

Statistics on Code on Access to Information for first quarter of 2021

The Government received a total of 2 619 requests for information under the Code on Access to Information in the first quarter of 2021, a spokesman for the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau said today (September 30).

The total number of requests received since the introduction of the Code in March 1995 and up to the end of March 2021 amounted to 91 528. Of these, 5 156 requests were subsequently withdrawn by the requestors and 4 633 requests covered cases in which the bureaux/departments concerned did not hold the requested information or cannot confirm or deny the existence of information. As at March 31, 2021, 492 requests were still being processed by bureaux/departments.

Among the 81 247 requests which covered information held by bureaux/departments and which the bureaux/departments had responded to, 78 654 requests (96.8 per cent) were met, either in full (76 474 requests) or in part (2 180 requests), and 2 593 requests (3.2 per cent) were refused.

Any member of the public who is dissatisfied with the response of a bureau/department under the Code may request that the matter be reviewed. He or she may also lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman.

In the first quarter of 2021, the Ombudsman received 20 complaints relating to requests for information. In this quarter, the Ombudsman concluded 28 complaints, among which five were partially substantiated, two were unsubstantiated, 15 were settled after inquiries by the Ombudsman, and six were not pursued by the Ombudsman or outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. As at March 31, 2021, the Ombudsman's investigations on 21 complaints were ongoing.

"The Code has provided an effective framework for the public to seek access to information held by the Government," the spokesman said.