation and compatible use of country parks and marine parks; and
- overseeing the implementation of the pilot scheme on management agreement and public-private partnership promulgated under the new nature conservation policy, with the objective of enhancing conservation of ecologically important habitats on private land.

Programme (3): Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

	2004–05 (Actual)	2005–06 (Original)	2005–06 (Revised)	2006–07 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	170.5	149.3	160.4 (+7.4%)	165.0 (+2.9%)
				(or +10.5% on 2005–06 Original)

Aim

12 The aim is to monitor the welfare of, and control the diseases in, animals and plants through enforcement of relevant legislation; protect public health; protect and regulate fisheries; and provide technical services.

Brief Description

13 The Department is responsible for prevention of the introduction and spread of animal and plant diseases, safeguarding animal welfare, regulation of drug use in livestock farms, provision of services to facilitate export of plants, animals and plant/animal by-products, prevention of rabies, and enforcement of regulations pertaining to animal welfare and import requirements, fisheries protection and marine fish culture. The work involves:

- the prevention and control of rabies and other zoonotic diseases;
- the provision of quarantine services;
- the inspection of animals and plants imported into the territory;
- the testing of veterinary and zoonotic diseases and chemical residues in food animals;
- the inspection of farms where food animals are kept;
- the inspection of premises and establishments where animals are kept for exhibition or trading purposes;

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- the inspection of marine fish culture farms;
 - the control of destructive fishing practices; and
 - the instigation of prosecution against offenders under relevant legislation.
- 14 The technical services provided by the Department include:
- assessing ex-gratia payments to primary producers arising from development projects affecting agriculture and fisheries;
 - managing agricultural weirs;
 - licensing livestock farms;
 - licensing marine fish culture farms;
 - facilitating export trade in plants, animals and their products;
 - safeguarding public health through the control of pesticides and drug use in livestock farms; and
 - supervising credit unions and co-operative societies.
- 15 The performance targets of the programme were satisfactorily achieved in 2005.
- 16 The key performance measures in respect of animal, plant and fisheries regulation and technical services are:

Targets

	Target	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Plan)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>				
prevention				
reported cases of rabies	0	0	0	0
dogs vaccinated in strategic Rabies Control Areas (%)φ...	80	80	80	80
enforcement				
issue of animal health certificates (working days) ...	2	2	2	2
issue of licences/permits (working days).....	3	3	3	3
issue of sanitary certificates for products of animal origin (working days)	3	3	3	3
<i>Technical services</i>				
management of agricultural weirs weirs to be cleansed	205β	180	203	205
plant health certification issue of phytosanitary certificates (working days) ...	2	2	2	2
control of pesticides issue of pesticide permits (working days).....	2	2	2	2
<i>Renewal of marine fish culture licence</i>				
in person in 50 minutes (%)	100	100	100	100

φ World Health Organization recommends a minimum of 70%.

β Revised from 180 to 205 with effect from 2006.

Indicators

	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Estimate)
<i>Animal and plant regulation</i>			
prevention			
stray animals caught	17 716	16 602	17 000
animals vaccinated and quarantined	39 091	40 844	41 000
enforcement			
licences/permits	8 234	8 594	8 550
animal and plant health certificates	5 115	6 005	5 950

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	2004 (Actual)	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Estimate)
<i>Technical services</i>			
ex-gratia payment assessment			
area assessed for crop ex-gratia payment (hectares).....	79	77	76
area assessed for aquaculture fisheries ex-gratia payment (m ²)Δ	34 700	0	216 000
claims assessed for capture fisheries ex-gratia payment.....	444	52	320
licensing of livestock farms			
licences issued	151	138	165
control of pesticides			
pesticides registered.....	21	19	19
licences/permits issued	2 687	2 632	2 650
regulation of credit unions and co-operative societies			
accounts examined or audited.....	308	310	308

Δ The figures vary from year to year according to the Government's programme for land clearance, development works and ex-gratia allowances registration exercises. For 2006, the estimated figure is anticipated to increase significantly due to the expected increase in number of projects affecting pond fish culture areas.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2006–07

17 During 2006–07, the Department will give emphasis to:

- strengthening the facilities and ability to provide diagnostic tests for veterinary and zoonotic diseases and screening tests for chemical residues in food animals;
- implementing measures to prevent the incursions of avian influenza;
- drawing up legislative proposals to enhance the control of animal and bird diseases, in particular new diseases and newly-identified disease transmission mechanisms, and contaminants; and
- drafting amendment bill to strengthen the control of pesticides.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2004–05 (Actual) (\$m)	2005–06 (Original) (\$m)	2005–06 (Revised) (\$m)	2006–07 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets	183.0	164.2	203.6	376.1
(2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks.....	407.9	389.6	401.3	415.2
(3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services ..	170.5	149.3	160.4	165.0
	761.4	703.1	765.3 (+8.8%)	956.3 (+25.0%)
				(or +36.0% on 2005–06 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2006–07 is \$172.5 million (84.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2005–06. This is mainly due to increase in non-recurrent expenditure for the financial support schemes for live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters, partly offset by decrease in operating expenses and capital expenditure.

