

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 2026–27 **\$186.0m**

Establishment ceiling 2026–27 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 43 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2026 and 31 March 2027..... **\$35.0m**

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

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

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	2026–27 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	107.2	91.3	86.6 (–5.1%)	90.2 (+4.2%)
				(or –1.2% on 2025–26 Original)

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 2025.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27

4 During 2026–27, 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, preparatory work for Agricultural Park Phase 2 First Stage development, rehabilitation of quality farmland and 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, development of modernised pond fish culture, promotion of leisure fisheries and provision of food processing and food and beverage facilities adjacent to the Aberdeen Wholesale Fish Market;
- oversee the introduction of a new unified brand for local agricultural and fisheries produce;
- 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;

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

- prepare for legislative proposal and other measures to promote duty of care on persons responsible for animals to enhance animal welfare and further protect animals from unnecessary suffering;
- promote the development of food industry in Hong Kong by facilitating the export of Hong Kong-manufactured food products to the Chinese Mainland;
- 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 sweeteners and other substances 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

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	2026–27 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	87.1	96.5	101.2 (+4.9%)	95.8 (–5.3%)
				(or –0.7% on 2025–26 Original)

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 2025.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27

7 During 2026–27, the Branch will:

- oversee the implementation of enhanced measures against environmental hygiene problems;
- 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 of the enhanced 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 the implementation of the initiative to allow dogs to enter permitted restaurants.

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

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2024-25 (Actual) (\$m)	2025-26 (Original) (\$m)	2025-26 (Revised) (\$m)	2026-27 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety.....	107.2	91.3	86.6	90.2
(2) Environmental Hygiene	87.1	96.5	101.2	95.8
	<hr/> 194.3	<hr/> 187.8	<hr/> 187.8 (—)	<hr/> 186.0 (-1.0%)
				(or -1.0% on 2025-26 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

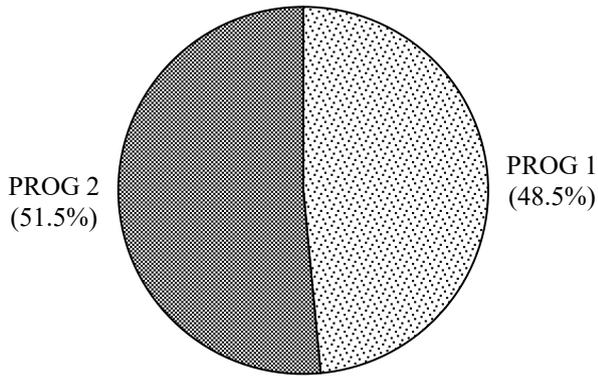
Provision for 2026-27 is \$3.6 million (4.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025-26. This is mainly due to the increased provision for general departmental expenses.

Programme (2)

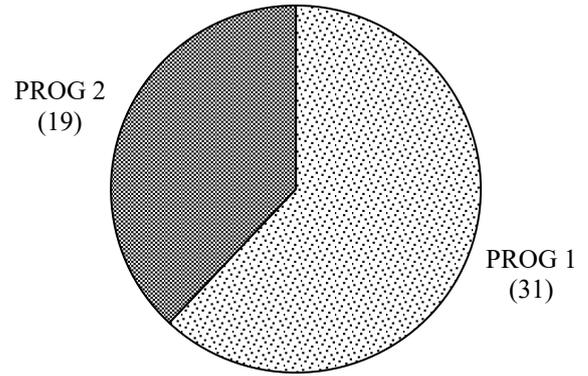
Provision for 2026-27 is \$5.4 million (5.3%) lower than the revised estimate for 2025-26. This is mainly due to the decreased provision for general departmental expenses.

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

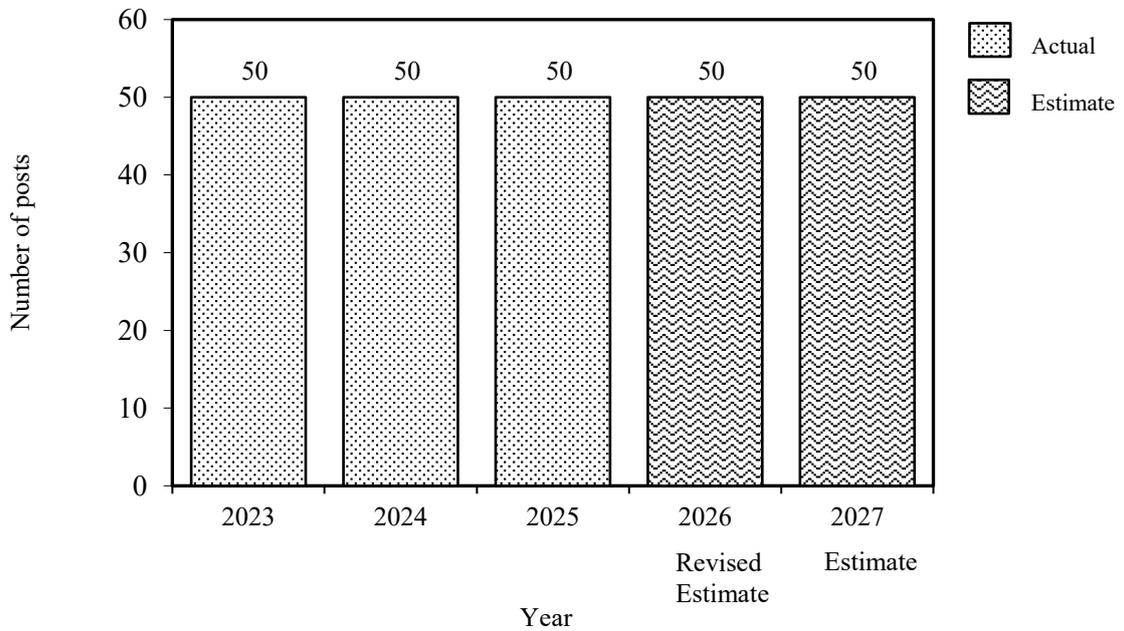
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2026-27)*



*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2027)*



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



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

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	194,258	187,750	187,750	185,958
	Total, Recurrent.....	194,258	187,750	187,750	185,958
	Total, Operating Account	194,258	187,750	187,750	185,958
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	Total Expenditure	194,258	187,750	187,750	185,958
		<u>194,258</u>	<u>187,750</u>	<u>187,750</u>	<u>185,958</u>

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

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2026–27 for the salaries and expenses of the Food Branch is \$185,958,000. This represents a decrease of \$1,792,000 against the revised estimate for 2025–26 and \$8,300,000 against the actual expenditure in 2024–25.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$185,958,000 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 2026 will be 50 posts. No change in establishment is expected 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 \$34,959,000.

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.....	50,883	52,471	50,422	51,960
- Allowances.....	2,294	3,121	3,285	3,554
- Job-related allowances.....	—	2	2	2
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	141	143	146	104
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	4,353	5,698	5,019	6,252
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses	136,587	126,315	128,876	124,086
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	194,258	187,750	187,750	185,958
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