

Head 139 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: FOOD AND HEALTH BUREAU (FOOD BRANCH)

Controlling officer: the Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food) will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2017–18 **\$162.1m**

Establishment ceiling 2017–18 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 45 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2017 rising by three posts to 48 posts as at 31 March 2018..... **\$32.0m**

In addition, there will be an estimated nine directorate posts as at 31 March 2017 and as at 31 March 2018.

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Director of Bureau's Office	This programme contributes to Policy Area 27: Intra-Governmental Services (Secretary for Food and Health).
Programme (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety	This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Food and Health).
Programme (3) Environmental Hygiene	This programme contributes to Policy Area 32: Environmental Hygiene (Secretary for Food and Health).

Detail

Programme (1): Director of Bureau's Office

	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Original)	2016–17 (Revised)	2017–18 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	12.0	11.8	12.0 (+1.7%)	12.4 (+3.3%)
				(or +5.1% on 2016–17 Original)

Aim

2 The aim is to ensure the smooth operation of the Office of the Secretary for Food and Health.

Brief Description

3 The Office of the Secretary for Food and Health is responsible for providing support to the Secretary for Food and Health in undertaking political work. This includes the support provided by the Under Secretary and the Political Assistant. The Office is also responsible for providing administrative support to the Secretary for Food and Health in carrying out his duties. The work includes the planning, co-ordination and implementation of all arrangements for the Secretary's public, media and community functions.

Programme (2): Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Original)	2016–17 (Revised)	2017–18 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	41.1	96.4	70.3 (-27.1%)	83.3 (+18.5%)
				(or -13.6% on 2016–17 Original)

Aim

4 The aim is to formulate and oversee implementation of policies to ensure that food available for human consumption is safe, respond to food incidents effectively, prevent the introduction and spread of zoonotic diseases and diseases in animals and plants, facilitate the sustainable development of the agricultural and fisheries industries, and oversee efficient operation of government wholesale marketing facilities for fresh food produce.

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Brief Description

5 The Branch's main responsibility under this programme is to formulate and co-ordinate policies and programmes relating to the above activities. It made good progress in achieving the targets set for 2016.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017–18

6 During 2017–18, the Branch will:

- study the latest development on regulation of nutrition claims and health claims for formula products and prepackaged food for infants and young children under the age of 36 months, with a view to putting forth specific legislative proposals;
- study the feasibility of reprovisioning and expanding the Food Safety Laboratory of the Government Laboratory to increase its testing capability and enhance its operational efficiency for tests relating to food safety;
- continue to devise and implement a strategic plan for encouraging reduced intake of salt and sugars in food to promote a healthy diet;
- put forth legislative proposals in respect of the regulation of the safety and quality standards of edible fats and oils, and commission studies on “cooking oils in use” with a view to developing guidelines on good practice on “cooking oils in use” for the trade;
- initiate consultation work on strengthening the regulation of the levels of metallic contamination in food;
- continue to study the regulation of cooked meat, including looking into international practices;
- consider optimising the regulatory framework governing veterinary drug residues in food with reference to the implementation of the Pesticide Residues in Food Regulation (Cap. 132 CM);
- follow up on the proposals to introduce a pre-market safety assessment scheme for genetically modified food;
- implement the new agriculture policy to proactively support the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture, including preparing for the establishment of the Agricultural Park, launching the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and conducting a consultancy study on agricultural priority areas;
- conduct public consultation on the recommendations of the consultancy study on the future of the live poultry trade;
- continue to implement a multi-pronged strategy to prevent avian influenza outbreak;
- continue to review and update the existing standards on food safety having regard to international practices and local needs;
- monitor the progress of various measures introduced to sustain and upgrade the development of local fisheries;
- oversee the implementation of the new regulatory regime on the strengthened regulation of animal trading and dog breeding activities for enhancing animal welfare;
- review the regulation of, and support to food animal farms so as to enhance their biosecurity, in contribution to Hong Kong's overall effort to combat the problem of antimicrobial resistance;
- prepare regulations under the Veterinary Surgeons Registration Ordinance (Cap. 529) to provide for the election of members of the veterinary profession to the Veterinary Surgeons Board; and
- prepare legislation for implementing the requirements of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources in Hong Kong, including the Catch Documentation Scheme for toothfish and other relevant conservation measures.

