

## Head 194 — WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT

**Controlling officer:** the Director of Water Supplies will account for expenditure under this Head.

**Estimate 2026–27** ..... **\$10,443.5m**

**Establishment ceiling 2026–27** (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 4 595 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2026 reducing by 104 posts to 4 491 posts as at 31 March 2027..... **\$2,001.4m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 23 directorate posts as at 31 March 2026 and 31 March 2027.

**Commitment balance**..... **\$385.3m**

### Controlling Officer's Report

#### Programmes

**Programme (1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution**

**Programme (2) Water Quality Control**

**Programme (3) Customer Services**

These programmes contribute to Policy Area 24: Water Supply, Drainage and Slope Safety (Secretary for Development).

#### Detail

##### Programme (1): Water Supply: Planning and Distribution

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	<b>2026–27 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	9,060.9	9,176.3	9,174.4 (—)	<b>9,285.2</b> (+1.2%)
				(or +1.2% on 2025–26 Original)

#### *Aim*

**2** The aim is to develop water resources and to plan, design, construct, operate and maintain water supply systems in order to provide round-the-clock supplies throughout the year to meet the demands of the territory.

#### *Brief Description*

**3** The Department is responsible for providing adequate supplies of water to the territory. This work involves:

##### *Fresh water*

- assessing fresh water supply requirements on the basis of providing round-the-clock supply of water throughout the year to meet the demand of the territory;
- developing fresh water resources to cope with such requirements;
- implementing the Dongjiang water supply agreement;
- planning, designing and constructing reliable and efficient fresh water supply and distribution systems to meet such requirements in good time; and
- operating and maintaining fresh water supply and distribution systems.

##### *Flushing water*

- assessing flushing water (comprising salt water and recycled water) supply requirements;
- developing flushing water resources to cope with such requirements;
- planning, designing and constructing reliable and efficient flushing water supply and distribution systems to meet such requirements in good time; and
- operating and maintaining flushing water supply and distribution systems.

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4 In 2025, the Department reviewed the total water management strategy and continued to plan, design and construct new projects for the development of water resources and extension of water supplies to new developments and to operate and maintain water supply and distribution systems to provide adequate and uninterrupted supplies of water throughout the year. In particular, the Department completed the construction of grey water treatment plant in the development of Anderson Road Quarry Site to supply recycled water for non-potable use. The Department commenced the construction of the main works (package 1) for Ngau Tam Mei water treatment works extension to increase the water treatment capacity to cater for the water demand arising from the future development in the Northern Metropolis. Besides, the Department commenced the improvement of water supply to the northern New Territories to cater for the water demand arising from the new development in North District.

5 The key performance measures in respect of water supply are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
supply pressure				
fresh water supply—maintaining normally a minimum residual head of between 15 and 30 metres in the distribution systems except at their extremities (%).....	100	100	100	100
flushing water supply—maintaining normally a minimum residual head of 15 metres in the distribution systems except at their extremities (%) .....	100	100	100	100

### *Indicators*

	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
projects under planning .....	21	22	21
value of projects under planning (\$m) .....	13,515.8	22,498.0	21,398.0
projects under design.....	26	18	14
value of projects under design (\$m).....	61,972.8	26,817.3	26,406.5
projects under construction .....	42	41	39
expenditure of works under construction (\$m) .....	4,836.5	4,753.2	8,237.2
fresh water supplied (m <sup>3</sup> ) .....	1 059 550 000	1 074 585 000	1 072 258 000
salt water supplied (m <sup>3</sup> ).....	308 100 000	299 699 000	306 446 000
recycled water supplied (m <sup>3</sup> ) <sup>^</sup> .....	-	1 300 000	2 560 000
days on full supply .....	366 <sup>#</sup>	365	365
total treatment works capacity (m <sup>3</sup> /day).....	4 648 100	4 648 100	4 648 100
total pumping plant capacity (megawatts) .....	350	358	358
leakage rate of water mains (%).....	13.4	12.8	12.1
education programmes / promotion campaigns on water conservation.....	12	12	12
schools joining education programmes on water conservation.....	896	953	955

<sup>^</sup> New indicator for 2025 onwards.

<sup>#</sup> 2024 was a leap year.

