

## Head 74 — INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

**Controlling officer:** the Director of Information Services will account for expenditure under this Head.

**Estimate 2020–21** ..... **\$683.6m**

**Establishment ceiling 2020–21** (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 424 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 rising by 20 posts to 444 posts as at 31 March 2021..... **\$329.2m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 12 directorate posts as at 31 March 2020 and as at 31 March 2021.

### Controlling Officer's Report

#### Programmes

**Programme (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong**      These programmes contribute to Policy Area 27:  
**Programme (2) Local Public Relations and Public Information**      Intra-Governmental Services (Secretary for Home Affairs).  
**Programme (3) Public Opinion**  
**Programme (4) Civic Responsibility**  
**Programme (5) Publishing**

#### Detail

##### Programme (1): Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	<b>2020–21 (Estimate)</b>
Financial provision (\$m)	132.4	147.5	147.6 (+0.1%)	<b>226.6</b> (+53.5%)
				(or +53.6% on 2019–20 Original)

#### Aim

2 The aim is to promote a favourable image of Hong Kong internationally and in the Mainland.

#### Brief Description

3 The work of the Department under this programme is carried out mainly through:

- the media, including overseas media based in Hong Kong, and visiting journalists;
- sponsored visit programmes and promotions outside Hong Kong;
- Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices overseas and in the Mainland, the Beijing Office and the Economic, Trade and Cultural Office in Taiwan; the international community in Hong Kong; and
- the Brand Hong Kong website and social media platforms, namely, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Weibo, Youku and YouTube.

4 The Department's publicity efforts are geared to promoting Hong Kong as Asia's world city, and as a two-way platform for international firms seeking access to the Mainland market, and for Mainland companies reaching out to the world, particularly under the Mainland's Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The focus is on promoting Hong Kong's role as a major business, financial, and cultural hub, and in sectors where Hong Kong enjoys clear advantages including financial, legal and professional services, and innovation and technology. Also highlighted are the city's strengths as a cosmopolitan, well-connected, dynamic and diverse city with world-class talent and infrastructure, and the growing emphasis on quality living and conservation of nature and heritage. The Department monitors media coverage to assess perceptions about Hong Kong, and responds to press reports as necessary. It uses a host of social media platforms to extend the reach of publicity efforts around the world.

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5 The key performance measures in respect of public relations outside Hong Kong are:

### *Target*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
initiating action to all requests within the same day (%) .....	100	100	100	100

### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
locally-based foreign media organisations assisted .....	84	84	80
visiting journalists and film crews assisted .....	119	79 <sup>#</sup>	100
publications produced and distributed .....	476	697 <sup>^</sup>	660
videos produced .....	264 <sup>¶</sup>	189	195
sponsored visitors and visiting VIPs assisted .....	193	177 <sup>‡</sup>	170
speaking engagements outside Hong Kong assisted .....	220	160 <sup>Ψ</sup>	160
high-level outward missions assisted .....	16	11 <sup>Ψ</sup>	11
public relations projects outside Hong Kong co-ordinated and assisted .....	63	85 <sup>§</sup>	90

<sup>#</sup> The drop was mainly due to the lower take-up rate of journalists coming to Hong Kong under the sponsored programme in 2019 and the cancellation of an event scheduled for the sponsored programme.

<sup>^</sup> The higher number in 2019 was due to production of publications, leaflets and display banners in different languages and formats in relation to campaigns including “Connect and Excel”, “HK in US”, legal system in Hong Kong and the “Hong Kong Update” webpage.

<sup>¶</sup> The surge in 2018 was mainly due to the production of videos in different languages and formats for “Our Hong Kong” and “Connect and Excel” campaigns as well as international events staged in Hong Kong.

<sup>‡</sup> The actual figure in 2019 was lower than that of 2018 mainly due to the lower take-up rate of approved nominees for sponsored visit in 2019. The estimate for 2020 is an average of the figures in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

<sup>Ψ</sup> The top echelon had conducted fewer outward missions in 2019 as compared to 2018, hence both the number of speaking engagements outside Hong Kong and high-level outward missions assisted by the Department decreased.

<sup>§</sup> The increase was mainly due to publicity support to new social media channels and “Hong Kong Update” webpage and additional “Connect and Excel” promotion channels.

