

Head 118 — PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2024–25 **\$903.8m**

Establishment ceiling 2024–25 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 937 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2024 and as at 31 March 2025..... **\$610.3m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 28 directorate posts as at 31 March 2024 and as at 31 March 2025.

Controlling Officer’s Report

Programmes

- | | |
|---|--|
| Programme (1) Territorial Planning | This programme contributes to Policy Area 21: Land and Waterborne Transport (Secretary for Transport and Logistics) and Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands, Planning, Heritage Conservation, Greening and Landscape (Secretary for Development). |
| Programme (2) District Planning | These programmes contribute to Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands, Planning, Heritage Conservation, Greening and Landscape (Secretary for Development). |
| Programme (3) Town Planning Information Services | |
| Programme (4) Technical Services | |

Detail

Programme (1): Territorial Planning

| | 2022–23 (Actual) | 2023–24 (Original) | 2023–24 (Revised) | 2024–25 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 169.9 | 162.9 | 162.6 (–0.2%) | 168.3 (+3.5%) |
| | | | | (or +3.3% on 2023–24 Original) |

Aim

2 The aim is to provide guidance and direction for long-term development and investment in Hong Kong through the formulation and revision of territorial planning policies and development strategies and the undertaking of planning studies.

Brief Description

3 The Department is responsible for the preparation and review of the territorial development strategy, the conduct of necessary follow-up actions arising from the strategy, and the undertaking of planning studies for development areas. The work involves:

- reviewing, updating, monitoring and taking forward the territorial development strategy;
- carrying out planning studies and researches on development issues and planning-related topics of strategic significance;
- providing planning support to other government bureaux/departments in their pursuit of initiatives with a land use dimension;
- supporting other government bureaux/departments in their formulation and revision of planning standards and guidelines under their respective policy portfolios;
- undertaking planning studies for development areas;
- providing planning inputs to the planning of railway projects, strategic highways, and transport-related studies; and
- with the input of relevant bureaux/departments, assessing and monitoring the requirement and provision of land for major uses.

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4 During 2023–24, the Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) continued to manage the consultancy studies to formulate detailed land use proposals and supporting transport infrastructure, among others, for the development of the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, the dual development engines and major sources of future land supply of Hong Kong. The Department, in collaboration with the CEDD, commenced the consultancy studies for Tuen Mun East Area as well as the Lung Kwu Tan reclamation and Tuen Mun West Area to formulate detailed land use proposals. The Department also provided planning inputs to a number of strategic studies and initiatives such as the Strategic Studies on Railways and Major Roads beyond 2030, the Traffic and Transport Strategy Study and the planning of new rail lines and major highways.

5 The key performance measures in respect of territorial planning are:

Indicators

| | 2022 (Actual) | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Estimate) |
|--|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| surveys, reports, papers and studies conducted/ produced/commented for territorial planning strategies and special areas | 552 | 626 | 940 |
| forecasts, reports and papers produced/commented relating to supply and demand of land for major uses | 537 | 579 | 610 |
| planning standards and guidelines formulated or revised | 2 | 0 | 7 |

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

6 During 2024–25, the Department will:

- continue to take forward the recommendations of the “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030”;
- in collaboration with the CEDD, continue to manage the consultancy studies to take forward the land development proposals in the Northern Metropolis (including the San Tin Technopole, New Territories North New Town (including Lo Wu/Man Kam To), Ngau Tam Mei, Yuen Long South, Ma Tso Lung, Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Areas), Tuen Mun East Area, Lung Kwu Tan reclamation and Tuen Mun West Area, as well as the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands; and
- continue to provide strategic planning input to other major land development-related and transport-related projects and initiatives of territorial significance.

Programme (2): District Planning

| | 2022–23 (Actual) | 2023–24 (Original) | 2023–24 (Revised) | 2024–25 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 482.2 | 518.0 | 517.6 (–0.1%) | 546.8 (+5.6%) |
| | | | | (or +5.6% on 2023–24 Original) |

Aim

7 The aim is to provide a rational pattern of land use to promote and guide development in different parts of the territory through the execution of various statutory and non-statutory town planning functions at the district level.

