

Head 181 — TRADE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT

Controlling officer: the Director-General of Trade and Industry will account for expenditure under this Head.

Estimate 2025–26 **\$2,318.4m**

Establishment ceiling 2025–26 (notional annual mid-point salary value) representing an estimated 503 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2025 reducing by three posts to 500 posts as at 31 March 2026..... **\$324.4m**

In addition, there will be an estimated 11 directorate posts as at 31 March 2025 and as at 31 March 2026.

Commitment balance..... **\$133,144.9m**

Controlling Officer's Report

Programmes

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Programme (1) Commercial Relations Programme (2) Trade Support and Facilitation Programme (3) Support for Small and Medium Enterprises and Industries</p> | <p>These programmes contribute to Policy Area 6: Commerce and Industry (Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development).</p> |
|---|---|

Detail

Programme (1): Commercial Relations

| | 2023–24 (Actual) | 2024–25 (Original) | 2024–25 (Revised) | 2025–26 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 162.4 | 184.4 | 187.7 (+1.8%) | 182.3 (–2.9%) |
| | | | | (or –1.1% on 2024–25 Original) |

Aim

2 The aim is to secure and preserve maximum access and fair treatment for Hong Kong's goods, services and investments in external markets in support of Hong Kong's role as an international trade centre under the National 14th Five-Year Plan.

Brief Description

3 The Department is responsible for Hong Kong's commercial relations with its trading partners, and for promoting and protecting Hong Kong's trade interests and rights. The rules-based multilateral trading system under the auspices of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is the cornerstone of Hong Kong's external trade policy. Being a founding Member of the WTO, Hong Kong has continued its separate membership in the WTO, under the name "Hong Kong, China", since its return to the motherland.

4 The Department continues to participate actively in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum whose goal is to achieve free and open trade and investment among its member economies which account for some 80 per cent of Hong Kong's total external trade.

5 Since the Mainland and Hong Kong concluded the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) in 2003, both sides have continued to explore further liberalisation measures for trade and investment and to facilitate smooth and effective implementation of announced liberalisation measures. In this regard, the Department co-ordinates with relevant bureaux and departments in discussions with the Mainland authorities.

6 According to the latest statistics compiled by the WTO, Hong Kong was the world's tenth largest economy in terms of merchandise trade and the 21st largest in terms of commercial services trade in 2023.

7 In 2024–25, the Department's key activities included the following:

- active participation in the WTO, including:
 - safeguarding Hong Kong's rights through monitoring and responding to trade restrictive measures which impacted on Hong Kong's trade interests and posed systemic risks to the multilateral trading system;

- safeguarding Hong Kong’s rights and interests by taking actions in accordance with the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism against the United States (US)’ revised origin marking requirement on imported products originating from Hong Kong; and
- contributing to the ongoing negotiations and discussions at the WTO, particularly on rules (i.e. additional disciplines on fisheries subsidies); electronic commerce (e-commerce); investment facilitation; domestic regulation for services; micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs); and proposals to reform the WTO;
- active participation in various APEC activities, including:
 - taking part in the Economic Leaders’ Meeting, Ministerial Meetings and Senior Officials’ Meetings;
 - contributing to work on trade and investment liberalisation and facilitation, including regional economic integration, connectivity, sustainability, and the implementation of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action; and
 - providing secretariat support for Hong Kong, China’s representatives to the APEC Business Advisory Council;
- overseeing the implementation of CEPA and its subsidiary agreements, amending the Agreement on Trade in Goods to cover the increase in duty-free allowance for baggage articles of Mainland resident travellers returning to the Mainland from Hong Kong, supporting the setting up of customs facilitation measure for export of certain Hong Kong food products to the Mainland, signing and implementing the Second Agreement Concerning Amendment to the CEPA Agreement on Trade in Services (Second Agreement) to achieve further liberalisation of trade in services between the Mainland and Hong Kong, and jointly organising a business forum with the Ministry of Commerce to familiarise the trade with the measures under this Second Agreement;
- enhancing economic co-operation with trading partners as well as assisting enterprises in diversifying markets and securing better market access through establishing co-operation arrangements, forging free trade agreements (FTAs) and investment promotion and protection agreements (IPPAs). Hong Kong signed an FTA with Peru in November 2024 and an IPPA with Bahrain in March 2024. The Department has intensified engagement with its members for Hong Kong’s early accession to Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). In addition, the Department has commenced IPPA consultations/negotiations with, among others, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Peru and Egypt and continued the negotiations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as per the work programme of ASEAN – Hong Kong Investment Agreement. The First Protocol to Amend the FTA between Hong Kong and ASEAN (Protocol) for updating the product specific rules of origin was signed by all Parties on 19 September 2024. The Protocol will take effect upon completion of the necessary internal procedures by all Parties. The Department has also continued its exploratory talks with other potential FTA or IPPA partners in the Middle East and other regions along the Belt and Road; and
- closely monitoring policies and actions of our major trading partners which might affect bilateral trade, responding to such policies and actions where necessary, and giving advice to local traders and manufacturers.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

