

## 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 2020–21** ..... **\$193.9m**

**Establishment ceiling 2020–21** (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 53 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 rising by three posts to 56 posts as at 31 March 2021..... **\$40.5m**

In addition, there will be an estimated nine directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 and as at 31 March 2021.

### 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

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	<b>2020–21 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	14.4	14.6	14.9 (+2.1%)	<b>15.0</b> (+0.7%)
				(or +2.7% on 2019–20 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

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	<b>2020–21 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	57.0	92.4	88.1 (–4.7%)	<b>101.5</b> (+15.2%)
				(or +9.8% on 2019–20 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.

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### *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 2019.

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21*

6 During 2020–21, 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;
- follow up on the 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, such as resuming issuance of new marine fish culture licences and commencing environmental impact assessment for designating new fish culture zones;
- 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; and
- continue to study the feasibility of reprovisioning and expanding the Food Safety Laboratory of the Government Laboratory to enhance its testing capability and operational efficiency for tests relating to food safety.

### **Programme (3): Environmental Hygiene**

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	<b>2020–21 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	89.8	71.3	74.3 (+4.2%)	<b>77.4</b> (+4.2%)
				(or +8.6% on 2019–20 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 2019.

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21*

9 During 2020–21, 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 provision of facilities for keeping and cremating abortuses;
- oversee the implementation of the regulatory regime for private columbaria in accordance with the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630);

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- promote collaboration in mosquito and rodent control; and
- oversee the refurbishment programme of public toilets.

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**ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION**

	2018–19 (Actual) (\$m)	2019–20 (Original) (\$m)	2019–20 (Revised) (\$m)	2020–21 (Estimate) (\$m)
<b>Programme</b>				
(1) Director of Bureau’s Office .....	14.4	14.6	14.9	<b>15.0</b>
(2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety .....	57.0	92.4	88.1	<b>101.5</b>
(3) Environmental Hygiene .....	89.8	71.3	74.3	<b>77.4</b>
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	161.2	178.3	177.3 (-0.6%)	<b>193.9</b> <b>(+9.4%)</b>
				<b>(or +8.7% on 2019–20 Original)</b>

**Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision**

**Programme (1)**

Provision for 2020–21 is \$0.1 million (0.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to increased provision for salary expenses.

**Programme (2)**

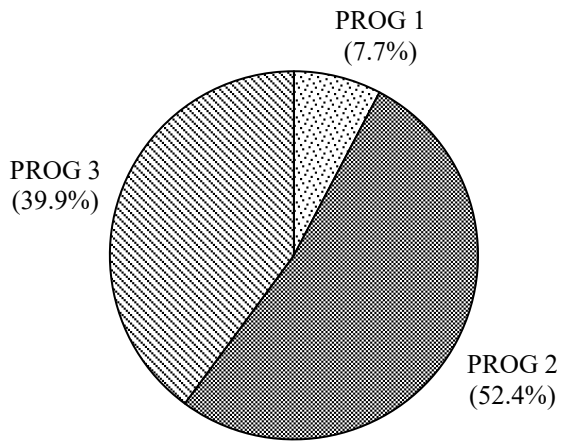
Provision for 2020–21 is \$13.4 million (15.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the increased provision for personal emoluments and operating expenses, and dealing with any contingency measures arising from avian influenza incidents. There will be a net increase of two posts in 2020–21.

**Programme (3)**

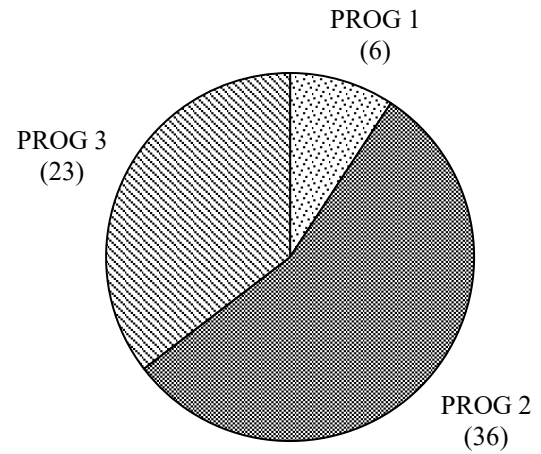
Provision for 2020–21 is \$3.1 million (4.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the increased provision for personal emoluments and operating expenses. There will be an increase of one post in 2020–21.