Programme (3): Environmental Hygiene

	2015–16 (Actual)	2016–17 (Original)	2016–17 (Revised)	2017–18 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	21.7	39.7	52.8 (+33.0%)	66.4 (+25.8%)
				(or +67.3% on 2016–17 Original)

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Aim

7 The aim is to provide quality environmental hygiene services in the territory, strengthen the management of public markets, minimise the risks and threats caused to public health by pest and other nuisances, increase the supply of columbarium and crematorium facilities and enhance the regulation of private columbaria, enhance the effectiveness of regulatory control over food premises, and promote public involvement in the upkeep of personal and environmental hygiene standards.

Brief Description

8 The Branch's main responsibility under this programme is to formulate and co-ordinate policies and programmes relating to the above activities. It made good progress in achieving the targets set for 2016.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2017–18

9 During 2017–18, the Branch will:

- formulate improvement proposals for a number of public markets, taking into account the recommendations of the consultancy study conducted in 2014;
- continue to implement measures to increase the supply of public columbarium and crematorium facilities and to promote the scattering of cremated human ashes at sea or in Gardens of Remembrance;
- follow through the legislative process of the Private Columbaria Bill with a view to enhancing the regulation of private columbaria;
- continue to implement the assistance scheme for improving the fire safety and operating environment of fixed-pitch hawker areas;
- follow through the implementation of measures to improve the operation of the liquor licensing regime; and
- intensify the cleansing of the environment, particularly targeting on hygiene blackspots.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2015–16 (Actual) (\$m)	2016–17 (Original) (\$m)	2016–17 (Revised) (\$m)	2017–18 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Director of Bureau’s Office	12.0	11.8	12.0	12.4
(2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety.....	41.1	96.4	70.3	83.3
(3) Environmental Hygiene	21.7	39.7	52.8	66.4
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	74.8	147.9	135.1 (–8.7%)	162.1 (+20.0%)
				(or +9.6% on 2016–17 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2017–18 is \$0.4 million (3.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to increased provision for payment of contract gratuities to non-civil service contract staff.

Programme (2)

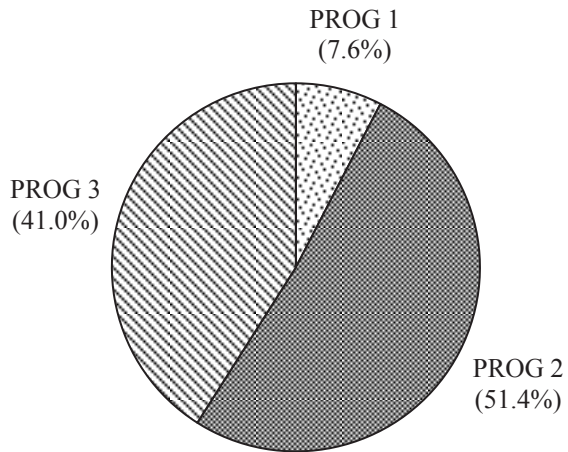
Provision for 2017–18 is \$13.0 million (18.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to the full-year provision for a new supernumerary directorate post for strengthening support on policy matters and initiatives relating to food safety and provision for dealing with any contingency measures arising from avian influenza incidents.

Programme (3)

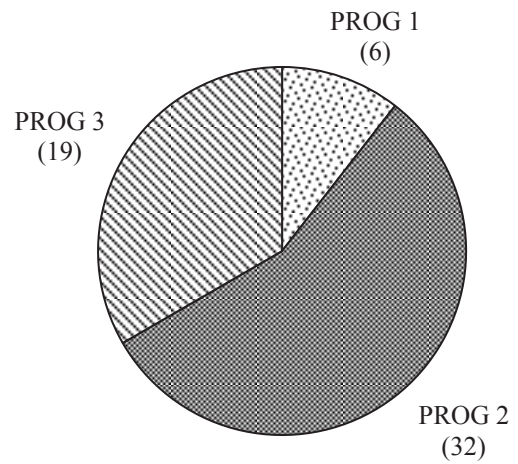
Provision for 2017–18 is \$13.6 million (25.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2016–17. This is mainly due to the creation of new posts in relation to the proposed regulation of private columbaria and the increased provision for meeting environmental hygiene exigencies such as health threats related to dengue fever. There will be an increase of three posts in 2017–18.