8 During 2025–26, the Department will:

- participate actively in the WTO to monitor implementation of agreements and to safeguard Hong Kong’s rights and interests, and engage in work relating to the decisions/declarations adopted at WTO Ministerial Conferences, including discussions on reforming the WTO;
- continue to monitor the developments with respect to actions taken in accordance with the WTO Dispute Settlement Mechanism against the US’ revised origin marking requirement on imported products originating from Hong Kong;
- participate in ongoing negotiations and discussions at the WTO in seeking to advance Hong Kong’s interest and contribute to multilateral efforts in trade liberalisation and greater predictability and transparency in global trade rules, including participation in the Fourteenth WTO Ministerial Conference;
- continue to participate actively in APEC and other regional bodies, and contribute particularly to APEC’s work on regional economic integration, connectivity, sustainability, and the implementation of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, including through the Aotearoa Plan of Action;
- continue to seek early accession to RCEP, negotiate/sign IPPAs with, among others, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Peru and Egypt, and negotiate with ASEAN as per the work programme of ASEAN – Hong Kong Investment Agreement;
- continue exploratory talks with other potential FTA or IPPA partners in the Middle East and other regions along the Belt and Road;
- oversee the implementation of FTAs signed between Hong Kong and foreign economies;

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- discuss, in consultation with relevant bureaux and departments and the trade, with Mainland authorities measures to enrich the content of CEPA and seek further liberalisation, aiming especially at those sectors that Hong Kong enjoys competitive advantages, for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as well as the entire Mainland, with a view to facilitating Hong Kong enterprises to tap into the nation-wide domestic consumption market; and
- continue to safeguard Hong Kong's trade interests through monitoring and responding where necessary to trade restrictive measures and changes in major trading partners' laws, regulations, and policies, and provide updated information to local traders and manufacturers.

Programme (2): Trade Support and Facilitation

| | 2023–24 (Actual) | 2024–25 (Original) | 2024–25 (Revised) | 2025–26 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 145.9 | 155.2 | 155.3 (+0.1%) | 152.1 (–2.1%) |
| | | | | (or –2.0% on 2024–25 Original) |

Aim

9 The aim is to optimise the benefits to Hong Kong flowing from international and bilateral trade agreements, including CEPA, to fulfil Hong Kong's obligations under such agreements by way of providing licensing, certification, and registration services, and to enhance Hong Kong's role as a regional trading and distribution centre.

Brief Description

10 The Department provides licensing, certification and registration services for various goods and commodities. The Department:

- operates the voluntary Textiles Trader Registration Scheme to enable it to disseminate textiles-related regulatory and other information to the trade in a speedy manner;
- maintains a robust control system on strategic commodities and participates actively in international co-operation in strategic trade control; reviews the list of strategic commodities controlled in Hong Kong regularly to align the list of controlled items with the latest control lists of the international regimes;
- operates the Rice Control Scheme to ensure a stable supply of rice in Hong Kong and to maintain a reserve stock to cater for short-term shortage of supply and other emergencies;
- implements the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme to stop trade in “conflict diamonds” that fuels armed conflicts, terrorist activities and illicit proliferation of armament; and
- operates a powdered formula export licensing arrangement under the policy area of the Environment and Ecology Bureau to help to ensure sufficient and stable supply of powdered formula for infants and young children under 36 months of age in Hong Kong.

