

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

The Government received a total of 2 485 requests for information under the Code on Access to Information in the first quarter of 2020, 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 2020 amounted to 80 336. Of these, 4 600 requests were subsequently withdrawn by the requestors and 4 028 requests covered cases in which the bureaux/departments concerned did not hold the requested information or cannot confirm or deny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, 2020, 442 requests were still being processed by bureaux/departments.

Among the 71 266 requests which covered information held by bureaux/departments and which the bureaux/departments had responded to, 69 018 requests (96.8 per cent) were met, either in full (67 117 requests) or in part (1 901 requests), and 2 248 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 2020, the Ombudsman received 24 complaints relating to requests for information. In this quarter, the Ombudsman concluded 26 complaints, among which three were substantiated, three were partially substantiated, 15 were settled after inquiries by the Ombudsman, and five were not pursued by the Ombudsman or outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. As at March 31, 2020, the Ombudsman's investigations on 45 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.