

## Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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

<b>Estimate 2008–09</b> .....	<b>\$825.0m</b>
<b>Establishment ceiling 2008–09</b> (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 829 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2008 rising by 55 posts to 884 posts as at 31 March 2009.....	<b>\$357.7m</b>
In addition, there will be an estimated 30 directorate posts as at 31 March 2008 and as at 31 March 2009.	
<b>Commitment balance</b> .....	<b>\$3.7m</b>

### Controlling Officer's Report

#### Programme

##### Buildings and Building Works

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

#### Detail

	2006–07 (Actual)	2007–08 (Original)	2007–08 (Revised)	2008–09 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	762.5	775.7	784.1 (+1.1%)	825.0 (+5.2%)
				(or +6.4% on 2007–08 Original)

#### Aim

2 The aim is to promote building safety, set and 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 2007, 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*

- in collaboration with the licensing authorities, improved the efficiency, transparency and customer-friendliness of the licensing regime for business premises with measures including streamlining licensing procedures, and enhanced communication with the trade through Business Liaison Groups;
- continued the strengthened service of inspecting within 48 hours unauthorised building works under construction upon receipt of complaints;
- instigated 3 021 prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders on unauthorised building works;
- continued 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 which started in mid-2006, and commenced an interim review for the first 18 months of operation;
- in collaboration with the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS), continued to implement the modified Co-ordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme to assist owners of 150 target buildings in carrying out the required repair/improvement works;

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- took enforcement action to require removal of unauthorised building works and repair of buildings erected between 1946 and 1958;
- initiated a special operation to remove 1 228 dangerous or abandoned advertisement signboards in addition to the annual target of removing 1 200 such signboards;
- continued the operation to take enforcement action against unauthorised large glass panels, advertisement signboards and TV displays installed on the external walls of target buildings in areas with heavy pedestrian flow and commercial activities; and
- worked with the Development Bureau to introduce the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2007 for the establishment of a minor works control system to streamline the control of small-scale building works.

### *New Buildings*

- completed the review on the requirements for the provision of facilities in buildings for persons with disabilities and elderly persons;
- continued a study on developing building design guidelines that support sustainable urban living space in Hong Kong; 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	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Actual)	<b>2008 (Plan)</b>
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>				
responding to emergencies during office hours (%):				
within 1.5 hours for cases in urban areas.....	100	99.8	100	<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	99.4	100	<b>100</b>
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T. ....	100	100	87.5	<b>100</b>
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction</i>				
responding to reports within 48 hours (%)..	100	99.0	99.5	<b>99.0</b>
<i>Existing Buildings</i>				
buildings targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works.....	1 000/year	1 169	1 514	<b>1 000</b>
buildings covered by the Co-ordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme .....	150/year	153	150	<b>150</b>
single-staircase buildings improved under rooftop structure clearance operationsΔ.....	700/year	704	707	<b>700</b>
prescribed commercial premises inspected for improvement of fire safety measuresβ .....	150/year	162	150	<b>150</b>
specified commercial buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measuresΨ .....	30/yearα	128	100	<b>30</b>
composite buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures .....	840/year#	906	905	<b>840</b>
advertisement signboards removed/ repaired.....	1 200/year	1 690	2 428∇	<b>1 600</b>

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	Target	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Actual)	<b>2008 (Plan)</b>
advising on restaurant and places of public entertainment licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 12 working days (%)@ .....	100	98	99	<b>98</b>
making existing building records available for public viewing within nine working days (%).....	100	96	98	<b>94</b>
<i>New Buildings</i>				
processing building plans within 60 days for new submissions (%).....	100	99.9	100	<b>100</b>
within 30 days for re-submissions (%) .....	100	99.9	99.9	<b>100</b>
processing within 28 days applications for consent to commence building works (%) .....	100	99.9	99.9	<b>100</b>
processing within 14 days applications for occupation permits (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
processing applications for hoarding permits within 60 days for cases of first application (%) .....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
within 30 days for cases of re-application, fast-track processing or renewal (%) .....	100	100	99.6	<b>100</b>

Δ Against the April 2001 target of taking enforcement action against 4 500 buildings within seven years, 4 501 buildings have been cleared of rooftop structures. The clearance operation will continue to tackle some 1 000 additional single-staircase buildings identified with illegal rooftop structures.