11 The Department operates an origin certification system to facilitate export of Hong Kong products to external markets by issuance of Certificates of Origin. It also maintains a Factory Registration service in support of the origin certification system.

12 Apart from providing a one-stop certification service for Hong Kong Service Suppliers (HKSS) and Hong Kong Investors (HKI) to support the implementation of CEPA and handling enquiries on CEPA matters, the Department actively organises and participates in various promotional and publicity activities, and handles requests for assistance from Hong Kong businesses which encounter difficulties in enjoying CEPA benefits.

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13 The key performance measures are:

Targets

| | Target# | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Actual) | 2025 (Plan) |
|--|---------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| registration of textiles traders (completed processing within three working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Certificate of Hong Kong Origin, Certificate of Origin - Processing, Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - CEPA (CO(CEPA)), Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - New Zealand (CO(NZ)), Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - Georgia (CO(Georgia)) and Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - Form AHK (CO(Form AHK)) (issued within 1.5 working days) (%)δ.... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| enquiry on CO(CEPA), CO(NZ), CO(Georgia), CO(Form AHK) and preferential rules of origin‡ | | | | |
| simple enquiry (replied within three working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| complicated enquiry (replied within ten working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| application for factory registration (completed processing within 14 working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| amendment of factory registration particulars | | | | |
| if factory inspection is necessary (completed processing within 14 working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| if factory inspection is not necessary and the request is lodged in paper form (completed processing within three working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| if factory inspection is not necessary and the request is lodged through online system (completed processing within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | N.A.¶ | 100 |
| local subcontracting arrangement (LSA) registration (completed processing within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| outward processing arrangement (OPA) registration (completed processing within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| combined annual renewal of factory registration and OPA registration (completed processing within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| enquiry on OPA: manufacturing processes allowed to be subcontracted outside Hong Kong | | | | |
| simple enquiry (completed processing within one working day) (%) | 100 | N.A.¶ | N.A.¶ | 100 |
| complicated enquiry (completed processing within four working days) (%) | 100 | N.A.¶ | N.A.¶ | 100 |
| import and export licence for reserved commodities (rice) (issued within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

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| | Target# | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Actual) | 2025 (Plan) |
|--|---------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| approval as a reserved commodity (rice) storage place | | | | |
| inform Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) to conduct inspection of the premises (completed within five working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| inform the applicant of the application result upon receipt of C&ED's inspection report (completed within five working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| import and export licence for ozone depleting substances (issued within two working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| import and export licence for strategic commodities | | | | |
| licence application with prior approval-in-principle (issued within the same day) (%)..... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| other licence applications (issued within 2.5 working days) (%)Ψ | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| pre-classification service on strategic commodities (completed within two working days) (%)Ψ | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| powdered formula export licence (issued within two working days) (%)..... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| amendment to and cancellation of powdered formula export licence (completed within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Kimberley Process Certificate (Import) for rough diamonds (issued within 20 minutes) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Kimberley Process Certificate (Export) for rough diamonds (issued within the following working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| registration for rough diamond traders (completed within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| certified true copy (issued within one working day) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| registration for Transshipment Cargo Exemption Scheme (completed within 14 working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| registration for importers of cereals and grain flour from the Mainland (completed within four working days) (%)..... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| HKSS and HKI certificates | | | | |
| fresh application (completed within 14 working days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| amendment and renewal (issued within five working days) (%)..... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| replacement and cancellation (issued within three working days) (%)..... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| other written enquiries (replied within ten calendar days) (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Target is applied upon receipt of all necessary documents and information.