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27*

6 During 2026–27, the Department will:

- continue with the implementation of the total water management strategy for sustainable use of water resources with focuses on water conservation and water loss management as well as on development of new water resources;
- continue with the implementation of the risk-based water main asset management strategy to accord priorities to sections of water main with high risks of burst and leak for continuous improvement works;
- continue with the implementation and enhancement of the Water Intelligent Network;
- continue with the construction of distribution network for supplying recycled water to the north-eastern part of the New Territories in phases for non-potable uses;
- continue with the construction of the main works for in-situ reprovisioning of Sha Tin Water Treatment Works (South Works);

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- continue with the construction of the main works for the Siu Ho Wan Water Treatment Works extension;
- continue with the construction works related to the relocation of Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to caverns;
- continue with the construction of the risk-based improvement of large diameter water mains, stage 1A;
- continue with the construction works related to the improvement of fresh water supply to low-level area in Central;
- continue with the construction of main works (package 1) for the Ngau Tam Mei Water Treatment Works extension;
- continue with the construction works for the improvement of water supply to the northern New Territories;
- continue with the planning, design and construction of fresh and flushing water supply to meet the demands arising from housing developments;
- continue with the investigation and design for supplying recycled water for non-potable uses in Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long Town and Tuen Mun – Yuen Long Corridor areas;
- continue with the investigation and design for the in-situ reprovisioning of Tsuen Wan Water Treatment Works;
- commence the investigation and design for the implementation of smart water supply systems in government network; and
- continue with the exploration and development of various robotic technologies, including water mains inspection robots to assess internal conditions of pressurised water mains, and facilitate their wider application in operation and maintenance of water mains.

### Programme (2): Water Quality Control

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	<b>2026–27 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	375.4	461.5	381.9 (–17.2%)	<b>445.7</b> (+16.7%)
				(or –3.4% on 2025–26 Original)

#### *Aim*

7 The aim is to control the quality of water supplied to customers in accordance with the Hong Kong Drinking Water Standards (HKDWS) and the Department’s standards for flushing water.

#### *Brief Description*

8 The Department is responsible for ensuring the purity, wholesomeness and safety of treated fresh water supplied to customers conforming to HKDWS in all respects and at all times. The Department is also responsible for ensuring the quality of flushing water supplied to customers conforming to the Department’s standards. This work involves:

##### *Fresh water*

- water treatment—ensuring that treated fresh water conforms chemically, radiologically and bacteriologically to HKDWS; and
- water quality control—ensuring that the drinking water at treatment works, desalination plant, service reservoirs, water tanks, connection points and consumers’ taps conforms to HKDWS.

##### *Flushing water*

- water treatment—ensuring that the flushing water conforms chemically and bacteriologically to the Department’s standards; and
- water quality control—ensuring that the flushing water at customer ends conforms to the Department’s standards.

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9 In 2025, the Department achieved the performance targets for both drinking water and flushing water through effective control of the quality of water supplied to customers. The Department continued to maintain an effective drinking water quality monitoring regime for parameters in HKDWS, surveillance list, watch list and aesthetic guidelines. The Department continued the baseline radiological monitoring for the desalination plant at Tseung Kwan O. The Department also continued to take forward the Action Plan for Enhancing Drinking Water Safety in Hong Kong including:

- the implementation of the Enhanced Water Quality Monitoring Programme covering five metals, residual chlorine and *Escherichia coli*;
- the promotion of the implementation of Water Safety Plans (WSP) in private buildings and processing of applications under the Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme (WSPSS); and
- the preparation for proposed legislative amendments to the Waterworks Ordinance (Cap. 102) (WWO) and Waterworks Regulations (Cap. 102A) (WWR), to enhance the regulatory control of plumbing works and materials.

10 The key performance measures in respect of water quality control are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	<b>2026 (Plan)</b>
fresh water quality—water supplied to customers complies with HKDWS(%) ...	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
flushing water quality—flushing water supplied to customers complies with the Department’s standards (%) <sup>^</sup> .....	97.0	99.4	99.4	<b>97.0</b>

<sup>^</sup> Flushing water includes salt water and recycled water. Salt water and recycled water supplied to customers for flushing comply with the Water Quality Objectives for Salt Water and the Water Quality Standards for Recycled Water respectively.

### *Indicators*

	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	<b>2026 (Estimate)</b>
<i>Treated fresh water</i>			
sampling visits at treatment works, service reservoirs, water tanks, connection points and consumers’ taps.....	30 384	30 008	<b>29 000</b>
chemical quality satisfying standards (%).....	100	100	<b>100</b>
bacteriological quality satisfying standards (%) .....	100	100	<b>100</b>

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27*

11 During 2026–27, the Department will carry out the following work to safeguard the drinking water quality:

- continue to encourage private building owners and property management agents to implement WSP in their buildings in order to further safeguard drinking water quality in the community, and process applications under WSPSS;
- continue to provide necessary assistance to relevant bureaux/departments to implement WSP for their buildings;
- continue to prepare proposed legislative amendments to WWO and WWR to safeguard the drinking water quality through enhanced regulatory control of plumbing works and materials; and
- continue with the publicity and public education on drinking water safety.

