

Head 46 — GENERAL EXPENSES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

Controlling officer: expenditure under this Head will be accounted for as follows:

Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service (Subheads 001, 010, 011, 023, 024, 025, 028, 037, 041 and 042)
 Registrar of Companies (Subhead 006)
 Chief Executive of Hong Kong Monetary Authority (Subhead 008)
 Land Registrar (Subhead 009)
 Director of Accounting Services (Subheads 013, 014, 020, 022, 032, 033, 038, 039 and 040)
 Director-General of Communications (Subhead 081)
 Postmaster General (Subhead 082)
 Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (Subhead 083)
 Director of Administration (Subhead 084)

Estimate 2024–25 **\$5,781.9m**

Establishment ceiling for Subhead 001 in 2024–25 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 359 non-directorate posts in the operational reserves as at 31 March 2024 and as at 31 March 2025..... **\$201.0m**

Controlling Officers' Report

Programme

General Expenses of the Civil Service

This programme contributes to Policy Area 26: Central Management of the Civil Service (Secretary for the Civil Service).

Detail

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	4,810.5	5,706.4	5,220.2 (–8.5%)	5,781.9 (+10.8%)
				(or +1.3% on 2023–24 Original)

Aim

- 2 The aim is to pay for expenditure on terms and conditions of service and other personnel related expenses.

Brief Description

3 The Secretary for the Civil Service is in charge of the central management of the civil service. The Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service and the Director of Accounting Services are responsible for overall resource control of the general expenses of the civil service. These expenses include:

- expenses for recruitment, civil service examinations and operational reserves posts;
- allowances under the Home Purchase, Home Financing, Private Tenancy Allowance, Accommodation Allowance, Rent Allowance and Non-accountable Cash Allowance Schemes including compassionate payment of the remaining entitlement of housing allowances of officers killed on duty to their dependent family members;
- passage expenses and personal allowances; and
- expenses relating to the relief and welfare of eligible officers and pensioners, and various awards and assistance to eligible officers.

- 4 Performance under this programme was generally maintained in 2023 as compared with 2022.

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5 The key performance indicators in respect of general expenses of the civil service are:

Indicators

	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Estimate)
candidates of common recruitment examinations and other examinations conducted by Civil Service Bureau	76 090	73 313	73 300
recipients of long and meritorious service travel award@.....	1 950	2 414	2 270
housing benefits			
recipients of home purchase allowance	8 277	7 264	6 750
recipients of private tenancy allowance	145	116	100
recipients of home financing allowance.....	1 887	1 938	2 040
recipients of accommodation allowance	16	15	15
recipients of rent allowance	2	1	1
recipients of non-accountable cash allowance	11 937	13 571	16 055
recipients of leave passage allowance.....	1 619	1 757	1 680
students receiving school passage allowance.....	1 514	1 553	1 550
students receiving mainland and local education allowance....	9 397	8 287	7 655
students receiving overseas education allowance	1 089	1 029	990

@ This refers to the number of recipients beginning to incur expenditure in the calendar year with the awards granted.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