Brief Description

8 The Department undertakes forward and district planning and development control in various planning districts, enforces the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) (TPO), and provides technical and secretariat services to the Town Planning Board (TPB) and its committees. The work involves:

- preparing and revising statutory and non-statutory plans;
- processing representations/comments/further representations as appropriate on statutory plans;
- co-ordinating all submissions to the TPB and its committees, and submitting draft plans to the Executive Council;
- processing planning applications and reviews;
- processing applications for amendment of plans;
- handling planning appeals and judicial reviews relating to statutory planning procedures;
- preparing planning briefs, researches, reports and programmes;
- conducting planning studies and land use reviews;

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- rendering district planning advice on development proposals and studies;
- conducting site searches;
- processing development proposals, including development schemes and development projects, of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA);
- providing planning advice to the URA and other redevelopment agencies on urban renewal matters;
- providing professional advice to the Harbourfront Commission and its task forces for harbourfront enhancement initiatives;
- undertaking enforcement and prosecution actions against unauthorised developments under the TPO; and
- preparing and revising guidance notes and guidelines relating to statutory planning system and practice.

9 To streamline the statutory process and expedite the development process, the Development Bureau together with the Department conducted a review on the TPO and the amended TPO took effect on 1 September 2023. To improve the overall urban planning and living environment and to increase land supply, the Department has been reviewing the statutory plans of and preparing new statutory plans for various districts in a progressive manner. In 2023, the Department amended 18 statutory outline zoning plans (OZPs) (including 13 involving land zoned/rezoned for residential use). In relation to statutory planning, there are three judicial reviews, including one completed in the year and the other two being dealt with by the Department. Revisions were also made to the TPB's Procedures and Practice; TPB Guidelines PG-No. 5, 13G, 18A, 24C, 29B, 30B, 31A, 32A, 33A and 36B; Guidance Notes and forms for plan-making and planning applications and information pamphlets so as to put in place streamlined arrangements, including those brought about by the amended TPO. The TPB Guidelines PG-No. 2B was cancelled as it had become obsolete. In 2023, work on enforcement and prosecution against unauthorised developments continued, with 2 650 statutory notices issued for enforcement, and 106 defendants in respect of 49 cases successfully convicted. The enforcement work has also been extended to the newly designated "Regulated Areas". The Department worked closely with the Development Bureau and the URA in the implementation of urban renewal projects.

10 During 2023–24, the Department continued to work on different land use reviews in collaboration with the relevant departments with a view to increasing housing, commercial and other land supply, including the development of Tseung Kwan O (TKO) Area 137 and Area 132 as well as the vacant and to-be vacant school premises. During the year, the Department completed a latest round of review of government, institution or community (GIC) sites earmarked for standalone public facilities and the broad-brushed review of the development potential of all the remaining "Green Belt" areas in respect of the exercise commenced in 2022. The Department also provided district planning inputs to the follow-up work on redeveloping three urban squatter areas in Cha Kwo Ling Village, Ngau Chi Wan Village and Chuk Yuen United Village into public housing, as well as engineering feasibility studies for housing development on shortlisted brownfield clusters and "Green Belt" clusters. To take forward one of the recommendations of URA's District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok, the Department formulated the mechanism to pilot transfer of plot ratio in the area as a new planning tool to incentivise private redevelopment. A new set of TPB Guidelines (TPB PG-No. 43) on the mechanism for transfer of plot ratio was also promulgated in this regard. Amendments to the Mong Kok and Yau Ma Tei OZPs to take forward various recommendations of the District Study were also completed.

11 The key performance measures in respect of district planning are:

Targets

| | Target | 2022 (Actual) | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Plan) |
|--|--------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| outcome of applications for amendments to approved schemes notified in writing within six weeks (%) | 90.0 | 100 | 99.9 | 90.0 |
| written notification of decision on applicant's submission in relation to master layout plan for the purpose of section 4A(3) of the TPO issued within six weeks (%) | 90 | 100 | 100 | 90 |
| written notification of decision on applicant's submission for the purpose of compliance with approval conditions imposed by the TPB issued within six weeks (%) | 95.0 | 100 | 99.9 | 95.0 |
| development proposals processed within three months (%) | 90 | 100 | 100 | 90 |
| complaints on alleged unauthorised development investigated within four weeks (%) | 95 | 100 | 100 | 95 |

