

## Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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

**Estimate 2015–16** ..... **\$1,243.1m**

**Establishment ceiling 2015–16** (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 1 506 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2015 rising by 152 posts to 1 658 posts as at 31 March 2016..... **\$752.1m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 32 directorate posts as at 31 March 2015 and as at 31 March 2016.

### Controlling Officer's Report

#### Programme

##### **Buildings and Building Works**

This programme contributes to Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands, Planning, Heritage Conservation, Greening and Landscape (Secretary for Development) and Policy Area 31: Housing (Secretary for Transport and Housing).

#### Detail

	2013–14 (Actual)	2014–15 (Original)	2014–15 (Revised)	<b>2015–16 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	1,106.3	1,175.9	1,159.7 (–1.4%)	<b>1,243.1</b> (+7.2%)
				(or +5.7% on 2014–15 Original)

#### *Aim*

**2** The aim is to promote building safety; set and enforce safety, health and environmental standards for private buildings; 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 private buildings through enforcement of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) (BO).

**4** As regards existing buildings, the work of the Department includes reducing dangers and nuisances caused by unauthorised building works (UBWs) including signboards; promoting proper and timely repairs and maintenance of old buildings, drainage and slopes; scrutinising and approving alteration and addition works; processing minor works submissions; improving fire safety construction measures in buildings; and providing advice on the suitability of premises for the issue of licences.

**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 2014, the Department continued to take enforcement action against UBWs and to require building owners to carry out necessary repairs to dilapidated buildings. In addition, the Department:

##### *Existing Buildings*

- continued to inspect within 48 hours UBWs under construction upon receipt of reports;
- continued the large scale operation (LSO) on comprehensive clearance of UBWs on rooftops, flat roofs, yards and lanes in 200 buildings;
- continued the LSO on inspection of sub-divided flats in 308 target buildings, comprising 270 domestic/composite buildings and 38 industrial buildings, and rectification of irregularities of building works associated with the sub-divided flats;
- continued the LSO on removal of large unauthorised signboards and the implementation of the Validation Scheme for Unauthorised Signboards under the Signboard Control System;
- completed village by village survey of 5 210 New Territories exempted houses (NTEHs) to identify UBWs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety (First Round Targets) for priority enforcement action;

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- continued to process the 18 034 reporting forms received under the Reporting Scheme for UBWs in NTEHs that constitute less serious contravention of the law and pose lower potential risks to building safety;
- instigated 2 532 prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders on UBWs;
- in collaboration with the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), continued to implement the Operation Building Bright (OBB), including carrying out repair works for 156 OBB buildings aged 30 years or above on behalf of the owners;
- implemented the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) in 1 018 buildings;
- made permanent the operation of the Joint Office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to handle public reports about water seepage problems;
- commenced a consultancy study on the latest technological methods in identifying the sources of water seepage in buildings;
- completed the joint operation with the Fire Services Department (FSD) to inspect the common means of escapes in about 6 500 old-style domestic and composite buildings; and
- continued the public education and publicity campaign to disseminate building safety messages to stakeholders to foster a building safety culture.

### *New Buildings*

- conducted 10 023 site inspections on new building works for ensuring the safety of adjoining buildings, structures, land and utilities;
  - commenced a benchmarking exercise jointly with the industry on plan submission quality with a view to facilitating preparation of plans for approval;
  - based on the building design guidelines for compliance with current building safety and health standards in the adaptive re-use of and alteration and addition works to heritage buildings, continued to offer technical advice on compliance with the BO to facilitate the approval process of such building plan submissions;
  - completed the consultancy study and promulgated the Guidelines on Design and Construction Requirements for Energy Efficiency of Residential Buildings for implementation in April 2015; and
  - continued the review of various building regulations, standards and codes of practice with a view to modernising building design and construction standards.
- 7 The key performance measures in respect of buildings and building works are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2013 (Actual)	2014 (Actual)	<b>2015 (Plan)</b>
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>				
responding to emergencies during office hours (%):				
within 1.5 hours for cases in urban areas.....	100	99.6	99.3	<b>100</b>
within two hours for cases in new towns in New Territories (N.T.).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T. ....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
responding to emergencies outside office hours (%):				
within two hours for cases in urban areas and new towns in N.T. ....	100	99.3	99.5	<b>100</b>
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T. ....	100	80	100	<b>100</b>
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on UBWs under construction</i>				
responding to reports within 48 hours (%) .....	100	99.4	99.6	<b>99.0</b>

