

Head 45 — FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2020–21	\$7,711.0m
Establishment ceiling 2020–21 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 11 169 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 rising by 177 posts to 11 346 posts as at 31 March 2021	\$5,072.8m
In addition, there will be an estimated 19 directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 and as at 31 March 2021.	
Commitment balance.....	\$602.5m

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

- Programme (1) Fire Service
- Programme (2) Fire Protection and Prevention
- Programme (3) Ambulance Service

These programmes contribute to Policy Area 9: Internal Security (Secretary for Security).

Detail

Programme (1): Fire Service

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	3,970.4	4,330.6	4,193.6 (–3.2%)	4,581.1 (+9.2%)
				(or +5.8% on 2019–20 Original)

Aim

2 The aim is to extinguish fires, to protect life and property in case of fire or other calamity and to carry out fire hazard abatement action.

Brief Description

3 Through the strategic deployment of properly trained staff, equipment and appliances within each Command area, effective fire fighting and rescue services are maintained to respond to emergency calls expeditiously and efficiently in order to protect lives and properties. The Fire Services Department will continue to take action to abate imminent fire hazard and promote public awareness of fire safety. This work mainly involves:

- providing an efficient and effective fire service to the community;
- ensuring that all fire fighting and rescue units are in an immediate state of readiness to respond to emergency calls at all times;
- providing refresher and tactical training to all service staff to ensure that performance is maintained at the highest possible standard;
- ensuring that fire safety regulations are observed and emergency vehicular accesses are properly maintained by the public; and
- advising on and responding to fire safety issues in District Councils and District Fire Safety Committees, and organising fire safety publicity activities as part of the efforts to strengthen community involvement in the fight against fire.

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4 The key performance measures in respect of the provision of fire service are:

Targets

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
total building fire calls met within graded response time (%).....	92.5	93.8	93.3	92.5
fire calls met within graded response time of six minutes for built-up areas (%).....	92.5	93.6	92.9	92.5
fire calls met within graded response time of nine to 23 minutes for more dispersed risk/isolated developments (%).....	94.5	95.4	96.7	95.0
complaints of imminent fire hazards answered within 24 hours (%).....	100	100	100	100
requests for fire drills, fire safety talks, seminars, exhibitions, meetings and operational visits attended (%).....	100	100	100	100

Indicators

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
all fire calls.....	33 463	37 606	34 000
building fire calls in built-up areas.....	25 806	28 313	26 000
building fire calls in more dispersed risk/isolated developments.....	2 956	3 186	3 000
special service calls.....	37 815	35 284	35 000
emergency ambulance calls attended by first responders.....	49 886	69 835	40 000
turnouts of fire appliances to emergency calls.....	157 090	162 602	157 000
emergency move-ups of fire appliances to provide operational coverage.....	60 568	64 790	61 000
complaints of imminent fire hazards received.....	8 670	8 679	8 700
Fire Hazard Abatement Notices issued in respect of floating obstructions to means of escape (MOE) and locked exits...	2 290	2 365	2 500
prosecutions instituted.....	315	364	350
inspection of hospitals/clinics.....	467	460	470
lectures and advisory services given to hospitals/clinics.....	1 016	1 085	1 000
inspection of fire service installation (FSI) to verify the accuracy of maintenance certificates.....	19 936	19 794	19 000

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21

5 During 2020–21, the Department will:

- continue to enhance live-fire and rescue training for and on-scene operational safety of frontline fire personnel;
- continue to monitor the development and construction of fire services facilities to support the Three-Runway System (3RS) at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA);
- pursue the plan for procurement of fire appliances to support the 3RS at HKIA, and continue to monitor the progress of the replacement and procurement of other fire appliances and vessels; and
- continue to pursue the replacement of the mobilising and communication system for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency in deploying fire fighting, rescue and ambulance resources.

Programme (2): Fire Protection and Prevention

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	612.7	654.4	693.3 (+5.9%)	737.7 (+6.4%)

(or +12.7% on
2019–20 Original)

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Aim

6 The aim is to reduce fire hazards in the community and to ensure that appropriate fire protection measures are provided in buildings and premises according to their intended use(s).

