

Legislative Council Members' meeting with The Ombudsman

**on Tuesday, 7 December 2004, at 11:00 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Efficiency and services of The Ombudsman's Office

(raised by Dr Hon YEUNG Sum)

- (a) The Ombudsman mentioned in the annual report that the funding for The Ombudsman's Office ("the Office") for 2004/05 would be reduced by 6.8% and the number of staff of the Office had been reduced from 98 in 2002 to 88 in 2004. In order to control expenditure, the Office has initiated a review of its existing pay structure. Will The Ombudsman inform us how the Office will recruit and retain staff of high quality under the financial constraints to ensure that its work efficiency will not be affected?
- (b) According to the findings of a household survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department for the Office last year, 69.8% of the respondents replied that they would prefer to lodge complaints to the Office over the phone. However, despite an increase in the number of complaints received by the Office from 3 736 in 2002 to 4 661 in 2004, the complaints made over the phone dropped from 508 to 267. Has The Ombudsman analyzed the reasons for the decline in complaints received over the phone and reviewed the means to ensure that the services of the Office could tie in with the requests of the general public?