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Indicators

| | 2022 (Actual) | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Estimate) |
|--|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| statutory plans submitted/gazetted | 150 | 134 | 155 |
| representations/comments on statutory plans processed..... | 9 020 | 15 006@ | 9 000 |
| applications for amendments to statutory plans processed | 59 | 69 | 65 |
| applications for amendments to approved schemes processed | 1 809 | 1 529 | 1 535 |
| development proposals, non-statutory plans, planning briefs and district planning studies produced or revised | 8 127 | 8 337 | 8 405 |
| site searches conducted¶ | 103 | — | — |
| applications for planning permission processed | 1 142 | 1 230 | 1 250 |
| reviews handled..... | 24 | 34 | 35 |
| Town Planning Appeal Board cases handled..... | 6 | 5 | 7 |
| lease conditions/modifications and short-term tenancies/waivers processed | 2 121 | 2 012 | 2 025 |
| reports on alleged unauthorised development investigated | 1 885 | 1 791 | 1 965 |
| warning letters/compliance reminders and enforcement/stop/reinstatement notices issued | 4 001 | 4 917 | 4 875 |
| unauthorised developments discontinued/regularised..... | 323 | 357 | 370 |
| prosecutions/reviews in magistracy and appeals handled..... | 52 | 62 | 85 |
| judicial reviews handled..... | 0 | 1 | 2 |

@ The increase in the number of representations/comments in 2023 was mainly due to the processing of the Kwai Chung OZP and Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area OZP.

¶ Indicator removed from 2023 onwards.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

12 During 2024–25, the Department will continue to:

- conduct land use reviews to increase housing, commercial and other land supply and undertake necessary statutory planning work to facilitate delivery of sites;
- in consultation with relevant bureaux/departments, review those reserved GIC sites earmarked for standalone public facilities or without firm development programme to ensure optimal utilisation of land resources;
- produce and review statutory and administrative plans to guide development and to meet changing requirements in the territory;
- handle ongoing and new judicial review cases/civil claims;
- take enforcement and prosecution actions against unauthorised developments in the rural New Territories;
- manage, in collaboration with the CEDD, district planning studies, including the development of TKO Area 137 and Area 132;
- provide district planning input to Lantau development and conservation;
- take forward the detailed planning of the Kwu Tung North/Fanling North New Development Area (NDA), including the preparation of urban design guidelines, and provision of planning input to the CEDD and the Lands Department (LandsD) to facilitate timely implementation of the NDA;
- take forward the detailed planning of Tung Chung New Town Extension including provision of planning input to the CEDD and LandsD to facilitate timely implementation of the New Town Extension;
- take forward the detailed planning of Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA including finalisation of urban and green design study, preparation of urban design guidelines, and provision of planning input to the CEDD and LandsD to facilitate timely implementation of the NDA;
- take forward the detailed planning of Yuen Long South NDA including provision of planning input to the CEDD and LandsD to facilitate timely implementation of the NDA;
- provide planning support to the two district studies conducted by the URA for Sham Shui Po and Tsuen Wan with a view to formulating renewal plans for these two districts;
- provide district planning inputs to engineering feasibility studies for housing development on shortlisted brownfield clusters and “Green Belt” clusters, and undertake amendments to relevant OZP(s) to facilitate timely implementation of these developments/redevelopments;

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- take forward the detailed planning of the Loop including provision of planning input to the CEDD and LandsD to facilitate timely implementation of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park; and
- provide district planning inputs to the studies for Ma Liu Shui reclamation together with land to be vacated by the relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to caverns, as well as the initial study on the developments related to the proposed Pak Shek Kok East Rail Station and its vicinity.

13 The Department will also take forward the amendments to the relevant OZPs to facilitate the implementation of the major new development proposals in the Northern Metropolis including the San Tin Technopole based on the recommendations of the relevant consultancy studies.

Programme (3): Town Planning Information Services

| | 2022–23 (Actual) | 2023–24 (Original) | 2023–24 (Revised) | 2024–25 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 35.8 | 39.7 | 39.0 (–1.8%) | 38.2 (–2.1%) |
| | | | | (or –3.8% on 2023–24 Original) |

Aim

14 The aim is to enhance public awareness of planning matters and to facilitate dissemination of planning information to the public.

