Head 47 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: DIGITAL POLICY OFFICE

Controlling officer: the Commissioner for Digital Policy will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2025–26 .... **$3,494.5m**

Establishment ceiling 2025–26 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 863 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2025 reducing by eight posts to 855 posts as at 31 March 2026 .... **$701.1m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 25 directorate posts as at 31 March 2025 and as at 31 March 2026.

Commitment balance **$2,953.2m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

Programme (1) Digital Government	These programmes contribute to Policy Area 17: Information
Programme (2) Data Governance	Technology and Broadcasting (Secretary for Innovation,
Programme (3) Digital Infrastructure	Technology and Industry).

Detail

Programme (1): Digital Government

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	**2025–26 (Estimate)**
Financial provision ($m)	311.9∧	310.4∧	293.8∧ (–5.3%)	**305.6** (+4.0%)

(or –1.5% on 2024–25 Original)

∧   For comparison purpose, the figures are adjusted to include the relevant provisions for the then Efficiency Office (original Programme (3) under Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau) which was transferred to this Head with effect from 25 July 2024 due to the re-organisation of the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the then Efficiency Office for the establishment of the Digital Policy Office (DPO).

Aim

2   The aim of this programme is to spearhead the development of digital government to bring impact, convenience and benefits to the public and the business sector.

Brief Description

3   The DPO supports government bureaux and departments in promoting the application of innovation and technology to enhance public services and build a digitally inclusive society in Hong Kong. It fosters bureaux and departments to proactively devise digitalisation strategies and plans in enhancing public services, thereby resulting in improved efficiency and effectiveness. It also oversees the operation of the "Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund" (SIE Fund).

4   In 2024–25, the DPO:

• worked closely with bureaux and departments to drive digitalisation of government services to facilitate business and streamline government services to enhance licensing and public services delivery;

• continued to collaborate with the Guangdong Province and co-ordinate bureaux and departments' provision of cross-boundary public services through different service delivery modes, including the setup of self-service kiosks, to facilitate enterprises and the public in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) in accessing public services across the boundary;

• formulated and implemented plan to strengthen the training on core digital skills for key information technology (IT) staff of bureaux and departments and senior government personnel to enhance their awareness and capability of managing information systems and data security;

• worked closely with bureaux and departments to oversee their implementation of digital government and smart city initiatives;

- continued to promote the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly, and worked with the SIE Fund Task Force to launch a territory-wide digital inclusion programme to enhance the capability and interest of the elders in learning and adopting digital technologies; and

- continued to promote web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations, and monitored the compliance of government websites and mobile apps.

5   The key performance measures in respect of Digital Government are:

Target

	Target	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	**2025 (Plan)**
services rendered meeting requirements set out in service level documents agreed with users (%)............................	100	100	100	**100**

Indicators

	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	**2025 (Estimate)**
no. of bureaux and departments with IT plans in place	67	67	**67**
results of post-implementation departmental returns on completed IT projects			
completed on schedule (%)...	75.1	75.6	**75.0**
completed within budget (%)...	100	100	**100**
meeting agreed specifications (%)	99.6	98.8	**100**
achieving intended benefits (%).....................................	99.6	99.6	**99.0**

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Revised Estimate)	**2025–26 (Estimate)**
total value of work undertaken in the year ($m).......................	3,440.8	4,356.1	**4,901.2**
total value of work outsourced in the year ($m).......................	3,307.8	4,186.2	**4,752.3**

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

6   During 2025–26, the DPO will:

- continue to work closely with bureaux and departments to drive digital transformation of licensing and public services delivery to facilitate business and streamline government services;

- continue to collaborate with the Guangdong Province and co-ordinate bureaux and departments' provision of cross-boundary public services in the GBA through different service delivery modes;

- continue to co-ordinate trainings and programmes on core digital skills for key IT staff of bureaux and departments and senior government personnel;

- continue to work closely with bureaux and departments to oversee their implementation of digital government and smart city initiatives;

- continue to promote adoption of digital technologies among the elderly through various programmes, and to oversee the operation of the SIE Fund, including the implementation of the "Smart Silver" Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders; and

- continue to promote web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations, and conduct compliance audit on accessibility of government websites and mobile apps.

Programme (2): Data Governance

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	**2025–26 (Estimate)**
Financial provision ($m)	758.8^	986.3^	968.1^ (–1.8%)	**1,129.4** **(+16.7%)**

(or +14.5% on 2024–25 Original)

^ For comparison purpose, the figures are adjusted to include the relevant provisions for the then Efficiency Office (original Programme (3) under Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau) which was transferred to this Head with effect from 25 July 2024 due to the re-organisation of the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the then Efficiency Office for the establishment of the DPO.

