

## Head 49 — FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT

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

**Estimate 2020–21** ..... **\$9,595.0m**

**Establishment ceiling 2020–21** (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 11 358 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 rising by 138 posts to 11 496 posts as at 31 March 2021 ..... **\$4,006.0m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 21 directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 and as at 31 March 2021.

### Controlling Officer's Report

#### Programmes

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

#### Detail

##### Programme (1): Food Safety and Public Health

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	1,290.2	1,432.4	1,314.3 (–8.2%)	<b>1,438.9</b> (+9.5%)
				(or +0.5% on 2019–20 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;
- taking control measures to prevent vector-borne diseases; and
- investigating incidents of vector-borne diseases.

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4 The key performance measures are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
initiating investigation of reports of food unfit for human consumption within 24 hours (%) .....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
applications for import of game, meat and poultry to be processed within five working days (%) .....	98	100	100	<b>98</b>
applications for import of milk and milk products to be processed within 12 working days (%).....	98	100	100	<b>98</b>
applications for import of frozen confections to be processed within 12 working days (%).....	98	100	100	<b>98</b>
applications for export or re-export food health certificates to be processed within 12 working days (%) .....	98	100	100	<b>98</b>
issuing veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products within two working days (%) .....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
testing pigs for beta-agonists (% of lots) .....	98	100	100	<b>98</b>
conducting inspections of farms exporting food animals to Hong Kong (no. of farms).....	35	43	45	<b>35</b>
food surveillance through testing of food samples (no. of food samples tested per 1 000 population per year).....	9 <sup>Λ</sup>	9	9	<b>9</b>
initiating investigation of complaints about food labelling within three working days (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
initiating pest control measures within 24 hours upon receiving report of vector-borne diseases (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
dealing with complaints on wasps/bees infestation within six working days (%).....	100	100	100	<b>100</b>

Λ The target is revised from 8 (number of food samples tested per 1 000 population per year) to 9 as from 2020.

### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
food complaints handled .....	5 801	5 126	<b>5 200</b>
applications for import of game, meat and poultry .....	2 614	2 637	<b>2 640</b>
applications for import of milk and milk products.....	494	459	<b>460</b>
applications for import of frozen confections .....	423	463	<b>470</b>
export or re-export food health certificates issued.....	465	418	<b>420</b>
veterinary health certificates for export food containing animal products issued.....	1 199	1 397	<b>1 400</b>
vehicles carrying vegetables inspected at Man Kam To Food Control Office <sup>φ</sup> .....	24 415	11 839 <sup>φ</sup>	<b>N.A.</b>
targeted inspections of food trucks at food control points <sup>φ</sup> .....	N.A.	N.A.	<b>12 000</b>
samples taken from food animals for testing of veterinary drug residues .....	47 687	33 467	<b>27 000</b>
food samples taken for testing.....	65 875 <sup>β</sup>	65 598 <sup>β</sup>	<b>65 500</b>
labels checked .....	55 082	55 104	<b>55 000</b>
HACCP seminars/workshops.....	33	33	<b>33</b>
poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks .....	93 815	98 322	<b>98 300</b>
no. of rodent trappings .....	60 432	68 490	<b>68 500</b>

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	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
mosquito breeding places eliminated.....	63 635	65 795	<b>65 800</b>
pest control surveys conducted .....	10 116	10 379	<b>10 800</b>

- ϕ The decrease in the number of inspections of vehicles carrying vegetables at Man Kam To was mainly because of the adoption of a risk-based approach in conducting targeted inspections to other food items with higher risk at the land border. To better reflect food inspection work at various food control points, the indicator “vehicles carrying vegetables inspected at Man Kam To Food Control Office” is replaced by a new indicator “targeted inspections of food trucks at food control points” as from 2020.
- β This indicator excludes samples taken from imported Japanese food for examination of radiation level in connection with the Japan nuclear power plant incident in March 2011. The number of such samples was 93 578 in 2018 and 97 052 in 2019.

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21*

5 During 2020–21, the Department will continue to:

- follow up proactively the recommendations in the Audit Reports released in November 2018 and the Public Accounts Committee reports concerned to strengthen the functions of the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) in food safety management and food import control;
- review and update local food safety standards, guidelines and regulatory arrangements, including but not limited to those concerning harmful substances (including mycotoxins) and trans fats in foods;
- re-engineer workflow, overhaul and develop new information technology systems for CFS for more effective management of data in food import and food safety incidents; and
- take forward initiatives to enhance pest control services, particularly in respect of mosquitoes and rodents, to strengthen response to vector-borne diseases and vector surveillance programmes.