δ Revised description of the previous target “Certificate of Hong Kong Origin, Certificate of Origin - Processing, Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - CEPA (CO(CEPA)), Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - New Zealand (CO(NZ)), Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - Georgia (CO(Georgia)), Certificate of Hong Kong Origin - Form AHK (CO(Form AHK)) and Certificate of Origin (Form A)” as from 2024.

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- ‡ Preferential rules of origin refer to the rules of origin applicable under respective arrangements/agreements of trade liberalisation between Hong Kong and its trading partners, including CEPA, the Closer Economic Partnership Agreement with New Zealand, as well as the respective FTAs with European Free Trade Association States, Chile, the ASEAN, Georgia, Australia and Peru.
- ¶ No application/enquiry was received.
- Ψ The processing time may take longer for complicated cases.

Indicators

| | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Actual) | 2025 (Plan) |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>Licence issued</i> | | | |
| textiles trader registration..... | 2 997 | 2 547 | 2 550 |
| Certificate of Hong Kong Origin, Certificate of Origin - Processing, CO(CEPA), CO(NZ), CO(Georgia) and CO(Form AHK)φ | 1 725 | 2 222 | 2 230 |
| factory registration | 676 | 657 | 660 |
| OPA registration | 23 | 20 | 20 |
| LSA registration..... | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| statutory declarations of antique | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| reserved commodities (rice) licence | 8 961 | 9 337 | 9 340 |
| registration of reserved commodity (rice) stockholder | 238 | 211 | 220 |
| approval as a reserved commodity (rice) storage place..... | 142 | 148 | 150 |
| ozone depleting substances licence..... | 71 | 83 | 85 |
| strategic commodities licence | 252 950 | 208 000 | 208 000 |
| powdered formula export licence..... | 7 895 | 17 788 | 17 800 |
| delivery verification certificate | 8 | 4 | 5 |
| international import certificate..... | 38 | 31 | 30 |
| pesticide (methyl bromide) licence..... | 46 | 49 | 49 |
| Kimberley Process Certificate | 1 428 | 1 672 | 1 680 |
| registration of rough diamond traders..... | 218 | 156 | 220η |
| HKSS and HKI certificatesΛ..... | 245 | 215 | 280 |
| permit under the Chemical Weapons (Convention) Ordinance (Cap. 578)Ω | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| registration for importers of cereals and grain flour from the Mainland | 81 | 82 | 80 |
| <i>CEPA</i> | | | |
| enquiries..... | 4 333 | 3 720 | 4 100 |
| visitors to the Department's CEPA website..... | 41 116 | 46 047 | 50 800 |

- φ Revised description of the previous indicator “Certificate of Hong Kong Origin, Certificate of Origin - Processing, Form A, CO(CEPA), CO(NZ), CO(Georgia) and CO(Form AHK)” as from 2024.
- η Rough diamond trader registration is renewable on a biennial basis. The planned figure is estimated based on the actual number of trader registration in 2023 which will expire in 2025.
- Λ The figures on HKSS and HKI certificates include fresh applications as well as certificates for amendment, replacement, cancellation and renewal, and certified true copy.
- Ω Under the Chemical Weapons (Convention) Ordinance, the Department administers a permit system to control and monitor the production and related activities pertinent to scheduled chemicals. The potential demand for a permit in Hong Kong is low given the small size of the chemical industry and that the scheduled chemicals are uncommon.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

14 During 2025–26, the Department will:

- promote understanding of CEPA among the trade through timely dissemination of information to the trade, and organisation of or participation in various promotional and publicity activities including the provision of a user-friendly enquiry hotline and when new measures are introduced, organisation of a business forum to introduce further enhancements to CEPA and the related implementation arrangements;

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- liaise closely with the Mainland authorities and local traders on Mainland issues of significant impact on business operations, and help reflect the trade's concerns to the relevant Mainland authorities, and collaborate with the Mainland authorities to support Hong Kong enterprises to promote their products and services to the Mainland market; and
- keep the strategic trade control system under review with a view to streamlining procedures and requirements without compromising the integrity and effectiveness of control.

