

Head 82 — BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

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

Estimate 2002–03	\$854.6m
Establishment ceiling 2002–03 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 933 non-directorate posts at 31 March 2002 reducing by 25 posts to 908 posts at 31 March 2003	\$373.6m
In addition there will be an estimated 31 directorate posts at 31 March 2002 reducing by one post to 30 posts at 31 March 2003.	
Capital Account commitment balance	\$37.4m

Controlling Officer's Report

Programme

Buildings and Building Works

This programme contributes to Policy Area 22: Buildings, Lands and Planning (Secretary for Planning and Lands) and Policy Area 31: Housing (Secretary for Housing).

Detail

	2000–01 (Actual)	2001–02 (Approved)	2001–02 (Revised)	2002–03 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	529.7	749.9 (+41.6%)	746.5 (–0.5%)	854.6 (+14.5%)

Aim

2 The aim is to promote building safety, enforce building standards and improve the quality of building development.

Brief Description

3 With this aim, the department provides services to owners and residents in both existing and new buildings in the private sector through enforcement of the Buildings Ordinance.

4 As regards existing buildings, the services provided include eliminating dangers and nuisances by demolishing unauthorised building works and advertisement signboards; removing dangers from old buildings and slopes; approving alteration and addition works; abating fire hazards in buildings and providing advice on the suitability of premises for the issue of licences for specified commercial uses.

5 As regards new buildings, the department scrutinises and approves building plans, carries out audit checks on construction works and site safety and issues occupation permits upon completion of new buildings.

6 In 2001, the department continued to step up enforcement action against unauthorised building works. In addition, the department undertook the following new initiatives and measures:

Existing Buildings

- by outsourcing building inspection work to increase the number of buildings from 400 to 1 500 (instead of the original target of 900) for commencing large-scale blitz clearance of unauthorised building works, mainly on external walls;
- increasing the number of single-staircase buildings targeted for rooftop structure clearance from 300 to 700;
- taking forward the pilot co-ordinated maintenance of buildings scheme for 150 buildings;
- devising a signboard registration system for ensuring the safety of advertisement signboards;
- improving services to the public through shortening processing time for licence applications;
- operating a pilot building records management system for storage and retrieval of building plans and records of Yau Tsim District in the form of electronic images;
- launching the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme;
- finalising a comprehensive layman's manual on building maintenance; and
- starting a public education and publicity campaign on building safety and maintenance.

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New Buildings

- completing the first stage of the comprehensive review of the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations and formulating amendments to modernise the legislation;
- enhancing the effort to facilitate the construction of environmentally friendly and innovative buildings;
- introducing a new site auditing strategy on foundation and superstructure works;
- re-engineering the building plan checking system to expedite and facilitate the building development process;
- establishing a new register for specialist contractors in ground investigation field works; and
- formulating a framework for the proposed statutory registration of geotechnical engineers.

7 The key performance measures in respect of buildings and building works are:

Targets

	Target	2000 (Actual)	2001 (Actual)	2002 (Plan)
<i>24-hour Emergency Services</i>				
time for responding to emergencies	3 hours	99.1%	98.7%	100%
<i>Existing Buildings</i>				
no. of buildings targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works	1 000/year§	404	1 571	1 500
no. of buildings covered by the co-ordinated maintenance of buildings scheme	150/yearΩ	—	150	200
no. of single-staircase buildings improved under rooftop structure clearance operations	700/year#	220	402	700
no. of prescribed commercial premises inspected for improvement of fire safety measures†	150/year	180	205	190
no. of specified commercial buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures‡	140/year	160	148	140
no. of composite buildings inspected for improvement of fire safety measures@ ..	900/year	—	519	900
no. of advertisement signboards removed/ repaired	1 200/year	646	1 491	1 200
time for advising on restaurant licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system	14 days	89%	94%	95%
time for making existing building records available for public viewing	10 daysφ	95.3%	91.2%	93%
<i>New Buildings</i>				
time for processing building plans:				
new submissions	60 days	99.3%	99.5%	100%
re-submissions	30 days	99.2%	98.4%	100%
time for processing applications for consent to commence building works	28 days	98.5%	98.3%	100%
time for processing applications for occupation permits	14 days	99%	99.7%	100%

§ This is an enhanced target of the large-scale blitz clearance operation for 2002 to remove unauthorised building works mainly on the external walls of buildings and some on roofs and podiums and some in backlanes and yards. The targets for 2000 and 2001 were 400 and 900 buildings respectively and 1 000 buildings per year thereafter.