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

6 The social unrest in Hong Kong since June 2019 has attracted widespread international attention and affected the external image of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). This has raised concerns about Hong Kong’s positioning as a global business and financial hub with a stable environment underpinned by the rule of law. More efforts will be made on publicity work and other measures to counter negative perceptions in key markets and rebuild international confidence in Hong Kong as Asia’s global business and financial hub with a safe and stable environment underpinned by the rule of law.

### **Programme (2): Local Public Relations and Public Information**

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	238.8	248.1	256.0 (+3.2%)	278.2 (+8.7%)
				(or +12.1% on 2019–20 Original)

### *Aim*

7 The aims are to assist mapping out co-ordinated public relations strategies and plans for the presentation of government policies locally; and to convey to the public information on, and enhance public understanding of, government policies, plans, decisions, activities and services.

### *Brief Description*

8 The Department is responsible for providing support to help develop, co-ordinate and implement local public relations strategies, and for providing public relations advisory services to the senior echelon of the Government through Press Secretaries, Secretariat Press Office teams and departmental information units.

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9 The Department disseminates information on, and enhances public understanding of, government policies, plans, decisions, activities and services. This includes the release of government information in multimedia formats and other ways, such as:

- arranging media facilities such as press conferences, briefings, interviews, media visits and public functions;
- issuing press releases, photos and videos;
- arranging for officials to participate in radio and television public affairs programmes;
- broadcasting press conferences and briefings on the Government's website and providing an archive for public information; and
- dealing with enquiries from the media and the public.

10 The Department continues to make good use of the Internet to disseminate government information. The Government News and Media Information System integrates in a single interface all government press releases, fax transmissions, photographs and video clips for easy and round-the-clock media access. In addition, the online government news bulletin, *news.gov.hk*, provides the public with government news and information in multimedia formats and caters for people accessing the Internet via mobile devices. The greater use of social media, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WeChat, Weibo and YouTube allows up-to-date news stories, feature stories, photos, infographics and videos to be disseminated to various sectors of the community.

11 During the year, the Department continued to enhance its co-ordination of public relations efforts for various government policies and initiatives. Major events and activities which required significant public communications input and support included the Chief Executive's Policy Address, the Budget, the first Community Dialogue session, 2019 District Council Election and issues relating to the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance (Cap. 503) (FOO).

12 The key performance measures in respect of local public relations and public information are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
responding to public criticism or misconception of government policies				
within the same day (%) .....	92	96	96	96
issue of press releases (minutes) .....	45	45	45	45
issue of press photographs (hours).....	2	1	1	1
dealing with enquiries from the media (days) .....	1	1	1	1
dealing with enquiries from the public (minutes).....	10	10	10	10
arranging media facilities (days).....	1	1	1	1

### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual) <sup>λ</sup>	2020 (Estimate)
press releases issued (in English and Chinese) .....	320 423	294 125	307 000
press photographs distributed.....	7 420	5 989	6 700
videos distributed .....	790	818	820
media enquiries dealt with .....	762 745	755 392	754 000
media facilities arranged			
press conferences and briefings .....	1 349	1 239	1 290
web broadcast.....	759	552	660
interviews .....	2 108	1 439	1 770
media visits .....	204	189	190
public functions.....	5 321	3 935	4 530

<sup>λ</sup> The indicators record decreases in 2019 because fewer media events were organised in the second half of 2019 as a result of the social unrest in Hong Kong. However, the Department continued to make use of its websites, social media platforms and other channels to disseminate information on government policies and measures.

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

13 In 2020–21, the Department will continue to strengthen core services and enhance public relations support for Bureau Directors, Permanent Secretaries, Bureau officials and Heads of Departments. The Department will provide public relations input and support for major events and activities, including the Chief Executive's Policy Address, the Budget, the 2020 Legislative Council Election and issues relating to the FOO.

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### Programme (3): Public Opinion

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	23.3	24.9	27.9 (+12.0%)	32.6 (+16.8%)
				(or +30.9% on 2019–20 Original)

#### *Aim*

14 The aims are to keep the Government informed of public opinion as expressed through the mass news media and social media platforms to advise the Government on public reaction to government policies and measures.

#### *Brief Description*

15 The Department monitors public opinion expressed in the mass news media and social media platforms to ensure that policy bureaux and departments stay abreast of public views on subjects under their purview. The process involves the monitoring of English and Chinese newspapers and magazines, popular news websites and their Facebook pages as well as about 230 hours a week of news and public affairs programmes on radio and television. Summaries, translations, reports, transcripts and clippings are produced and distributed as soon as possible to relevant policy bureaux and departments.

