

DISASTER RELIEF FUND

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Memorandum Note

On 1 December 1993 the Legislative Council established the Disaster Relief Fund by Resolution to provide a ready mechanism for Hong Kong to respond swiftly to international appeals for humanitarian aid in relief of disasters that occur outside Hong Kong. The Resolution provides that—

- (a) the Financial Secretary is the administrator of the Fund and he may delegate his power of administration to other public officers;
- (b) a Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Chief Executive to advise the Financial Secretary on disbursements from the Fund;
- (c) the Financial Secretary shall make a single grant of cash for each purpose advised by the Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee;
- (d) the Financial Secretary shall obtain the consent of the Finance Committee for a grant in excess of \$8 million;
- (e) the Finance Committee may amend the limit for which the Financial Secretary is required to obtain their consent;
- (f) the Financial Secretary shall credit to the Fund—
 - (i) appropriations from the general revenue approved by the Legislative Council for the purpose of the Fund;
 - (ii) donations received for the purpose of the Fund; and
 - (iii) other sums received for the purpose of the Fund including all moneys received as interest or dividends earned on moneys invested for the Fund;
- (g) the Financial Secretary may expend moneys from the Fund for the purpose of disaster relief as may be advised by the Disaster Relief Fund Advisory Committee;
- (h) the Director of Accounting Services shall, under the authority of a funds warrant issued by the Financial Secretary, pay from the Fund such sums as may be required to meet expenditure from the Fund;
- (i) the Financial Secretary in his discretion may authorise the investment in the manner he may determine of any unexpended balance held in the Fund at any time; and
- (j) the Financial Secretary shall not transfer any moneys from the Fund to the general revenue.

2 On 10 December 1993, the Finance Committee approved an appropriation of \$50 million for the establishment of the Fund.

3 As at 31 March 2007, payments totalling about \$369,828,000 have been made from the Fund since its establishment.

4 As at 6 February 2008, grants totalling \$266,118,000 have been made in 2007–08. It is estimated that \$26,570,000 will be paid in the remaining part of 2007–08 mainly to cater for further requirements arising from relief programmes for snowstorm victims in the Mainland. No estimate of payment is made for 2008–09 as calls on the Fund in relief of disasters cannot be predicted.

5 Receipts for 2007–08 and 2008–09 are estimated at \$269,117,000 and \$42,953,000 respectively.

DISASTER RELIEF FUND

(Payments)

Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2006–07	Revised estimate 2007–08	Estimate 2008–09
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Head 800—Disaster Relief			
180 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Indonesia—grant to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia	977	—	—
181 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Indonesia—grant to Oxfam Hong Kong.....	1,992	—	—
182 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Indonesia—grant to The Salvation Army	3,300	—	—
183 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Indonesia—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	2,200	—	—
184 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Indonesia—grant to Mercy Corps Limited	1,420	—	—
185 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Indonesia—grant to The Association of Chinese Evangelical Ministry Limited	500	—	—
186 Relief programme for flood victims in Guizhou and Jiangxi Provinces, Mainland—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	2,000	—	—
187 Relief programme for flood victims in Hunan Province, Mainland—grant to The Association of Chinese Evangelical Ministry Limited	1,000	—	—
188 Relief programme for flood victims in Guangxi, Hunan and Jiangxi Provinces, Mainland—grant to Hong Kong Red Cross	2,000	—	—
189 Relief programme for drought victims in Sichuan Province, Mainland—grant to World Vision Hong Kong.....	1,500	—	—
190 Relief programme for typhoon victims in the Philippines—grant to World Vision Hong Kong.....	1,500	—	—
191 Relief programme for typhoon victims in the Philippines—grant to The Association of Chinese Evangelical Ministry Limited	1,000	—	—
192 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Yunnan Province, Mainland—grant to The Salvation Army.....	—	2,000	—
193 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Yunnan Province, Mainland—grant to World Vision Hong Kong.....	—	2,000	—
194 Relief programme for flood victims in Guangxi, Guizhou, Hunan and Jiangxi Provinces, Mainland—grant to Hong Kong Red Cross	—	3,700	—
195 Relief programme for flood victims in Hunan Province, Mainland—grant to The Salvation Army.....	—	3,300	—
196 Relief programme for flood victims in Guangxi, Guizhou and Hunan Provinces, Mainland—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	—	2,500	—
197 Relief programme for cyclone and flood victims in Pakistan—grant to Mercy Corps Limited.....	—	880	—
198 Relief programme for flood victims in Anhui, Chongqing and Sichuan, Mainland—grant to Hong Kong Red Cross	—	3,310	—
199 Relief programme for flood victims in Anhui Province, Mainland—grant to The Salvation Army.....	—	2,510	—