### **Programme (2): Environmental Hygiene and Related Services**

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	4,212.8	4,828.6	4,939.3 (+2.3%)	<b>5,903.1</b> (+19.5%)
				(or +22.3% on 2019–20 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.

### *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 environmental hygiene blackspots;
- managing cremation and burial facilities, including public cemeteries, crematoria and columbaria; and
- regulating private columbaria under the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630).

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8 The key performance measures are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (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>				
holding of Application Vetting Panel meeting for restaurant licences within 20 working days from passing of initial screening (%).....	99	100	100	99
issuing of food business licences within seven working days from confirmation of 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	100	100	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
issuing of licences within seven working days from confirmation of compliance (%).....	99	100	100	99
<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

### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
refuse collected (tonnes) .....	2 160 373	2 128 753	2 130 000
recurrent expenditure per tonne of refuse collected (\$)Δ.....	282	291	297
sludge collected by gully emptiers (tonnes).....	3 138	3 075	3 080
restaurant licences .....	14 998	15 380	15 400
other food-related licences (e.g. liquor, food factory, bakery).....	20 509	21 463	21 500
restricted food permits (e.g. sushi and milk).....	7 952	7 865	7 900
applications for new food business licences .....	4 499	4 062	4 100
applications for new restricted food permits .....	1 574	1 328	1 300
inspections to food premises .....	230 254	225 944	226 000
raids against illegal slaughtering.....	12	12	12

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	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
prosecutions against food premises			
licensed.....	2 580	2 837	2 800
unlicensed.....	3 312	4 194	4 200
food business licences suspended/cancelled .....	99	101	100
courses/seminars for Hygiene Supervisors .....	114	114	114
applications for private swimming pools, places of public entertainment and other licences (excluding applications for temporary licences).....	543 $\Omega$	192 $\Omega$	190 $\S$
inspections conducted to private swimming pools, places of public entertainment, etc.....	12 711	14 684	14 600
no. of cremations provided			
body.....	43 803	45 543	46 000
skeletal .....	1 855	1 552	1 600
no. of burials conducted			
coffin .....	919	819	820
urn .....	980	731	730
exhumation permits issued.....	4 483	4 005	4 000

$\Delta$  The figures represent unit expenditure for the respective financial years ending 31 March.

$\Omega$  The figure includes the number of applications for a licence, an exemption or a temporary suspension of liability for operating a columbarium following the enactment of the Private Columbaria Ordinance on 30 June 2017.

$\S$  It does not include the number of applications for a licence, an exemption or a temporary suspension of liability for operating a columbarium. There is no appropriate basis for making any estimate for 2020.

### **Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21**

9 During 2020–21, the Department will:

- follow up proactively the recommendations in the Audit Report released in November 2019 and the Public Accounts Committee report concerned to further enhance the planning, provision and management of public toilets;
- continue to implement the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme to improve the design and facilities of existing public toilets by phases;
- 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;
- continue to explore and apply new technology and automation to enhance environmental hygiene services and strengthen related enforcement and prosecution work;
- 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 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**

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	1,973.0	2,102.9	2,025.3 (–3.7%)	2,172.0 (+7.2%)
				(or +3.3% on 2019–20 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.

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### *Brief Description*

11 The work involves:

- providing new public market facilities at suitable locations;
- managing and maintaining existing public markets, including revitalisation 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.

12 The key performance measures are:

#### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
markets with common parts cleansed at least three times a day (%).....	100	100	100	100
stalls let (%) <sup>θ</sup> .....	85	89	87	88
responding to complaints against illegal hawking in built-up areas within 30 minutes (%).....	98	99	99	98

θ 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.

#### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
licensed hawkers			
fixed pitch hawkers .....	5 148	5 045	5 500
itinerant hawkers .....	383	370	350
estimated no. of unlicensed hawkers.....	1 469	1 283	1 300
raids by Hawker Control Teams .....	118 068	117 020	117 000
joint operations against illegal hawking with other departments.....	2 198	1 871	1 900
hawker blackspots .....	45	45	45

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21*

13 During 2020–21, the Department will:

- continue to plan new public market facilities at suitable locations and take forward the proposed projects;
- continue the comprehensive review on public markets, with a view to formulating concrete improvement proposals for the management of 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
- continue to enforce against shop front extensions.

### **Programme (4): Public Education and Community Involvement**

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	75.6	71.0	80.2 (+13.0%)	81.0 (+1.0%)
				(or +14.1% on 2019–20 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.