Brief Description

7 The two Fire Protection Commands are responsible for the control of dangerous goods and timber stores, abatement of fire hazards in general, registration of FSI contractors, formulation and inspection of fire safety measures in buildings, and upgrading of fire safety standards in prescribed commercial premises, specified commercial buildings, composite buildings and domestic buildings. They also advise relevant statutory authorities and the public on fire protection/prevention and promote public awareness of fire safety and emergency preparedness. This work mainly involves:

- licensing storage or manufacture of Category 2 (other than liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)) to Category 10 dangerous goods, storage of timber and vehicles for conveyance of Category 2 (other than LPG) and Category 5 dangerous goods;
- conducting investigation of complaints about dangerous goods (other than LPG), illicit fuelling activities, vehicle repair workshops and fire hazards and initiating law enforcement action;
- registration of FSI contractors and monitoring of their performance;
- vetting and certifying building plans in respect of provision of FSIs and equipment;
- ensuring the provision and proper maintenance of FSIs and equipment in buildings;
- vetting and approving portable fire fighting equipment;
- conducting inspection of fire safety in schools, child care centres, food premises, prescribed commercial premises, specified commercial buildings, composite buildings, karaoke establishments, drug dependent persons treatment and rehabilitation centres, and places of public entertainment;
- conducting inspection of ventilating systems in buildings and licensed premises;
- giving lectures and advisory services on fire safety of premises other than hospitals and clinics;
- processing loan applications on fire safety improvement works under the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme;
- upgrading fire safety measures in prescribed commercial premises, specified commercial buildings, composite buildings and domestic buildings;
- inculcating a fire safety culture in Hong Kong and encouraging greater community involvement in improving fire safety; and
- conducting educational and publicity activities to enhance the awareness of emergency preparedness in the community.

8 The key performance measures in respect of fire protection and prevention are:

Targets

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
safety requirements issued within 28 working days for storage/manufacture of Category 2 (other than LPG) to Category 10 dangerous goods and/or for storage of timber following receipt of application and the required details/plans in full (%).....	100	100	100	100
safety requirements issued within six working days for vehicles used for conveyance of Category 2 (other than LPG) or Category 5 dangerous goods following receipt of application (%).....	100	100	100	100
licences issued within six working days for storage/manufacture of Category 2 (other than LPG) to Category 10 dangerous goods and/or storage of timber upon confirmation of full compliance with safety requirements (%)	100	100	100	100

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	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
licences issued within six working days for vehicles used for conveyance of Category 2 (other than LPG) or Category 5 dangerous goods upon confirmation of full compliance with safety requirements (%).....	100	100	100	100
fire safety requirements issued within 20 working days for the licensing/ registration of schools, child care centres, food premises, places of public entertainment, karaoke establishments, and drug dependent persons treatment and rehabilitation centres following receipt of application and the required details/plans in full (%).....	90	100	100	95
Fire Services Certificates issued within seven working days upon confirmation of full compliance with fire safety requirements for all licence/registration applications (%).....	90	100	100	95
complaints about dangerous goods (other than LPG) or reports of fire hazards posing imminent danger investigated within 24 hours (%).....	100	100	98	100
complainants for complaints related to imminent danger advised within 12 working days of outcome of investigation (%).....	90	100	100	95
complaints about fire hazards not posing imminent danger investigated within ten working days (%).....	95.0	99.9	100	95.0
complainants for complaints not related to imminent danger advised within 27 working days of outcome of investigation (%).....	90.0	99.9	100	95.0
applications processed within seven working days for registration as FSI contractors (%).....	100	100	100	100
letters of approval issued within 14 working days to applicants for registration as FSI contractors upon completion of all formalities (%).....	100	100	100	100
no. of prescribed commercial premises inspected.....	50	50	50	50
no. of specified commercial buildings inspected.....	20	20	20	20
no. of composite buildings inspected.....	400	406	400	400

Indicators

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
licences renewed/issued			
timber/dangerous goods stores.....	4 492	4 376	4 400
dangerous goods vehicles.....	2 081	2 034	2 000
Fire Hazard Abatement Notices issued (other than floating obstructions to MOE and locked exits)	8 777	7 738	8 000
prosecutions instituted			
dangerous goods and timber stores	181	157	210
fire hazards.....	425	779	450
building plans processed.....	22 260	23 383	24 000
inspection of FSIs and equipment.....	227 296	239 780	230 000
applications for approval of portable fire fighting equipment and FSI/equipment processed.....	209	340	220

