

Head 62 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: HOUSING BUREAU

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

Estimate 2024–25	\$3,947.1m
Commitment balance.....	\$8,135.5m

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

	2022–23 (Actual)#	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	14.6	22.4	23.5 (+4.9%)	24.6 (+4.7%)
				(or +9.8% on 2023–24 Original)

The actual expenditure for 2022–23 represents the expenditure incurred 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

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	170.0	176.3	181.4 (+2.9%)	180.2 (–0.7%)
				(or +2.2% on 2023–24 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.

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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 2023, the portfolio of properties comprises:

• number of SSF courts/flats:	217 / 443 771
• number of PRH estates/flats:	97 / 430 733
• total number of courts and estates:	314
• number of retail/carparking premises:	110 / 348
• total number of domestic flats (SSF and PRH):	874 504

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	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Plan)
processing building plans within 60 days for new submissions (%)	90.0	98.8	100	90.0
processing building plans within 30 days for re-submission (%)	90.0	99.6	100	90.0
processing applications for consent to commence building works within 28 days (%)	90.0	99.5	100	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	—Δ	100	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	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Plan)
buildings targeted for prescribed inspection and, if necessary, prescribed repair under MBIS	28/year	50	50	35
flats targeted for prescribed window inspection and, if necessary, prescribed window repair under MWIS	26 560/year	32 439	30 714	33 200

Indicators

	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Estimate)
building plans received and processed within 60 days	171	217	220
resubmitted building plans received and processed within 30 days	266	271	290
consents to commence building works issued	382	437	420
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	449	780	660
reports on cantilever canopies	18	18	18
advisory letters issued	3 438	2 847	1 250
removal orders issued	1 251	1 533	960
prosecutions referred to BD against failure to comply with removal orders	11	23	20
dilapidated buildings			
reports from members of the public attended to	972	1 137	1 050
repairs orders issued	— ^Δ	6	3
mandatory building inspection			
notices issued	20	26	25
notices discharged	406	1 18 ^λ	1 00 ^λ
mandatory window inspection			
notices issued	13 931	16 606	16 000
notices discharged	13 146	12 413	12 000
advice on licensing/registration applications (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools, etc.)	1 492	1 529	1 610
minor works submissions received	28 193	31 827	29 000

^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 2023 and 2024.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

8 During 2024–25, ICU will continue:

- with the programme of the Planned Survey in SSF buildings;
- 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

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	91.3	98.3	99.1 (+0.8%)	101.9 (+2.8%)

(or +3.7% on
2023–24 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 2024–25

11 During 2024–25, 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)

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	12.8	12.8	13.6 (+6.3%)	13.6 (—)
				(or +6.3% on 2023–24 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.

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

Targets

	Target	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (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 (%).....	100	100	100	100

Indicators

	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Estimate)
no. of appeals received.....	1 054	1 378	1 450
no. of hearing sessions	204	287	290
no. of hearings arranged.....	898	1 150	1 150
no. of appeals heard.....	639	1 014	1 005

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

15 During 2024–25, 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

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	26.6	26.3	25.0 (–4.9%)	24.7 (–1.2%)
				(or –6.1% on 2023–24 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	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Plan)
verification of domestic clearances' rehousing eligibility within eight weeks upon receipt of referrals from relevant departments (%).....	100	100	100	100

Indicators

	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Estimate)
programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances			
no. of rehousing applications processed	211	425	1 830§
no. of offers made for PRH.....	193	320	1 490§
no. of offers made for interim housing	6	8	60§
no. of households received other housing benefits	—¶	—¶	10§
illegal rooftop structure clearances			
no. of rehousing applications processed	20	1	70§
no. of offers made for PRH.....	1	1	10§
no. of offers made for interim housing	15	—¶	50§
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 2024–25

19 During 2024–25, 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

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	3,715.7	6,976.9	6,295.6 (–9.8%)	3,602.1 (–42.8%)
				(or –48.4% on 2023–24 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 the Light Public Housing (LPH) projects to achieve the target of completing the construction of about 30 000 LPH units under a government-led initiative by 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 application and allocation arrangements, and operation as well as 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), facilitating various short-term community initiatives on transitional housing to achieve the transitional housing supply target as pledged, and enhancing the publicity of transitional housing;
- overseeing the policy of the tenancy control on subdivided units (SDUs), which is administered by the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) through the implementation of Part IVA of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7);
- overseeing the work of the six district service teams operated by NGOs and a web-based information portal for assisting RVD in promoting SDU tenancy control at district level;
- providing secretariat support to the Task Force on Tackling the Issue of Subdivided Units;
- 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 Private Subsidised Sale Flat – Pilot Scheme.

