

## 12 more DB seats to come onstream

HONGKONG will have at least 12 more elected district board seats next year as a result of the Government's recent review of constituency boundaries.

According to the Government Gazette, published yesterday, a total of 12 constituencies will be added to the existing 145.

More could be added, depending on the outcome of the public consultation on the Green Paper, the principal assistant secretary for district administration, Mr Peter Tam, told a press conference yesterday.

The additions were required because of population growth and movement, physical developments, and the need to bring the boundaries of some districts in line with land administration boundaries, he said.

Urban districts including Eastern, Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin and Southern will each gain an additional constituency.

In the New Territories, Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun and Sha Tin will each

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have a new constituency, while North District will have three additional constituencies.

Mr Tam said the changes were based on the recommendations of an inter-departmental committee set up last December to review DB constituency boundaries.

Public opinion had to be taken into account in the review, he said, adding that the changes were generally supported.

They had to be declared now to enable the annual voter registration exercise to start on August 15 in accordance with the statutory requirement.

Mr Tam would not say if more elected seats would be created as the Government was still exploring public views on political reform.

"A decision on the numbers of elected and appointed district board members of the following term can only be made after public consultation on the Green Paper is completed," he added.