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### *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 form of disposal 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 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 Councils, non-governmental organisations, community groups and schools.

17 The key performance measures are:

#### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
primary and secondary schools approached for talks on food safety and environmental hygiene (%) .....	100	100	100	100
responding to requests for information/ talks on food safety and environmental hygiene within one week (%) .....	100	100	100	100
day care centres and residential care homes for the elderly approached for talks on green burial (%) .....	100	100	100	100
publicity campaigns .....	3	4	4	4

#### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
seminars and activities for general public .....	1 752	1 576	1 730
television APIs .....	4	2	2
radio APIs .....	5	4	2
outreaching programmes targeted at schools .....	20	20	20
school talks on food safety and environmental hygiene .....	1 200	1 112	1 200

### *Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2020–21*

18 During 2020–21, 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;
- continue to devise and implement a strategic plan for 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.

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### ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2018–19 (Actual) (\$m)	2019–20 (Original) (\$m)	2019–20 (Revised) (\$m)	2020–21 (Estimate) (\$m)
(1) Food Safety and Public Health.....	1,290.2	1,432.4	1,314.3	1,438.9
(2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services .....	4,212.8	4,828.6	4,939.3	5,903.1
(3) Market Management and Hawker Control.....	1,973.0	2,102.9	2,025.3	2,172.0
(4) Public Education and Community Involvement.....	75.6	71.0	80.2	81.0
	7,551.6	8,434.9	8,359.1 (–0.9%)	9,595.0 (+14.8%)
				(or +13.8% on 2019–20 Original)

#### Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

##### Programme (1)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$124.6 million (9.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to creation of new posts and increased operating expenses for enhancing the effectiveness in food safety management, food import control and data governance and management, stepping up rodent and mosquito prevention and control, and enhancing other public health services. There will be a net increase of 30 posts.

##### Programme (2)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$963.8 million (19.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to creation of new posts and increased operating expenses for keeping Hong Kong clean, setting up additional dedicated enforcement teams to strengthen law enforcement actions against public cleanliness offences, strengthening the handling of water seepage complaints, improving cleanliness and restoring streetscape in back lanes, setting up a new team to oversee the allocation of new niches, regulating private columbaria, and enhancing provision of cemeteries and crematoria services and other environmental hygiene services. There will be a net increase of 56 posts.

##### Programme (3)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$146.7 million (7.2%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to creation of new posts and increased operating expenses for planning new public markets and other municipal facilities, modernisation of existing public markets, and strengthening enforcement against street obstruction. There will be a net increase of 52 posts.

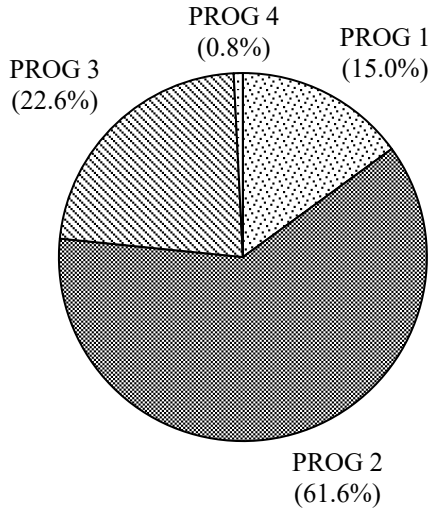
##### Programme (4)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$0.8 million (1.0%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to increased operating expenses for enhancing publicity and promotion of green burials.