Programme (3): Support for Small and Medium Enterprises and Industries

| | 2023–24 (Actual) | 2024–25 (Original) | 2024–25 (Revised) | 2025–26 (Estimate) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial provision (\$m) | 1,910.0 | 2,035.8 | 2,671.3 (+31.2%) | 1,984.0 (–25.7%) |
| | | | | (or –2.5% on 2024–25 Original) |

Aim

- 15 The aim is to support and facilitate the development of Hong Kong's SMEs and industries.

Brief Description

16 The Department implements programmes to support enterprises, particularly SMEs, with a view to enhancing their competitiveness. It provides information and advisory services to SMEs through its Support and Consultation Centre for SMEs (SUCCESS) and co-ordinates the integrated services of SUCCESS and the other three SME service centres under the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, to provide advisory services on government funding schemes. In addition, "SME ReachOut", operated by the HKPC under the support of the Department, promotes the Government's funding schemes to SMEs and assists them in identifying and applying for suitable schemes as well as building their capacities.

17 The Department administers several funding schemes, including the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales (BUD Fund), the SME Export Marketing Fund (EMF), and the Trade and Industrial Organisation Support Fund (TSF) to assist Hong Kong enterprises in developing more diversified markets and enhancing their competitiveness. In 2024, to further assist enterprises in tapping into the Mainland and overseas markets, \$500 million was injected into the BUD Fund and "E-commerce Easy" was launched to better assist enterprises in developing the Mainland market through e-commerce business. The geographical coverage of the BUD Fund has been extended to include Bahrain and Peru, covering a total of 40 economies with which Hong Kong has signed FTAs or IPPAs. To continue to support enterprises in conducting local market promotion activities and to maintain Hong Kong's leading position as the hub for large-scale merchandise exhibitions, the special measure to expand the funding scope of the EMF has been extended to 30 June 2026 to continue to cover large-scale exhibitions and online exhibitions targeting the local market, and the eligibility criteria have been relaxed to cover non-SMEs.

18 The Department maintains close liaison with local industries and trade and industrial organisations. It provides secretariat support for the Trade and Industry Advisory Board and the Small and Medium Enterprises Committee, which respectively advise the Government on matters affecting Hong Kong's trade and industry, and specifically on issues affecting the development of SMEs.

- 19 The key performance measures are:

Targets

| | Target# | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Actual) | 2025 (Plan) |
|---|---------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| SUCCESS | | | | |
| processing applications for Business Advisory Service within seven working days (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| replying to simple enquiries on licensing requirements within one working day (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| replying to complicated enquiries on licensing requirements within three working days (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

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| | Target# | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Actual) | 2025 (Plan) |
|--|---------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| replying to simple enquiries on SME support services and facilities within one working day (%)..... | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| replying to complicated enquiries on SME support services and facilities within three working days (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| TSF processing applications for grant within 60 working days (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| EMF processing applications for grant within 30 working days (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| BUD Fund processing general and “E-commerce Easy” applications for grant within 60 working days (%)□ | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| processing “Easy BUD” applications within 30 working days (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Target is applied upon receipt of all necessary documents and information.

□ Revised description of the previous target “processing general applications for grant within 60 working days” as from 2024. “E-commerce Easy” was introduced in July 2024.

Indicators

| | 2023 (Actual) | 2024 (Actual) | 2025 (Plan) |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| SUCCESS | | | |
| enquiries | 3 848 | 4 284 | 4 290 |
| visitors to SUCCESSφ | 1 794 [^] | 2 524 [^] | 2 530[^] |
| visits to SUCCESS and SME Link websites | 2 410 451 | 2 568 034 | 2 569 000 |
| seminars and other activities | 119 | 120 | 120 |
| e-newsletters sent to SUCCESS members | 26 | 26 | 26 |
| TSF applications received and processed | 43 | 34 | 35 |
| amount of government grants approved (\$m) | 39.5 | 30.5 | 30.5 |
| EMF applications received and processed | 29 863 | 30 918 | 30 920 |
| no. of first time SME beneficiaries | 2 582 | 2 705 | 2 705 |
| total no. of SME beneficiaries..... | 9 182 | 10 515 [¶] | 10 515 |
| amount of government grants approved (\$m) | 587.9 | 808.9 [¶] | 572.9^δ |
| BUD Fund applications received and processed | 4 739 | 7 262 ^Δ | 3 600[@] |
| amount of government grants approved (\$m) | 1 160.4 | 1 689.2 ^Δ | 1 097.3[@] |

