

**Head 139 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY
BUREAU (FOOD BRANCH)**

Controlling officer: the Permanent Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Food) will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2024–25 **\$200.1m**

Establishment ceiling 2024–25 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 43 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2024 and as at 31 March 2025 **\$33.9m**

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

Controlling Officer’s Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Environment and Ecology).

Programme (2) Environmental Hygiene This programme contributes to Policy Area 32: Environmental Hygiene (Secretary for Environment and Ecology).

Detail

Programme (1): Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	66.8#	95.9	106.6 (+11.2%)	99.3 (–6.8%)
				(or +3.5% on 2023–24 Original)

For comparison purpose, the figure excludes relevant provision which has been transferred to Head 140 — Government Secretariat: Health Bureau due to re-organisation of the Government Secretariat with effect from 1 July 2022.

Aim

2 The aim is to formulate and oversee implementation of policies to ensure that food available for human consumption is safe, respond to food incidents effectively, prevent the introduction and spread of zoonotic diseases and diseases in animals and plants, facilitate the sustainable development of the agricultural and fisheries industries, and oversee efficient operation of government wholesale marketing facilities for fresh food produce.

Brief Description

3 The Branch’s main responsibility under this programme is to formulate and co-ordinate policies and programmes relating to the above activities. It made good progress in achieving the targets set for 2023.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

4 During 2024–25, the Branch will:

- oversee the progressive implementation of various measures set out in the blueprint for the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries to promote the modernisation and sustainable development of the agriculture and fisheries industries;
- continue to monitor various measures for supporting the modernisation and sustainable development of local agriculture, such as operation of Agricultural Park Phase 1, the preparatory work for Agricultural Park Phase 2 under the staged development approach, the consultancy study on Agricultural Priority Areas and the promotion of urban farming and leisure farming;
- continue to monitor the progress of various measures for sustaining and upgrading the development of local fisheries, such as provision of support for Hong Kong fishermen to develop deep sea mariculture in the new fish culture zones and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, development of modernised pond fish culture and leisure fishing, and revitalisation of Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market;

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- monitor the operation of the Sustainable Agricultural Development Fund and Sustainable Fisheries Development Fund under the enhanced mechanism and expanded scope, with a view to making good use of the funds to promote modernisation, enhance competitiveness of the industry and facilitate the transfer of knowledge;
- prepare for legislative amendments and other measures to introduce a positive duty of care on persons responsible for animals to enhance animal welfare and further protect animals from unnecessary suffering;
- continue to implement a strategic plan for reducing the levels of salt and sugar in food to promote healthy eating;
- continue to review and update local food safety standards, guidelines and regulatory arrangements, including legislation relating to additives and veterinary drug residues in food; and
- continue to enhance the testing capability and operational efficiency of the Food Safety Laboratory of the Government Laboratory.

Programme (2): Environmental Hygiene

	2022–23 (Actual)	2023–24 (Original)	2023–24 (Revised)	2024–25 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	88.0#	110.2	99.5 (–9.7%)	100.8 (+1.3%)
				(or –8.5% on 2023–24 Original)

For comparison purpose, the figure excludes relevant provision which has been transferred to Head 140 — Government Secretariat: Health Bureau due to re-organisation of the Government Secretariat with effect from 1 July 2022.

Aim

5 The aim is to provide quality environmental hygiene services in the territory, strengthen the management of public markets, minimise the risks and threats caused to public health by pest and other nuisances, increase the supply of public columbarium and crematorium facilities, enhance the regulation of private columbaria, promote green burial, enhance the effectiveness of regulatory control over food premises, and promote public involvement in the upkeep of personal and environmental hygiene standards.

Brief Description

6 The Branch's main responsibility under this programme is to formulate and co-ordinate policies and programmes relating to the above activities. It made good progress in achieving the targets set for 2023.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25

7 During 2024–25, the Branch will:

- take forward the legislative amendments to the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) to enhance the efficiency and deterrent effect of enforcement against thorny environmental hygiene problems, such as shop front extension;
- oversee the development of new public markets at selected locations and the implementation of the Market Modernisation Programme to improve facilities of existing public markets;
- continue to implement measures to increase the supply of public columbarium and crematorium facilities and to promote the scattering of cremated human ashes at sea or in Gardens of Remembrance;
- oversee the implementation and review of the regulatory regime for private columbaria under the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630);
- enhance anti-rodent measures and promote collaboration in mosquito and rodent control;
- oversee the refurbishment programme of public toilets; and
- oversee initiatives to streamline and enhance efficiency of the food business licensing regime.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2022–23 (Actual) (\$m)	2023–24 (Original) (\$m)	2023–24 (Revised) (\$m)	2024–25 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety	66.8	95.9	106.6	99.3
(2) Environmental Hygiene	88.0	110.2	99.5	100.8
	154.8‡	206.1	206.1 (—)	200.1 (–2.9%)

**(or –2.9% on
2023–24 Original)**

‡ For comparison purpose, the figure has been adjusted to reflect the provisions for relevant programmes under this Head due to the re-organisation of the Government Secretariat with effect from 1 July 2022. In addition, the figure also excludes the provisions for the Director of Bureau's office which have been transferred to Head 140 — Government Secretariat: Health Bureau due to the aforementioned Government re-organisation.