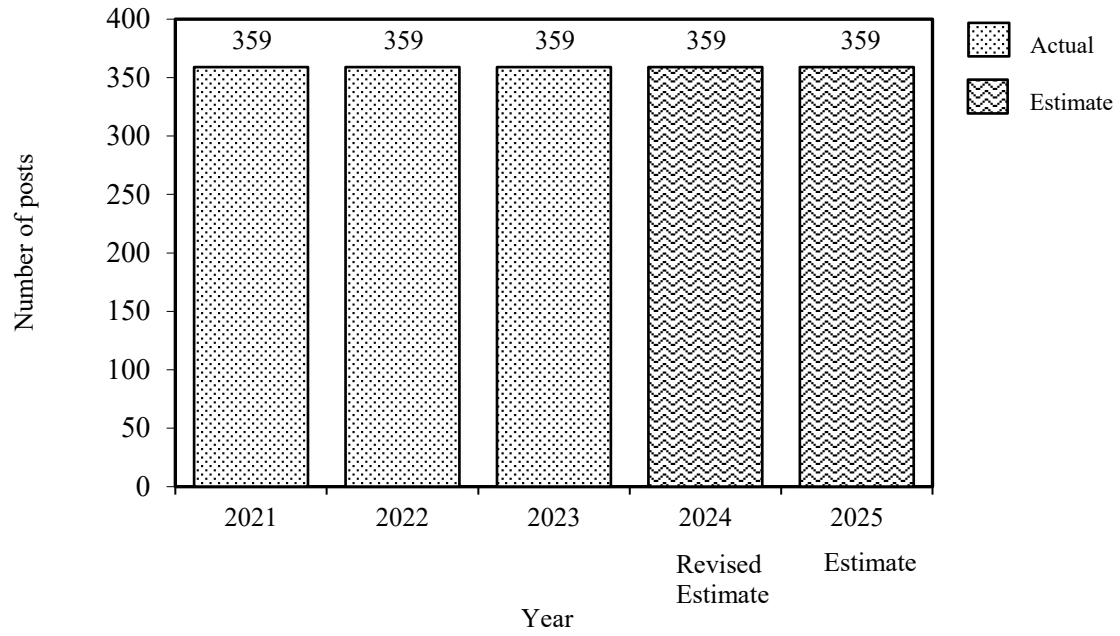
	2022–23 (Actual) (\$m)	2023–24 (Original) (\$m)	2023–24 (Revised) (\$m)	2024–25 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
General Expenses of the Civil Service	4,810.5	5,706.4	5,220.2 (–8.5%)	5,781.9 (+10.8%)
				(or +1.3% on 2023–24 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2024–25 is \$561.7 million (10.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the projected increase in the expenditure on housing allowances, partly offset by the projected decrease in expenditure on passages and Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme.

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



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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2022–23	Approved estimate 2023–24	Revised estimate 2023–24	Estimate 2024–25
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
Personal Emoluments					
001	Salaries.....	121,860	129,372	108,778	116,271
006	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Companies Registry Trading Fund)..... 250,000				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 250,000</i>	—	—	—	—
008	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Hong Kong Monetary Authority)..... 0				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 0</i>	—	—	—	—
009	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Land Registry Trading Fund)..... 266,316				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 266,316</i>	—	—	—	—
081	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Office of the Communications Authority Trading Fund)..... 276,278				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 276,278</i>	—	—	—	—
082	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Post Office Trading Fund)..... 1,806,000				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 1,806,000</i>	—	—	—	—
083	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund)..... 2,384,351				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 2,384,351</i>	—	—	—	—
084	Recoverable salaries and allowances (Legal Aid Services Council)..... 3,265				
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr. 3,265</i>	—	—	—	—
	Total, Personal Emoluments.....	121,860	129,372	108,778	116,271
Personnel Related Expenses					
010	Recruiting expenses.....	1,025	1,000	1,370	1,550
011	Civil service examinations.....	15,178	14,381	12,944	14,214
013	Personal allowances.....	371,475	352,910	326,200	316,200
014	Home purchase allowance.....	573,572	564,000	519,000	498,000
020	Payments to estates of deceased officers.....	14,607	26,500	21,000	21,000
022	Passages.....	118,973	165,000	175,000	159,000
023	Quarterming.....	3,293	3,333	3,333	3,646
024	Staff relief and welfare.....	6,548	6,059	6,055	6,557
025	Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme.....	140,072	190,664	172,875	105,401
028	Legal assistance.....	1,623	3,000	3,000	3,000
032	Accommodation allowance.....	8,579	8,000	8,000	8,000
033	Home financing allowance.....	628,323	693,000	633,000	694,000
037	Pensioners' welfare fund.....	1,591	1,600	1,600	1,600
038	Private tenancy allowance.....	49,217	46,000	42,000	38,000
039	Rent allowance.....	353	500	400	400
040	Non-accountable cash allowance.....	2,746,249	3,488,000	3,174,000	3,782,000
041	Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	453	808	384	726

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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2022–23	Approved estimate 2023–24	Revised estimate 2023–24	Estimate 2024–25
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account—Cont'd.					
Personnel Related Expenses—Cont'd.					
042	Civil Service Provident Fund contribution	7,503	12,262	11,216	12,311
	Total, Personnel Related Expenses.....	4,688,634	5,577,017	5,111,377	5,665,605
	Total, Recurrent.....	4,810,494	5,706,389	5,220,155	5,781,876
	Total, Operating Account	4,810,494	5,706,389	5,220,155	5,781,876
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	Total Expenditure	4,810,494	5,706,389	5,220,155	5,781,876
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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2024–25 for general expenses of the civil service, including the operational reserves and recurrent personnel related expenses, is \$5,781,876,000. This represents an increase of \$561,721,000 over the revised estimate for 2023–24 and \$971,382,000 over the actual expenditure in 2022–23.