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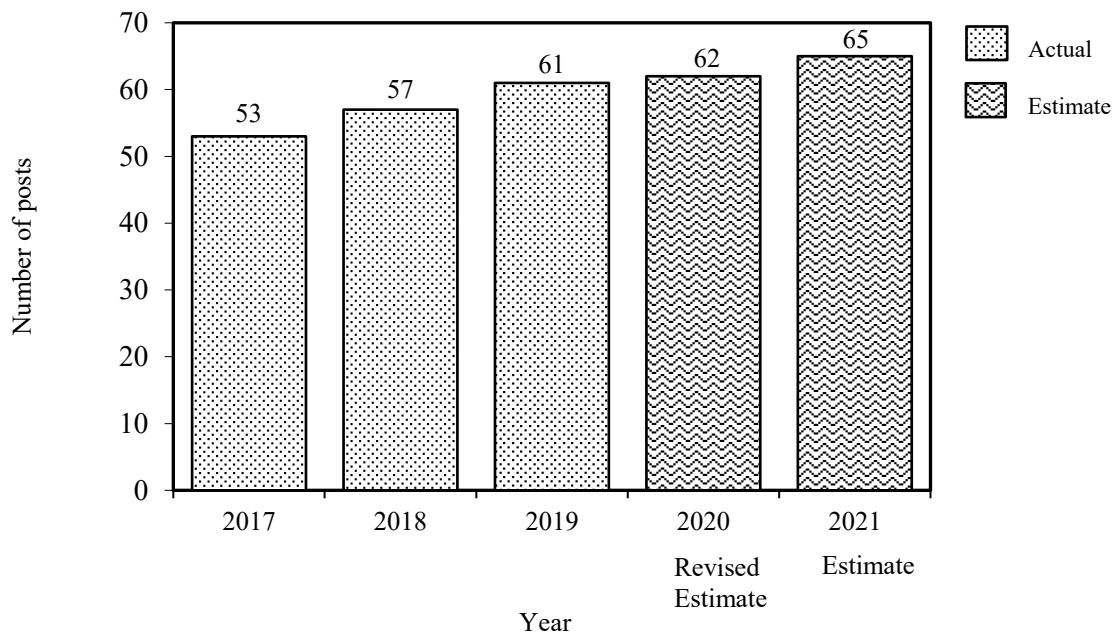
*Allocation of provision  
to programmes  
(2020-21)*



*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	<b>Estimate 2020–21</b>	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	<b>\$'000</b>	
<b>Operating Account</b>					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses .....	161,195	178,304	177,316	<b>193,908</b>
	Total, Recurrent.....	<u>161,195</u>	<u>178,304</u>	<u>177,316</u>	<b><u>193,908</u></b>
	Total, Operating Account .....	<u>161,195</u>	<u>178,304</u>	<u>177,316</u>	<b><u>193,908</u></b>
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	Total Expenditure .....	<u><u>161,195</u></u>	<u><u>178,304</u></u>	<u><u>177,316</u></u>	<b><u><u>193,908</u></u></b>

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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 Food Branch is \$193,908,000. This represents an increase of \$16,592,000 over the revised estimate for 2019–20 and \$32,713,000 over the actual expenditure in 2018–19.

#### *Operating Account*

#### Recurrent

**2** Provision of \$193,908,000 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 2020 will be 62 posts including one supernumerary post. It is expected that there will be a net increase of three 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 \$40,472,000.

**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)	<b>2020–21 (Estimate) (\$'000)</b>
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries .....	52,607	55,130	57,081	<b>61,410</b>
- Allowances .....	4,375	4,735	3,205	<b>3,168</b>
- Job-related allowances.....	—	2	3	<b>2</b>
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution .....	166	169	182	<b>150</b>
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution .....	2,173	2,812	2,822	<b>3,817</b>
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses .....	101,874	115,456	114,023	<b>125,361</b>
	161,195	178,304	177,316	<b>193,908</b>