Aim

7   The aim of this programme is to support the formulation and implementation of policies and measures on data governance and related centrally-managed digital platforms, services and infrastructures, with a view to opening up and sharing more data; breaking information silos; harnessing technologies to analyse and leverage data; and innovating public services with the aid of digital technologies and data.

Brief Description

8   The DPO oversees the work of setting data governance policies and standards that facilitate the collection, analysis, sharing and application of data; working closely with bureaux and departments to improve accessibility of their data and leverage the central IT services and latest technologies for introducing data-driven policies, user-oriented services and smart solutions; managing the government data centres, data network, central platforms and services to support the delivery of digital government services; and providing advisory and consultancy services to bureaux and departments on design thinking, change management, business process re-engineering and data sharing.

9   In 2024–25, the DPO:

• promulgated the Principles of Data Governance and commenced the compilation of a set of departmental data catalogues from bureaux and departments to promote sharing and application of data;

• implemented the Consented Data Exchange Gateway to support the sharing of personal data among government departments with user consent, and continued to support the sharing of data from government departments to financial institutions through the connection with the Commercial Data Interchange of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority;

• continued to work closely with bureaux and departments and related organisations to open up more data in machine-readable format for free use by the public, and published the consolidated annual open data plans for 2024;

• continued to provide technical advice and support to bureaux and departments in the adoption of artificial intelligence, big data analytics and blockchain technologies for their digital government services;

• launched the enhanced "iAM Smart" platform in phases and coordinated bureaux and departments to provide citizens with one-stop digitalised services, thereby realising "single portal for online government services" through adoption of "iAM Smart";

• facilitated the pilot use of a generative artificial intelligence document processing copilot application developed by a Hong Kong-based large language model within the Government;

• commenced the development of the "Digital Corporate Identity" (CorpID) platform;

• commenced a consultancy study with Development Bureau to explore the use of cavern to develop a new government data centre;

• improved the service of 1823 through the application of artificial intelligence and other innovative technologies; and

• provided advisory and consultancy services to bureaux and departments on design thinking, change management, business process re-engineering and data sharing.

10   The DPO continues to provide overall direction and enhancement services for 1823. The contact centre provides 24-hour one-stop service to handle public enquiries for 23 departments as well as public complaints about government service. In 2024, there were around 2 570 000 calls and 920 000 emails or other communications from the public. The key performance measures of 1823 are:

Target

	Target	2023 (Actual)	2024 (Actual)	**2025 (Plan)**
calls that can be answered within 12 seconds (%)	80	74	80	**80**
callers that have their enquiries addressed at the first time of calling (%)	95	99	99	**99**
customer satisfaction (out of a five-point scale)	4.0	4.6	4.6	**4.5**

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

11   During 2025–26, the DPO will:

- continue to enhance data governance and compile departmental data catalogues of bureaux and departments to promote the sharing and application of data among bureaux and departments;

- continue to drive and support more data sharing and opening up of data in machine-readable format among government departments and other organisations through various central services, and publish the consolidated annual open data plans for 2025;

- continue to provide technical advice and support to bureaux and departments in the adoption of artificial intelligence, big data analytics and blockchain technologies for their digital government services;

- continue the implementation of the enhanced "iAM Smart" platform and drive full adoption by all bureaux and departments to provide the public with convenient and one-stop electronic services by the end of 2025;

- support the pilot use of the generative artificial intelligence document processing copilot application within the Government;

- make plans for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute;

- continue the development of the "CorpID" platform and launch a sandbox programme to facilitate service providers to conduct proof-of-concept testing and develop their applications;

- continue to improve the service of 1823 through wider use of technologies; and

- continue to provide advisory and consultancy services to bureaux and departments on design thinking, change management, business process re-engineering and data sharing.

Programme (3): Digital Infrastructure

	2023–24 (Actual)	2024–25 (Original)	2024–25 (Revised)	**2025–26 (Estimate)**
Financial provision ($m)	1,254.1	2,086.5	1,838.5 (–11.9%)	**2,059.5** (+12.0%)

(or –1.3% on 2024–25 Original)

Aim

12   The aim of this programme is to provide Hong Kong with adequate, secure and robust IT infrastructure and the standards and talent needed, etc., to facilitate the development of a vibrant digital economy, digital transformation of industries in society, as well as the smart city development of Hong Kong, in collaboration with the industries.

