

Head 62 — HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2019–20 **\$358.0m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Building Control
Programme (2) Private Housing
Programme (3) Appeal Panel (Housing)
Programme (4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance
Programme (5) Support Services

These programmes contribute to Policy Area 31: Housing (Secretary for Transport and Housing).

Detail

Programme (1): Building Control

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	150.2	156.6	159.2 (+1.7%)	164.6 (+3.4%)
				(or +5.1% on 2018–19 Original)

Aim

2 The Independent Checking Unit (ICU) of the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) is delegated with the building control authority over buildings of the Housing Authority (HA) that have been sold or otherwise disposed of under section 4(2)(a) or 17A of the Housing Ordinance (Cap. 283) (HO). The aim is for ICU to exercise building control of these former HA buildings, in accordance with the Buildings Department (BD)'s current practice on building control of private housing, and to make a bi-annual report to the Director of Buildings.

Brief Description

3 ICU has been carrying out building control duties in subsidised sale flats (SSF) buildings under authority delegated by the Building Authority. The delegation has been extended to retail and carparking premises and some public rental housing estates as a result of the divestment of HA's retail and carparking premises since November 2005 when the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) became applicable to these properties. As at 1 December 2018, the portfolio of properties comprises:

- number of SSF courts/flats : 197 / 413 810
- number of public rental housing estates/flats : 97 / 430 292
- total numbers of courts and estates : 292
- number of retail/carparking premises : 110 / 348
- total numbers of domestic flats (SSF and public rental housing) : 844 102

4 The work involves:

- processing applications for building works within the statutory period;
- attending to emergencies and carrying out enforcement action on:
 - unauthorised building works;
 - dangerous buildings; and
 - defective drainage;
- conducting the Planned Survey for overall improvements to SSF buildings;
- processing licensing/registration referrals by government departments (e.g. restaurants, places of public entertainment and tutorial schools);

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- processing minor works submissions; and
 - implementing the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS) and the Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS).
- 5 The key performance measures in respect of building control are:

Targets

	Target	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Plan)
processing building plans within 60 days for new submissions (%)¶	90.0	97.1	97.1	90.0
processing building plans within 30 days for re-submission (%)¶	90.0	96.1	94.3	90.0
processing applications for consent to commence building works within 28 days (%)¶	90.0	97.3	96.9	90.0
advising on restaurant licence applications under the Application Vetting Panel system within 12 working days (%)	100	99.0	98.4	98.0
responding to emergencies during office hours (%) :				
within 1.5 hours for cases in urban areas	100	100	—Δ	100
within two hours for cases in new towns in New Territories (N.T.)	100	100	100	100
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.	100	—Δ	—Δ	100
responding to emergencies outside office hours (%) :				
within two hours for cases in urban areas and new towns in N.T.	100	100	100	100
within three hours for cases in other areas in N.T.	100	100	—Δ	100
providing non-emergency services for reports on unauthorised building works under construction within 48 hours (%)	100	100	100	100
buildings targeted for prescribed inspection and, if necessary, prescribed repair under MBIS	28/year	30	29	28
flats targeted for prescribed window inspection and, if necessary, prescribed window repair under MWIS	26 560/year	26 853	27 080	26 560

¶ Revised descriptions of previous targets “processing plans for alteration and addition works within 60 days”, “processing resubmissions for alteration and addition works within 30 days” and “processing applications for consent to commence alteration and addition works within 28 days” as from 2018.

Δ No case in the relevant years.

Indicators

	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Estimate)
building plans received and processed within 60 daysψ	210	210	200
resubmitted building plans received and processed within 30 daysψ	485	392	400
consents to commence building works issuedψ	620	511	500
buildings to be targeted for clearance of unauthorised building works under ICU’s Planned Survey	18	18	18
unauthorised buildings works			
reports from members of the public attended to	441	553	400
reports on cantilever canopies	18	26	18
advisory letters issued	1 118	1 115	1 100
removal orders issued	408	402	400
prosecutions referred to BD against failure to comply with removal orders	43	21	40

