

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2026–27 **\$11,114.5m**

Establishment ceiling 2026–27 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 11 320 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2026 reducing by 235 posts to 11 085 posts as at 31 March 2027..... **\$4,335.9m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 17 directorate posts as at 31 March 2026 and 31 March 2027.

Commitment balance..... **\$64.1m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Food Safety and Public Health	This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Environment and Ecology).
Programme (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services	These programmes contribute to Policy Area 32: Environmental Hygiene (Secretary for Environment and Ecology).
Programme (3) Market Management and Hawker Control	
Programme (4) Public Education and Community Involvement	This programme contributes to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety (Secretary for Environment and Ecology) and Policy Area 32: Environmental Hygiene (Secretary for Environment and Ecology).

Detail

Programme (1): Food Safety and Public Health

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	2026–27 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	1,735.7	1,745.1	1,704.6 (–2.3%)	1,665.1 (–2.3%)
				(or –4.6% on 2025–26 Original)

Aim

2 The aim is to ensure that food available for human consumption is wholesome, hygienic and safe; and to safeguard public health through testing and control of live food animals and effective pest control.

Brief Description

3 The work involves:

- conducting risk assessment on food and providing timely information to the public;
- investigating and managing food incidents;
- exercising import control on high-risk food and issuing health certificates for food exports;
- exercising import control on live food animals;
- conducting inspections and tests on live food animals at licensed slaughterhouses;
- providing meat inspection services at licensed slaughterhouses;
- conducting food surveillance at various points of the food chain and taking enforcement actions;
- promoting the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) approach to the trade and the adoption of HACCP-based food safety plans;
- ensuring prepackaged food for sale is properly labelled;
- conducting risk assessment on pests affecting public health;

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

- taking control measures to prevent vector-borne diseases; and
- investigating incidents of vector-borne diseases.

4 The key performance measures are:

Targets

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
initiating investigation of reports of food unfit for human consumption within 24 hours (%)	100	100	100	100
applications for permission to import game, meat and poultry to be processed within four working days (%).....	98	100	100	98
applications for permission to import milk and milk products to be processed within 12 working days (%)	98	100	99	98
applications for permission to import frozen confections to be processed within 12 working days (%)	98	99	99	98
applications for export or re-export food health certificates to be processed within 12 working days (%)	98	100	100	98
issuing veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products within two working days (%)	100	100	100	100
testing pigs for beta-agonists (% of lots)	100	100	100	100
conducting inspections of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong (no. of farms).....	35	56¶	53¶	50¶
food surveillance through testing of food samples (no. of food samples tested per 1 000 population per year).....	9	9	9	9
initiating investigation of complaints about food labelling within three working days (%).....	100	100	100	100
initiating pest control measures within 24 hours upon receiving report of vector-borne diseases (%).....	100	99	99	100
dealing with complaints on wasps/ bees infestation within six working days (%).....	100	100	100	100
reducing the no. of priority rodent blackspots (%)	60	65	72	60

¶ A mixed mode of on-site inspections and document assessment was adopted as a post-COVID-19 epidemic arrangement and will continue to be adopted in 2026.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Indicators

	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
food complaints handled	7 912	8 685	8 690
applications for permission to import game, meat and poultry.....	629	595	600
applications for permission to import milk and milk products	463	503	500
applications for permission to import frozen confections.....	521	512	510
export or re-export food health certificates issued.....	397	452	490
veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products issued.....	1 599	1 578	1 730
targeted inspections of food trucks at food control points	13 212	14 102	14 500
samples taken from food animals for testing of veterinary drug residues.....	29 068	28 932	28 940
food samples taken for testing.....	66 694	69 118	65 500
labels checked	55 365	55 359	55 400
HACCP seminars/workshops.....	33	33	33
poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks and other public places ^μ	121 744	—	—
no. of poisonous baiting points inspected and/or serviced ^μ	3 410 366	3 362 241	3 362 200
no. of rodent trappings [□]	123 118	—	—
no. of rodent trap nights [□]	2 377 481	2 809 037	2 809 000
mosquito breeding places eliminated.....	73 861	80 312	80 300
pest control surveys conducted	11 178	11 384	11 500

^μ The indicator “poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks and other public places” was replaced by a new indicator “no. of poisonous baiting points inspected and/or serviced” for 2025 onwards. By counting the number of poisonous baiting points inspected or serviced, the new indicator better reflects the actual work done and resources deployed by the Department.