Brief Description

15 The Department is responsible for promoting awareness of town planning in Hong Kong and providing town planning information services. The work involves:

- disseminating town planning information and providing planning enquiry services including managing the Planning Enquiry Counters and handling public enquiries;
- formulating the Department's outreach, community relations and publicity programmes and overseeing their implementation;
- managing the City Gallery and the Mobile Exhibition Centre;
- providing briefings to local, Mainland and overseas visitors on planning and development matters; and
- dealing with complaints from the general public.

16 The key performance measures in respect of town planning information services are:

Targets

| | Target | 2022 (Actual) | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Plan) |
|---|--------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| straightforward written enquiries handled | | | | |
| within five working days (%) | 95 | 100 | 100 | 95 |
| complicated written enquiries handled | | | | |
| within three weeks (%) | 95.0 | 99.7 | 100 | 95.0 |
| straightforward oral enquiries handled | | | | |
| at once (%) | 95 | 100 | 100 | 95 |
| complicated oral enquiries handled | | | | |
| within three working days (%) | 95 | 100 | 100 | 95 |

Indicators

| | 2022 (Actual) | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Estimate) |
|--|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| written enquiries handled | 2 396 | 1 851 | 1 885 |
| oral enquiries handled | 7 586 | 9 286 | 9 525 |
| media enquiries handled | 931 | 1 009 | 1 010 |
| briefings on planning matters | 239 | 359 | 390 |
| information pamphlets/booklets published | 35 | 76 | 110 |
| hits on the website of the Department | 26 185 336 | 29 131 539 | 29 131 540 |

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Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

17 During 2024–25, the Department will continue to:

- handle public enquiries in accordance with the Performance Pledges, the Code on Access to Information and the TPO; and
- organise activities and thematic exhibitions to reach out to the community in promoting Hong Kong’s planning and development, and produce publications to enhance public awareness of town planning in Hong Kong and to facilitate dissemination of planning information.

Programme (4): Technical Services

| | 2022–23 (Actual) | 2023–24 (Original) | 2023–24 (Revised) | 2024–25 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 156.4 | 147.2 | 147.4 (+0.1%) | 150.5 (+2.1%) |
| | | | | (or +2.2% on 2023–24 Original) |

Aim

18 The aim is to provide technical services and training opportunities to staff in various sections of the Department, with a view to enhancing the quality of planning work.

Brief Description

19 The Department provides in-service training and services on information systems, technical administration, statistical data, urban design, air ventilation and landscape planning. The work involves:

- providing in-service training and arranging local and overseas training courses/seminars/conferences;
- providing technical administrative services through the preparation and revision of technical circulars, planning manual, practice notes as well as papers and reports on technical planning and information technology security matters;
- formulating, managing and enhancing the Department’s computerisation and information technology strategies and data management systems, overseeing their implementation, and ensuring efficient and secure operation and support for smart city initiatives;
- managing and enhancing Internet services for online statutory plans to serve the public and a departmental portal to share planning information with bureaux and departments;
- providing expert advice and assistance to create visual aids including three-dimensional (3D) digital models and video clips for analysis and presentation of planning concepts and proposals;
- developing and applying geographic information systems, digital mapping, 3D, mobile and remote sensing technologies to facilitate land use and land utilisation analyses;
- collecting and collating data for making population, employment and other forecasts to facilitate territorial and other levels of planning studies; and
- providing urban design, landscape planning and air ventilation inputs for development planning under the TPO and tendering advice on landscape and visual impact assessments under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499).

20 The key performance measures in respect of technical services are:

Indicators

| | 2022 (Actual) | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Estimate) |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| local and overseas courses/seminars/conferences organised ... | 178 | 221 | 220 |
| information technology projects/information systems implemented/enhanced and related papers prepared | 204 | 292 | 365 |
| special surveys and planning data forecasts carried out and reports produced | 16 | 17 | 16 |
| urban design/landscape planning studies, reports, layout plans produced/revised and inputs provided on development proposals/departmental plans | 5 800 | 5 706 | 5 800 |

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Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

21 During 2024–25, the Department will continue to:

- focus its efforts on providing training to staff in four major aspects: vocational training, management and general knowledge, language and communication as well as information technology;
- update forecasts of population and employment distribution for use in various government activities;
- manage consultancies for undertaking air ventilation assessment for major development sites/areas and major government projects and provide advice on air ventilation assessment submissions; and
- improve and enhance planning data and web-based information systems to strengthen support for various planning studies, tasks and services.