φ The increase in the number of visitors to SUCCESS in 2024 is mainly attributed to the rebound in economic activities upon full resumption of normalcy.

[^] The number of visitors to SUCCESS excludes visitors to the EMF service counter located in SUCCESS.

[¶] The increase in total number of SME beneficiaries and the amount of government grants approved in 2024 is attributed to the gradual resumption to full normalcy leading to increased number of approved applications for participation in activities outside Hong Kong and increased average amount of government grants approved per application for local trade exhibitions.

^δ The decrease in the planned figures for 2025 is attributed to the measures to be implemented to optimise the operation of EMF.

^Δ The increase in the number of applications received and processed and the amount of government grants approved in 2024 is attributed to the increase in the applications for the BUD Fund, the launch of “E-commerce Easy” in July 2024 to better support enterprises in developing the Mainland market through e-commerce business, and the full-year implementation of Easy BUD.

[@] In 2025, the geographical scope of “E-commerce Easy” will be extended to the ten ASEAN countries, targeted funding support will be provided for enterprises to implement green transformation projects and “Easy BUD” will be enhanced. The decrease in the planned figures for 2025 is attributed to the measures to be implemented to ensure that BUD Fund can offer more targeted support to the applicant enterprises.

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26

20 During 2025–26, the Department will:

- closely monitor the global and domestic economic environment and the impact of any changes in the environment on Hong Kong enterprises, in particular SMEs;
- liaise closely with the trade and implement enhanced support services to help them meet the challenges they face, including organising a mentorship programme that enhances support to SMEs to develop brands and expand the sales networks of e-commerce, and setting up a one-stop thematic webpage under the “SME Link” web portal to provide information about decarbonisation and carbon audit;
- administer various funding schemes and closely monitor their implementation with a view to enhancing their effectiveness and financial sustainability;
- further enhance the BUD Fund by extending the geographical coverage of “E-commerce Easy” from the Mainland to cover also the ten ASEAN countries to better assist Hong Kong enterprises in developing the ASEAN markets through e-commerce, and providing targeted funding support for enterprises to implement green transformation projects; and implementing enhancements to “Easy BUD”; and
- continue to administer the enhanced services of “SME ReachOut” in providing SMEs capacity building services and enhancing assistance to SMEs in government funding applications.

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ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL PROVISION

| | 2023–24 (Actual) (\$m) | 2024–25 (Original) (\$m) | 2024–25 (Revised) (\$m) | 2025–26 (Estimate) (\$m) |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Programme | | | | |
| (1) Commercial Relations | 162.4 | 184.4 | 187.7 | 182.3 |
| (2) Trade Support and Facilitation | 145.9 | 155.2 | 155.3 | 152.1 |
| (3) Support for Small and Medium Enterprises and Industries..... | 1,910.0 | 2,035.8 | 2,671.3 | 1,984.0 |
| | 2,218.3 | 2,375.4 | 3,014.3 (+26.9%) | 2,318.4 (–23.1%) |
| | | | | (or –2.4% on 2024–25 Original) |

Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision

Programme (1)

Provision for 2025–26 is \$5.4 million (2.9%) lower than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the decreased provision for departmental expenses.