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	Target	2013 (Actual)	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Plan)
<i>Existing Buildings</i>				
buildings targeted for repair and maintenance under OBB.....	— <sup>μ</sup>	204	156	—
buildings targeted for prescribed inspection and, if necessary, prescribed repair under MBIS.....	650 <sup>¶</sup>	1 576	1 018	<b>650<sup>¶</sup></b>
buildings targeted for prescribed window inspection and, if necessary, prescribed window repair under MWIS.....	650 <sup>¶</sup>	3 943	1 018	<b>650<sup>¶</sup></b>
NTEHs targeted for survey to identify UBWs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks for priority enforcement action.....	5 000	8 927	5 210	<b>5 000</b>
buildings targeted for removal of UBWs on rooftops, flat roofs, yards and lanes.....	270 <sup>Ψ</sup>	600	200	<b>270</b>
buildings targeted for rectification of irregularities associated with sub-divided flats including those for domestic use in industrial buildings.....	330 <sup>Φ</sup>	300	308	<b>330</b>
prescribed commercial premises inspected for improvement of fire safety measures <sup>Ω</sup> .....	50	150	67	<b>50</b>
specified commercial buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures <sup>Ω</sup> .....	20	40	22	<b>20</b>
composite buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures <sup>Ω</sup> .....	400	1 150	400	<b>400</b>
advising on restaurants and places of public entertainment licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 12 working days (%).....	100	99.0	99.8	<b>98.0</b>
making existing building and minor works records in electronic form available for public viewing in Building Information Centre within three working days (%).....	100	97.7	99.7	<b>98.0</b>
<i>New Buildings</i>				
processing building plans within 60 days for new submissions (%).....	100	98.9	89.9	<b>90.0</b>
within 30 days for re-submissions (%).....	100	99.5	94.1	<b>90.0</b>
processing within 28 days applications for consent to commence building works (%).....	100	99.5	93.9	<b>90.0</b>
processing within 14 days applications for occupation permits (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
processing applications for hoarding permits <sup>□</sup>				
within 60 days for cases of first application (%).....	—	100	88.1	—
within 30 days for cases of re-application, fast-track processing or renewal (%).....	—	95.7	94.4	—

<sup>μ</sup> The OBB operation has reached its final stage with all remaining target buildings covered in 2014.

<sup>¶</sup> The number of buildings planned to be covered by MBIS and MWIS in 2015 is adjusted to 650 in order to redeploy resources for serving inspection notices to buildings identified in 2013 and 2014 and taking enforcement action against non-compliant notices. The long-term targets of MBIS and MWIS are being reviewed.

<sup>Ψ</sup> The target of the operation will be reduced to 270 as resources will be redeployed to clear the backlog of outstanding removal orders.

<sup>Φ</sup> The target comprises 60 industrial buildings and 270 domestic or composite buildings.

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- Ω To address the recommendations of the Audit Commission, the Department and FSD have jointly reviewed the implementation programmes under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 502) and Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572). Having regard to the capacity of the existing manpower resources, the annual inspection targets of prescribed commercial premises, specified commercial buildings and composite buildings have been adjusted. Resources will be redeployed for issuing and enforcing directions against premises and buildings.
- Target to be removed as from 2015 as this is not a key performance target in processing new building proposals.