α The target in 2006 and 2007 was 140. The estimated decrease in the number of specified commercial buildings (SCBs) to be inspected in 2008 is due to the small number of remaining target SCBs. However, it is estimated that more resources are required for the inspection of each of such buildings built in the 1980s which are larger in size, more complicated in layouts, involving more units and occupiers and requiring retrieval and checking of numerous alterations and additions proposals.

# The target in 2006 and 2007 was 900. Following the commencement of the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (FS(B)O) (Cap. 572) in July 2007, the first phase of the implementation programme is to inspect approximately 5 000 pre-1973 target composite buildings in six years, i.e. around 840 per annum.

∇ A special operation in collaboration with the Home Affairs Department for removal of abandoned signboards was undertaken from January to July 2007 resulting in a larger number of signboards removed/repared in 2007.

@ Revised description from the previous target “advising on restaurant licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 12 working days”.

### *Indicators*

	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Actual)	<b>2008 (Estimate)</b>
<i>24-hour emergency services</i>			
emergency reports attended to .....	1 035	791	<b>1 000</b>
<i>Non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction</i>			
reports attended to .....	3 568	3 590	<b>3 500</b>
<i>Existing Buildings</i>			
unauthorised building works			
reports from members of the public attended to .....	26 447	26 009	<b>26 000</b>
warning notices issued .....	8 498	8 621	<b>8 000</b>
removal orders issued .....	32 711	32 898	<b>28 000</b>
prosecutions against failure to comply with removal orders.....	3 042	3 021	<b>3 000</b>
unauthorised structures removed and irregularities rectified .....	48 479	51 312	<b>40 000</b>

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	2006 (Actual)	2007 (Actual)	2008 (Estimate)
dilapidated buildings			
reports from members of the public attended to .....	10 614	8 271 $\Omega$	<b>8 500<math>\Omega</math></b>
repair orders issued .....	1 041	1 083 $\Omega$	<b>800<math>\Omega</math></b>
buildings repaired .....	1 039	1 211	<b>1 000</b>
dangerous slopes			
repair orders issued .....	144	140	<b>140</b>
dangerous slopes repaired .....	141	140	<b>140</b>
prescribed commercial premises $\beta$			
fire safety directions issued .....	203	200	<b>200</b>
fire safety directions discharged .....	119	114	<b>110</b>
specified commercial buildings $\Psi$			
fire safety improvement directions issued .....	3 003	2 001	<b>800<math>\S</math></b>
fire safety improvement directions discharged .....	2 165	2 305	<b>2 600<math>\Phi</math></b>
composite buildings issued with advisory letters to improve fire safety .....	900	354 $\P$	<b>N.A.</b>
composite buildings $\wedge$			
fire safety directions issued .....	N.A.	2 683	<b>4 400</b>
fire safety directions discharged .....	N.A.	0	<b>300</b>
licence/registration applications processed (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools etc.) .....	8 240	9 686	<b>8 800</b>
<i>Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme</i>			
loan applications processed .....	2 616	1 916	<b>1 700</b>
loan applications approved .....	2 342	1 398	<b>1 500</b>
total amount of loans committed (\$m) .....	75.1	45.2	<b>45.0</b>
<i>New Buildings</i>			
new building proposals approved .....	292	293	<b>300</b>
plans received and processed .....	12 213	13 300	<b>13 300</b>
occupation permits issued .....	212	166	<b>200</b>
gross floor area of proposed new buildings approved (in 1 000 m <sup>2</sup> ) .....	4 365	3 861	<b>4 000</b>
site audit checks made .....	6 438	6 493	<b>7 500</b>
sites inspected .....	1 121	1 221	<b>1 200</b>
hoarding permits issued or renewed .....	766	755	<b>700</b>

$\beta$  Since the implementation of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance in May 1997 and up to 31 December 2007, 1 975 commercial premises have been jointly inspected with the Fire Services Department (FSD) and 1 441 premises were subsequently identified as prescribed commercial premises (PCPs). During the same period, a total of 2 003 fire safety directions (FSDns) were issued by the Buildings Department (BD) of which 1 195 FSDns were discharged and 752 PCPs have completed the improvement works.

