

Statistics on Code on Access to Information for third quarter of 2020

The Government received a total of 2 925 requests for information under the Code on Access to Information in the third quarter of 2020, a spokesman for the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau said today (April 1).

The total number of requests received since the introduction of the Code in March 1995 and up to the end of September 2020 amounted to 86 127. Of these, 4 882 requests were subsequently withdrawn by the requestors and 4 366 requests covered cases in which the bureaux/departments concerned did not hold the requested information or cannot confirm or deny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 September 30, 2020, 399 requests were still being processed by bureaux/departments.

Among the 76 480 requests which covered information held by bureaux/departments and which the bureaux/departments had responded to, 73 995 requests (96.8 per cent) were met, either in full (71 948 requests) or in part (2 047 requests), and 2 485 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 third quarter of 2020, the Ombudsman received 28 complaints relating to requests for information. In this quarter, the Ombudsman concluded 29 complaints, among which three were substantiated, five were partially substantiated, five were unsubstantiated, eight were settled after inquiries by the Ombudsman, and eight were not pursued by the Ombudsman or were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. As at September 30, 2020, the Ombudsman's investigations on 48 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.