Ω This target was introduced in 2000 as a pilot scheme. Review on the effectiveness of the scheme is in progress. The enhanced target of 200 buildings for 2002 is to be confirmed in the light of the findings of the review.

This enhanced target was introduced in 2001. The targets for 1999 and 2000 were 100 and 300 buildings respectively.

† Under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, fire safety improvement is required for premises used for banking, off-course betting, jewellery or goldsmith's business, supermarket, department store or shopping arcade, with a floor area exceeding 230 m².

‡ Under the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, fire safety improvement is required for commercial buildings constructed or designed on or before 23 March 1973 for office, business, trade or any entertainment use.

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- @ This new target was introduced in mid-2001 for inspections of old composite (commercial/residential) buildings. After inspection, the department advises owners/occupiers to improve fire safety measures.
- φ This enhanced target was introduced in January 2001. The target for 2000 and the original target for 2001 were 14 days. Instant viewing service is available for records of buildings in Yau Tsim district following the conversion of the records into electronic images for on-line retrieval.

Indicators

	2000 (Actual)	2001 (Actual)	2002 (Estimate)
<i>24-hour Emergency Services</i>			
no. of emergency reports attended to.....	634	852	900
<i>Existing Buildings</i>			
no. of reports from members of the public on unauthorised building works attended to.....	15 860	13 817	11 000
no. of removal orders issued on unauthorised building works.....	10 602	13 212	25 000§
no. of unauthorised structures removed and irregularities rectified.....	18 297	20 647	30 000
no. of reports from members of the public on dilapidated buildings attended to.....	4 613	6 215	5 000
no. of repair orders issued on dilapidated buildings.....	434	295	600
no. of dilapidated buildings repaired.....	534	390	500
no. of repair orders issued on dangerous slopes.....	170	265	300
no. of dangerous slopes repaired.....	53	73	70
no. of prescribed commercial premises issued with fire safety directions.....	121	121	120
no. of specified commercial buildings issued with fire safety improvement directions.....	144	141	140
no. of composite buildings issued with advisory letters to improve fire safety.....	—	519	900
no. of licence/registration applications processed (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools etc.).....	6 215	6 337	6 200
<i>Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme</i>			
no. of loan applications processed.....	308	1 726Ω	1 800
no. of loan applications approved.....	281	1 457Ω	1 750
total amount of loans committed (\$m).....	10.2	45.7Ω	70.0
<i>New Buildings</i>			
no. of new building proposals approved.....	284	274	270
no. of plans received and processed.....	12 104	10 829	10 000
no. of occupation permits issued.....	231	209	230
gross floor area of new building proposals approved (in 1 000 m ²).....	4 204	3 448	3 400
no. of site audit checks made#.....	3 916	4 115	6 500
no. of sites inspected.....	1 256	1 310	1 300

§ The substantial increase in the number of removal orders issued is mainly due to increase in the number of buildings for clearance of external unauthorised building works from 900 to 1 500 in 2001.

Ω The growth in applications is mainly due to the expanded scope of the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme since July 2001.

The site audit checks cover both construction works and site safety since the last quarter of 2000.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2002–03

- 8 During 2002–03, the department will take forward initiatives in all areas of its work. In particular, it will:
- intensify action to improve building safety, targeting 1 500 buildings (instead of the original target of 1 000 buildings) for carrying out blitz clearance of unauthorised building works on the external walls by outsourcing building inspection work, and 700 single-staircase buildings for clearance of illegal rooftop structures;
 - strengthen support for building owners through implementing the co-ordinated maintenance of buildings scheme and broadening the assistance available to owners by an expanded scope of the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme;
 - encourage construction of environmentally friendly and innovative buildings through the provision of further incentives;
 - further reform the plan processing system to expedite and facilitate the building development process;