### **Programme (3): Customer Services**

	2024–25 (Actual)	2025–26 (Original)	2025–26 (Revised)	<b>2026–27 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	709.6	720.0	708.7 (–1.6%)	<b>712.6</b> (+0.6%)
				(or –1.0% on 2025–26 Original)

### *Aim*

12 The aim is to provide customer services and enforce WWO and WWR.

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### *Brief Description*

13 The Department is responsible for the provision of efficient and effective services to customers and enforcing WWO and WWR. This work involves:

- ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with customer enquiries and complaints and in processing applications for water supplies;
- enforcing WWO and WWR;
- ensuring timeliness of billing and promptness in updating customer accounts;
- monitoring closely the level of arrears of water charges; and
- coping with the growth in the number of customer accounts.

14 In 2025, the Department continued to provide efficient and effective services to customers and enforce WWO and WWR. The Department continued to administer the provisions of WWO, including the Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 which took effect on 19 April 2024, to protect tenants of sub-divided units (SDU) from being overcharged for water. The Department continued with the preparation of proposed legislative amendments to WWO and WWR on safeguarding drinking water quality and strengthening water resource management. The Department continued to pursue various digitalisation initiatives with a view to optimising waterworks infrastructure and enhancing customer services, and providing high quality and environmentally friendly water supply services.

15 The key performance measures in respect of customer services are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Plan)
processing application for taking up of consumership				
by post within seven working days (%).....	100	100	100	<b>98Ψ</b>
in person at Customer Enquiry Centres (all-purpose counter) within 15 minutes (%) .....	100	100	100	<b>98Ψ</b>
issue of final bill upon closure of account within three working days (%) .....	100	98.6	100	<b>98.0Ψ</b>
refund of water deposit within nine working days (%).....	100	100	100	<b>98Ψ</b>
processing application for meter test within eight working days (%) .....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
processing application for autopay service (upon receipt of notification from banks) within three working days (%).....	100	100	100	<b>98Ψ</b>
proportion of accurate water meters (inaccuracy not exceeding +/- 3%)(%)...	98.0	98.7	98.5	<b>98.0</b>
response time for attendance to fault complaints				
within half a day for fresh water supply fault (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
within 24 hours for others (%) .....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
notice for planned suspension of water supply issued not less than four working days in advance (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
conducting publicity campaigns and seminar for promotion of combatting unauthorised water consumption .....	70	75	75	<b>72</b>
initiating an investigation after receiving a complaint on suspected unauthorised water consumption within one working day (%) .....	92	98	97	<b>93</b>

Ψ The performance targets for 2026 are slightly adjusted given the suspension of the Customer Care and Billing System (CCBS) for a few days in 2026 for system upgrade.

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### *Indicators*

	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
no. of customer accounts.....	3 270 000	3 320 000	<b>3 370 000</b>
fees, water charges and deposits demanded (\$m).....	2,810	2,820	<b>2,460</b>
arrears of water charges at year end in terms of no. of days of water charges demanded .....	1.3	1.3	<b>1.3</b>
prosecutions.....	176	271	<b>200</b>
finances imposed (\$).....	191,829	454,248	<b>220,000</b>
house service inspections due to irregular consumption.....	5 833	5 785	<b>5 947</b>
public enquiries and requests for services.....	1 210 755	1 235 892	<b>1 198 357</b>
disputes and complaints handled.....	12 394	12 881	<b>12 875</b>

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026–27*

**16** During 2026–27, the Department will continue to:

- streamline and enhance the efficiency of the approval process of applications for water supplies by implementation of the proposed Digital Water Supply Application Management System;
- strengthen regulatory control on inside service leakage to minimise water loss in inside services;
- implement smart water meters for suitable new developments;
- proceed with the remaining legislative amendments to WWO and WWR;
- step up prosecutions and inspections against overcharging for water in SDU with the strengthened law enforcement power pursuant to the Waterworks (Amendment) Ordinance 2024;
- provide necessary technical advice and support to building owners and property management agents and render assistance to the market in developing capacity to deal with inside service leakage;
- support and maintain the information technology systems and pursue innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, voicebot and smart data analytics to enhance the customer service experience of the public;
- upgrade CCBS with a view to digitalising and enhancing customer services;
- drive the digital transformation of water supply services for providing high quality, efficient and effective services to the public; and
- enhance the water supply emergency incident management with a view to better collaborating with stakeholders to relieve the impact of the incident and disseminating more precise information to the public as soon as practicable.