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

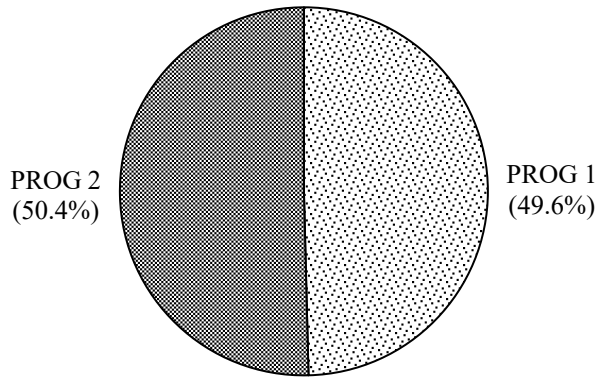
Provision for 2024–25 is \$7.3 million (6.8%) lower than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the decreased provision for operating expenses.

Programme (2)

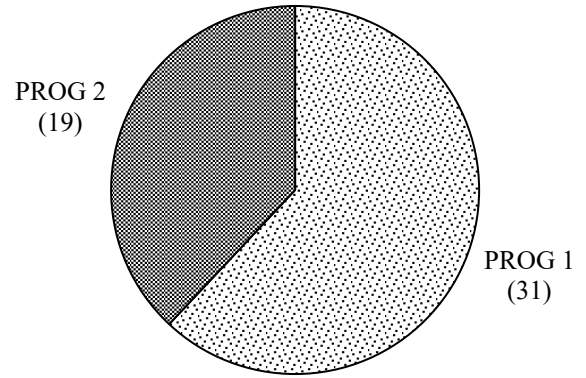
Provision for 2024–25 is \$1.3 million (1.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023–24. This is mainly due to the increased provision for operating expenses.

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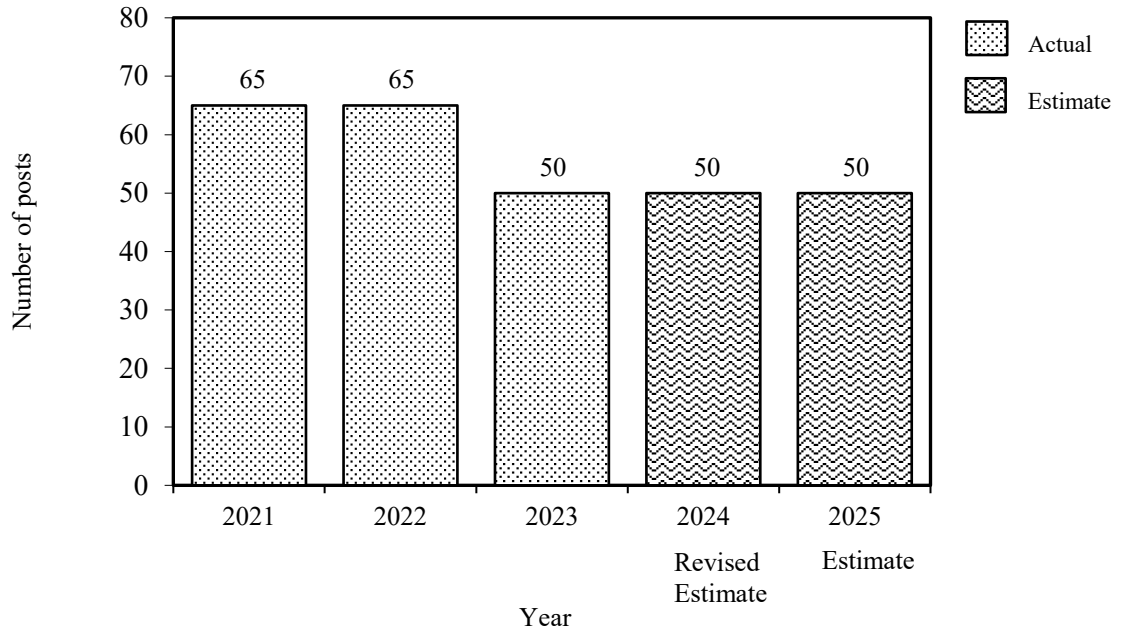
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2024-25)*



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



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



**Head 139 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY
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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	163,864	206,144	206,144	200,107
	Total, Recurrent.....	163,864	206,144	206,144	200,107
	Total, Operating Account	163,864	206,144	206,144	200,107
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	Total Expenditure	163,864	206,144	206,144	200,107

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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 Food Branch is \$200,107,000. This represents a decrease of \$6,037,000 against the revised estimate for 2023–24 and an increase of \$36,243,000 over the actual expenditure in 2022–23.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$200,107,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Food Branch.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2024 will be 50 posts, including one supernumerary post. 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 \$33,941,000.

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	54,125	49,381	47,423	51,415
- Allowances	2,000	1,993	2,520	2,626
- Job-related allowances.....	—	2	2	2
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	148	101	147	113
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution	3,803	5,001	4,096	5,538
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	103,788	149,666	151,956	140,413
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	163,864	206,144	206,144	200,107