### Indicators

	2013 (Actual)	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Estimate)
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>			
emergency reports attended to .....	1 048	911	<b>1 000</b>
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on UBWs under construction</i>			
reports attended to .....	4 381	3 872 <sup>ə</sup>	<b>3 300</b>
<i>Existing Buildings</i>			
<i>UBWs</i>			
reports from members of the public attended to .....	44 512	41 146	<b>43 000</b>
warning notices issued .....	276	332	<b>300</b>
removal orders issued .....	12 005	11 816	<b>17 000</b> §
prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders .....	2 513	2 532	<b>3 000</b>
unauthorised structures removed and irregularities rectified .....	14 972	22 866 <sup>Δ</sup>	<b>27 000</b> Δ
<i>dilapidated buildings</i>			
reports from members of the public attended to .....	13 671	13 430	<b>14 000</b>
repair/investigation orders issued .....	682	540 <sup>‡</sup>	<b>550</b>
buildings repaired .....	600	849	<b>700</b>
<i>mandatory building inspection</i>			
number of notices issued .....	14 359	17 537	<b>12 000</b> @
number of notices discharged .....	—	984	<b>4 100</b> @
<i>mandatory window inspection</i>			
number of notices issued .....	119 178	105 943	<b>120 000</b> @
number of notices discharged .....	1 717	57 964	<b>70 000</b> @
<i>NTEHs</i>			
removal orders issued for UBWs in NTEHs .....	328	454 <sup>ψ</sup>	<b>350</b>
<i>sub-divided flats</i>			
number of sub-divided flats inspected .....	1 212	2 218 <sup>α</sup>	<b>1 800</b> α
number of sub-divided flats rectified of irregularities ....	217	295	<b>260</b>
<i>dangerous slopes</i>			
repair orders issued .....	112	102	<b>60</b> β
dangerous slopes repaired .....	72	60	<b>80</b>
<i>prescribed commercial premises</i>			
fire safety directions (FSDns) issued .....	186	128	<b>130</b>
FSDns discharged .....	105	110	<b>110</b>
<i>specified commercial buildings</i>			
fire safety improvement directions (FSIDns) issued .....	336	323	<b>240</b> ε
FSIDns discharged .....	691	802 <sup>δ</sup>	<b>700</b> δ
<i>composite buildings</i>			
FSDns issued .....	5 551	5 988	<b>5 100</b>
FSDns discharged .....	1 736	1 760	<b>1 700</b>
licence/registration applications processed (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools etc.) .....	12 449	12 396	<b>12 000</b>

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	2013 (Actual)	2014 (Actual)	2015 (Estimate)
<i>Minor Works Control System</i>			
minor works submissions received .....	87 938	106 829	<b>110 000</b>
minor works submissions selected for auditing .....	5 367	6 638	<b>6 500</b>
household minor works items validated <sup>δ</sup> .....	18	8	—
<i>Signboard Control System</i>			
unauthorised signboards removal orders issued.....	250	349	<b>600#</b>
unauthorised signboards removed/validated.....	146	791 <sup>λ</sup>	<b>800</b>
dangerous/abandoned signboards removed/repaired .....	1 144	1 301	<b>1 400</b>
reports of unauthorised, dangerous or abandoned signboards from members of the public attended to .....	—	1 451	<b>1 400</b>
<i>Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme</i>			
loan applications processed.....	2 697	1 827 <sup>η</sup>	<b>2 800<sup>η</sup></b>
loan applications approved.....	2 068	1 516 <sup>η</sup>	<b>2 300<sup>η</sup></b>
total amount of loans committed (\$m).....	141.0	117.6 <sup>η</sup>	<b>150.0<sup>η</sup></b>
<i>New Buildings</i>			
new building proposals approved .....	184	237	<b>260<sup>υ</sup></b>
plans received and processed .....	17 404	17 334	<b>19 000<sup>υ</sup></b>
gross floor area of proposed new buildings approved (in 1 000 m <sup>2</sup> ) .....	2 049	4 406	<b>4 800<sup>υ</sup></b>
site inspections made.....	5 206	10 023 <sup>ω</sup>	<b>10 000<sup>ω</sup></b>
sites inspected.....	1 258	1 201	<b>1 200</b>
hoarding permits issued or renewed <sup>Λ</sup> .....	914	867	—
occupation permits issued .....	140	200	<b>220<sup>υ</sup></b>

<sup>ε</sup> The decrease in 2014 was due to a drop in reports received from the public.

<sup>§</sup> The number of removal orders is anticipated to increase as a significant number of UBWs is expected to be identified from the enforcement actions.

<sup>Δ</sup> The increase is due to the redeployment of resources for clearing the backlog of outstanding removal orders.

<sup>‡</sup> The decrease in 2014 was due to more buildings being selected for issue of mandatory inspection notices instead of repair/investigation orders.

<sup>@</sup> The estimate in 2015 has taken into account the adjustment in work priority. Resources will be redeployed to step up enforcement actions against non-compliant notices.

<sup>ψ</sup> The increase in 2014 was due to the large number of NTEHs surveyed in 2013.

<sup>α</sup> The increase is due to the inclusion of inspections arising from individual reports on sub-divided flats in addition to the number of inspections under LSOs as from 2014 onwards.

<sup>β</sup> The number of repair orders is anticipated to reduce as the number of slopes identified under the risk-based priority ranking system of the Landslip Prevention and Mitigation Programme will decrease and resources will be redeployed to clear the backlog of outstanding repair orders.

<sup>ε</sup> Since the remaining number of specified commercial buildings in multiple ownership and with directions yet to be issued has decreased, the corresponding number of directions to be issued will decrease in the coming years.