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- modernise the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations by introducing the first batch of legislative amendments;
- introduce legislation for a signboard registration system with a view to ensuring that advertisement signboards are safely constructed and properly maintained;
- conduct an extensive review of construction and planning standards under the Buildings Ordinance;
- issue a comprehensive layman's manual on building maintenance;
- upgrade the fire safety standards of old composite buildings in collaboration with the Fire Services Department;
- sustain a public education and publicity campaign on building safety and maintenance;
- develop the framework of a voluntary scheme for classification of private buildings;
- commission a consultancy study to devise a system for assessing environmental design and performance of buildings; and
- commission a consultancy study on provision of facilities in buildings for the elderly.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

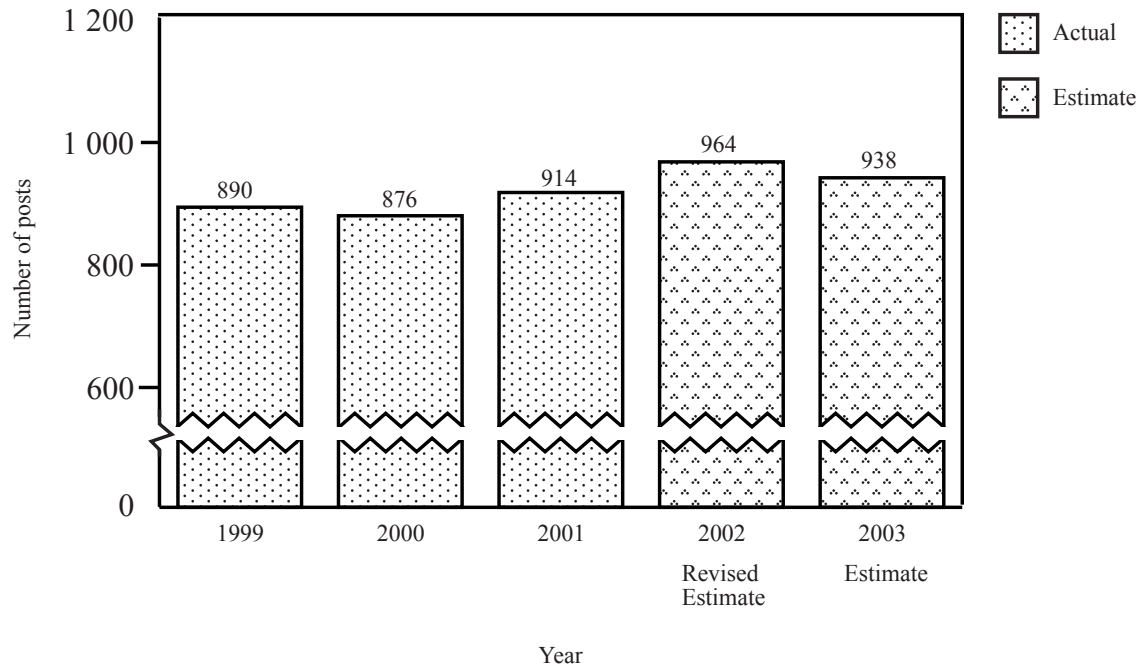
Programme	2000-01 (Actual) (\$m)	2001-02 (Approved) (\$m)	2001-02 (Revised) (\$m)	2002-03 (Estimate) (\$m)
Buildings and Building Works	529.7	749.9 (+41.6%)	746.5 (-0.5%)	854.6 (+14.5%)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Provision for 2002-03 is \$108.1 million (14.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2001-02. This is mainly due to additional provision to pay Land Registry's fees for providing ownership information and registration of orders/notices/directions in the course of stepping up the department's efforts to remove unauthorised building works on a more extensive basis, demolish more illegal rooftop structures in single-staircase buildings and carry out fire safety inspection and enforcement in composite buildings. The increase is also due to full-year provision of resources provided in 2001-02 to step up this department's large-scale clearance operations, partly offset by a net deletion of 25 permanent and one supernumerary posts.