[□] The indicator “no. of rodent trappings” was replaced by a new indicator “no. of rodent trap nights” for 2025 onwards. By counting the number of rodent traps laid multiplied by the number of nights that the trap has been laid, the new indicator better reflects the actual work done and resources deployed by the Department.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27

5 During 2026–27, the Department will:

- continue to review and update local food safety standards, guidelines and regulatory arrangements of sweeteners;
- continue to conduct Rodent Activity Survey and formulate targeted rodent control strategy based on the survey results;
- strengthen co-operation with and provide necessary support for other departments and sectors to enhance rodent control and mosquito control;
- continue to explore and take forward new initiatives to enhance pest control services and vector surveillance programmes to strengthen response to vector-borne diseases; and
- facilitate Hong Kong-manufactured food products to access the Mainland and overseas markets by relevant fee waiver arrangements.

Programme (2): Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	2026–27 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	6,770.6	6,854.2	6,703.9 (–2.2%)	6,793.4 (+1.3%)

(or –0.9% on
2025–26 Original)

Aim

6 The aim is to provide quality environmental hygiene services and facilities, and to safeguard public health through licensing and regulation of licensed food premises.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Brief Description

7 The work involves:

- providing efficient and effective public cleansing services, including street cleansing and household waste collection, and management of public cleansing facilities such as public toilets and refuse collection points;
- licensing and inspecting food premises, and taking enforcement actions against unlicensed and unhygienic food premises;
- processing liquor licence applications and providing administrative support to the Liquor Licensing Board;
- licensing private swimming pools, commercial bathhouses, places of public entertainment, funeral parlours, undertakers, karaoke establishments in restaurants, slaughterhouses and offensive trades, and taking enforcement actions in relation to these activities;
- abating environmental nuisances relating to dripping air-conditioners and water seepage and cleaning up illegal refuse deposit blackspots;
- managing cremation and burial facilities, including public cemeteries, crematoria and columbaria; and
- regulating private columbaria under the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630).

8 The key performance measures are:

Targets

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
<i>Cleansing</i>				
completion of first round street sweeping services on main roads before 9:00 a.m. to ensure removal of over-night street litter (%).....	99	100	100	99
<i>Licensing of food premises</i>				
scheduling of Application Vetting Panel meeting for restaurant licence applicants within 20 working days from passing of initial screening (%)	99	100	99	99
approval for issuing of food business licences within seven working days from confirmation of full compliance (%).....	99	99	99	99
issuing of provisional licences for restaurants and other food premises within one working day from receipt of acceptable Certificates of Compliance for submissions over the counter (%)	99	100	100	99
issuing of liquor licences and club liquor licences within five working days from approval by Liquor Licensing Board (%).....	99	99	99	99
<i>Licensing of private swimming pools, commercial bathhouses, places of public entertainment, funeral parlours, undertakers, karaoke establishments in restaurants, slaughterhouses and offensive trades</i>				
issuing of Letters of Requirements within seven working days from clearance with concerned departments (%).....	99	100	100	99
approval for issuing of licences within seven working days from confirmation of full compliance (%).....	99	100	100	99

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
<i>Cemeteries and crematoria</i>				
booking of cremation sessions within 15 days (%).....	99	100	100	99
allocation of burial spaces on the day of application (%).....	99	100	100	99
 <i>Indicators</i>				
		2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
refuse collected (tonnes)		2 112 543	2 024 324	2 024 300
recurrent expenditure per tonne of refuse collected (\$)Δ.....		378	395	395
sludge collected by gully emptiers (tonnes).....		1 909	1 710	1 700
restaurant licences		17 087	16 876	16 900
other food-related licences (e.g. liquor, food factory, bakery).....		25 344	24 702	24 700
restricted food permits (e.g. sushi and milk).....		10 555	9 939	9 900
applications for new food business licences		3 168	3 624	3 600
applications for new restricted food permits		1 784	1 866	1 900
inspections to food premises		280 132	270 166	270 200
raids against illegal slaughtering.....		12	12	12
prosecutions against food premises				
licensed.....		1 588	1 194	1 200
unlicensed.....		3 423	2 754	2 800
food business licences suspended/cancelled		74	54	50
courses/seminars for Hygiene Supervisors		103	101	96
applications for private swimming pools, places of public entertainment and other licences (excluding applications for temporary licences).....		110	153	130
inspections conducted to private swimming pools, places of public entertainment, etc.....		18 882	17 607	17 620
no. of cremations provided				
body.....		49 812	48 967	51 800
skeletal		2 396	2 629	2 600
no. of burials conducted				
coffin		779	668	670
urn		593	620	620
exhumation permits issued.....		4 300	4 484	4 500

