

# LC: Speech by CS in presenting Government Minute in response to Annual Report of The Ombudsman 2024

Following is the speech (translated from Chinese) by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, in presenting the Government Minute in response to the Annual Report of The Ombudsman 2024 in the Legislative Council today (December 18):

Mr President,

On July 3 this year, I submitted the Annual Report of The Ombudsman 2024 to the Legislative Council. I am submitting today the Government Minute in response to the recommendations as set out in the Annual Report.

The Office of The Ombudsman received a total of about 4 400 complaint cases in 2023-24, which is the lowest in the recent five years.

In the Annual Report, The Ombudsman summed up 10 direct investigation and 95 full investigation cases, making a total of 186 recommendations. The vast majority of the recommendations were accepted, and the relevant Government departments and public bodies have taken or are actively taking follow-up actions. Members may refer to the Government Minute for the detailed response to all recommendations. As for the two cases where recommendations have not been fully accepted, the authorities concerned have already explained the reasons to The Ombudsman and provided a detailed account in the Government Minute.

As reflected in the Annual Report, about 60 per cent of the 95 full investigation cases were found to be unsubstantiated. Nevertheless, The Ombudsman has made recommendations regarding some of these cases to facilitate relevant Government departments and public bodies to improve their administration. For those cases where The Ombudsman made recommendations for improvement, government departments and public bodies have made specific responses and actively taken follow-up actions, with a view to continuously enhancing the quality of public services.

In addition to investigation, the Office resolved 187 complaint cases by way of mediation in 2023-24. About 92 per cent of the respondent complainants and organisations participating in mediation were satisfied with the Office's mediation service. Various Government departments and public bodies will continue to work with the Office to promote mediation which can resolve complaints amicably within a short period of time.

On access to information, about 12 000 requests for information made under the Code on Access to Information from members of the public were received by government departments in 2023-24, representing an increase of 9 per cent as compared to the previous year. Since the promulgation of the

Code, about 94 per cent of the cases have been provided with all the information requested and about 3 per cent have been provided with part of the information requested. The number of complaints concerning the Code received during the year was 79, which is about the average number for the past three years.

To commend government departments and public officers for their excellent performance in handling complaints and serving the public, the Office organised the Presentation Ceremony of The Ombudsman's Awards in November 2023 and presented awards to four government departments and offices, and also 62 public officers.

In conclusion, we appreciate the ever-growing public expectations towards public services. We will continue to foster a result-oriented governance, address pressing community concerns with dedication. Our gratitude extends to The Ombudsman and his professional team. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Office. Since its establishment, the Office has always provided valuable recommendations in driving a fair and efficient public administration. We will continue to support and collaborate with the Office. Together, we will build a better Hong Kong, enhancing public confidence and trust.

Thank you, Mr President.