Brief Description

13   The DPO supports the development of community-wide IT infrastructure and facilitates the development of IT human capital to strengthen Hong Kong's position as a smart city. It seeks to facilitate the development of digital infrastructure to promote the use of electronic means for economic, social and government activities. It also establishes policies and practices on governance and cybersecurity, supports the IT initiatives of bureaux and departments, and provides support and advices to bureaux and departments on their IT strategies, projects and operations.

14 In 2024–25, the DPO:

- continued to provide one-stop support service to facilitate the setting up of data centres in Hong Kong, and assisted in planning the expansion of the innovation and technology (I&T) site in Sandy Ridge in the North District for data centre and related uses;

- supported the development of the artificial intelligence ecosystem, including the launch of the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (AISS) to encourage relevant research and development teams and industries to tap into the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC);

- organised the first cybersecurity attack and defence drill to enhance the defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations;

- promulgated the enhancement measures to strengthen the governance and security of IT systems of bureaux and departments as well as public bodies under the purview of bureaux and departments;

- updated the government information security policies and guidelines and monitor their implementation within the Government;

- continued the promotion of information security awareness within the Government and in the community;

- promulgated the Practice Guide on Data Centre Security to strengthen the security of data centre infrastructure;

- extended the facilitation measure of the Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the GBA (Mainland, Hong Kong) (GBA Standard Contract) to cover all sectors;

- continued to oversee Cyberport's implementation of the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme;

- continued to oversee Cyberport's implementation of the Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups;

- continued the implementation of the Knowing More About IT Programme and the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme;

- continued to promote and assist bureaux and departments in sourcing innovative IT solutions to meet their business needs and enhance public services through the Smart Government Innovation Lab;

- supported the information and communications technology (ICT) collaboration with the Guangdong Province for the GBA development; and

- organised events to enhance Hong Kong's profile as a leading ICT hub in the region.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

15 During 2025–26, the DPO will:

- continue to provide one-stop support service to facilitate the setting up of data centres in Hong Kong and support the conversion of the I&T site in Sandy Ridge for data centres and related uses;

- continue to work closely with Cyberport to support the development of the artificial intelligence ecosystem, including the operation of the AISS;

- continue to develop and organise the cybersecurity attack and defence drill for government departments and public organisations;

- continue to oversee the implementation of the enhanced measures to strengthen the governance and security of IT systems of bureaux and departments as well as public bodies under the purview of the bureaux and departments;

- continue the promotion of information security awareness within the Government and in the community;

- continue to oversee the implementation of the GBA Standard Contract and explore other measures to facilitate cross-boundary flow of personal data;

- continue to oversee Cyberport's implementation of the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme;

- continue to oversee Cyberport's implementation of the Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups;

- continue to implement the Knowing More About IT Programme and the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme;

- continue to promote and assist bureaux and departments in sourcing innovative IT solutions to meet their business needs and enhance public services through the Smart Government Innovation Lab;

- continue to support the ICT collaboration with the Guangdong Province for the GBA development and work closely with relevant Mainland authorities; and

- continue to organise events to enhance Hong Kong's profile as a leading ICT hub in the region.

Head 47 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: DIGITAL POLICY OFFICE

ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

Programme	2023–24 (Actual) ($m)	2024–25 (Original) ($m)	2024–25 (Revised) ($m)	2025–26 (Estimate) ($m)
(1) Digital Government	311.9^	310.4^	293.8^	305.6
(2) Data Governance	758.8^	986.3^	968.1^	1,129.4
(3) Digital Infrastructure	1,254.1	2,086.5	1,838.5	2,059.5
	2,324.8	3,383.2	3,100.4 (–8.4%)	3,494.5 (+12.7%)

(or +3.3% on 2024–25 Original)

^ For comparison purpose, the figures are adjusted to include the relevant provisions for the then Efficiency Office (original Programme (3) under Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau) which was transferred to this Head with effect from 25 July 2024 due to the re-organisation of the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the then Efficiency Office for the establishment of the DPO.