16 The key performance measures in respect of public opinion are:

#### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
production of media summaries (hours per day) .....	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
production of special reports (day) .....	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5

#### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
newspapers monitored each day.....	21	21	21
weekly/monthly magazines and journals monitored.....	25	24	22
hours of news and public affairs programmes monitored on 12 television channels <sup>ψ</sup> .....	6 001	6 335	6 500
five radio channels .....	5 329	5 650	5 650
media reviews and special reports.....	61 159	58 711	57 000

<sup>ψ</sup> The number of television channels has increased from 11 to 12 with the inclusion of the Hong Kong Open TV since January 2019 when it was renamed from Fantastic TV and started to broadcast news and public affairs programmes.

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

17 In 2020–21, the Department will continue to monitor public opinion as expressed through the mass news media and social media platforms.

### Programme (4): Civic Responsibility

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	47.8	54.0	57.8 (+7.0%)	68.2 (+18.0%)
				(or +26.3% on 2019–20 Original)

#### *Aim*

18 The aims are to enhance public awareness of, and educate the community on, issues of wide concern; and promote a greater sense of civic responsibility.

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### *Brief Description*

19 The Department provides strategic advice and technical support to policy bureaux and government departments mounting publicity campaigns and promotion drives. Publicity programmes are mainly funded by bureaux and departments. Campaign messages are conveyed to target audiences through a wide range of publicity channels such as television, radio, digital media, print materials, outdoor advertising and community involvement activities. Publicity and promotion of large-scale/major campaigns conducted with the Department's assistance during the year included HKSAR Government's Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China; HKSAR Government's Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Reform and Opening Up of the Country; Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme; Next Generation Smart Identity Card System project and the territory-wide identity card replacement exercise; 2019 District Council Election; voter registration; Treasure Hong Kong, our home; environmental protection; road safety; and the fight against crime.

20 The key performance measures for civic responsibility are:

#### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
production of posters upon request within two months (%) .....	100	100	100	100
production of Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) upon request within two months (%) .....	100	100	100	100

#### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
publicity programmes planned and implemented with the Department's assistance			
major campaigns .....	10	10	10
minor campaigns .....	131	127	120
posters produced and displayed .....	148	349@	280
APIs produced .....	999	1 005	980
exhibitions mounted .....	13	12	13

@ The surge in 2019 was mainly due to the production of various posters to enhance the publicity of a six-month territory-wide interdepartmental cleaning operation and certain leisure programmes.

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

21 In 2020–21, the Department will continue to provide support to bureaux and departments for publicity campaigns and promotional activities, including the Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Promulgation of the Basic Law; Treasure Hong Kong, our home; 2020 Legislative Council Election; 2021 Population Census; Next Generation Smart Identity Card System project and the territory-wide identity card replacement exercise; the fight against crime; environmental protection; road safety; voter registration; and anti-drug efforts.

### **Programme (5): Publishing**

	2018–19 (Actual)	2019–20 (Original)	2019–20 (Revised)	2020–21 (Estimate)
Financial provision (\$m)	79.2	71.5	80.1 (+12.0%)	78.0 (–2.6%)
				(or +9.1% on 2019–20 Original)

### *Aim*

22 The aim is to serve as the Government's publishing agency.

### *Brief Description*

23 The Department co-ordinates the Government's publishing requirements, including editorial input where needed, production, distribution and sale of government publications.

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24 The key performance measures in respect of publishing are:

### *Targets*

	Target	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Plan)
updating publications, including their electronic version (days).....	60	60	60	<b>60</b>
producing new publications (Yearbook and books on special topics) (months).....	9	9	9	<b>9</b>
processing publication sales transactions at counter (minutes) .....	3	3	3	<b>3</b>
responding to requests by post (days) .....	3	3	3	<b>3</b>
delivering publications ordered from the online Government Bookstore (days).....	3	3	3	<b>3</b>
delivering e-legislation ordered under "Print-on-Demand" mechanism (days).....	10	10	10	<b>10</b>
processing requests for purchase of digital photographs at Photo Library (days) .....	5	5	5	<b>5</b>
from Government Photo Records and Sales System (minutes).....	30	30	30	<b>30</b>
processing requests for free publication(s) at counter (minutes) .....	3	3	3	<b>3</b>
by post (days) .....	3	3	3	<b>3</b>

