

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 2019–20 **\$178.3m**

Establishment ceiling 2019–20 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 52 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2019 rising by one post to 53 posts as at 31 March 2020 **\$36.9m**

In addition, there will be an estimated nine directorate posts as at 31 March 2019 and as at 31 March 2020.

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

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	12.5	14.3	14.3 (—)	14.6 (+2.1%)
				(or +2.1% on 2018–19 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 her 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

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	68.5	86.4	79.1 (–8.4%)	92.4 (+16.8%)
				(or +6.9% on 2018–19 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.

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

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 2018.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

6 During 2019–20, the Branch will:

- 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, and monitoring the consultancy study on designating Agricultural Priority Areas;
- conduct public consultation on the review of the existing legislation related to animal welfare, including introducing a positive duty of care on animal keepers;
- monitor the progress of various measures introduced to sustain and upgrade the development of local fisheries;
- 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;
- follow through the legislative amendment exercise to facilitate relocation of chicken farms to improve their bio-security measures;
- continue to implement a strategic plan for reducing the levels of salt and sugar in food to promote healthy eating;
- continue to review and update local food safety standards, guidelines and regulatory arrangements, including but not limited to those concerning harmful substances in food;
- continue to study the feasibility of re-provisioning and expanding the Food Safety Laboratory of the Government Laboratory to enhance its testing capability and operational efficiency for tests relating to food safety; and
- 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.

Programme (3): Environmental Hygiene

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	69.4	64.9	70.6 (+8.8%)	71.3 (+1.0%)
				(or +9.9% on 2018–19 Original)

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 public columbarium and crematorium facilities, enhance the regulation of private columbaria, promote green burial, 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 2018.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

9 During 2019–20, the Branch will:

- oversee the development of new public markets at selected locations and the implementation of the Market Modernisation Programme to improve facilities of existing public markets;
- 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;
- oversee the implementation of the regulatory regime for private columbaria in accordance with the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630);

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

- promote the application of technologies in the cleansing work of the environment, particularly targeting hygiene blackspots, and in mosquito and midge control as well as rodent control; and
- oversee the re-issue of fixed-pitch hawker licences and re-allocation of vacant hawker pitches with improved fire safety and operating environment.

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

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2017–18 (Actual) (\$m)	2018–19 (Original) (\$m)	2018–19 (Revised) (\$m)	2019–20 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Director of Bureau’s Office	12.5	14.3	14.3	14.6
(2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety.....	68.5	86.4	79.1	92.4
(3) Environmental Hygiene	69.4	64.9	70.6	71.3
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	150.4	165.6	164.0 (–1.0%)	178.3 (+8.7%)
				(or +7.7% on 2018–19 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2019–20 is \$0.3 million (2.1%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to increased provision for salary payment to politically appointed officials and non-civil service contract staff.

Programme (2)

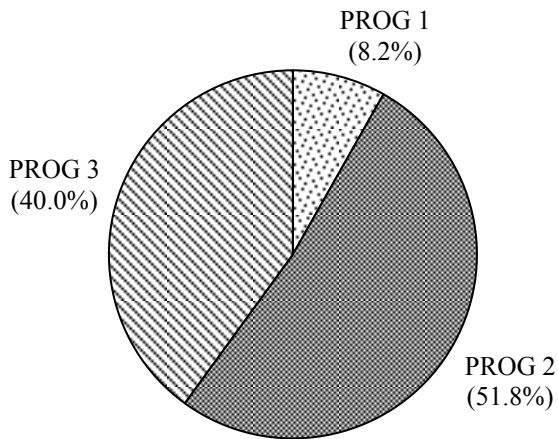
Provision for 2019–20 is \$13.3 million (16.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the increased provision for personal emoluments and other operating expenses, and dealing with any contingency measures arising from avian influenza incidents.

