

4,600 denied right to land at Kai Tak.

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST
21 JUL 1991

THE Immigration Department's refusal to allow eight overseas Chinese students to enter Hongkong last week brought the number of people denied landing permission at Kai Tak to more than 4,600 people this year.

For the same period last year more than 5,500 people were turned away while 10,437 failed to fulfil immigration requirements for all of 1990.

Government spokesman Mr Paul Brown said these figures were not unusual and were a routine event at the airport.

"These things happen in every country, at every airport," he said. "People are not allowed to land for a variety of reasons, and Hongkong is no different from any other place in the world."

Mr Brown said this was not an issue that worried the Government, and that as the number of people arriving in Hongkong increased so would the number being refused entry.

In reply to questions about the students refused entry at Kai Tak he said: "We have freedom of speech in Hongkong and we defend that freedom."

"We ask only that people exercise that freedom within the law. But, as the Governor has made clear on many occasions in the past, we do not want Hongkong to be used as a battlefield for other people's political battles."

"Everything we do is consistent with this policy."

Immigration Department spokeswoman Ms Tammy Keung Kam-sau said reasons why people were refused entry were not released, nor were the countries they come from.

She said the majority of those turned back at the airport were for "technical reasons", meaning they did not have visas.

"Some even come here without travel documents, or unacceptable travel documents," she said.

"There are doubtful visitors we suspect are not coming here for the reasons they claim, some of them may be coming for employment but they pretend to come here as visitors."

Those refused permission to enter Hongkong have to wait in a special reception area at the airport.

"Of course we will make arrangements for those who have been refused permission to land to leave as soon as possible, but sometimes because of flight schedules they may have to stay overnight," said Ms Keung.