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	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
inspection of fire safety in schools, child care centres, food premises, places of public entertainment, karaoke establishments, and drug dependent persons treatment and rehabilitation centres	40 725	40 890	39 000
inspection of fire safety in commercial premises and composite buildings	65 003	62 247	62 000
inspection of ventilating systems in buildings and licensed premises	33 559	33 492	33 300
lectures and advisory services given (other than hospitals/clinics)	133 480	127 473	127 400
prescribed commercial premises			
no. of fire safety directions issued	804	788	800
no. of fire safety directions complied with/discharged ...	850	837	850
specified commercial buildings			
no. of fire safety improvement directions issued	2 045	2 007	2 000
no. of fire safety improvement directions complied with/discharged.....	3 997	1 008	2 000
composite buildings			
no. of fire safety directions issued	21 375	24 485	16 000
no. of fire safety directions complied with/discharged ...	7 827	12 839	7 500

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21

9 During 2020–21, the Department will continue to:

- conduct inspection with a view to enhancing fire protection measures for prescribed commercial premises with floor area exceeding 230 square metres, specified commercial buildings and pre-1987 composite/domestic buildings;
- pursue legislative work and enforcement actions to improve the fire safety of industrial buildings;
- fine-tune the proposals for amending the remaining subsidiary legislation under the Dangerous Goods Ordinance (Cap. 295) to enhance the control of dangerous goods;
- review the legislative provisions regarding the registration scheme for FSI contractors;
- pursue legislative work for the introduction of a scheme for registered fire engineers;
- enhance public awareness of community emergency preparedness;
- implement a community education programme on cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and the use of Automated External Defibrillator; and
- strengthen publicity activities to educate the public on the proper use of emergency ambulance service.

Programme (3): Ambulance Service

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	1,919.9	2,176.6	2,065.0 (–5.1%)	2,392.2 (+15.8%)
				(or +9.9% on 2019–20 Original)

Aim

10 The aim is to provide an efficient and effective paramedic emergency ambulance service to meet public demand.

Brief Description

11 Through strategic deployment of properly trained staff, equipment and ambulances, the Department maintains an ambulance service that responds to ambulance calls effectively and efficiently. This work mainly involves:

- rendering assistance to any person who appears to need prompt or immediate medical attention by securing his safety, resuscitating or sustaining his life and reducing his suffering or distress;
- ensuring that all emergency calls that require the immediate provision of ambulance aid and subsequent conveyance of the sick or injured persons to hospital are responded to as expeditiously as possible;

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- ensuring that all hospital transfer calls received by the Department, involving the transfer of patients from a hospital or clinic to an acute hospital for urgent medical investigation or treatment are responded to as expeditiously as possible;
- ensuring that all ambulances and equipment are well maintained and fully operational at all times;
- maintaining good working relationship with district organisations, medical institutions, etc., to facilitate the effective and efficient discharge of operational duties; and
- maintaining and enhancing pre-hospital emergency care knowledge and skills of personnel through regular and specialised training.

12 The key performance measures in respect of the provision of ambulance service are:

Target

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
emergency calls answered within the target response time of 12 minutes (%) ...	92.5	94.6	93.4	92.5

Indicators

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
no. of emergency calls.....	748 777	766 679	781 200
no. of hospital transfer calls	54 642	54 423	56 600
calls per ambulance	2 098	2 095	2 014
turnouts of ambulances, ambulance motor cycles and Rapid Response Vehicles to calls	877 947	905 833	927 100
emergency move-ups of ambulances to provide operational coverage.....	93 269	100 168	108 500

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21

13 During 2020–21, the Department will continue to:

- implement the Rapid Response Vehicle Scheme to enhance the delivery of paramedic ambulance service and quality assurance;
- enhance the provision of post-dispatch advice to callers requesting emergency ambulance service; and
- explore the long-term arrangement for the provision of emergency ambulance service.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2018–19 (Actual) (\$m)	2019–20 (Original) (\$m)	2019–20 (Revised) (\$m)	2020–21 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Fire Service	3,970.4	4,330.6	4,193.6	4,581.1
(2) Fire Protection and Prevention.....	612.7	654.4	693.3	737.7
(3) Ambulance Service	1,919.9	2,176.6	2,065.0	2,392.2
	6,503.0	7,161.6	6,951.9 (–2.9%)	7,711.0 (+10.9%)
				(or +7.7% on 2019–20 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$387.5 million (9.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the net increase of 67 posts, as well as additional provision for filling vacancies, and increased operating expenses and cash flow requirement for capital items.