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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 | | | | |
| (1) Territorial Planning..... | 169.9 | 162.9 | 162.6 | 168.3 |
| (2) District Planning | 482.2 | 518.0 | 517.6 | 546.8 |
| (3) Town Planning Information Services | 35.8 | 39.7 | 39.0 | 38.2 |
| (4) Technical Services..... | 156.4 | 147.2 | 147.4 | 150.5 |
| | 844.3 | 867.8 | 866.6 (-0.1%) | 903.8 (+4.3%) |
| | | | | (or +4.1% on 2023–24 Original) |

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$5.7 million (3.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the increased provision for salary increments and filling of vacancies, partly offset by the decreased provision for operating expenses.

Programme (2)

Provision for 2024–25 is \$29.2 million (5.6%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the increased provision for salary increments, filling of vacancies, a net increase of one post and operating expenses as well as the increased cash flow requirements for a capital item.

Programme (3)

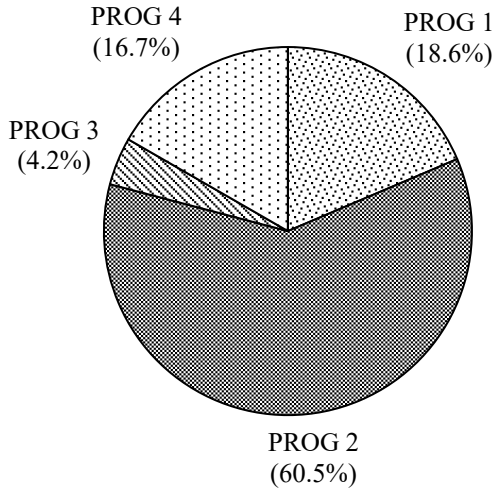
Provision for 2024–25 is \$0.8 million (2.1%) lower than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the decreased provision for operating expenses and the decreased cash flow requirements for capital items, partly offset by the increased provision for salary increments and filling of vacancies.

Programme (4)

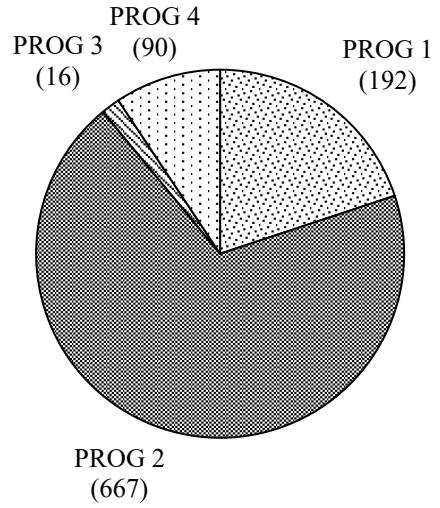
Provision for 2024–25 is \$3.1 million (2.1%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the increased provision for salary increments and filling of vacancies as well as the increased cash flow requirement for a capital item, partly offset by a net decrease of one post and the decreased provision for operating expenses.

