

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2007–08	\$775.7m
Establishment ceiling 2007–08 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 825 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2007 rising by four posts to 829 posts as at 31 March 2008.....	\$306.6m
In addition, there will be an estimated 30 directorate posts as at 31 March 2007 and as at 31 March 2008.	
Commitment balance	\$10.3m

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

	2005–06 (Actual)	2006–07 (Original)	2006–07 (Revised)	2007–08 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	751.3	778.9	755.2 (–3.0%)	775.7 (+2.7%)
				(or –0.4% on 2006–07 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.

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 2006, the Department continued to take enforcement action against unauthorised building works and to require building owners to carry out necessary repairs to dilapidated buildings. In addition, the Department:

Existing Buildings

- assisted the Licensing Authority in the implementation of improvement measures to streamline the processing of cinema licences;
- maintained the strengthened service of inspecting within 48 hours unauthorised building works under construction upon receipt of complaints;
- instigated 3 042 prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders on unauthorised building works;
- extended the operation of the pilot joint office with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to handle public complaints about water seepage problems in the whole territory under a three-year programme;
- in collaboration with the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS), continued to implement the modified Co-ordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme to assist owners of 153 target buildings in carrying out the required repair/improvement works;
- inspected buildings erected between 1946 and 1958 to require removal of unauthorised building works and repair of buildings which were found dilapidated;

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- initiated an operation to take enforcement action against unauthorised large glass panels, advertisement signboards and TV displays installed on the external walls of 300 target buildings in areas with heavy pedestrian flow and commercial activities;

New Buildings

- completed public consultation on the revised requirements for the provision of facilities in buildings for persons with a disability and the elderly persons; and
- continued the review of the Building Regulations to modernise building design and construction standards.

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

Targets

	Target	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Plan)
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>				
responding to emergencies during office hours (%)φ:				
within 1.5 hours for cases in urban areas	100	—	99.8	100
within two hours for cases in new towns in New Territories (N.T.)....	100	—	100	100
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.	100	—	100	100
responding to emergencies outside office hours (%)φ:				
within two hours for cases in urban areas and new towns in N.T.	100	—	99.4	100
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.	100	—	100	100
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction</i>				
responding to reports within 48 hours (%)..	100	99.5	99.0	99.0
<i>Existing Buildings</i>				
buildings targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works	1 000/year	1 000	1 169	1 000
buildings covered by the Co-ordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme	150/year	150	153	150
single-staircase buildings improved under rooftop structure clearance operations#	700/year	705	704	700
prescribed commercial premises inspected for improvement of fire safety measuresΔ	150/year	141	162	150
specified commercial buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures¶	140/year	141	128	100@
composite buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures.....	900/year	908	906	900
advertisement signboards removed/ repaired	1 200/year	1 597	1 690	2 000
advising on restaurant licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 12 working days (%)§.....	100	96	98	96
making existing building records available for public viewing within nine working days (%)Ψ	100	94.5	96.0	94.0
<i>New Buildings</i>				
processing building plans				
within 60 days for new submissions (%)	100	99.9	99.9	100
within 30 days for resubmissions (%)	100	99.9	99.9	100

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	Target	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Plan)
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
processing applications for hoarding permitsΩ				
within 60 days for cases of first application (%).....	100	—	100	100
within 30 days for cases of re-application, fast-track processing or renewal (%).....	100	—	100	100

φ New targets as from 2006 to categorise the response time to emergencies according to the locations of occurrence.

Against the April 2001 target of completing 4 500 buildings within seven years, 3 794 buildings have so far been cleared of rooftop structures.

@ The decrease in the number of specified commercial buildings (SCBs) inspected is due to more resources required for the inspection of each of such buildings to be covered in 2007 as they were built in the 1980s and are generally much larger in size, more complicated in layouts and would involve more units and occupiers.

§ The pledged target has been revised from 14 to 12 working days with effect from 1 July 2006 upon implementation of five-day week.

Ψ The pledged target has been revised from ten to nine working days with effect from 1 July 2006 upon implementation of five-day week.

Ω New target as from 2006.

Indicators

	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Estimate)
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>			
emergency reports attended to.....	1 182	1 035	1 200
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction</i>			
reports attended to	3 520	3 568	3 500
<i>Existing Buildings</i>			
unauthorised building works			
reports from members of the public attended to	26 965	26 447	26 000
warning notices issued.....	2 184β	8 498	8 000
removal orders issued.....	25 007	32 711	25 000
prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders	2 962	3 042	3 000
unauthorised structures removed and irregularities rectified.....	40 365	48 479	40 000
dilapidated buildings			
reports from members of the public attended to	15 523	10 614	15 000
repair orders issued	901	1 041	1 000
buildings repaired.....	1 581	1 039	1 000
dangerous slopes			
repair orders issued	168	144	140
dangerous slopes repaired	104	141	140
prescribed commercial premisesΔ			
fire safety directions issued	219	203	200
fire safety directions discharged.....	100	119	110
specified commercial buildings¶			
fire safety improvement directions issued	3 339	3 003	2 000^
fire safety improvement directions discharged.....	2 291	2 165	2 500∇
composite buildings issued with advisory letters to improve fire safety	900	900	900
licence/registration applications processed (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools etc.).....	8 064	8 240	8 000