Δ The figures represent unit expenditure for the respective financial years ending 31 March.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27

9 During 2026–27, the Department will:

- strengthen street cleansing, refuse collection and clearance work and step up related enforcement and prosecution;
- continue to explore and apply new technology and automation to enhance environmental hygiene services;
- expedite the refurbishment or facelifting projects of public toilets under the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme;
- continue to improve the design and facilities of existing public toilets in phases, and improve the planning, provision and management of public toilets;
- enhance the hardware of refuse collection facilities in rural areas;
- continue to implement the scheme to enable licensed food business to properly store refuse pending collection at rear lanes;
- take forward initiatives to allow dogs to enter permitted food premises and streamline the application procedures for Outside Seating Accommodation of restaurants;
- explore ways to streamline the requirements for and the processing of food business licence applications;
- continue to take stringent enforcement actions against unlicensed food premises and food premises which pose immediate health hazards or with illegal extension of food business areas;
- implement a new workflow to enhance the inspection and testing procedures for handling water seepage problems;
- continue to take forward plans and projects to provide more crematorium and columbarium facilities;
- continue to allocate new niches; and
- continue to implement the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630) by supporting the Private Columbaria Licensing Board in processing applications for a licence or other specified instruments for operating a private columbarium, and taking enforcement actions under the Ordinance.

Programme (3): Market Management and Hawker Control

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	2026–27 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	2,540.8	2,553.9	2,517.3 (–1.4%)	2,592.9 (+3.0%)
				(or +1.5% on 2025–26 Original)

Aim

10 The aim is to provide new public market facilities at suitable locations, enhance viability of and maintain a clean and hygienic environment in existing public markets, and control on-street hawking activities.

Brief Description

11 The work involves:

- providing new public market facilities at suitable locations;
- managing and maintaining existing public markets, including modernisation works as appropriate;
- inspecting public markets to ensure cleanliness and compliance with tenancy requirements and conditions;
- controlling and containing on-street hawking activities and obstruction;
- managing licensed hawker pitches, hawker permitted places and hawker bazaars; and
- taking enforcement actions.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

12 The key performance measures are:

Targets

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
markets with common parts cleansed at least three times a day (%).....	100	100	100	100
stalls let (%)Ω.....	85‡	82	82	85
responding to complaints against illegal hawking in built-up areas within 30 minutes (%).....	98	99	99	98

Ω In calculating the letting percentage, the number of stalls set aside for designated purposes has been included in the total number of stalls for letting. As at 31 December 2025, about nine per cent of stalls were set aside for designated purposes, such as to facilitate/support market improvement or modernisation works, stall repair or improvement, as well as market closure/consolidation arrangements, etc.

‡ The target is revised from 90 per cent to 85 per cent for 2025 onwards.

Indicators

	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
licensed hawkers			
fixed pitch hawkers	4 848	4 714	4 600
itinerant hawkers	233	218	200
estimated no. of unlicensed hawkers.....	698	631	600
raids by Hawker Control Teams	85 445	83 699	83 700
joint operations against illegal hawking			
with other departments	2 154	1 519	1 100
hawker blackspots	45	45	45

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27

13 During 2026–27, the Department will:

- continue to plan new public market facilities at suitable locations and take forward the proposed projects;
- continue to implement and keep under review the new management model and improvement measures introduced in new and overhauled public markets;
- continue to implement the Market Modernisation Programme to improve facilities of existing public markets;
- take action to close public markets which are under-utilised; and
- enhance enforcement against irregularities, cleanliness and rodent control in public markets.

Programme (4): Public Education and Community Involvement

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	2026–27 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	74.4	73.2	63.4 (–13.4%)	63.1 (–0.5%)

(or –13.8% on
2025–26 Original)

Aim

14 The aim is to promote food safety, maintenance of a hygienic environment and green burial through partnership with the community and multimedia publicity campaigns.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Brief Description

15 The work involves:

- enhancing public awareness of the importance of food safety and empowering consumers to make informed choices;
- educating the public on their responsibility in maintaining a clean and hygienic living environment;
- organising targeted public education and publicity programmes to mobilise community involvement and support for activities in keeping the environment clean; and
- promoting green burial as a more sustainable way to dispose of cremated human ashes.

16 The Department disseminates food safety, keep clean and green burial messages through television and radio Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs), social media such as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, mobile applications, banners, posters, publicity stickers, pamphlets, leaflets and a publicity vehicle, as appropriate. In addition, talks and support are given at food safety and environmental hygiene activities organised by district bodies, non-governmental organisations, community groups and schools.