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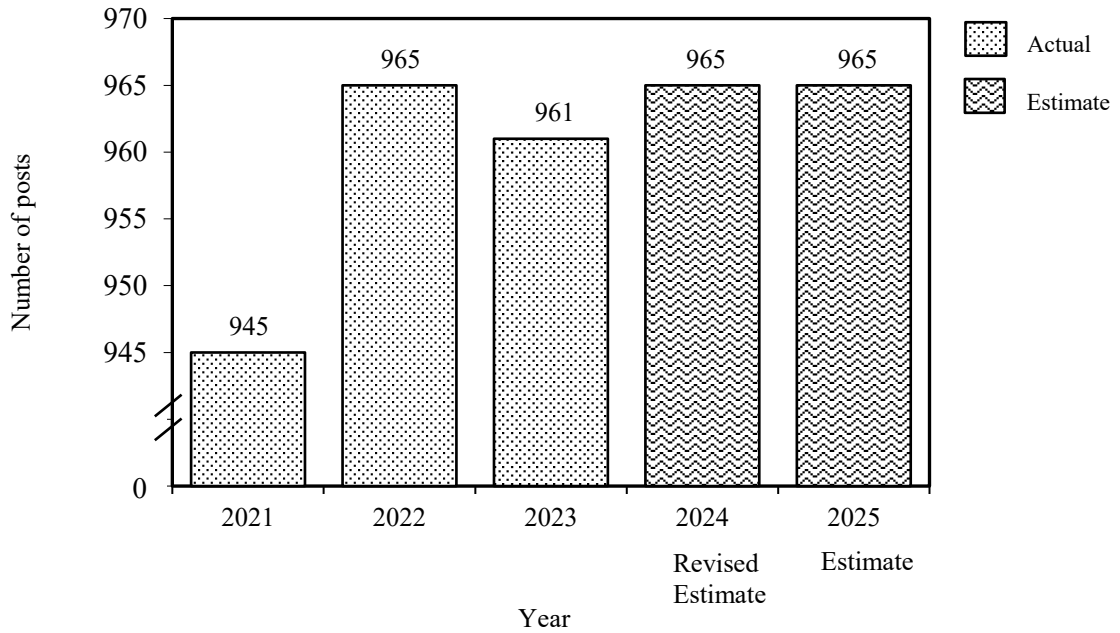
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2024-25)*



*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2025)*



*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 | |
| Operating Account | | | | | |
| Recurrent | | | | | |
| 000 | Operational expenses | 834,770 | 857,533 | 856,388 | 891,486 |
| | Total, Recurrent..... | <u>834,770</u> | <u>857,533</u> | <u>856,388</u> | <u>891,486</u> |
| Non-Recurrent | | | | | |
| | General non-recurrent | 4,766 | — | — | — |
| | Total, Non-Recurrent..... | <u>4,766</u> | <u>—</u> | <u>—</u> | <u>—</u> |
| | Total, Operating Account | <u>839,536</u> | <u>857,533</u> | <u>856,388</u> | <u>891,486</u> |
| Capital Account | | | | | |
| Plant, Equipment and Works | | | | | |
| 661 | Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)..... | 4,739 | 10,217 | 10,217 | 12,333 |
| | Total, Plant, Equipment and Works..... | <u>4,739</u> | <u>10,217</u> | <u>10,217</u> | <u>12,333</u> |
| | Total, Capital Account..... | <u>4,739</u> | <u>10,217</u> | <u>10,217</u> | <u>12,333</u> |
| | Total Expenditure | <u><u>844,275</u></u> | <u><u>867,750</u></u> | <u><u>866,605</u></u> | <u><u>903,819</u></u> |

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2024–25 for the salaries and expenses of the Planning Department is \$903,819,000. This represents an increase of \$37,214,000 over the revised estimate for 2023–24 and \$59,544,000 over the actual expenditure in 2022–23.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$891,486,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Planning Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2024 will be 965 posts including two supernumerary posts. No change in establishment is expected in 2024–25. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer 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 \$610,312,000.

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

| | 2022–23 (Actual) (\$'000) | 2023–24 (Original) (\$'000) | 2023–24 (Revised) (\$'000) | 2024–25 (Estimate) (\$'000) |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Personal Emoluments | | | | |
| - Salaries | 650,208 | 676,000 | 675,000 | 700,000 |
| - Allowances | 9,476 | 16,287 | 14,299 | 18,823 |
| - Job-related allowances..... | 83 | 100 | 2 | 2 |
| Personnel Related Expenses | | | | |
| - Mandatory Provident Fund contribution | 2,143 | 2,248 | 1,986 | 1,870 |
| - Civil Service Provident Fund contribution | 42,709 | 49,860 | 50,138 | 58,069 |
| Departmental Expenses | | | | |
| - General departmental expenses | 130,151 | 113,038 | 114,963 | 112,722 |
| | 834,770 | 857,533 | 856,388 | 891,486 |

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$12,333,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of \$2,116,000 (20.7%) over the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the increased requirement for procurement and replacement of equipment.