Programme (2)

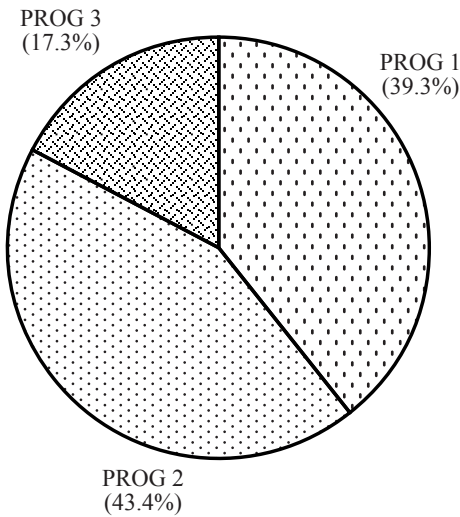
Provision for 2006–07 is \$13.9 million (3.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2005–06. This is mainly due to increase in operating expenses, partly offset by decrease in non-recurrent and capital expenditure.

Programme (3)

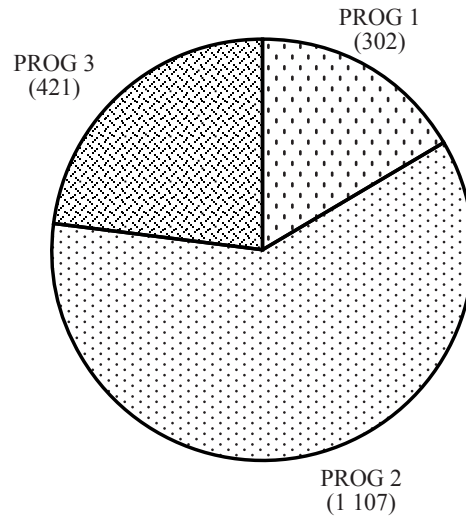
Provision for 2006–07 is \$4.6 million (2.9%) higher than the revised estimate for 2005–06. This is mainly due to increase in operating expenses, partly offset by decrease in non-recurrent and capital expenditure.

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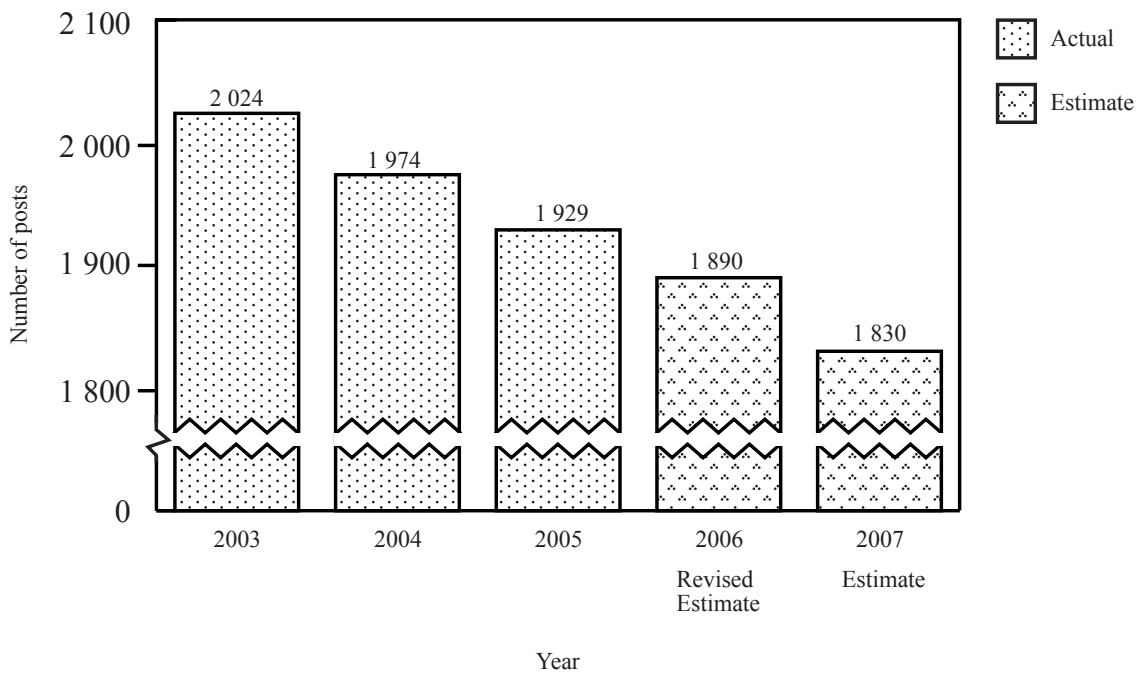
Allocation of provision to programmes (2006-07)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2007)