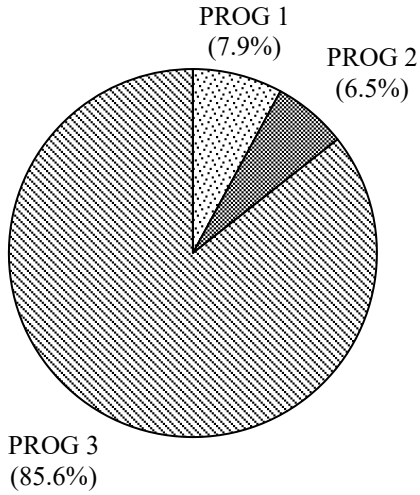
Programme (2)

Provision for 2025–26 is \$3.2 million (2.1%) lower than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the decreased provision for departmental expenses. There will be a net decrease of three posts under this Programme in 2025–26.

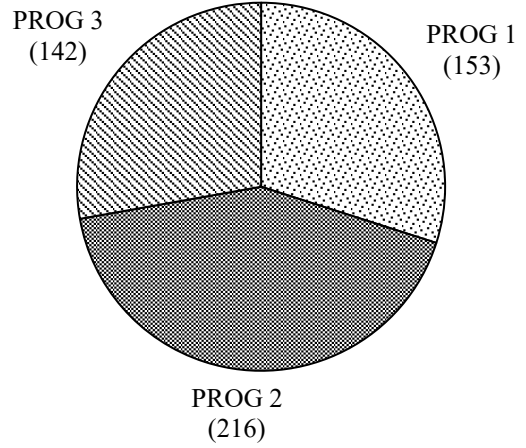
Programme (3)

Provision for 2025–26 is \$687.3 million (25.7%) lower than the revised estimate for 2024–25. This is mainly due to the decreased cash flow requirements for funding schemes.

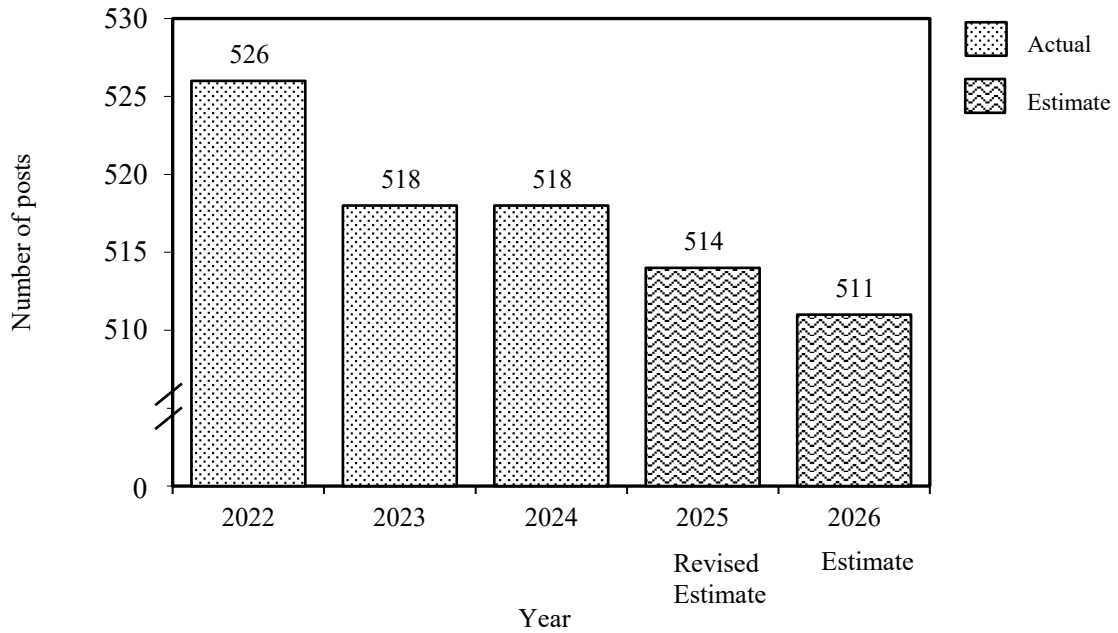
Allocation of provision to programmes (2025-26)



Staff by programme (as at 31 March 2026)