DISASTER RELIEF FUND

(Payments)

Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2006–07 \$'000	Revised estimate 2007–08 \$'000	Estimate 2008–09 \$'000
Head 800—Disaster Relief—Cont'd.			
200 Relief programme for flood victims in Anhui Province, Mainland—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	—	3,300	—
201 Relief programme for flood victims in South Asia (Bangladesh, India and Nepal)—grant to Oxfam Hong Kong	—	3,340	—
202 Relief programme for flood victims in India—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	—	1,500	—
203 Relief programme for earthquake victims in Peru—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	—	1,500	—
204 Relief programme for flood victims in Nepal—grant to Hong Kong Red Cross	—	1,200	—
205 Relief programme for cyclone victims in Bangladesh—grant to World Vision Hong Kong	—	3,000	—
206 Relief programme for cyclone victims in Bangladesh—grant to Cedar Fund	—	648	—
207 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to Hong Kong Red Cross	—	8,000	—
208 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to Hunan Province	—	100,000	—
209 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to Guizhou Province	—	100,000	—
210 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to Shaoguan Municipality of the Guangdong Province	—	10,000	—
211 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to Oxfam Hong Kong	—	670	—
212 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to The Salvation Army	—	7,760	—
213 Relief programme for snowstorm victims in the Mainland— grant to World Vision Hong Kong	—	5,000	—
Additional Commitments†	—	26,570	—
<i>Head 800: total</i>	19,389	292,688	—
Total (Payments)			
	19,389	292,688	—

† Mainly to cater for further requirements arising from relief programmes for snowstorm victims in the Mainland.

DISASTER RELIEF FUND**(Receipts)**

	Revised estimate 2007–08	Estimate 2008–09
	\$'000	\$'000
Investment income	1,798	2,553
Refund of grants.....	519	—
Transfer from General Revenue.....	266,800	40,400
Total (Receipts)	269,117	42,953

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Movement of the Account

	Actual				Revised Estimate	Estimate
	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Opening Balance	32	34	18	30	30	7
Revenue	4	2	2	3	3	3
Expenditure	16	38	18	19	293	—
Surplus/(Deficit) before Transfer from GRA	(12)	(36)	(16)	(16)	(290)	3
Transfer from GRA	14	20	28	16	267	40
Surplus/(Deficit) after Transfer from GRA	2	(16)	12	—	(23)	43
Closing Balance	34	18	30	30	7	50

Revenue Analysis

	Actual				Revised Estimate	Estimate
	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Investment Income	3	2	1	3	2	3
Refund of Grants	1	—	1	—	1	—
Total Revenue	4	2	2	3	3	3

Expenditure Analysis

	Actual				Revised Estimate	Estimate
	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09
	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m	\$m
Payments	16	38	18	19	293	—
Total Expenditure	16	38	18	19	293	—

Note: The 2007–08 Revised Estimate on payments reflects grants of \$266 million made as at 6 February 2008 plus additional commitments of \$27 million to cater for further requirements arising from relief programmes for snowstorm victims in the Mainland. No estimate of payment is made for 2008–09 as calls on the Fund in relief of disasters cannot be predicted.