<sup>δ</sup> Many directions issued with relatively simple requirements have been discharged gradually and difficult cases particularly those involving improvement works in the common parts of buildings are accumulating.

<sup>◇</sup> Recent experience has revealed that owners generally preferred replacing the existing unauthorised household minor works items (i.e. air conditioning unit supporting frames, drying racks and canopies) with new ones properly constructed under the minor works control system, instead of retaining the existing ones under the validation scheme. To improve the brevity of the indicators on minor works control system, this relatively insignificant indicator is to be removed as from 2015.

<sup>#</sup> The anticipated increase in 2015 is due to the stepping-up of enforcement action against unauthorised signboards.

<sup>λ</sup> The increase in 2014 was due to strengthened enforcement action.

<sup>η</sup> The drop in the number of loan applications in 2014 was due to the phasing out of OBB. It is anticipated that the number of applications will increase when the impact of MBIS and MWIS emerges in 2015.

<sup>υ</sup> The estimated increase in 2015 is due to the increase in land supply for private developments.

<sup>ω</sup> The increase is due to the extension of scope of the site inspections to be counted to include site audit checks, routine inspections and inspections in response to reports from members of the public on site safety and quality of construction works.

<sup>Λ</sup> Indicator to be removed as from 2015 as this is not a key performance indicator in processing new building proposals.

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### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2015–16*

- 8 During 2015–16, the Department will take forward initiatives in all areas of its work. In particular, it will:
- continue to implement the revised enforcement policy against UBWs introduced since April 2011 and respond to reports on UBWs from members of the public;
  - continue the LSO on comprehensive clearance of UBWs on rooftops, flat roofs, yards and lanes of target buildings;
  - continue the LSO on inspection of sub-divided flats in target buildings and rectification of irregularities of building works associated with sub-divided flats;
  - continue the LSO on removal of large unauthorised signboards and the LSO on removal of signboards that are not validated on target buildings or target streets;
  - continue the LSO for removal of UBWs in NTEHs that constitute serious contravention of the law and pose higher potential risks to building safety, and administer the reporting scheme for other UBWs;
  - continue to collaborate with HKHS and URA in speeding up the rehabilitation of old buildings by providing technical and financial assistance to owners in need and complete the implementation of OBB;
  - continue to implement MBIS and MWIS concurrently, covering 650 buildings aged 30 years or above which require mandatory inspection and, if necessary, repair of the buildings and windows in 2015;
  - continue the consultancy study on the latest technological methods in identifying the sources of water seepage in buildings;
  - continue the publicity and public education campaign to disseminate building safety messages to building owners, occupants, building professionals, contractors, workers, property management personnel, students and the general public, and foster a building safety culture;
  - review the Building (Minor Works) Regulation (Cap. 123N) by formulating new and refined minor works items as well as new prescribed building works items to facilitate building owners in carrying out new and/or maintaining existing small scale minor works;
  - continue the joint benchmarking exercise with the industry on the quality of submission of plans to facilitate their preparation of plans for early approval;
  - continue to assist Development Bureau to prepare for the amendments to the building regulations to introduce performance-based standards and modernise technical requirements in respect of construction and drainage of buildings;
  - continue to provide technical advice on building plan submissions involving adaptive re-use of and alteration and addition works to heritage buildings to facilitate the approval process and to process such submissions;
  - implement the design and construction requirements for energy efficiency of residential buildings;
  - continue the review of various building regulations, standards and codes of practice with a view to modernising building design and construction standards;
  - commence a consultancy study to formulate a Code of Practice for Seismic-resistant Building Design Standards for the introduction of statutory seismic design requirements for new buildings; and
  - consult stakeholders for implementing a product certification system for materials used in private building developments.

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### ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2013-14 (Actual) (\$m)	2014-15 (Original) (\$m)	2014-15 (Revised) (\$m)	2015-16 (Estimate) (\$m)
<b>Programme</b>				
Buildings and Building Works.....	1,106.3	1,175.9	1,159.7 (-1.4%)	<b>1,243.1</b> <b>(+7.2%)</b>
				<b>(or +5.7% on 2014-15 Original)</b>