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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2004-05	Approved estimate 2005-06	Revised estimate 2005-06	Estimate 2006-07	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	661,251	660,201	653,556	693,568
	Total, Recurrent.....	661,251	660,201	653,556	693,568
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent.....	73,460	17,133	86,261	243,377
	Minor conservation projects and studies (block vote)	6,450	—	—	—
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	79,910	17,133	86,261	243,377
	Total, Operating Account.....	741,161	677,334	739,817	936,945
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
600	Works	5,754	8,312	7,297	6,040
603	Plant, vehicles and equipment	5,135	4,260	4,255	744
609	Minor irrigation works in the New Territories (block vote)	607	1,400	1,400	1,400
610	Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote)	7,126	8,644	8,644	8,644
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)	1,588	3,122	3,867	2,563
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works	20,210	25,738	25,463	19,391
	Total, Capital Account	20,210	25,738	25,463	19,391
	Total Expenditure.....	761,371	703,072	765,280	956,336

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2006–07 for the salaries and expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is \$956,336,000. This represents an increase of \$191,056,000 over the revised estimate for 2005–06 and of \$194,965,000 over actual expenditure in 2004–05.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$693,568,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2006 will be 1 890 permanent posts. It is expected that 60 posts will be deleted in 2006–07. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2006–07, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$393,737,000.

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

	2004–05 (Actual) (\$'000)	2005–06 (Original) (\$'000)	2005–06 (Revised) (\$'000)	2006–07 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries	471,683	474,323	456,730	466,824
- Allowances	7,370	9,560	9,560	8,127
- Job-related allowances	6,429	7,544	7,544	7,514
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	566	630	630	630
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution	—	—	—	269
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	172,137	159,747	170,695	200,687
Other Charges				
- Minor conservation projects and studies ..	—	6,470	6,470	8,970
Subventions				
- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Hong Kong)	908	608	608	308
- Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA)	78	80	80	80
- Subventions to conservation and management of Ramsar site	2,080	1,239	1,239	159
	661,251	660,201	653,556	693,568

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$1,400,000 under *Subhead 609 Minor irrigation works in the New Territories (block vote)* is for a programme to provide irrigation works to assist agricultural development in the New Territories up to a limit of \$700,000 for each project.

6 Provision of \$8,644,000 under *Subhead 610 Minor recreational facilities and roadworks in country parks (block vote)* is for minor works such as fire lookouts, public toilets, shelters and roads up to a limit of \$500,000 for each project, and for building materials for recreational facilities such as barbecue pits, information boards, shelters and outdoor furniture.

7 Provision of \$2,563,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents a decrease of \$1,304,000 (33.7%) against the revised estimate for 2005–06. The decrease is mainly due to reduction in requirement for replacement of aging fire services equipment and air-conditioning systems.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2005	Revised estimated expenditure for 2005–06	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
490		Ex-gratia payments to live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters.....	344,500	—	49,550	294,950
491		One-off grants to assist affected live poultry farm, wholesale and transport workers	21,600	—	—	21,600
536		Setting up a marine sanctuary in the Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau area ..	21,000	15,942	1,000	4,058
540		Artificial reefs project.....	80,100	67,004	1,500	11,596
546		Consultancy study on wetland compensation	50,000	29,882	5,100	15,018
560		Compilation of Hong Kong Flora.....	3,300	1,178	700	1,422
564		Planting of 500 000 tree seedlings in the proposed Lantau North (Extension) Country Park.....	7,500	4,398	2,000	1,102
569		Setting up of a Fisheries Education Centre at Aberdeen Fisheries Office ..	1,564	1,499	56	9
572		Provision of additional cleansing and maintenance service to country parks and other AFCD venues.....	90,300	61,236	26,058	3,006
			619,864	181,139	85,964	352,761
<i>Capital Account</i>						
600		<i>Works</i>				
351		Development of a morning walkers garden in Ma On Shan Country Park	9,700	4,090	2,405	3,205
355		Replacement of a footbridge at Chung Mei, Plover Cove Country Park.....	1,243	1,131	12	100
356		Construction of a public toilet cum refreshment kiosk at Tai Tong, Tai Lam Country Park.....	3,900	1,775	1,700	425
358		Sewerage system for toilets at Sai Kung West (Wan Tsai Extension) Country Park	2,000	805	1,180	15
359		Potable water supply for toilet facilities at Tai Tong, Tai Lam Country Park ..	5,400	250	2,000	3,150
			22,243	8,051	7,297	6,895

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Commitments—Cont'd.

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2005	Revised estimated expenditure for 2005–06	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital Account—Cont'd.						
603		<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment</i>				
	337	A catamaran for the protection and management of marine parks and the Plover Cove (Extension) country parks.....	2,830	2,474	245	111
	344	Acquisition of a catamaran vessel for the monitoring and investigation of red tide	3,000	2,449	540	11
	352	A patrol launch for the protection and management of the proposed marine parks at Soko Islands and Southwest Lantau	8,000	7,196	294	510
	353	A speed boat for the protection and management of the proposed marine parks at Soko Islands and Southwest Lantau	3,000	2,788	100	112
			16,830	14,907	1,179	744
		Total	658,937	204,097	94,440	360,400