Programme (2)

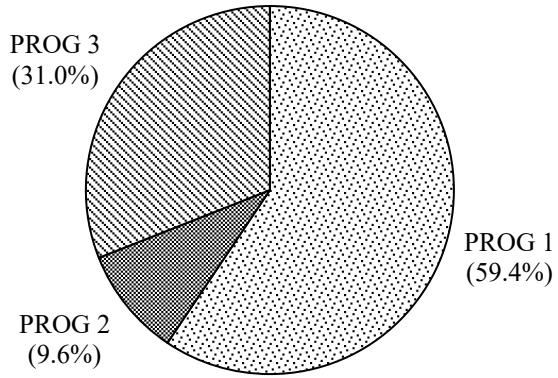
Provision for 2020–21 is \$44.4 million (6.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the net increase of nine posts, as well as additional provision for filling vacancies, and increased operating expenses.

Programme (3)

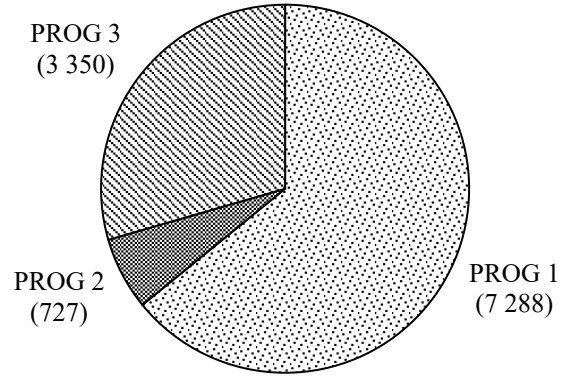
Provision for 2020–21 is \$327.2 million (15.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the net increase of 101 posts, as well as additional provision for filling vacancies, and increased operating expenses and cash flow requirement for capital items.

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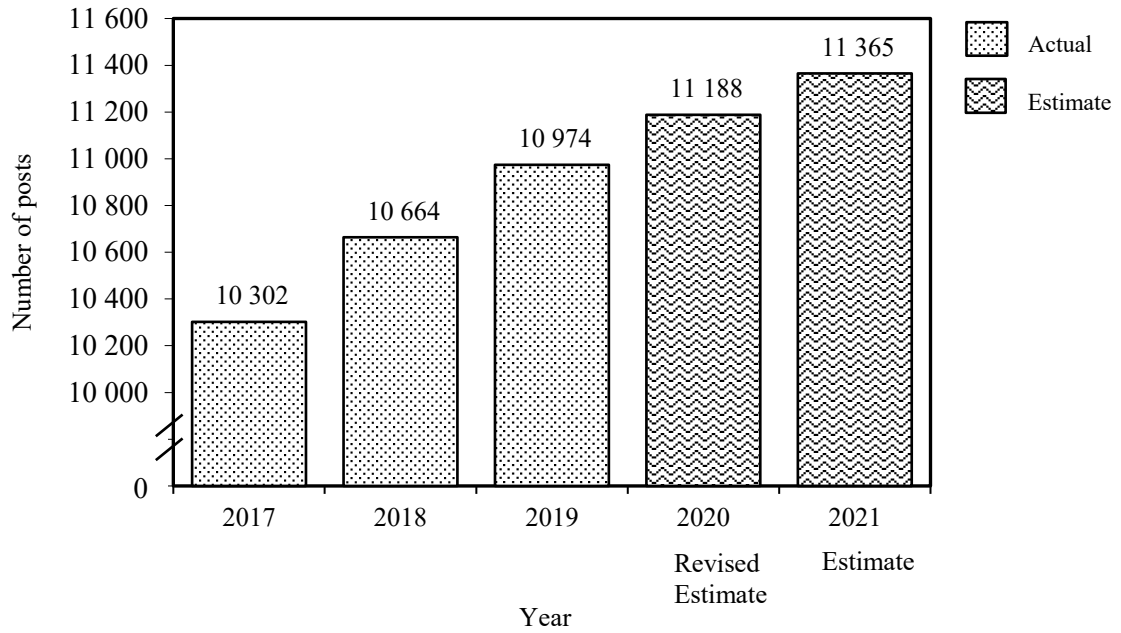
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2020-21)*