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2025–26 is $11.8 million (4.0%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased provision for departmental expenses, partly offset by the decreased provision for personal emoluments. There will be a net decrease of 14 posts in 2025–26.
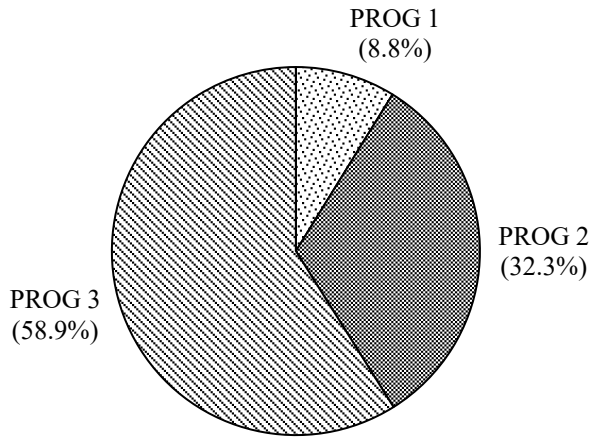
Programme (2)

Provision for 2025–26 is $161.3 million (16.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased provision for departmental expenses and personal emoluments. There will be a net increase of six posts in 2025–26.
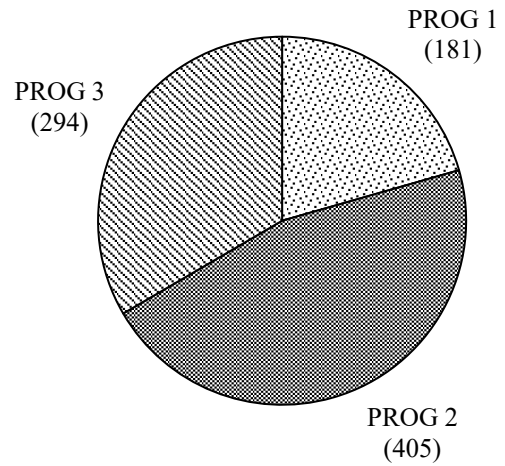
Programme (3)

Provision for 2025–26 is $221.0 million (12.0%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for general non-recurrent expenses.
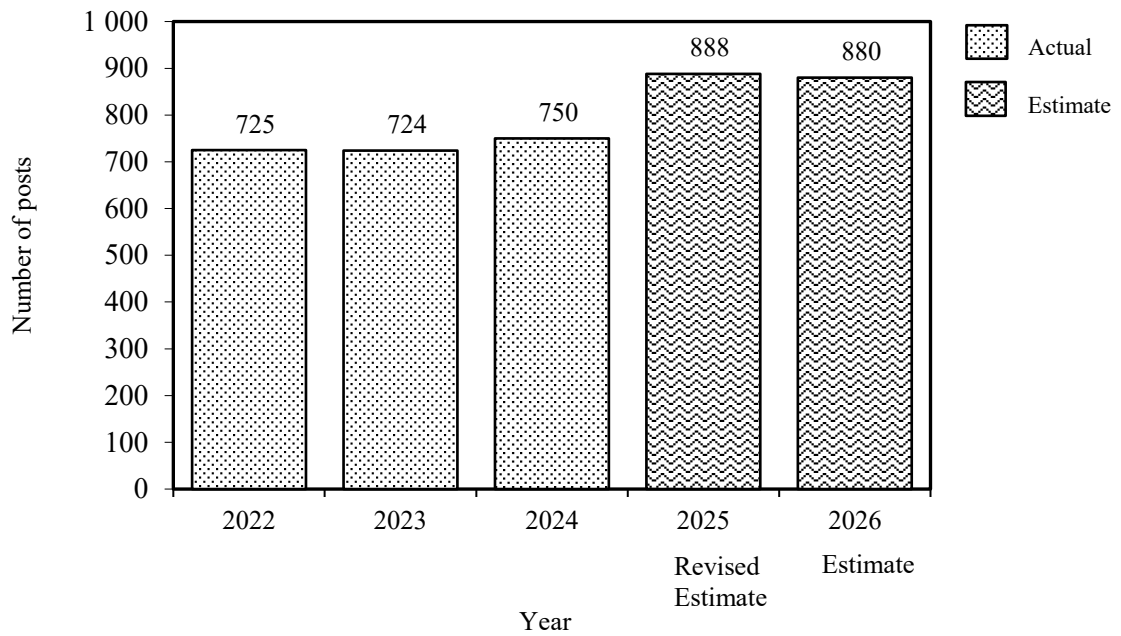
*Allocation of provision
to programmes
(2025-26)*

*Staff by programme
(as at 31 March 2026)*

PROG 1
(8.8%)

PROG 2
(32.3%)

PROG 3
(58.9%)

PROG 3
(294)

PROG 1
(181)

PROG 2
(405)

