

20 views offered on watchdog

By JEREMY LAU

THE Government had received at least 20 submissions on the role of the ombudsman by the time the consultation exercise on the subject closed yesterday.

Four submissions came from social and political groups while the others were submitted by individuals.

A government spokesman said the submissions focused mainly on the expansion of the Commissioner for Administrative Complaints' jurisdiction, the referral system, the finality of the ombudsman's decisions and the publication of reports.

The Government will analyse views contained in the submissions and discuss them with the Legislative Council *ad hoc* group studying the review of the relevant ordinance.

"The Government will then submit its findings and recommendations to the Executive Council for a final decision," the spokesman said.

"Subject to the Exco endorsement, the relevant legislative amendment to the ordinance will be tabled to the Legco early next year."

The Commissioner for Administrative Complaints, Mr Arthur Garcia, would not comment on whether he was satisfied with the number of submissions.

"It depends very much on the quality of the submissions. But I have not been able to see the comments yet," he said.

Meanwhile, eight Kwai Tsing District Board members called for all government departments, government-owned corporations and statutory institutions to be under the jurisdiction of the ombudsman.