

Head 62 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: HOUSING BUREAU

Controlling officer: the Permanent Secretary for Housing will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2023–24	\$7,313.0m
Commitment balance.....	\$13,147.8m

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Director of Bureau's Office	This programme contributes to Policy Area 27: Intra-Governmental Services (Secretary for Housing).
Programme (2) Building Control	These programmes contribute to Policy Area 31: Housing (Secretary for Housing).
Programme (3) Private Housing	
Programme (4) Appeal Panel (Housing)	
Programme (5) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance	
Programme (6) Support Services	

Detail

Programme (1): Director of Bureau's Office

	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Original)	2022–23 (Revised)#	2023–24 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	—	—	23.1	22.4 (–3.0%)

The revised estimate for 2022–23 represents the provision required for the nine months from 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Aim

- 2 The aim is to ensure the smooth operation of the Office of the Secretary for Housing.

Brief Description

3 The Office of the Secretary for Housing is responsible for providing support to the Secretary for Housing 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 Housing 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): Building Control

	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Original)	2022–23 (Revised)	2023–24 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	176.9	175.0	174.8 (–0.1%)	176.3 (+0.9%)
				(or +0.7% on 2022–23 Original)

Aim

4 The Independent Checking Unit (ICU) under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Housing is delegated with the building control authority over buildings of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) that have been sold or otherwise disposed of under section 4(2)(a) or 17A of the Housing Ordinance (Cap. 283) (HO). The aim is for ICU to exercise building control of these former HA buildings, in accordance with the Buildings Department (BD)'s current practice on building control of private housing, and to make a bi-annual report to the Director of Buildings.

Brief Description

5 ICU has been carrying out building control duties in subsidised sale flats (SSF) buildings under authority delegated by the Building Authority. The delegation has been extended to retail and carparking premises and some public rental housing (PRH) estates as a result of the divestment of HA's retail and carparking premises since November 2005 when the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) became applicable to these properties. As at 1 December 2022, the portfolio of properties comprises:

• number of SSF courts/flats :	212 / 434 103
• number of PRH estates/flats :	97 / 430 785
• total number of courts and estates :	309
• number of retail/carparking premises:	110 / 348
• total number of domestic flats (SSF and PRH) :	864 888

6 The work involves:

- processing applications for building works within the statutory period;
- attending to emergencies and carrying out enforcement action on:
 - unauthorised building works;
 - dangerous buildings; and
 - defective drainage;
- conducting the Planned Survey for overall improvements to SSF buildings;
- processing licensing/registration referrals by government departments (e.g. restaurants, places of public entertainment and tutorial schools);
- processing minor works submissions; and
- implementing the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS).

7 The key performance measures in respect of building control are:

Targets

	Target	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Plan)
processing building plans within 60 days for new submissions (%)	90.0	99.4	98.8	90.0
processing building plans within 30 days for re-submission (%)	90.0	100	99.6	90.0
processing applications for consent to commence building works within 28 days (%).....	90.0	100	99.5	90.0
advising on restaurants and places of public entertainment licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 12 working days (%).....	98	100	100	98
responding to emergencies during office hours (%) :				
within 1.5 hours for cases in urban areas	100	100	—Δ	100
within two hours for cases in new towns in New Territories (N.T.)	100	100	100	100
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.	100	—Δ	—Δ	100
responding to emergencies outside office hours (%) :				
within two hours for cases in urban areas and new towns in N.T.	100	100	100	100
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.	100	—Δ	—Δ	100
providing non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction within 48 hours (%)	99	100	100	99

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	Target	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Plan)
buildings targeted for prescribed inspection and, if necessary, prescribed repair under MBIS	28/year	44	50	28
flats targeted for prescribed window inspection and, if necessary, prescribed window repair under MWIS	26 560/year	29 420	32 439	26 560

Indicators

	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Estimate)
building plans received and processed within 60 days	175	171	160
resubmitted building plans received and processed within 30 days	345	266	280
consents to commence building works issued	463	382	390
buildings to be targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works under ICU's Planned Survey	18	18	18
unauthorised buildings works			
reports from members of the public attended to	718	449	590
reports on cantilever canopies	18	18	18
advisory letters issued	1 709	3 438	2 730
removal orders issued	546	1 251	1 430
prosecutions referred to BD against failure to comply with removal orders	17	11	20
dilapidated buildings			
reports from members of the public attended to	1 029	972	930
repairs orders issued	—Δ	—Δ	—Δ
mandatory building inspection			
notices issued	14	20	14
notices discharged	1 318	406λ	300λ
mandatory window inspection			
notices issued	12 855	13 931	13 000
notices discharged	12 125	13 146	12 000
advice on licensing/registration applications (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools, etc.)	1 821	1 492	1 650
minor works submissions received	28 297	28 193	28 000

Δ No case in the relevant years.