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

Indicators

	2022 (Actual)	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Estimate)
no. of infrastructure projects obtaining funding approval from the Legislative Council in the year	4	9	7
no. of infrastructure projects under construction	47	51	51

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

23 During 2024–25, 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 complete the construction of about 30 000 LPH units by 2027–28 as pledged, and commence the application for the first batch of LPH projects gradually;
- 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, facilitate various short-term community initiatives on transitional housing to contribute towards the pledged target of providing about 20 000 transitional housing units, and enhance the publicity of transitional housing;
- provide secretariat support to the Task Force on Tackling the Issue of Subdivided 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
- continue to implement the Private Subsidised Sale Flat – Pilot Scheme.

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2022–23 (Actual) (\$m)	2023–24 (Original) (\$m)	2023–24 (Revised) (\$m)	2024–25 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Director of Bureau’s Office	14.6	22.4	23.5	24.6
(2) Building Control	170.0	176.3	181.4	180.2
(3) Private Housing	91.3	98.3	99.1	101.9
(4) Appeal Panel (Housing).....	12.8	12.8	13.6	13.6
(5) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance	26.6	26.3	25.0	24.7
(6) Support Services	3,715.7	6,976.9	6,295.6	3,602.1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4,031.0	7,313.0	6,638.2 (-9.2%)	3,947.1 (-40.5%)
				(or -46.0% on 2023–24 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$1.1 million (4.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the increase in operating expenses.

Programme (2)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$1.2 million (0.7%) lower than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the decrease in operating expenses.

Programme (3)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$2.8 million (2.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the additional provision for replacement of minor plant and equipment.

Programme (4)

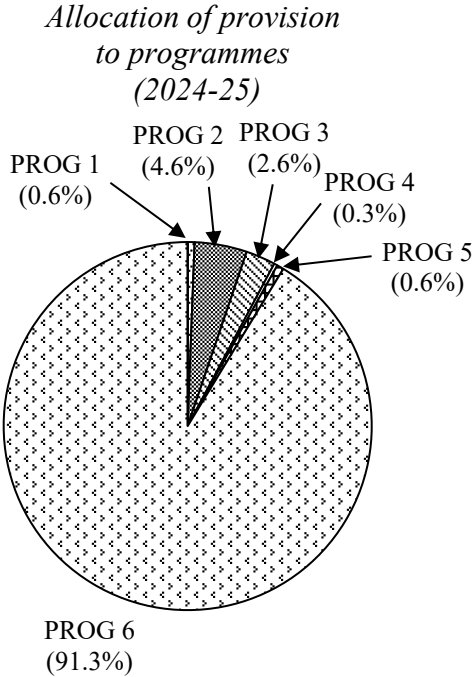
Provision for 2024–25 is the same as the revised estimate for 2023–24.

Programme (5)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$0.3 million (1.2%) lower than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the decrease in operating expenses.

Programme (6)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$2,693.5 million (42.8%) lower than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the aggregate decrease in cash flow requirement for the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by NGOs; as well as the lapse of 46 time-limited posts for implementing the Cash Allowance Trial Scheme and six time-limited posts for conducting site potential and architectural feasibility studies for increasing the supply of land for public housing development; partly offset by the increases of eight time-limited posts for handling the applications and assignments of LPH units and three time-limited posts for tackling the subdivided unit issue.



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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					
000	Operational expenses	537,450	605,617	626,524	647,839
003	Recoverable salaries and allowances (General)..... 6,246,143				
	Deduct reimbursements <i>Cr. 6,246,143</i>	—	—	—	—
	Total, Recurrent.....	537,450	605,617	626,524	647,839
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	3,493,522	6,707,400	6,011,720	3,296,895
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	3,493,522	6,707,400	6,011,720	3,296,895
	Total, Operating Account	4,030,972	7,313,017	6,638,244	3,944,734
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	—	—	—	2,332
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	—	—	—	2,332
	Total, Capital Account.....	—	—	—	2,332
	Total Expenditure	4,030,972	7,313,017	6,638,244	3,947,066

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2024–25 for the expenses of those activities of the Housing Bureau that are funded from General Revenue is \$3,947,066,000. This represents a decrease of \$2,691,178,000 against the revised estimate for 2023–24 and \$83,906,000 against the actual expenditure in 2022–23.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$647,839,000 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.

3 Gross provision of \$6,246,143,000 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.

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

4 Provision of \$2,332,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* is for the replacement of minor plant and equipment.

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Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2023	Revised estimated expenditure for 2023–24	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	2,674,078	4,445,085	4,480,837
	803	Cash Allowance Trial Scheme.....	8,129,590	2,908,329	1,566,635	3,654,626
		Total.....	<u>19,729,590</u>	<u>5,582,407</u>	<u>6,011,720</u>	<u>8,135,463</u>