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	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Estimate)
dilapidated buildings			
reports from members of the public attended to	737	746	700
repairs orders issued.....	1	0	0
mandatory building inspection			
no. of notices issued.....	3 340	2 129	4 000@
no. of notices discharged.....	3 316	4 004	3 500
mandatory window inspection			
no. of notices issued.....	19 637	14 974	12 000
no. of notices discharged.....	35 493	10 053	13 000
advice on licensing/registration applications (restaurants, places of public entertainment, tutorial schools, etc.)	2 055	2 032	2 300
minor works submissions received	37 800	28 154	30 000

ψ Revised descriptions of previous indicators “alteration and addition plans received and processed within 60 days”, “resubmitted alteration and addition plans received and processed within 30 days” and “consents to commence alteration and addition works issued” as from 2018.

@ The tenth batch of MBIS notices will be issued in 2019.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

- 6 During 2019–20, ICU will continue:
- with the programme of the Planned Survey in SSF buildings;
 - to compile as-built records of existing SSF and public rental housing buildings, and retail and carparking premises, in line with BD’s existing practice and format for private housing, to facilitate future building control;
 - to implement the Minor Works Control System; and
 - to implement MBIS and MWIS for buildings aged 30 years or above which require mandatory inspection and, if necessary, repair of the buildings and flats aged ten years or above which require mandatory inspection and, if necessary, repair of windows.

Programme (2): Private Housing

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	81.5	83.7	86.4 (+3.2%)	89.6 (+3.7%)
				(or +7.0% on 2018–19 Original)

Aim

7 The aim is to maintain an orderly, fair and free environment to facilitate stable and healthy development of the private residential property market.

Brief Description

- 8 The work involves:
- collecting data, compiling and maintaining a database on private housing supply;
 - releasing data on housing supply in the primary market on a regular basis to enhance market transparency;
 - providing analysis on developments in the private housing market;
 - implementing the Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance (Cap. 621) to regulate the sale of first-hand residential properties;
 - monitoring developments in the private residential property market;
 - monitoring the subsidised housing schemes entrusted to the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS);
 - working with the Estate Agents Authority (EAA) to further improve the calibre and professionalism of local estate agents; and
 - administering the appeal mechanism provided for under the Estate Agents Ordinance (Cap. 511).

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Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

- 9 During 2019–20, the Department will:
- continue to release statistics on private housing supply in the primary market on a quarterly basis;
 - continue to enhance the transparency of the sale of first-hand residential properties;
 - continue to liaise with EAA to enhance the professionalism and service standard of estate agents;
 - continue to liaise with HKHS on the implementation of subsidised housing projects entrusted to HKHS;
 - monitor the implementation of the “Starter Homes” pilot project at Ma Tau Wai Road; and
 - formulate legislative proposals to amend the Rating Ordinance (Cap. 116) for introducing “Special Rates” on vacant first-hand private residential units.

Programme (3): Appeal Panel (Housing)

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	10.9	11.2	11.6 (+3.6%)	12.1 (+4.3%)
				(or +8.0% on 2018–19 Original)

Aim

10 The aim is to provide administrative and secretarial support to the Appeal Panel (Housing) (the Panel) to ensure that appeals lodged under the HO against the termination of leases by HA are handled in a thorough, impartial and efficient manner.

Brief Description

11 The Appeal Panel (Housing) Secretariat is set up to assist the Panel in discharging its functions. The work involves:

- verifying appellants’ status;
- assisting the Chairman of the Panel to appoint the Appeal Tribunals and draw up hearing schedules;
- issuing notice of hearing together with relevant documents to the appellant and HA;
- serving as secretary to the Appeal Tribunals;
- issuing notice of decision to the appellant and HA on the Appeal Tribunal’s determination after each hearing;
- handling enquiries and correspondence from appellants and HA;
- advising Members of the Panel on the scope of authority of the Panel and keeping Members updated on the latest policies on tenancy issues; and
- organising briefing sessions for new Members of the Panel.