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### ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2024–25 (Actual) (\$m)	2025–26 (Original) (\$m)	2025–26 (Revised) (\$m)	2026–27 (Estimate) (\$m)
<b>Programme</b>				
(1) Water Supply: Planning and Distribution .....	9,060.9	9,176.3	9,174.4	9,285.2
(2) Water Quality Control .....	375.4	461.5	381.9	445.7
(3) Customer Services .....	709.6	720.0	708.7	712.6
	10,145.9	10,357.8	10,265.0 (–0.9%)	10,443.5 (+1.7%)
				(or +0.8% on 2025–26 Original)

#### Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

##### Programme (1)

Provision for 2026–27 is \$110.8 million (1.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to the increased provisions for purchase of water and personnel related expenses, partly offset by the decreased provision for contract maintenance. There will be a net decrease of 60 posts in 2026–27.

##### Programme (2)

Provision for 2026–27 is \$63.8 million (16.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirements for the implementation of WSPSS and the replacement of one launch for assisting water quality control. There will be a net decrease of two posts in 2026–27.

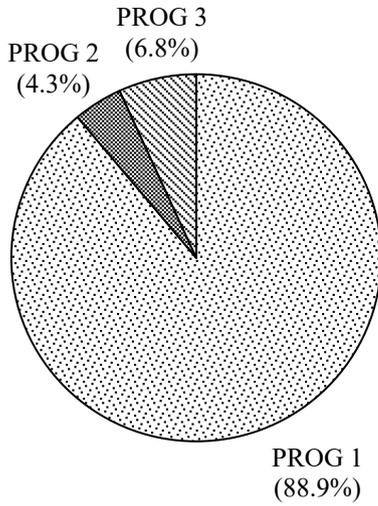
##### Programme (3)

Provision for 2026–27 is \$3.9 million (0.6%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025–26. This is mainly due to the increased provision for personnel related expenses. There will be a net decrease of 42 posts in 2026–27.

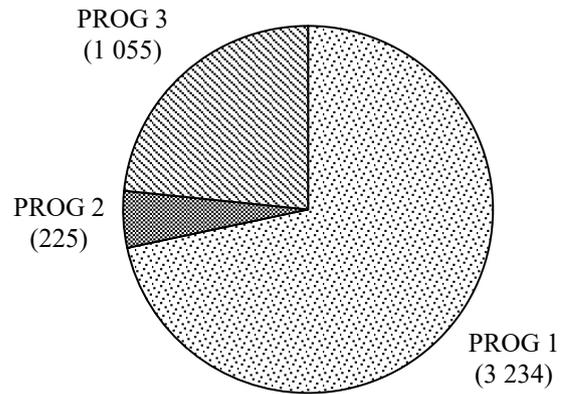
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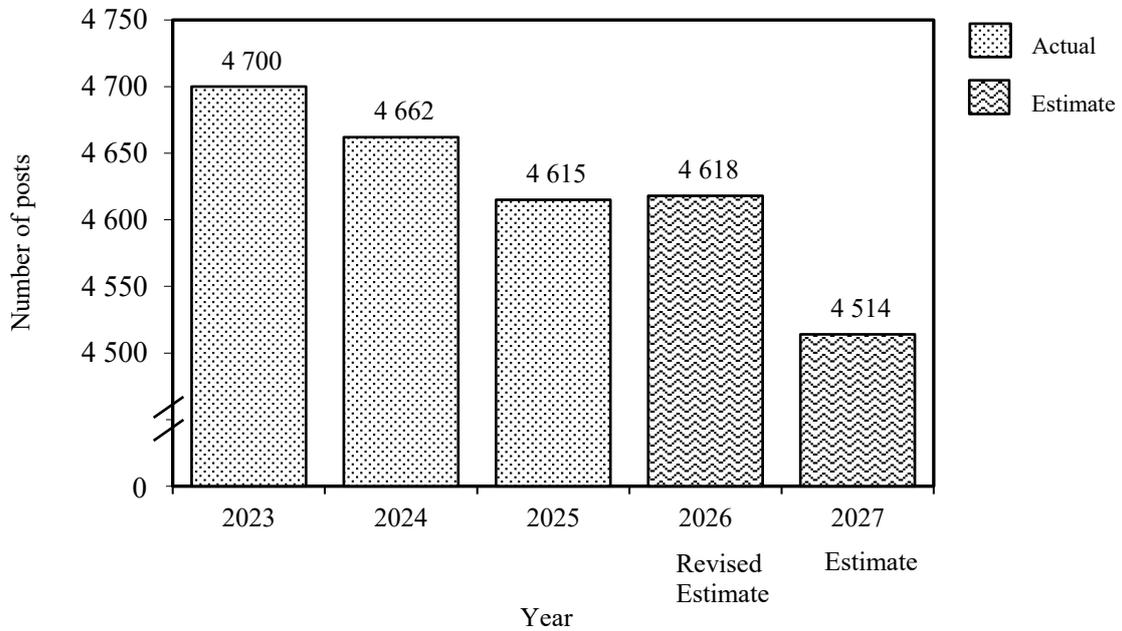
*Allocation of provision  
to programmes  
(2026-27)*