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	2005 (Actual)	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Estimate)
<i>Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme</i>			
loan applications processed	2 647	2 616	2 800
loan applications approved	2 486	2 342	2 500
total amount of loans committed (\$m)	66.6	75.1	70.0
<i>New Buildings</i>			
new building proposals approved	269	292	300
plans received and processed	11 723	12 213	11 900
occupation permits issued	264	212	200
gross floor area of proposed new buildings approved (in 1 000 m ²)	4 018	4 365	4 500
site audit checks made	6 379	6 438	6 300
sites inspected	1 073	1 121	1 200
hoarding permits issued or renewed	417	766	700

β The indicator was introduced in the course of 2005 and hence cannot capture the full-year effect.

Δ During the years 2005 and 2006, 190 potential prescribed commercial premises (PCPs) were jointly inspected with the Fire Services Department (FSD) each year in which 141 and 162 premises were subsequently identified as PCPs respectively. Up to 31 December 2006, 1 809 commercial premises have been jointly inspected with the FSD since the implementation of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance in May 1997 and 1 291 premises were subsequently identified as PCPs. On the whole, a total of 1 803 fire safety directions (FSDns) were issued by the BD in which 1 081 FSDns were complied with/discharged and 688 PCPs have completed the improvement works or the relevant FSDns have been discharged.

¶ During the years 2005 and 2006, 148 and 140 potential SCBs were jointly inspected with the FSD in which 141 and 128 buildings were subsequently identified as SCBs respectively. Up to 31 December 2006, 1 380 commercial buildings have been jointly inspected with the FSD since the implementation of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) (Amendment) Ordinance in June 1998 and 1 260 buildings were subsequently identified as SCBs. On the whole, a total of 20 521 fire safety improvement directions (FSIDns) were issued by the BD in which 8 449 FSIDns were complied with/discharged and 280 SCBs have completed the improvement works or the relevant FSIDns have been discharged.

^ The drop in the estimated number of FSIDns to be issued in 2007 is due to the fact that fewer SCBs will be inspected in the year and more of them are single-owner properties requiring the issue of one FSIDn only.

▽ The anticipated rise in the number of FSIDns to be discharged in 2007 is due to the increase in the number of FSIDns issued in recent years.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007–08

8 During 2007–08, 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 old buildings for carrying out blitz clearance of unauthorised building works on the external walls and repair of building defects, and 700 single-staircase buildings for clearance of illegal rooftop structures;
- in respect of the removal of unauthorised building works, take vigorous enforcement action to achieve compliance of outstanding removal orders and continue to instigate 3 000 prosecutions in 2007;
- continue to 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;
- continue to develop a performance-based regulatory system to facilitate modern and innovative building design;
- introduce amendments to the Buildings Ordinance to establish a minor works control regime to regulate small-scale building works more effectively;
- carry out an interim review after the extension of the operation of the joint office with the FEHD to handle public complaints about water seepage problems in the whole territory for 18 months;
- sustain a public education and publicity campaign on the need for periodical safety inspection and maintenance of buildings;
- continue to develop a performance-based fire code to facilitate modern fire safety design of buildings;
- continue to collaborate with the HKHS and the Urban Renewal Authority in speeding up the rehabilitation of old buildings by providing technical and financial assistance to owners in need;
- consider developing building design guidelines that support sustainable urban living space in Hong Kong;

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- take enforcement actions to remove more abandoned signboards; and
- continue to take enforcement action against unauthorised large glass panels, advertisement signboards and TV displays installed on the external walls of another batch of target buildings in areas with heavy pedestrian flow and commercial activities.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