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



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| 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 | 448,275 | 475,370 | 486,209 | 482,381 |
| | Total, Recurrent..... | 448,275 | 475,370 | 486,209 | 482,381 |
| Non-Recurrent | | | | | |
| 700 | General non-recurrent | 1,769,989 | 1,900,000 | 2,528,100 | 1,836,000 |
| | Total, Non-Recurrent..... | 1,769,989 | 1,900,000 | 2,528,100 | 1,836,000 |
| | Total, Operating Account | 2,218,264 | 2,375,370 | 3,014,309 | 2,318,381 |
| ----- | | | | | |
| | Total Expenditure | 2,218,264 | 2,375,370 | 3,014,309 | 2,318,381 |
| | | <u>2,218,264</u> | <u>2,375,370</u> | <u>3,014,309</u> | <u>2,318,381</u> |

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Details of Expenditure by Subhead

The estimate of the amount required in 2025–26 for the salaries and expenses of the Trade and Industry Department is \$2,318,381,000. This represents a decrease of \$695,928,000 against the revised estimate for 2024–25 and an increase of \$100,117,000 over the actual expenditure in 2023–24.

Operating Account

Recurrent

2 Provision of \$482,381,000 under *Subhead 000 Operational expenses* is for the salaries, allowances and other operating expenses of the Trade and Industry Department.

3 The establishment as at 31 March 2025 will be 514 posts. It is expected that there will be a net decrease of three 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 \$324,422,000.

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 | 316,394 | 329,126 | 329,324 | 343,539 |
| - Allowances | 6,834 | 6,558 | 7,079 | 7,079 |
| - Job-related allowances..... | — | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Personnel Related Expenses | | | | |
| - Mandatory Provident Fund contribution | 939 | 937 | 862 | 882 |
| - Civil Service Provident Fund contribution | 23,716 | 25,444 | 27,530 | 29,623 |
| Departmental Expenses | | | | |
| - General departmental expenses | 93,302 | 101,451 | 109,143 | 90,195 |
| Other Charges | | | | |
| - Contribution to and participation in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation | 1,414 | 1,275 | 1,345 | 1,345 |
| - Trade negotiations and associated activities | 3,498 | 8,400 | 8,747 | 7,539 |
| - Contribution to the organisation of the Hong Kong Awards for Industries | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| - Subscription to the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council | 178 | 177 | 177 | 177 |
| | 448,275 | 475,370 | 486,209 | 482,381 |

Head 181 — TRADE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT

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 | <i>General non-recurrent</i> | | | | | |
| | 520 | SME Loan Guarantee Scheme# | 30,000,000 | 459,941 | 15,000 | 29,525,059 |
| | 524 | Export Marketing and Trade and Industrial Organisation Support Fund‡ | 8,000,000‡ | 6,087,832 | 907,000 | 1,005,168 |
| | 802 | Special Loan Guarantee Scheme@ | 100,000,000 | 828,447 | 4,100 | 99,167,453 |
| | 836 | Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales^ | 8,750,000^ | 3,700,808 | 1,602,000 | 3,447,192 |
| | | Total | 146,750,000 | 11,077,028 | 2,528,100 | 133,144,872 |

The scheme ceased to receive applications from 1 April 2021. The approved commitment of \$30 billion refers to the total loan guarantee commitment approved by the Finance Committee (based on an assumed default rate of five per cent, the expected maximum expenditure for settlement of default claim is \$1,500 million). The expenditure represents payments made to lending institutions for their default claims.

‡ The approved commitment for the item was \$7,250 million. An increase in commitment of \$750 million is sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2025.

@ The scheme ceased to receive applications from 1 January 2011. The approved commitment of \$100 billion refers to the total loan guarantee commitment approved by the Finance Committee (based on the assumed default rates of ten per cent and 12 per cent for loans approved under 70 per cent and 80 per cent Government guarantee respectively, the expected maximum expenditure for settlement of default claim is \$11,800 million). The expenditure represents payments made to lending institutions for their default claims.

^ The approved commitment for the item was \$7,000 million. An increase in commitment of \$1,750 million is sought in the context of the Appropriation Bill 2025.