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

Number of posts

Year	Number of posts
2022	725
2023	724
2024	750
2025 Revised Estimate	888
2026 Estimate	880

Actual

Estimate

Head 47 — GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT: DIGITAL POLICY OFFICE

Sub-head (Code)		Actual expenditure 2023–24	Approved estimate 2024–25	Revised estimate 2024–25	Estimate 2025–26
		$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
	Operating Account				
	Recurrent				
000	Operational expenses	1,241,883	1,706,321	1,895,697‡	**2,179,588**
	Total, Recurrent	1,241,883	1,706,321	1,895,697	**2,179,588**
	Non-Recurrent				
700	General non-recurrent	717,159	1,289,043	1,105,700‡	**1,311,000**
	Total, Non-Recurrent...............................	717,159	1,289,043	1,105,700	**1,311,000**
	Total, Operating Account	1,959,042	2,995,364	3,001,397	**3,490,588**
	Capital Account				
	Plant, Equipment and Works				
661	Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)...	—	1,350	3,130	**3,887**
	Total, Plant, Equipment and Works.........	—	1,350	3,130	**3,887**
	Total, Capital Account..............................	—	1,350	3,130	**3,887**
	Total Expenditure	1,959,042Δ	2,996,714Δ	3,004,527	**3,494,475**

Δ   The figures reflect the 2023–24 actual expenditure and the 2024–25 approved estimate for the then Head 47 — Government Secretariat: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer before the re-organisation.

‡   Includes relevant provisions for the then Efficiency Office transferred from Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau upon re-organisation with effect from 25 July 2024.

Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2025–26 for the salaries and expenses of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) is $3,494,475,000. This represents an increase of $489,948,000 over the revised estimate for 2024–25 and $1,535,433,000 over the actual expenditure in 2023–24.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of $2,179,588,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of DPO. The increase of $283,891,000 (15.0%) over the revised estimate for 2024–25 is mainly due to the transfer of the relevant provisions for the then Efficiency Office from Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau upon re-organisation with effect from 25 July 2024 and the increased provision for departmental expenses.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2025 will be 888 posts. It is expected that there will be a net decrease of eight posts in 2025–26. Subject to certain conditions, the controlling officer may under delegated power create or delete non-directorate posts during 2025–26, but the notional annual mid-point salary value of all such posts must not exceed $701,057,000.

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

	2023–24 (Actual) ($'000)	2024–25 (Original) ($'000)	2024–25 (Revised) ($'000)	**2025–26 (Estimate) ($'000)**
Personal Emoluments				
- Salaries	511,795	577,518	623,760	**693,258**
- Allowances	14,741	12,460	14,950	**15,930**
- Job-related allowances	197	100	47	**100**
Personnel Related Expenses				
- Mandatory Provident Fund contribution	1,391	1,388	1,538	**1,368**
- Civil Service Provident Fund contribution	28,595	38,124	39,185	**44,479**
Departmental Expenses				
- Hire of services and professional fees	477,464	765,102	830,374	**870,912**
- Information and communications technology rentals and maintenance	80,529	66,463	112,369	**98,440**
- General departmental expenses	73,310	185,420	219,482	**395,201**
Other Charges				
- Hosting platform for e-government services	53,861	59,746	53,992	**59,900**
	1,241,883	1,706,321	1,895,697	**2,179,588**

Capital Account

Plant, Equipment and Works

5 Provision of $3,887,000 under *Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)* represents an increase of $757,000 (24.2%) over the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the increased requirement for the replacement of minor plant and equipment with the cost of individual items above $200,000 but not exceeding $10 million.

Commitments

Sub-head (Code)	Item (Code)	Ambit	Approved commitment	Accumulated expenditure to 31.3.2024	Revised estimated expenditure for 2024–25	Balance
			$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
		Operating Account				
700		*General non-recurrent*				
	802	Expediting the Web3 ecosystem development in Hong Kong	50,000	35,800	11,700	2,500
	803	Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme	500,000	395,000	5,000	100,000
	804	Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups	265,000	85,000	18,200	161,800
	805	Scheme for Supporting the Development of Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem in Hong Kong	3,000,000	—	905,000	2,095,000
	806	Injection into the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development FundΘ	500,000	381,800	60,000	58,200
	894	Enriched IT Programme in Schools	1,234,000	597,298	101,000	535,702
		Total	5,549,000	1,494,898	1,100,900	2,953,202

Θ   On 14 June 2024, the Legislative Council's Finance Committee approved the consequential transfer of this item from Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau to this Head, upon the re-organisation with effect from 25 July 2024.