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



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



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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2024-25	Approved estimate 2025-26	Revised estimate 2025-26	Estimate 2026-27
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Operating Account</b>					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses .....	4,945,700	4,969,838	4,929,161	<b>4,929,411</b>
223	Purchase of water .....	5,158,045	5,281,853	5,281,789	<b>5,402,597</b>
	Total, Recurrent.....	<u>10,103,745</u>	<u>10,251,691</u>	<u>10,210,950</u>	<b><u>10,332,008</u></b>
Non-Recurrent					
700	General non-recurrent .....	15,214	87,800	35,800	<b>88,100</b>
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	<u>15,214</u>	<u>87,800</u>	<u>35,800</u>	<b><u>88,100</u></b>
	Total, Operating Account .....	<u>10,118,959</u>	<u>10,339,491</u>	<u>10,246,750</u>	<b><u>10,420,108</u></b>
<b>Capital Account</b>					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
603	Plant, vehicles and equipment.....	—	3,150	3,150	<b>6,300</b>
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	26,938	15,113	15,113	<b>17,048</b>
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	<u>26,938</u>	<u>18,263</u>	<u>18,263</u>	<b><u>23,348</u></b>
	Total, Capital Account.....	<u>26,938</u>	<u>18,263</u>	<u>18,263</u>	<b><u>23,348</u></b>
	Total Expenditure .....	<u><u>10,145,897</u></u>	<u><u>10,357,754</u></u>	<u><u>10,265,013</u></u>	<b><u><u>10,443,456</u></u></b>

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### Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2026–27 for the salaries and expenses of the Water Supplies Department is \$10,443,456,000. This represents an increase of \$178,443,000 over the revised estimate for 2025–26 and \$297,559,000 over the actual expenditure in 2024–25.

#### Operating Account

##### Recurrent

**2** Provision of \$4,929,411,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Water Supplies Department.

**3** The establishment as at 31 March 2026 will be 4 618 posts. It is expected that there will be a net decrease of 104 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 \$2,001,424,000.

**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 .....	2,027,037	2,101,225	2,062,453	<b>2,084,601</b>
- Allowances .....	200,079	199,767	188,864	<b>188,864</b>
- Job-related allowances.....	14,671	15,159	16,819	<b>15,785</b>
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution .....	10,964	12,471	10,043	<b>10,211</b>
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution .....	182,868	208,712	198,363	<b>227,510</b>
Departmental Expenses				
- Light and power.....	1,004,968	1,006,708	1,015,140	<b>1,016,065</b>
- Hire of services and professional fees .....	308,317	323,799	323,795	<b>349,797</b>
- Fuel and lubricating oil.....	130	383	384	<b>384</b>
- Specialist supplies and equipment.....	111,156	136,223	128,137	<b>129,790</b>
- Maintenance materials.....	68,370	60,287	66,255	<b>64,930</b>
- Contract maintenance .....	726,609	586,892	637,585	<b>574,308</b>
- General departmental expenses .....	290,531	318,212	281,323	<b>267,166</b>
	4,945,700	4,969,838	4,929,161	<b>4,929,411</b>

**5** Provision of \$5,402,597,000 under *Subhead 223 Purchase of water* is for the purchase of water from Guangdong.

#### Capital Account

##### Plant, Equipment and Works

**6** Provision of \$17,048,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of \$1,935,000 (12.8%) over the revised estimate of 2025–26. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for procurement/replacement of minor plant, vehicles and equipment in 2026–27.

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### 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
<b><i>Operating Account</i></b>						
700		<i>General non-recurrent</i>				
	802	Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme .....	440,000	33,241	35,800	370,959
			<u>440,000</u>	<u>33,241</u>	<u>35,800</u>	<u>370,959</u>
<b><i>Capital Account</i></b>						
603		<i>Plant, vehicles and equipment</i>				
	803	Replacement of one launch for assisting water quality monitoring and sampling in the High Island Reservoir .....	17,500	—	3,150	14,350
			<u>17,500</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>3,150</u>	<u>14,350</u>
	Total .....		<u>457,500</u>	<u>33,241</u>	<u>38,950</u>	<u>385,309</u>