

**Information Note for
Legislative Council Members' Meeting with The Ombudsman
on 10 December 2002**

**Briefing by The Ombudsman
on the work of The Ombudsman's Office**

Workload

To ensure that in future The Ombudsman's "reporting year" and "financial year" coincides, the 2001/2002 reporting year only covered a 10½ months period between May 2001 to March 2002. Despite this, complaints received in the 10-month period (3,736) were more than those received (3,709) for the 2000/2001 reporting year. Of the 3,790 complaints completed in 2001/2002, 72% were concluded within three months, 22.6% between three to six months and 5.4% exceed six months.

2. In 2001/2002, a total of 166 recommendations were made and all were accepted for implementation. The Administration tabled the Government Minute on 13 November 2002 to inform Members of departments' response to these recommendations.

3. For the first eight months of the current reporting year (i.e. from April to end of November 2002), a total of 10,284 enquiries and 3,216 complaints were received.

Direct Investigation

4. From April 2002 up to end of November 2002, four direct investigations have been completed and four are in progress. They are –

DIs completed

- Contingency and relief measures for secondary school places allocation exercise 2001
- Funding of sports programmes by Hong Kong Sports Development Council
- Administration of vehicle registration marks auctions

- Practices of Hospital Authority for dealing with missing patients

DIs in progress

- Monitoring and control of fund-raising activities
- Role of Home Affairs Department in facilitating and formation of Owners' Corporation
- Operation of the Integrated Call Centre
- Enforcement of Education Ordinance on universal basic education

Office accommodation

5. On 6 September 2002, the Office moved into purchased accommodation at Shun Tak Centre, Sheung Wan. The directorate and investigation teams are accommodated on 30/F of the China Merchants Tower (i.e. East Tower) and the administration units occupy part of the 25/F of the West Tower.

6. As parking spaces are not available for sale at reasonable price in or near Shun Tak Centre, the Office will continue to lease parking spaces in the vicinity.

7. The accounts for fitting-out have not yet been finalized. At the end of November 2002, the relocation exercise is estimated to cost –

| | <i>Approved Provision (\$M)</i> | <i>Estimated expenditure (\$M)</i> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Purchase of accommodation</i> | 132.0 | 92.1 |
| <i>Design and fitting-out</i> | 14.3 | 11.9 |
| <i>Furniture and equipment</i> | 2.4 | 1.8 |
| <i>Car parking spaces</i> | 2.0 | – |
| <i>Total:</i> | 150.7 | 105.8 |

Staff Recruitment

8. Recruitment of contract staff to replace civil servants seconded to the Office is on-going, with priority given to investigation officers. To date, 63 posts (69%) have been replaced by contract staff. Of the 35 non-directorate investigation officer posts, 26 posts (74%) are held by contract staff. The Office hopes to complete the replacement of all civil servants by 2003/2004.

Office of The Ombudsman

December 2002