*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2021)*



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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2018–19	Approved estimate 2019–20	Revised estimate 2019–20	Estimate 2020–21	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	6,222,978	6,407,884	6,685,664	7,031,741
	Total, Recurrent.....	6,222,978	6,407,884	6,685,664	7,031,741
	Total, Operating Account	6,222,978	6,407,884	6,685,664	7,031,741
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Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
603	Plant, vehicles and equipment.....	82,911	86,717	72,038	90,573
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	83,237	407,102	102,384	381,962
690	Town ambulances (block vote).....	113,885	259,885	91,802	206,765
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	280,033	753,704	266,224	679,300
	Total, Capital Account.....	280,033	753,704	266,224	679,300
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	Total Expenditure	6,503,011	7,161,588	6,951,888	7,711,041

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2020–21 for the salaries and expenses of the Fire Services Department is \$7,711,041,000. This represents an increase of \$759,153,000 over the revised estimate for 2019–20 and \$1,208,030,000 over the actual expenditure in 2018–19.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$7,031,741,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Fire Services Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2020 will be 11 188 posts. It is expected that there will be a net increase of 177 posts in 2020–21. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2020–21, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$5,072,824,000.

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

	2018–19 (Actual) (\$'000)	2019–20 (Original) (\$'000)	2019–20 (Revised) (\$'000)	2020–21 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	4,638,240	4,765,565	4,978,223	5,153,557
- Allowances.....	136,427	103,933	163,455	155,795
- Job-related allowances.....	114,960	126,238	128,199	128,209
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	23,531	26,187	26,260	28,105
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	329,455	388,238	393,349	457,431
Departmental Expenses				
- Specialist supplies and equipment	94,771	129,689	115,971	178,389
- General departmental expenses	885,594	868,034	880,207	930,255
	6,222,978	6,407,884	6,685,664	7,031,741

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$381,962,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of \$279,578,000 (273.1%) over the revised estimate for 2019–20. This reflects the increased cash flow requirement for fire appliances and equipment.

6 Provision of \$206,765,000 under *Subhead 690 Town ambulances (block vote)* is for the procurement of new and replacement of town ambulances each costing up to \$10 million. The increase of \$114,963,000 (125.2%) over the revised estimate for 2019–20 is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for town ambulances.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2019	Revised estimated expenditure for 2019–20	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital Account						
603		<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment</i>				
	8BY	Replacement of Fireboat No. 7	98,260	25,056	59,798	13,406
	8CQ	Replacement of diving support speedboat No. 2	16,000	13,249	1,904	847
	8CR	Replacement of diving support speedboat No. 3	16,000	13,033	2,032	935
	8F5	One replacement aerial ladder platform F722	16,940	88	—	16,852
	8F6	Acquisition of a fireboat.....	125,000	1,687	—	123,313
	8F7	Acquisition of a fast rescue vessel	40,000	486	3,915	35,599
	8F8	Replacement of Fireboat No. 2	97,500	—	—	97,500
	8F9	Replacement of Command Boat No. 1.....	120,000	—	—	120,000
	8FA	Replacement of Command Boat No. 2.....	120,000	—	—	120,000
	8FB	One replacement crash fire tender R22	10,496	—	1,050	9,446
	8FC	One replacement crash fire tender R42....	10,496	—	1,050	9,446
	8FD	Acquisition of a high reach extendable turret for the Airside Fire Station (West Support Area) for Three-Runway System.....	12,775	—	852	11,923
	8FE	Acquisition of two rapid intervention vehicles for the Airside Fire Station (West Support Area) for Three-Runway System.....	20,892	—	1,393	19,499
	8FF	Replacement of Turntable Ladder F131Ω	11,871Ω	—	—	11,871
	8FG	Replacement of Turntable Ladder F132Ω	11,871Ω	—	—	11,871
		Total	<u>728,101</u>	<u>53,599</u>	<u>71,994</u>	<u>602,508</u>

Ω This is a new item, funding for which is sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2020.