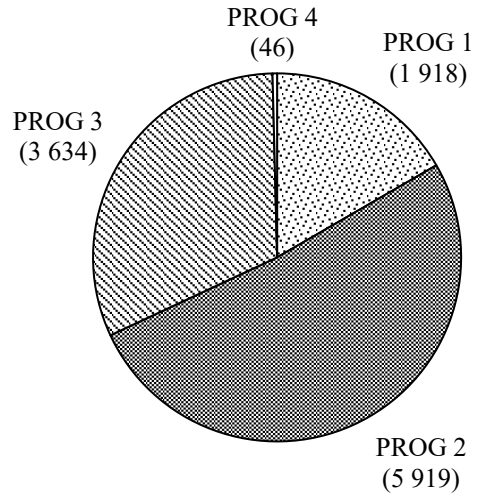


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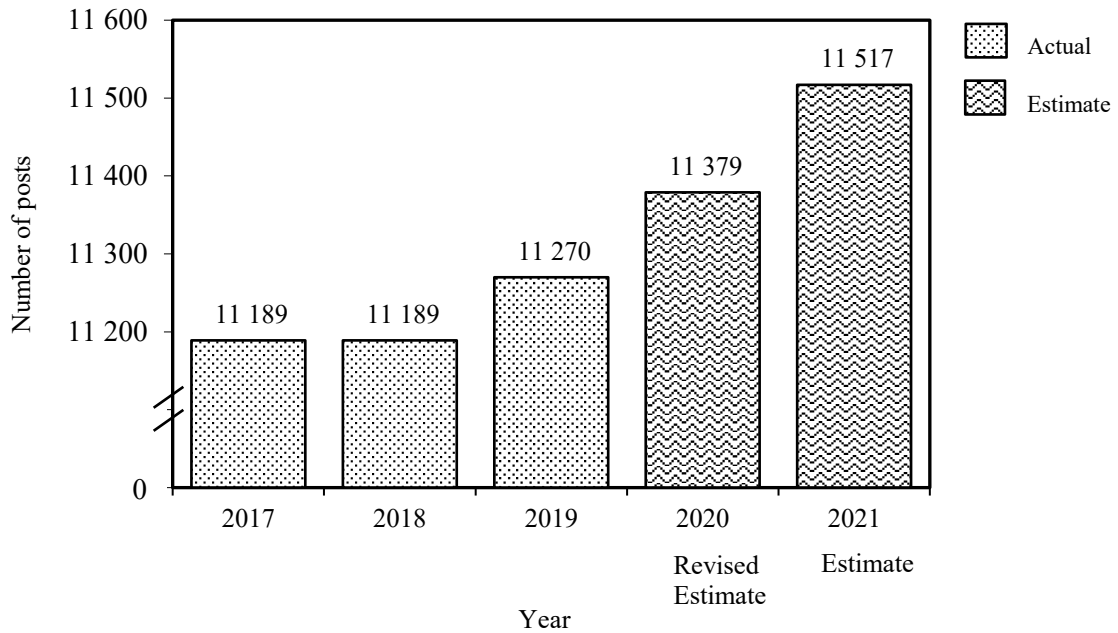
*Allocation of provision to programmes (2020-21)*



*Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2021)*



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



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Sub-head (Code)	Actual expenditure 2018–19	Approved estimate 2019–20	Revised estimate 2019–20	Estimate 2020–21	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
<b>Operating Account</b>					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses .....	7,314,155	8,087,342	8,103,157	<b>9,364,056</b>
	Total, Recurrent.....	7,314,155	8,087,342	8,103,157	<b>9,364,056</b>
Non-Recurrent					
	General non-recurrent .....	27,998	—	3,830	—
	Total, Non-Recurrent.....	27,998	—	3,830	—
	Total, Operating Account .....	7,342,153	8,087,342	8,106,987	<b>9,364,056</b>
<b>Capital Account</b>					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	209,445	347,567	252,148	<b>230,918</b>
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	209,445	347,567	252,148	<b>230,918</b>
	Total, Capital Account.....	209,445	347,567	252,148	<b>230,918</b>
	Total Expenditure .....	7,551,598	8,434,909	8,359,135	<b>9,594,974</b>

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### Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2020–21 for the salaries and expenses of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is \$9,594,974,000. This represents an increase of \$1,235,839,000 over the revised estimate for 2019–20 and \$2,043,376,000 over the actual expenditure in 2018–19.

#### *Operating Account*

#### Recurrent

2 Provision of \$9,364,056,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. The increase of \$1,260,899,000 (15.6%) over the revised estimate for 2019–20 is mainly due to the increased operating expenses for improving environmental cleanliness and public market facilities, and further enhancing the food safety regime.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2020 will be 11 379 posts including five supernumerary posts. It is expected that there will be a net increase of 138 posts in 2020–21. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2020–21, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed \$4,006,006,000.

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

	2018–19 (Actual) (\$'000)	2019–20 (Original) (\$'000)	2019–20 (Revised) (\$'000)	<b>2020–21 (Estimate) (\$'000)</b>
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries.....	3,482,130	3,681,113	3,706,959	<b>3,906,526</b>
- Allowances.....	46,301	44,866	56,462	<b>56,462</b>
- Job-related allowances.....	76,257	76,233	82,741	<b>82,741</b>
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution.....	32,106	31,147	31,046	<b>33,699</b>
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution.....	204,897	254,076	248,190	<b>306,323</b>
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses .....	3,472,083	3,999,515	3,977,370	<b>4,977,895</b>
Other Charges				
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission.....	381	392	389	<b>410</b>
	7,314,155	8,087,342	8,103,157	<b>9,364,056</b>