λ Higher mandatory building inspection notices compliance rate in recent years resulting in lesser outstanding notices and hence smaller numbers of notices estimated to be discharged in 2022 and 2023.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023–24

8 During 2023–24, ICU will continue:

- with the programme of the Planned Survey in SSF buildings;
- to compile as-built records of existing SSF and PRH buildings, and retail and carparking premises, in line with BD's existing practice and format for private housing, to facilitate future building control;
- to implement the Minor Works Control System; and
- to implement MBIS and MWIS for buildings aged 30 years or above which require mandatory inspection and, if necessary, repair of the buildings and flats aged ten years or above which require mandatory inspection and, if necessary, repair of windows.

Programme (3): Private Housing

	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Original)	2022–23 (Revised)	2023–24 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	94.4	95.0	96.1 (+1.2%)	98.3 (+2.3%)
				(or +3.5% on 2022–23 Original)

Aim

9 The aim is to maintain an orderly, fair and free environment to facilitate stable and healthy development of the private residential property market.

Brief Description

10 The work involves:

- collecting data, compiling and maintaining a database on private housing supply;
- releasing data on housing supply in the primary market on a regular basis to enhance market transparency;
- monitoring and providing analysis on developments in the private residential property market;
- overseeing the policy of the pre-sale Consent Scheme administered by the Lands Department (LandsD);
- implementing the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance (Cap. 621) to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties;
- monitoring the subsidised housing projects entrusted to the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS);
- monitoring the implementation of Starter Homes projects;
- working with the Estate Agents Authority (EAA) to further improve the calibre and professionalism of local estate agents; and
- administering the appeal mechanism provided for under the Estate Agents Ordinance (Cap. 511).

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023–24

11 During 2023–24, the Bureau will continue to:

- release statistics on private housing supply in the primary market on a quarterly basis;
- enhance the transparency of the sale of first-hand residential properties;
- liaise with HKHS on the implementation of subsidised housing projects entrusted to HKHS;
- oversee the implementation of Starter Homes projects; and
- liaise with EAA to enhance the professionalism and service standard of local estate agents.

Programme (4): Appeal Panel (Housing)

	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Original)	2022–23 (Revised)	2023–24 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	12.9	12.5	12.3 (–1.6%)	12.8 (+4.1%)
				(or +2.4% on 2022–23 Original)

Aim

12 The aim is to provide administrative and secretarial support to the Appeal Panel (Housing) (the Panel) so that appeals lodged under the HO against the termination of leases by HA are handled in a thorough, impartial and efficient manner.

Brief Description

13 The Appeal Panel (Housing) Secretariat is set up to assist the Panel in discharging its statutory functions. The work involves:

- assisting Chairman of the Panel in appointing tribunals to conduct hearings on appeals received;
- serving as secretary to the tribunals;
- notifying appellants and HA of the tribunal's determination;
- advising Members of the Panel on the statutory functions of the Panel and the latest policies on tenancy issues; and
- organising briefing sessions for new Members of the Panel.

14 The key performance measures in respect of the Panel are:

Targets

	Target	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Plan)
issuing notice of hearing and relevant documents to appellant and HA not less than 14 days before the fixed hearing date (%).....	100	100	100	100
issuing tribunal's determination to appellant and HA within 14 days after hearing (%)β	100	100	100	100

β Revised description of the previous target “issuing Appeal Tribunal’s determination to appellant and HA within 14 days after hearing” as from 2022.

Indicators

	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Estimate)
no. of appeals received	722	1 054	1 000
no. of hearing sessions	163	204	280
no. of hearings arranged.....	325	898	900
no. of appeals heard.....	233	639	620

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023–24

15 During 2023–24, the Appeal Panel (Housing) Secretariat will:

- continue to provide efficient and effective support services to the Panel in discharging its duties; and
- ensure that Members are kept up-to-date on the latest policies on tenancy issues to facilitate their consideration of appeals.

Programme (5): Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Original)	2022–23 (Revised)	2023–24 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	26.5	27.3	26.5 (–2.9%)	26.3 (–0.8%)
				(or –3.7% on 2022–23 Original)

Aim

16 The aim is to provide rehousing assistance to eligible clearerees affected by government actions in land clearance and illegal rooftop structure clearance, and victims of natural disasters and other emergency incidents.

Brief Description

17 The work involves:

- screening rehousing applications referred by LandsD according to prevailing policies and criteria and verifying their rehousing eligibility;
- providing assistance in rehousing the occupants of illegal rooftop structures displaced by BD’s enforcement actions and verifying their rehousing eligibility;
- allocating PRH and interim housing to eligible applicants;
- paying singleton and doubleton allowances/issuing Green Form Certificates to eligible applicants in lieu of rehousing;
- maintaining computerised records on miscellaneous housing benefits granted by LandsD and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA);
- providing temporary shelter to victims affected by natural disasters, emergency incidents and other government actions; and
- co-ordinating the use of the transit centres.