Operating Account

Recurrent

Personal Emoluments

2 Provision of \$116,271,000 for personal emoluments represents an increase of \$7,493,000 over the revised estimate for 2023–24.

3 Provision under *Subhead 001* is for operational reserves, i.e. staff in the administrative, executive, secretarial and clerical grades who are required by departments to replace officers on leave or full-time training or for handover purposes and for staff required to undertake special and ad hoc projects.

4 Gross provision of \$250 million under *Subhead 006* is for staff working in the Companies Registry. *Subhead 008* is for staff seconded to the Hong Kong Monetary Authority. No gross provision is required under this subhead in 2024–25 due to no secondment being scheduled. Gross provision of \$266,316,000 under *Subhead 009* is for staff working in the Land Registry. Gross provision of \$276,278,000 under *Subhead 081* is for staff working wholly on trading fund activities in the Office of the Communications Authority. Gross provision of \$1,806 million under *Subhead 082* is for staff working in the Hongkong Post. Gross provision of \$2,384,351,000 under *Subhead 083* is for staff working wholly on trading fund activities in the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department. Gross provision of \$3,265,000 under *Subhead 084* is for staff seconded to the Legal Aid Services Council.

5 The establishment of the operational reserves will be 359 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2024 and remain the same as at 31 March 2025.

6 Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer for *Subhead 001* may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2024–25, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$200,974,000.

7 The establishment of staff for which the salaries and allowances are recoverable under *Subheads 006, 008, 009, 081, 082, 083 and 084* as at 31 March 2024 will be 10 527 posts. It is expected that there will be a net decrease of 54 posts in 2024–25.

8 Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officers for *Subheads 006, 008, 009, 081, 082, 083 and 084* may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2024–25, the cost of which is reimbursed by the Companies Registry Trading Fund (for *Subhead 006*), the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (for *Subhead 008*), the Land Registry Trading Fund (for *Subhead 009*), the Office of the Communications Authority Trading Fund (for *Subhead 081*), the Post Office Trading Fund (for *Subhead 082*), the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund (for *Subhead 083*) and the Legal Aid Services Council (for *Subhead 084*). Before exercising his delegated power, the controlling officer is required to ensure that the gross estimate under each respective subhead must not be exceeded without the prior approval of the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury. The controlling officer for *Subhead 084* is required to obtain the endorsement of the Legal Aid Services Council for his proposal and the associated financial implications.

Personnel Related Expenses

9 Expenses on allowances under the following subheads include provisions for civil servants, judges and judicial officers and Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) officers where applicable.

10 Provision of \$1,550,000 under *Subhead 010 Recruiting expenses* is for expenses in respect of recruitment for administrative and general grades, and for other miscellaneous recruiting expenses. The increase of \$180,000 (13.1%) over the revised estimate for 2023–24 is mainly due to increased provision for recruitment-related initiatives.

11 Provision of \$14,214,000 under *Subhead 011 Civil service examinations* is mainly for the payment of remuneration to examiners, moderators and invigilators and for other related expenses for examinations within, and for appointments to, the civil service.

12 Provision of \$316,200,000 under *Subhead 013 Personal allowances* is for the payment of standard personal allowances to eligible officers. It comprises—

- \$305 million for the payment of mainland and local education allowance as well as overseas education allowance to officers whose eligible children are receiving education in the Mainland, Hong Kong or overseas. Only officers offered appointment before 1 August 1996 are eligible for overseas education allowance, and only officers offered appointment before 1 June 2000 are eligible for mainland and local education allowance;

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- \$11,190,000 for the payment of allowance in lieu of the provision of furniture and domestic appliances (only eligible officers offered appointment before 1 May 1999 are eligible for furniture and domestic appliances allowances); and
- \$10,000 for the payment of air-conditioning allowance to eligible judges and judicial officers. Provision of air-conditioning allowance has ceased for civil servants and ICAC officers with effect from 1 October 2006.