17 The key performance measures are:

Targets

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
responding to requests from primary and secondary schools for talks on food safety and environmental hygiene within one week (%).....	100	100	100	100
responding to requests for information/ talks on food safety and environmental hygiene within one week (%).....	100	100	100	100
responding to requests from day care centres and residential care homes for the elderly for talks on green burial within one week (%).....	100	100	100	100
publicity campaigns	1	1	1	1

Indicators

	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
seminars and activities for general public	1 370	1 370	1 364
television APIs	1	1	1
radio APIs.....	2	2	2
outreaching programmes targeted at schools	17	18	18
school talks on food safety and environmental hygiene	565	478	480

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27

18 During 2026–27, the Department will:

- continue the efforts in promoting public health, environmental hygiene and food safety, with special emphasis on domestic hygiene, through seminars and activities, and in collaboration with District Health Centres;
- enhance publicity, public education and community engagement in rodent prevention and control;
- continue the efforts in encouraging reduced intake of salt and sugars in food to promote a healthy diet; and
- continue to promote green burial, particularly in respect of promotion of a central registration scheme.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2024–25 (Actual) (\$m)	2025–26 (Original) (\$m)	2025–26 (Revised) (\$m)	2026–27 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Food Safety and Public Health.....	1,735.7	1,745.1	1,704.6	1,665.1
(2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services	6,770.6	6,854.2	6,703.9	6,793.4
(3) Market Management and Hawker Control.....	2,540.8	2,553.9	2,517.3	2,592.9
(4) Public Education and Community Involvement.....	74.4	73.2	63.4	63.1
	11,121.5	11,226.4	10,989.2 (–2.1%)	11,114.5 (+1.1%)
				(or –1.0% on 2025–26 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2026–27 is \$39.5 million (2.3%) lower than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to decreased provision for outsourced service contracts. There will be a net decrease of 112 posts in 2026–27.

Programme (2)

Provision for 2026–27 is \$89.5 million (1.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to increased provision for filling of vacancies, personnel related expenses and increased cash flow requirement for capital account items. There will be a net decrease of 68 posts in 2026–27.

Programme (3)

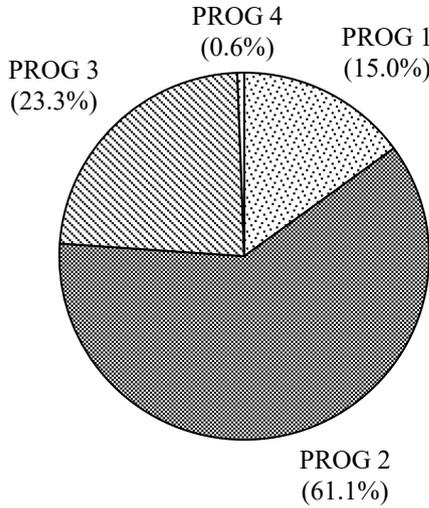
Provision for 2026–27 is \$75.6 million (3.0%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to increased provision for outsourced service contracts and increased cash flow requirement for non-recurrent item. There will be a net decrease of 53 posts in 2026–27.

Programme (4)

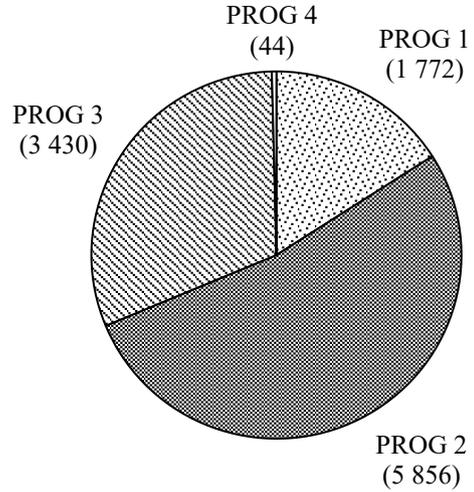
Provision for 2026–27 is \$0.3 million (0.5%) lower than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to decreased provision for personal emoluments. There will be a net decrease of two posts in 2026–27.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