Programme (3)

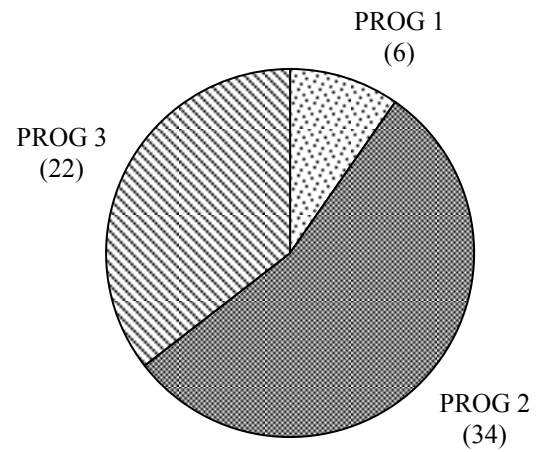
Provision for 2019–20 is \$0.7 million (1.0%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the increased provision for personal emoluments, partly offset by the reduced requirement for operating expenses. There will be a net increase of one post in 2019–20.

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

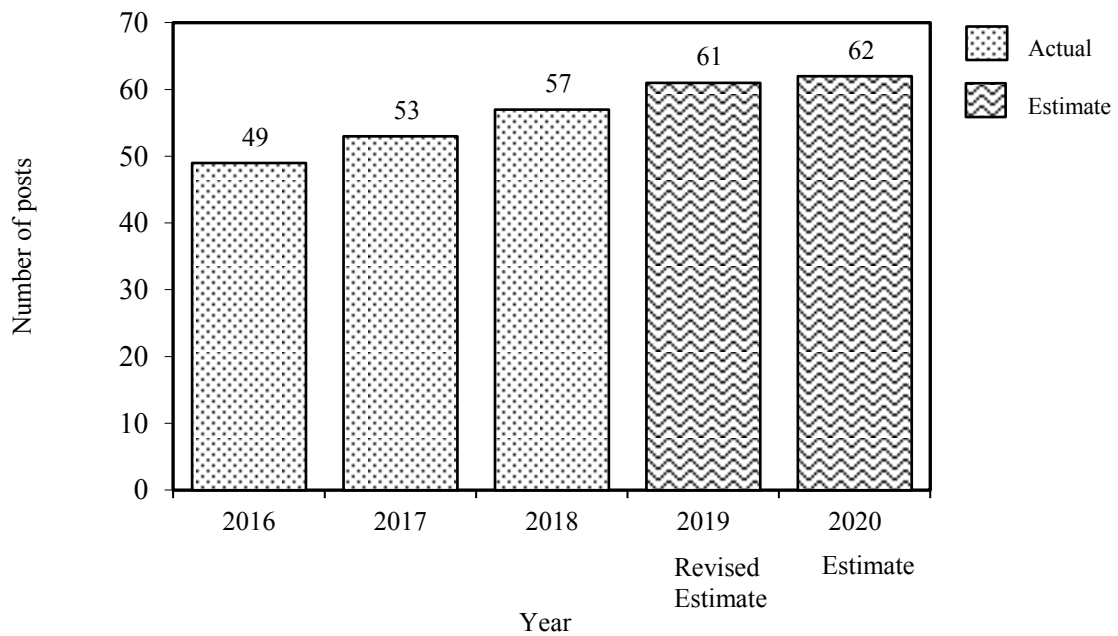
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2019-20)*



*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2020)*



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



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

Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2017–18	Approved estimate 2018–19	Revised estimate 2018–19	Estimate 2019–20	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	150,432	165,583	163,977	178,304
	Total, Recurrent.....	<u>150,432</u>	<u>165,583</u>	<u>163,977</u>	<u>178,304</u>
	Total, Operating Account	<u>150,432</u>	<u>165,583</u>	<u>163,977</u>	<u>178,304</u>
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	Total Expenditure	<u><u>150,432</u></u>	<u><u>165,583</u></u>	<u><u>163,977</u></u>	<u><u>178,304</u></u>

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

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2019–20 for the salaries and expenses of the Food Branch is \$178,304,000. This represents an increase of \$14,327,000 over the revised estimate for 2018–19 and \$27,872,000 over the actual expenditure in 2017–18.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$178,304,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Food Branch.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2019 will be 61 posts including one supernumerary post. It is expected that there will be a net increase of one post in 2019–20. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2019–20, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$36,907,000.

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

	2017–18 (Actual) (\$'000)	2018–19 (Original) (\$'000)	2018–19 (Revised) (\$'000)	2019–20 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	48,827	53,684	52,821	55,130
- Allowances.....	3,198	3,981	4,399	4,735
- Job-related allowances.....	3	2	2	2
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	107	85	172	169
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	2,156	3,268	2,327	2,812
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	96,141	104,563	104,256	115,456
	150,432	165,583	163,977	178,304