$\Psi$  Since the implementation of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) (Amendment) Ordinance in June 1998 and up to 31 December 2007, 1 490 commercial buildings have been jointly inspected with the FSD and 1 360 buildings were subsequently identified as SCBs. During the same period, a total of 22 522 fire safety improvement directions (FSIDns) were issued by the BD of which 10 754 FSIDns were discharged and 327 SCBs have completed the improvement works.

$\Omega$  The number of reports received depends on reporting by members of the public to the BD. All reports received have been attended to. The smaller number of repair orders to be issued in 2008 is because of the completion of the Team Clean operation and fewer reports received.

$\S$  The drop in the estimated number of FSIDns to be issued in 2008 is due to the small number of remaining target SCBs to be inspected in the year and about 70 per cent of which are in single-ownership requiring the issue of one FSIDn only.

$\Phi$  The anticipated rise in the number of FSIDns to be discharged in 2008 is due to the planned increase in the number of compliance inspections for stepping up the discharge of outstanding FSIDns.

$\P$  The figure in 2007 covered the work done up to 30 June 2007. Upon the implementation of the FS(B)O in July 2007, FSDns, instead of advisory letters, are issued.

$\wedge$  New indicators as from 2007 pursuant to the implementation of the FS(B)O in July 2007.

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2008–09*

**8** During 2008–09, 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 cantilevered slab balconies 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 2008;

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- continue to provide assistance to building owners in maintaining their buildings under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme;
- continue to make preparations for the introduction of 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;
- continue to take forward legislative amendments to establish the minor works control system;
- complete the interim review on the operation of the joint office with the FEHD to handle public complaints about water seepage problems and implement improvement measures where necessary;
- 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;
- in collaboration with the licensing authorities, make further improvement to the efficiency, transparency and customer-friendliness of the licensing regime for business premises;
- enhance site audit checks on new building works by increasing the number of site inspections from 6 493 to 7 500;
- set up a dedicated team on heritage conservation to process building plan submissions involving alteration and adaptive re-use of heritage buildings and to provide technical advice on compliance with the Buildings Ordinance to facilitate the process; and
- continue to take enforcement action against unauthorised large glass panels, advertisement signboards and TV displays installed on the external walls of target buildings in areas of heavy pedestrian flow and commercial activities.

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### ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

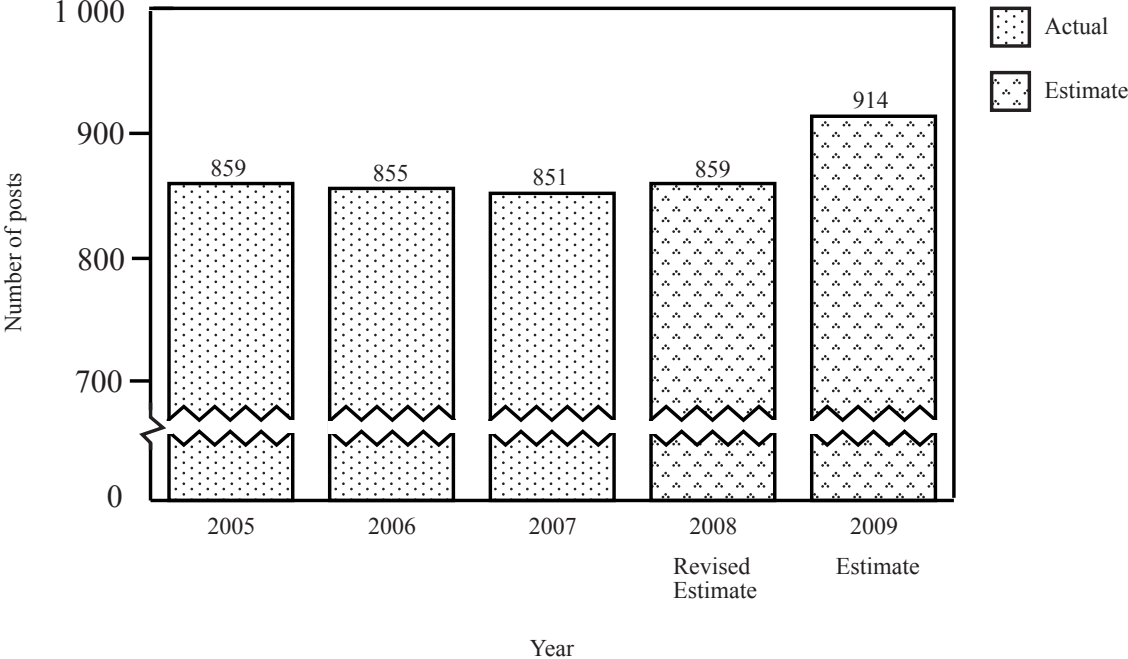
<b>Programme</b>	2006-07 (Actual) (\$m)	2007-08 (Original) (\$m)	2007-08 (Revised) (\$m)	<b>2008-09 (Estimate) (\$m)</b>
Buildings and Building Works .....	762.5	775.7	784.1 (+1.1%)	<b>825.0 (+5.2%)</b>
				<b>(or +6.4% on 2007-08 Original)</b>

#### Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2008-09 is \$40.9 million (5.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2007-08. This is mainly due to increase in salary provision for the creation of 55 posts in 2008-09, filling of vacancies and salary increments, as well as increase in outsourcing expenses for the image conversion of building records for completed projects and for the inspection of unauthorised building works.

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



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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2006-07	Approved estimate 2007-08	Revised estimate 2007-08	<b>Estimate 2008-09</b>
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>Operating Account</b>					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses .....	717,788	735,571	742,993	<b>786,835</b>
227	Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services .....	39,145	36,410	39,840	<b>36,750</b>
	Total, Recurrent.....	756,933	771,981	782,833	<b>823,585</b>
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent .....	5,561	3,756	1,217	<b>1,457</b>
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	5,561	3,756	1,217	<b>1,457</b>
	Total, Operating Account .....	762,494	775,737	784,050	<b>825,042</b>
Total Expenditure .....					
		762,494	775,737	784,050	<b>825,042</b>



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### Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2008–09 for the salaries and expenses of the Buildings Department is \$825,042,000. This represents an increase of \$40,992,000 over the revised estimate for 2007–08 and of \$62,548,000 over actual expenditure in 2006–07.

#### *Operating Account*

#### Recurrent

2 Provision of \$786,835,000 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 2008 will be 859 permanent posts. It is expected that there will be a creation of 55 permanent posts in 2008–09. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2008–09, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$357,659,000.

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

	2006–07 (Actual) (\$'000)	2007–08 (Original) (\$'000)	2007–08 (Revised) (\$'000)	2008–09 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries .....	415,111	419,061	431,664	<b>461,664</b>
- Allowances .....	4,407	4,502	4,131	<b>4,276</b>
- Job-related allowances .....	1	18	10	<b>18</b>
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution .....	342	175	179	<b>880</b>
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution .....	332	1,119	1,164	<b>2,364</b>
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees .....	57,584	64,042	64,787	<b>73,974</b>
- Contract maintenance .....	3,318	4,200	3,800	<b>3,435</b>
- General departmental expenses .....	236,693	242,454	237,258	<b>240,224</b>
	717,788	735,571	742,993	<b>786,835</b>

5 Provision of \$36,750,000 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 31.3.2007	Revised estimated expenditure for 2007-08	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b><i>Operating Account</i></b>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	007	Translation and production of codes of practice and design manuals in Chinese.....	500	128	—	372
	012	Consultancy to review Code of Practice for Fire Safety in buildings and renovation works.....	9,900	6,997	390	2,513
	015	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on drainage of buildings.....	4,000	3,126	104	770
		Total .....	<u>14,400</u>	<u>10,251</u>	<u>494</u>	<u>3,655</u>