### *Indicators*

	2018 (Actual)	2019 (Actual)	2020 (Estimate)
publications updated.....	337	402	<b>395</b>
new publications produced.....	227	262	<b>250</b>
copies distributed .....	3 378 660	6 520 762 <sup>δ</sup>	<b>4 618 000</b>
copies sold.....	51 374	45 087	<b>45 000</b>
revenue received (\$m).....	2.9	2.3	<b>2.3</b>
advertisements placed .....	9 058	8 375	<b>9 500</b>

δ The higher number of copies distributed in 2019 was mainly due to the production of various leaflets and posters in relation to a six-month territory-wide interdepartmental cleaning operation.

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

25 In 2020–21, the Department will continue to co-ordinate the Government's publishing requirements.

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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) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong....	132.4	147.5	147.6	226.6
(2) Local Public Relations and Public Information .....	238.8	248.1	256.0	278.2
(3) Public Opinion .....	23.3	24.9	27.9	32.6
(4) Civic Responsibility.....	47.8	54.0	57.8	68.2
(5) Publishing .....	79.2	71.5	80.1	78.0
	521.5	546.0	569.4 (+4.3%)	683.6 (+20.1%)
				(or +25.2% on 2019–20 Original)

#### Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

##### Programme (1)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$79.0 million (53.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the needs to expand and enhance communications, publicity and promotional requirements outside Hong Kong to rebuild international confidence in the city, and the net increase of seven posts in 2020–21.

##### Programme (2)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$22.2 million (8.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to a general increase in operating expenses and the net increase of eight posts in 2020–21.

##### Programme (3)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$4.7 million (16.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is due to an increase in operating expenses and the net increase of two posts in 2020–21.

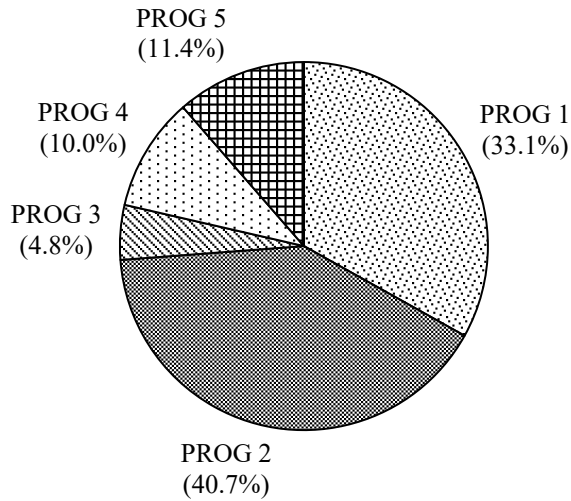
##### Programme (4)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$10.4 million (18.0%) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the expanding publicity and promotional requirements in Hong Kong including efforts to heal social division, a general increase in operating expenses and the net increase of three posts in 2020–21.

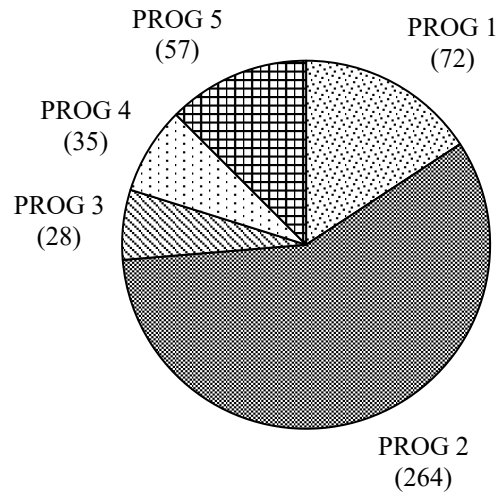
##### Programme (5)

Provision for 2020–21 is \$2.1 million (2.6%) lower than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to a further decrease in the estimated printing requirements for various government publications in 2020–21.