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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2000-01	Approved estimate 2001-02	Revised estimate 2001-02	Estimate 2002-03	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Recurrent Account					
000	Operational expenses	—	714,524	716,981	739,500
227	Payment for Land Registry/Companies				
	Registry Trading Fund services	—	—	—	84,173*
	Salaries	434,711	—	—	—
	Allowances	5,459	—	—	—
	Hire of services and professional fees	3,461	—	—	—
	Contract maintenance	1,192	—	—	—
	General departmental expenses	67,347	—	—	—
	Total, Recurrent Account	512,170	714,524	716,981	823,673
Capital Account					
I — Plant, Equipment and Works					
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)	—	3,700	2,668	1,460
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works	—	3,700	2,668	1,460
II — Other Non-Recurrent					
700	General other non-recurrent	17,543	31,703	26,850	29,508
	Total, Other Non-Recurrent	17,543	31,703	26,850	29,508
	Total, Capital Account	17,543	35,403	29,518	30,968
	Total Expenditure	529,713	749,927	746,499	854,641

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2002–03 for the salaries and expenses of the Buildings Department is \$854,641,000. This represents an increase of \$108,142,000 over the revised estimate for 2001–02 and of \$324,928,000 over actual expenditure in 2000–01.

Recurrent Account

2 Provision of \$739,500,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries and allowances of staff of the Buildings Department and its other operating expenses. Management and control of the Buildings Department's operational expenses take the form of a one-line vote.

3 As a vote-funded department, the Buildings Department is subject to establishment control. The establishment at 31 March 2002 will be 963 permanent and one supernumerary posts. It is expected that a net 25 permanent and one supernumerary posts will be deleted in 2002–03. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated powers create or delete non-directorate posts during 2002–03, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$373,588,000.

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

	2000–01 (Actual) (\$'000)	2001–02 (Original Estimate) (\$'000)	2001–02 (Revised Estimate) (\$'000)	2002–03 (Estimate) (\$'000)
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries	434,711	468,474	487,130	527,740
- Allowances	5,459	6,300	4,562	4,868
- Job-related allowances	—	11	1,483	71
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees	3,461	4,858	4,858	5,057
- Contract maintenance	1,192	6,030	2,821	3,331
- General departmental expenses	67,347	228,851	216,127	198,433
	512,170	714,524	716,981	739,500

5 Provision of \$84,173,000 under *Subhead 227 Payment for Land Registry/Companies Registry Trading Fund services* is for the payment of fees to the Land Registry and Companies Registry for providing ownership information and registration of orders/notices/directions.

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

6 Provision of \$1,460,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents a decrease of \$1,208,000 (45.3%) against the revised estimate for 2001–02. This is mainly due to the reduced requirement for expenditure on minor plant and equipment.

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Capital Account

Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2001	Revised estimated expenditure for 2001-02	Balance
			\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
700		<i>General other non-recurrent</i>				
	007	Translation and production of codes of practice and design manuals in Chinese	500	64	100	336
	010	Consultancy to study and resolve the technological issues of the proposed Building Safety Inspection Scheme....	6,000	3,300	2,100	600
	011	Consultancy to compile a full list of existing private buildings in Hong Kong	3,300	—	1,100	2,200
	012	Consultancy to review Code of Practice for Fire Safety in buildings and renovation works	9,900	—	990	8,910
	013	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on lighting and ventilation of buildings.....	6,000	1,197	3,291	1,512
	014	In-situ tests on cantilevered slab canopies	5,700	2,018	2,300	1,382
	015	Consultancy to review Building Regulations on drainage of buildings	4,000	—	3,500	500
	016	Consultancy for water seepage and drain leakage investigation	3,200	—	960	2,240
	018	Pilot project on electronic imaging of building records	6,640	—	5,000	1,640
	019	Consultancy study on the seismic effects on buildings in Hong Kong.....	5,000	—	250	4,750
	020	Consultancy study to draft a Comprehensive Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme for Buildings.....	5,600	—	—	5,600
	021	Consultancy study to draft a Design Manual on Barrier Free Access and Facilities for Persons with a Disability and the Elderly.....	4,500	—	—	4,500
	022	Consultancy to draft a Limit-State Code for Structural Use of Steel in Hong Kong	3,200	—	—	3,200
		Total	<u>63,540</u>	<u>6,579</u>	<u>19,591</u>	<u>37,370</u>