12 The key performance measures in respect of the Panel are:

Targets

	Target	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Plan)
issuing notice of hearing and relevant documents to appellant and HA not less than 14 days before the fixed hearing date (%).....	100	100	100	100
issuing Appeal Tribunal’s determination to appellant and HA within 14 days after hearing (%).....	100	100	99.6	100

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Indicators

	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Estimate)
no. of appeals received.....	952	747	740
no. of hearing sessions.....	175	145	150
no. of hearings arranged.....	547	361	375
no. of appeals heard.....	420	270	290

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

13 During 2019–20, the Appeal Panel (Housing) Secretariat will:

- continue to provide efficient and effective support services to the Panel in discharging its duties; and
- ensure that Members are kept up-to-date on the latest policies on tenancy issues to facilitate their consideration of appeals.

Programme (4): Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	24.5	24.4	26.0 (+6.6%)	25.8 (–0.8%)
				(or +5.7% on 2018–19 Original)

Aim

14 The aim is to provide rehousing assistance to eligible clearerees affected by government actions in land clearance and illegal rooftop structure clearance, and victims of natural disasters and other emergency incidents.

Brief Description

15 The work involves:

- screening rehousing applications referred by the Lands Department (LandsD) according to prevailing policies and criteria and verifying their rehousing eligibility;
- providing assistance in rehousing the occupants of illegal rooftop structures displaced by BD’s enforcement actions and verifying their rehousing eligibility;
- allocating public rental housing and interim housing to eligible applicants;
- paying singleton and doubleton allowances/issuing Green Form Certificates to eligible applicants in lieu of rehousing;
- maintaining computerised records on miscellaneous housing benefits granted by LandsD and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA);
- providing temporary shelter to victims affected by natural disasters, emergency incidents and other government actions; and
- co-ordinating the use of the transit centres.

16 The key performance measures in respect of rehousing of occupants upon clearance are:

Target

	Target	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Plan)
verification of domestic clearerees’ rehousing eligibility within eight weeks upon receipt of referrals from relevant departments (%)φ.....	100	100	100	100

φ Revised description of the previous target “verification of domestic clearerees’ rehousing eligibility within eight weeks after clearance announcement” as from 2018 for precise presentation.

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Indicators

	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Estimate)
programmed squatter clearances or emergency clearances			
no. of rehousing applications processed	90	100	820§
no. of offers made for public rental housing	30	20	410§
no. of offers made for interim housing	50	40	270§
no. of households received other housing benefits	0	0	20§
illegal rooftop structure clearances			
no. of rehousing applications processed	70	60	60§
no. of offers made for public rental housing	10	10	10§
no. of offers made for interim housing	20	10	20§
no. of households received other housing benefits	0	0	10§
emergency			
no. of bedspaces in transit centres provided	416	416	416

§ The figures are estimated according to the progress and programmes of LandsD's clearance projects and BD's enforcement actions against illegal rooftop structures.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

17 During 2019–20, the Department will continue to:

- undertake rehousing for affected occupants referred by LandsD and BD including vetting rehousing eligibility;
- maintain computerised records on miscellaneous housing benefits granted by LandsD and URA;
- provide temporary shelter to victims affected by natural disasters, emergency incidents and other government actions; and
- co-ordinate the use of the transit centres.

Programme (5): Support Services

	2017–18 (Actual)	2018–19 (Original)	2018–19 (Revised)	2019–20 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	37.5	46.8	49.5 (+5.8%)	65.9 (+33.1%)
				(or +40.8% on 2018–19 Original)

Aim

18 The aim is to provide efficient and effective support services for housing-related matters and infrastructure projects.

Brief Description

19 The work involves:

- administering housing-related infrastructure projects under the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 711 by providing intra-governmental services for implementation of these projects. The work involves liaison with concerned departments at various stages from project inception, feasibility study, funding approval, detailed design and construction to monitoring of the delivery of projects according to schedule and within budget;
- co-ordinating the collection and checking the accuracy of overall public and private housing statistics and providing necessary data and analysis to relevant bureaux and departments for infrastructure and land supply planning;
- monitoring the supply and timely delivery of suitable sites for development of public housing to meet the policy pledge; and
- setting up the task force on transitional housing under the Transport and Housing Bureau to assist the community to take forward transitional housing initiatives.