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18 The key performance measures in respect of rehousing of occupants upon clearance are:

Target

	Target	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Plan)
verification of domestic clearances' rehousing eligibility within eight weeks upon receipt of referrals from relevant departments (%).....	100	100	100	100

Indicators

	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Estimate)
programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances			
no. of rehousing applications processed	220	211	490§
no. of offers made for PRH.....	190	193	450§
no. of offers made for interim housing	10	6	20§
no. of households received other housing benefits	—¶	—¶	10§
illegal rooftop structure clearances			
no. of rehousing applications processed	60	20	50§
no. of offers made for PRH.....	10	1	10§
no. of offers made for interim housing	20	15	20§
no. of households received other housing benefits	—¶	—¶	10§
emergency			
no. of bedspaces in transit centres provided	416	416	416

§ The figures are estimated according to the progress and programmes of LandsD's clearance projects and BD's enforcement actions against illegal rooftop structures.

¶ No case in the relevant years.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023–24

19 During 2023–24, the Bureau will continue to:

- undertake rehousing for affected occupants referred by LandsD and BD including vetting rehousing eligibility;
- maintain computerised records on miscellaneous housing benefits granted by LandsD and URA;
- provide temporary shelter to victims affected by natural disasters, emergency incidents and other government actions; and
- co-ordinate the use of the transit centres.

Programme (6): Support Services

	2021–22 (Actual)	2022–23 (Original)	2022–23 (Revised)	2023–24 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	2,303.9	7,029.8	4,707.0 (–33.0%)	6,976.9 (+48.2%)
				(or –0.8% on 2022–23 Original)

Aim

20 The aim is to provide efficient and effective support services for housing-related matters and infrastructure projects.

Brief Description

21 The work involves:

- administering housing-related infrastructure projects under the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711 by providing intra-governmental services for implementation of these projects. The work involves liaison with departments concerned at various stages from project inception, feasibility study, funding approval, detailed design and construction to monitoring of the delivery of projects according to schedule and within budget;

- co-ordinating the collection and checking the accuracy of overall public and private housing statistics and providing necessary data and analysis to relevant bureaux and departments for infrastructure and land supply planning;
- monitoring the supply and timely delivery of suitable sites for development of public housing to attain the policy pledge;
- implementing Light Public Housing (LPH) projects to achieve the target of building about 30 000 LPH units from 2023–24 to 2027–28. The work involves liaison with the Architectural Services Department and the relevant bureaux/departments at various stages from projects inception, feasibility study, funding approval, detailed design and construction to monitoring of the delivery of projects and the subsequent operation and management of individual LPH estates according to schedule and within budget;
- processing and vetting funding applications to the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organisations (NGOs) and facilitating various short-term community initiatives on transitional housing to achieve the transitional housing supply target as pledged;
- engaging NGOs to set up six district service teams and establish/manage a web-based information portal to assist the Rating and Valuation Department to promote the implementation of Part IVA of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7) to regulate tenancies of subdivided units at district level;
- implementing the Cash Allowance Trial Scheme, under which cash allowance is provided to eligible General Applicant households who have been waiting for PRH for over three years, subject to meeting specified eligibility criteria; and
- implementing the Pilot Scheme on Private Developer Participation in Subsidised Housing Development.

22 The key performance measures in respect of support services are:

Indicators

	2021 (Actual)	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Estimate)
no. of infrastructure projects obtaining funding approval from the Legislative Council in the year	5	4	7
no. of infrastructure projects under construction	44	47	49

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023–24

23 During 2023–24, the Bureau will:

- continue to liaise closely with bureaux/departments concerned to facilitate the implementation of housing-related infrastructure projects to meet the public housing production programme;
- continue to monitor the progress on supply and timely availability of public housing sites;
- implement and closely monitor the LPH projects to build about 30 000 LPH units from 2023–24 to 2027–28 as pledged;
- facilitate and monitor the implementation of transitional housing projects approved by the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by NGOs or the Community Care Fund, and facilitate various short-term community initiatives on transitional housing to contribute towards the pledged target of providing about 20 000 transitional housing units;
- continue to implement the Cash Allowance Trial Scheme to provide cash allowance to eligible General Applicant households, who have been waiting for PRH for over three years; and
- implement the Pilot Scheme on Private Developer Participation in Subsidised Housing Development.