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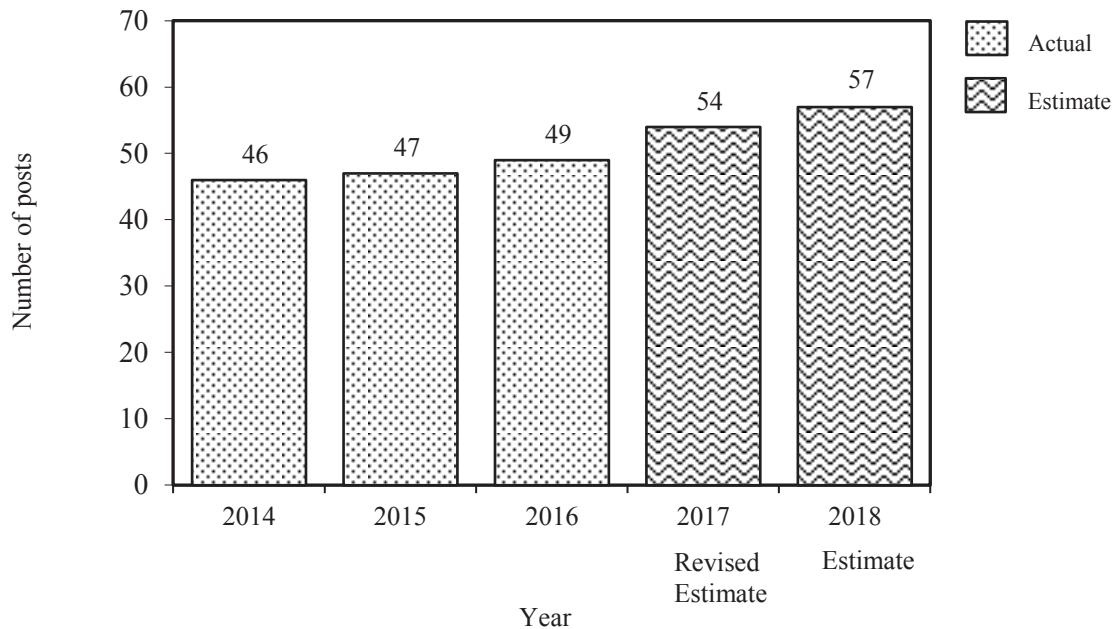
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2017-18)*



*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2018)*



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



**Head 139 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: FOOD AND HEALTH BUREAU
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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2015–16	Approved estimate 2016–17	Revised estimate 2016–17	Estimate 2017–18	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	74,779	147,914	135,138	162,081
	Total, Recurrent.....	74,779	147,914	135,138	162,081
	Total, Operating Account	74,779	147,914	135,138	162,081
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	Total Expenditure	74,779	147,914	135,138	162,081

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2017–18 for the salaries and expenses of the Food Branch is \$162,081,000. This represents an increase of \$26,943,000 over the revised estimate for 2016–17 and \$87,302,000 over the actual expenditure in 2015–16.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$162,081,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Food Branch. The increase of \$26,943,000 (20%) over the revised estimate for 2016–17 is mainly due to the creation of new posts and provision for dealing with contingency measures arising from avian influenza incidents and other environmental hygiene issues.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2017 will be 54 posts. It is expected that there will be a net increase of three posts in 2017–18. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2017–18, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$31,979,000.

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

	2015–16 (Actual) (\$'000)	2016–17 (Original) (\$'000)	2016–17 (Revised) (\$'000)	2017–18 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	40,875	45,681	44,642	48,805
- Allowances.....	2,352	2,540	3,114	3,658
- Job-related allowances.....	—	2	2	2
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	60	105	89	84
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	1,230	1,786	1,746	2,464
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	30,262	97,800	85,545	107,068
	74,779	147,914	135,138	162,081