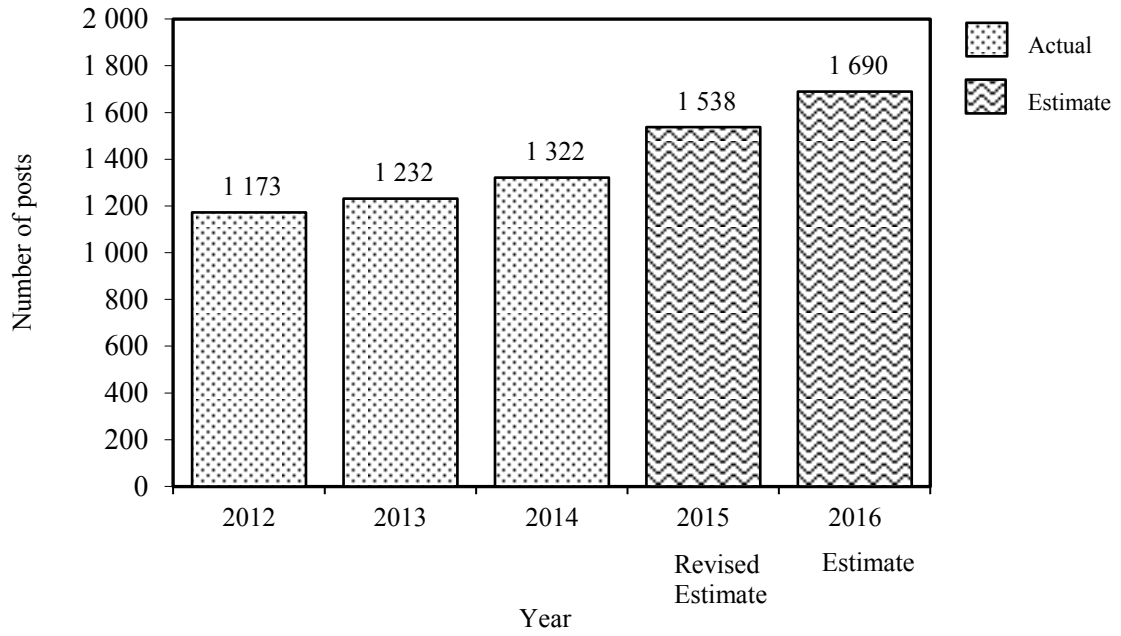
#### Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2015-16 is \$83.4 million (7.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2014-15. This is mainly due to the increased provision for enhancing enforcement relating to building safety, including enforcement against UBWs, LSOs against sub-divided flats, and filling of vacancies. In 2015-16, there will be a net increase of 152 posts including conversion of existing non-civil service contract positions to civil service posts for the continued implementation of the initiatives in enhancing building safety.

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





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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2013–14	Approved estimate 2014–15	Revised estimate 2014–15	<b>Estimate 2015–16</b>	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	<b>\$'000</b>	
<b>Operating Account</b>					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses .....	1,016,305	1,141,427	1,125,178	<b>1,207,697</b>
227	Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services .....	89,998	34,174	34,174	<b>35,406</b>
	Total, Recurrent .....	1,106,303	1,175,601	1,159,352	<b>1,243,103</b>
	Total, Operating Account .....	1,106,303	1,175,601	1,159,352	<b>1,243,103</b>
<b>Capital Account</b>					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote) .....	—	300	300	—
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works .....	—	300	300	—
	Total, Capital Account .....	—	300	300	—
	Total Expenditure .....	1,106,303	1,175,901	1,159,652	<b>1,243,103</b>

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### Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2015–16 for the salaries and expenses of the Buildings Department is \$1,243,103,000. This represents an increase of \$83,451,000 over the revised estimate for 2014–15 and of \$136,800,000 over the actual expenditure in 2013–14.

#### *Operating Account*

#### Recurrent

**2** Provision of \$1,207,697,000 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 2015 will be 1 538 posts including one supernumerary post. It is expected that there will be a net increase of 152 posts in 2015–16. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2015–16, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$752,097,000.

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

	2013–14 (Actual) (\$'000)	2014–15 (Original) (\$'000)	2014–15 (Revised) (\$'000)	<b>2015–16 (Estimate) (\$'000)</b>
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	684,562	793,944	804,065	<b>875,663</b>
- Allowances.....	6,260	10,391	8,515	<b>9,008</b>
- Job-related allowances.....	34	48	50	<b>51</b>
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	2,633	5,941	4,733	<b>6,660</b>
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	20,417	26,602	26,384	<b>40,839</b>
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees .....	81,604	105,856	87,843	<b>103,324</b>
- Contract maintenance .....	2,098	2,159	2,145	<b>2,192</b>
- General departmental expenses .....	218,697	196,486	191,443	<b>169,960</b>
	1,016,305	1,141,427	1,125,178	<b>1,207,697</b>

**5** Provision of \$35,406,000 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.