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2021–22 (Actual) (\$m)	2022–23 (Original) (\$m)	2022–23 (Revised) (\$m)	2023–24 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Director of Bureau's Office	—	—	23.1	22.4
(2) Building Control	176.9	175.0	174.8	176.3
(3) Private Housing	94.4	95.0	96.1	98.3
(4) Appeal Panel (Housing)	12.9	12.5	12.3	12.8
(5) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance	26.5	27.3	26.5	26.3
(6) Support Services	2,303.9	7,029.8	4,707.0	6,976.9
	2,614.6 ^α	7,339.6	5,039.8 (–31.3%)	7,313.0 (+45.1%)
				(or –0.4% on 2022–23 Original)

^α The figure does not include the provision of rent payment for tenants/licencees living in the rental units of HA and HKHS.

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2023–24 is \$0.7 million (3.0%) lower than the revised estimate for 2022–23. This is mainly due to the decrease in operating expenses.

Programme (2)

Provision for 2023–24 is \$1.5 million (0.9%) higher than the revised estimate for 2022–23. This is mainly due to the increase in operating expenses.

Programme (3)

Provision for 2023–24 is \$2.2 million (2.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2022–23. This is mainly due to the increase in operating expenses.

Programme (4)

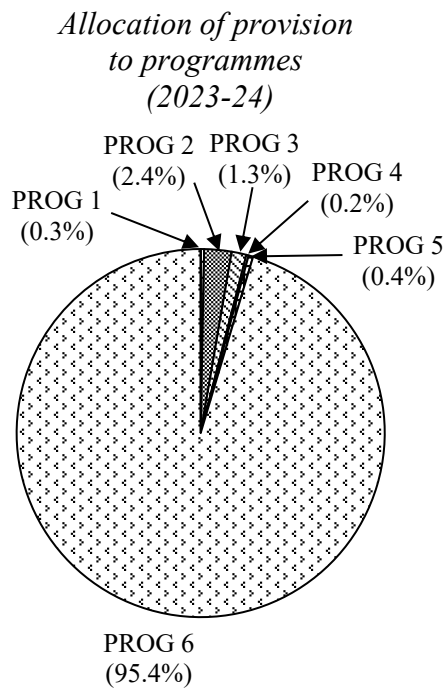
Provision for 2023–24 is \$0.5 million (4.1%) higher than the revised estimate for 2022–23. This is mainly due to the increase in operating expenses.

Programme (5)

Provision for 2023–24 is \$0.2 million (0.8%) lower than the revised estimate for 2022–23. This is mainly due to the decrease in operating expenses.

Programme (6)

Provision for 2023–24 is \$2,269.9 million (48.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2022–23. This is mainly due to the aggregate increase in cash flow requirement for the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by NGOs; as well as the increases of eight permanent posts for conducting site potential and architectural feasibility studies for increasing the supply of land for public housing development, 17 time-limited posts for building about 30 000 LPH units, five time-limited posts for implementing the Pilot Scheme on Private Developer Participation in Subsidised Housing Development, and additional three time-limited posts for achieving the increased supply target of transitional housing units; and decrease of five time-limited posts for implementing the Cash Allowance Trial Scheme.



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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2021–22	Approved estimate 2022–23	Revised estimate 2022–23	Estimate 2023–24
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	529,163	522,822	546,886	605,617
003	Recoverable salaries and allowances (General).....	6,017,670			
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 6,017,670</i>	—	—	—	—
	Total, Recurrent.....	529,163	522,822	546,886	605,617
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	2,090,419	6,816,790	4,492,951	6,707,400
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	2,090,419	6,816,790	4,492,951	6,707,400
	Total, Operating Account	2,619,582	7,339,612	5,039,837	7,313,017
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	Total Expenditure	2,619,582	7,339,612	5,039,837	7,313,017
		<u>2,619,582</u>	<u>7,339,612</u>	<u>5,039,837</u>	<u>7,313,017</u>

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2023–24 for the expenses of those activities of the Housing Bureau that are funded from General Revenue is \$7,313,017,000. This represents an increase of \$2,273,180,000 over the revised estimate for 2022–23 and \$4,693,435,000 over the actual expenditure in 2021–22.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$605,617,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Housing Bureau under the programmes of Director of Bureau's office, building control, private housing, Appeal Panel (Housing), rehousing of occupants upon clearance and support services. The increase of \$58,731,000 (10.7%) over the revised estimate for 2022–23 is mainly due to the increased operating expenses for meeting the demands of ongoing commitments and the net increase of 28 posts.

3 Gross provision of \$6,017,670,000 under *Subhead 003 Recoverable salaries and allowances (General)* is for salaries and allowances for civil servants working in the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA). Expenditure under this subhead is reimbursed by HA.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2022	Revised estimated expenditure for 2022–23	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	801	Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organisations.....	11,600,000	786,312	2,823,511	7,990,177
	803	Cash Allowance Trial Scheme.....	8,129,590	1,302,572	1,669,440	5,157,578
		Total.....	<u>19,729,590</u>	<u>2,088,884</u>	<u>4,492,951</u>	<u>13,147,755</u>