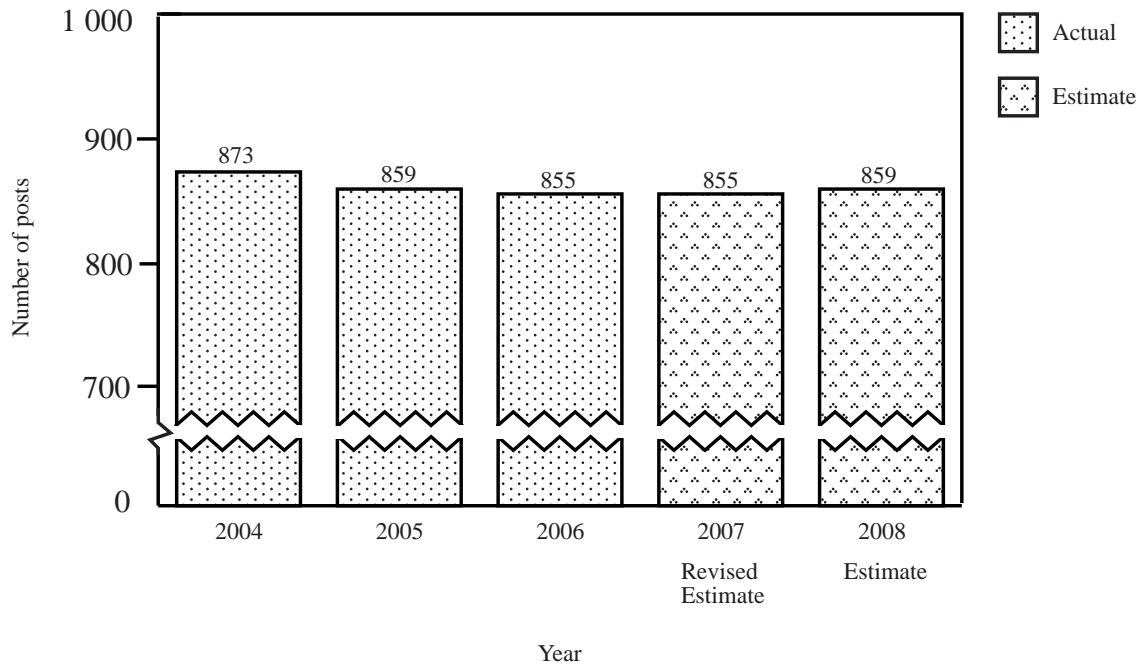
Programme	2005-06 (Actual) (\$m)	2006-07 (Original) (\$m)	2006-07 (Revised) (\$m)	2007-08 (Estimate) (\$m)
Buildings and Building Works.....	751.3	778.9	755.2 (-3.0%)	775.7 (+2.7%)
				(or -0.4% on 2006-07 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2007-08 is \$20.5 million (2.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. This is mainly due to the salary increments for existing staff, full-year effect of the extension of the operation of the joint offices with the FEHD to handle public complaints about water seepage problems in the whole territory, as well as additional provision required for the removal of abandoned advertisement signboards and processing of inter-departmental referrals of planning and building development proposals. In addition, four posts will be created in 2007-08.

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



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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2005-06	Approved estimate 2006-07	Revised estimate 2006-07	Estimate 2007-08
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses.....	706,954	737,529	713,894	735,571
227	Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services.....	37,462	36,490	36,410	36,410
	Total, Recurrent	<u>744,416</u>	<u>774,019</u>	<u>750,304</u>	<u>771,981</u>
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent.....	6,847	4,895	4,895	3,756
	Total, Non-Recurrent	<u>6,847</u>	<u>4,895</u>	<u>4,895</u>	<u>3,756</u>
	Total, Operating Account.....	<u>751,263</u>	<u>778,914</u>	<u>755,199</u>	<u>775,737</u>
<hr/>					
	Total Expenditure.....	<u><u>751,263</u></u>	<u><u>778,914</u></u>	<u><u>755,199</u></u>	<u><u>775,737</u></u>

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2007–08 for the salaries and expenses of the Buildings Department is \$775,737,000. This represents an increase of \$20,538,000 over the revised estimate for 2006–07 and of \$24,474,000 over actual expenditure in 2005–06.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$735,571,000 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 2007 will be 855 permanent posts. It is expected that there will be a creation of four permanent posts in 2007–08. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2007–08, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$306,591,000.

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

	2005–06 (Actual) (\$'000)	2006–07 (Original) (\$'000)	2006–07 (Revised) (\$'000)	2007–08 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	416,770	420,128	415,000	419,061
- Allowances.....	4,307	4,204	4,500	4,502
- Job-related allowances.....	—	18	18	18
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	432	280	346	175
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	—	390	330	1,119
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees.....	62,451	78,679	52,611	64,042
- Contract maintenance.....	2,276	2,723	2,700	4,200
- General departmental expenses.....	220,718	231,107	238,389	242,454
	706,954	737,529	713,894	735,571

5 Provision of \$36,410,000 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.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2006	Revised estimated expenditure for 2006-07	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	007	Translation and production of codes of practice and design manuals in Chinese	500	77	45	378
	011	Consultancy to compile a full list of existing private buildings in Hong Kong	3,300	341	1,248	1,711
	012	Consultancy to review Code of Practice for Fire Safety in buildings and renovation works.....	9,900	5,548	1,127	3,225
	015	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on drainage of buildings	4,000	3,052	74	874
	020	Consultancy study to draft a Comprehensive Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme for Buildings.....	5,600	3,262	293	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	2,214	246	2,040
		Total.....	<u>27,800</u>	<u>14,494</u>	<u>3,033</u>	<u>10,273</u>