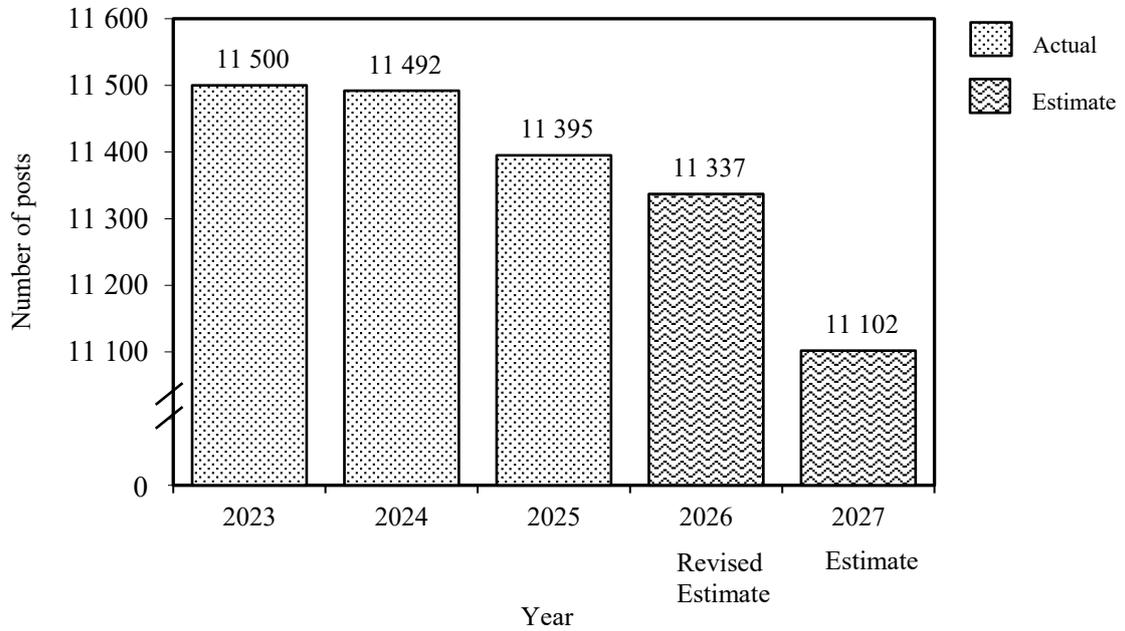
Allocation of provision to programmes (2026-27)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2027)



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



Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2024–25	Approved estimate 2025–26	Revised estimate 2025–26	Estimate 2026–27	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	10,904,792	10,994,975	10,816,519	10,890,898
	Total, Recurrent.....	<u>10,904,792</u>	<u>10,994,975</u>	<u>10,816,519</u>	<u>10,890,898</u>
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent	—	24,252	1,953	23,392
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	<u>—</u>	<u>24,252</u>	<u>1,953</u>	<u>23,392</u>
	Total, Operating Account	<u>10,904,792</u>	<u>11,019,227</u>	<u>10,818,472</u>	<u>10,914,290</u>
Capital Account					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	216,725	207,167	170,683	200,186
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	<u>216,725</u>	<u>207,167</u>	<u>170,683</u>	<u>200,186</u>
	Total, Capital Account.....	<u>216,725</u>	<u>207,167</u>	<u>170,683</u>	<u>200,186</u>
	Total Expenditure	<u><u>11,121,517</u></u>	<u><u>11,226,394</u></u>	<u><u>10,989,155</u></u>	<u><u>11,114,476</u></u>

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2026–27 for the salaries and expenses of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is \$11,114,476,000. This represents an increase of \$125,321,000 over the revised estimate for 2025–26 and a decrease of \$7,041,000 against the actual expenditure in 2024–25.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$10,890,898,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2026 will be 11 337 posts. It is expected that there will be a net decrease of 235 posts in 2026–27. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2026–27, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$4,335,890,000.

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

	2024–25 (Actual) (\$'000)	2025–26 (Original) (\$'000)	2025–26 (Revised) (\$'000)	2026–27 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	4,304,031	4,447,729	4,318,228	4,340,575
- Allowances.....	51,182	67,657	52,489	52,489
- Job-related allowances.....	89,987	97,179	94,006	94,006
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	24,468	23,021	21,731	19,716
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	442,903	504,797	471,827	522,229
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	5,991,891	5,854,217	5,857,916	5,861,464
Other Charges				
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission.....	330	375	322	419
	10,904,792	10,994,975	10,816,519	10,890,898

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of \$200,186,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of \$29,503,000 (17.3%) over the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to increased funding requirements for replacement of equipment in crematorium and columbarium facilities.

Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2025	Revised estimated expenditure for 2025–26	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<i>Operating Account</i>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	858	Ex-gratia payment to Food and Environmental Hygiene Department market tenants affected by market development plans	100,000	33,921	1,953	64,126
		Total	100,000	33,921	1,953	64,126