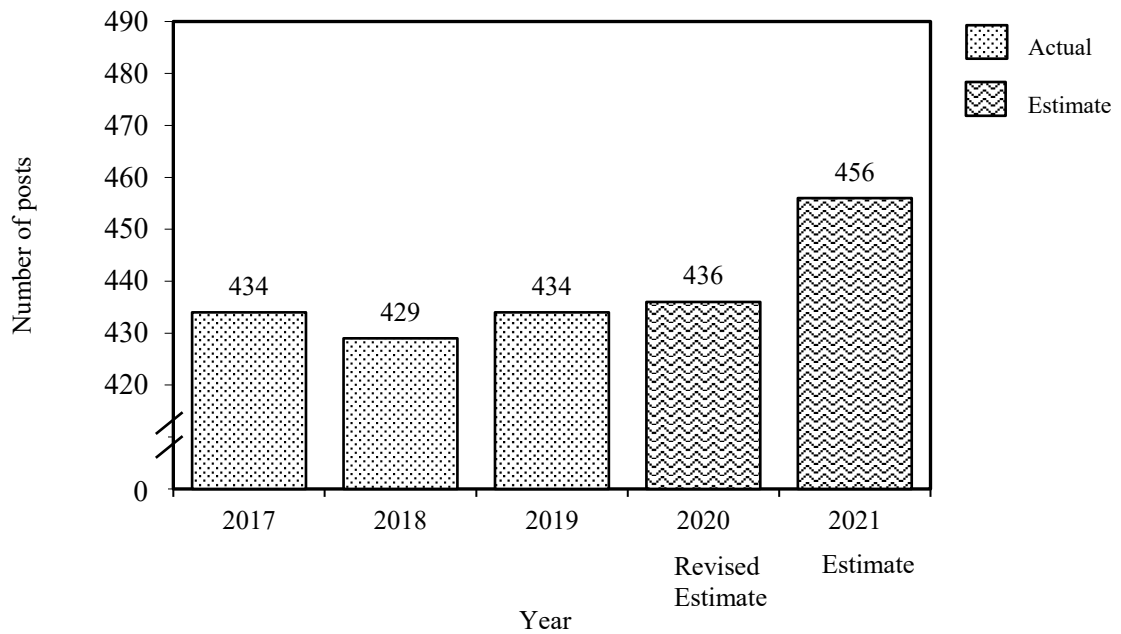
*Allocation of provision to programmes (2020-21)*



*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	<b>Estimate 2020–21</b>	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	<b>\$'000</b>	
<b>Operating Account</b>					
Recurrent					
000	Operational expenses .....	520,477	545,284	568,658	<b>683,321</b>
	Total, Recurrent.....	520,477	545,284	568,658	<b>683,321</b>
	Total, Operating Account .....	520,477	545,284	568,658	<b>683,321</b>
<hr/>					
<b>Capital Account</b>					
Plant, Equipment and Works					
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote).....	1,025	698	696	<b>300</b>
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.....	1,025	698	696	<b>300</b>
	Total, Capital Account.....	1,025	698	696	<b>300</b>
<hr/>					
	Total Expenditure .....	521,502	545,982	569,354	<b>683,621</b>
		<u>521,502</u>	<u>545,982</u>	<u>569,354</u>	<u><b>683,621</b></u>

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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 Information Services Department is \$683,621,000. This represents an increase of \$114,267,000 over the revised estimate for 2019–20 and \$162,119,000 over the actual expenditure in 2018–19.

#### *Operating Account*

##### Recurrent

**2** Provision of \$683,321,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Information Services Department. This represents an increase of \$114,663,000 (20.2%) over the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is mainly due to the needs to expand and enhance communications, publicity and promotional requirements both locally and outside Hong Kong; net increase of 20 new posts in 2020–21; and a general increase in operating expenses.

**3** The establishment as at 31 March 2020 will be 436 posts. It is expected that there will be a net increase of 20 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 \$329,223,000.

**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 .....	293,636	300,369	311,321	<b>327,615</b>
- Allowances .....	9,703	9,804	9,666	<b>13,033</b>
- Job-related allowances.....	462	650	541	<b>765</b>
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution .....	1,007	784	762	<b>1,115</b>
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution .....	17,541	21,312	22,113	<b>24,776</b>
Departmental Expenses				
- General departmental expenses .....	60,544	65,054	71,290	<b>84,829</b>
Other Charges				
- Publicity.....	61,520	58,296	68,021	<b>72,070</b>
- Expenses of visitors to Hong Kong and overseas speaking engagements .....	76,064	89,015	84,944	<b>159,118</b>
	520,477	545,284	568,658	<b>683,321</b>

#### *Capital Account*

##### Plant, Equipment and Works

**5** Provision of \$300,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents a decrease of \$396,000 (56.9%) against the revised estimate for 2019–20. This reflects the reduced requirement for replacement of equipment.