13 Provision of \$498 million under *Subhead 014 Home purchase allowance* is for the payment of home purchase allowance to eligible officers offered appointment before 1 June 2000.

14 Provision of \$21 million under *Subhead 020 Payments to estates of deceased officers* is for the payment in respect of earned vacation leave to the estates of eligible officers who die in service.

15 Provision of \$159 million under *Subhead 022 Passages* is for the payment of leave passage allowance, passages and related expenditure, including baggage and travelling allowances, in respect of eligible officers and their dependants, and children of eligible officers being educated overseas. The provision comprises—

- \$130 million for the payment of leave passage allowance; and
- \$29 million for the payment of school passage.

Eligible officers offered appointment on or after 1 June 2000 are eligible for non-accountable leave passage allowance for themselves only and not their family members. Only dependants of officers offered appointment before 1 August 1996 are eligible for school passage.

16 Provision of \$3,646,000 under *Subhead 023 Quartering* is for expenses incidental to the provision of housing benefits to eligible officers, and also expenses incurred when temporary accommodation needs to be provided to eligible officers.

17 Provision of \$6,557,000 under *Subhead 024 Staff relief and welfare* is for the relief and welfare of eligible officers, including the purchase of retirement souvenirs and commemorative awards for long and meritorious service.

18 Provision of \$105,401,000 under *Subhead 025 Long and Meritorious Service Travel Award Scheme* is for the awards granted to eligible officers and their companions under the above scheme, in recognition of the long and meritorious service of the officers concerned. The exceptional arrangement in response to COVID-19 pandemic made since July 2021, similar to that adopted for leave passage allowance for eligible officers to claim reimbursement of award amount for local spending on items comparable to those travel-related expenses incurred outside Hong Kong, will lapse in 2024–25. The decrease of \$67,474,000 (39.0%) against the revised estimate for 2023–24 is mainly due to the expected decrease in the amount of reimbursement claims from the awardees.

19 Provision of \$3 million under *Subhead 028 Legal assistance* is for legal assistance to officers involved or likely to be involved in court proceedings for criminal offences, civil actions, death inquests, etc. as a result of their official duties.

20 Provision of \$8 million under *Subhead 032 Accommodation allowance* is for the payment of accommodation allowance to eligible officers offered appointment between 1 October 1990 and 31 December 1998.

21 Provision of \$694 million under *Subhead 033 Home financing allowance* is for the payment of home financing allowance to eligible officers offered appointment before 1 June 2000.

22 Provision of \$1,600,000 under *Subhead 037 Pensioners' welfare fund* is for the payment of one-off grants to pensioners and dependants in financial hardship.

23 Provision of \$38 million under *Subhead 038 Private tenancy allowance* is for the payment of private tenancy allowance to eligible officers offered appointment before 1 October 1990.

24 Provision of \$400,000 under *Subhead 039 Rent allowance* is for the payment of rent allowance to eligible officers offered appointment between 1 January 1999 and 31 May 2000.

25 Provision of \$3,782 million under *Subhead 040 Non-accountable cash allowance* is for the payment of non-accountable cash allowance to eligible officers who are offered appointment on or after 1 June 2000. The increase of \$608 million (19.2%) over the revised estimate for 2023–24 is mainly due to the expected increase in the average number of recipients in 2024–25 through salary progression, promotion and new appointment.

26 Provision of \$726,000 under *Subhead 041 Mandatory Provident Fund contribution* is for the employer's contribution under Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme for staff put under operational reserves. The increase of \$342,000 (89.1%) over the revised estimate for 2023–24 is mainly due to the expected increase in requirement in 2024–25.

27 Provision of \$12,311,000 under *Subhead 042 Civil Service Provident Fund contribution* is for the Government's contribution under the Civil Service Provident Fund Scheme for staff put under operational reserves.