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20 The key performance measures in respect of support services are:

Indicators

	2017 (Actual)	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Estimate)
no. of infrastructure projects obtaining funding approval from the Legislative Council in the year	3	7	7
no. of infrastructure projects under construction	30	37	43

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019–20

21 During 2019–20, the Department will continue to liaise closely with concerned bureaux/departments to:

- facilitate the implementation of housing-related infrastructure projects to meet the public housing production programme;
- monitor the progress on supply and timely availability of public housing sites; and
- facilitate the implementation of various short-term community initiatives to increase the supply of transitional housing.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

	2017–18 (Actual) (\$m)	2018–19 (Original) (\$m)	2018–19 (Revised) (\$m)	2019–20 (Estimate) (\$m)
Programme				
(1) Building Control.....	150.2	156.6	159.2	164.6
(2) Private Housing.....	81.5	83.7	86.4	89.6
(3) Appeal Panel (Housing).....	10.9	11.2	11.6	12.1
(4) Rehousing of Occupants upon Clearance.....	24.5	24.4	26.0	25.8
(5) Support Services.....	37.5	46.8	49.5	65.9
	304.6	322.7	332.7 (+3.1%)	358.0 (+7.6%)
				(or +10.9% on 2018–19 Original)

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2019–20 is \$5.4 million (3.4%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the increase of five posts for coping with additional workload in building control on buildings of HA and former HA buildings which are subject to the Buildings Ordinance.

Programme (2)

Provision for 2019–20 is \$3.2 million (3.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the net increase of two posts for strengthening the manpower of the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority.

Programme (3)

Provision for 2019–20 is \$0.5 million (4.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the increase in operating expenses.

Programme (4)

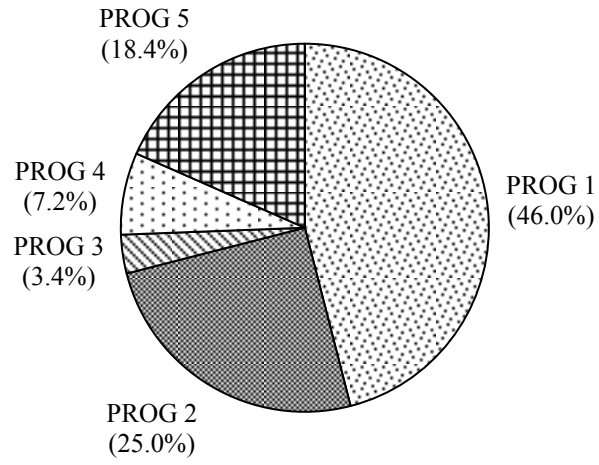
Provision for 2019–20 is \$0.2 million (0.8%) lower than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the decrease in operating expenses.

Programme (5)

Provision for 2019–20 is \$16.4 million (33.1%) higher than the revised estimate for 2018–19. This is mainly due to the increase of seven posts for implementing infrastructure projects and community facilities for public housing developments and monitoring the supply and timely delivery of suitable public housing sites; and increase of five posts for implementing various community initiatives on transitional housing.

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*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2019-20)*



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Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2017-18	Approved estimate 2018-19	Revised estimate 2018-19	Estimate 2019-20
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Account					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses	304,574	322,650	332,655	357,962
003	Recoverable salaries and allowances (General).....	5,365,838			
	<i>Deduct</i> reimbursements <i>Cr.</i> 5,365,838	—	—	—	—
	Total, Recurrent.....	304,574	322,650	332,655	357,962
	Total, Operating Account	304,574	322,650	332,655	357,962
	Total Expenditure	304,574	322,650	332,655	357,962

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2019–20 for the expenses of those activities of the Housing Department that are funded from General Revenue is \$357,962,000. This represents an increase of \$25,307,000 over the revised estimate for 2018–19 and \$53,388,000 over the actual expenditure in 2017–18.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$357,962,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Housing Department under the programmes of building control, private housing, Appeal Panel (Housing), rehousing of occupants upon clearance and support services.

3 Gross provision of \$5,365,838,000 under *Subhead 003 Recoverable salaries and allowances (General)* is for salaries and allowances for civil servants working in the Housing Authority (HA). Expenditure under this subhead is reimbursed by HA.