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300 refused entry to UK

By S. Y. WAI

NEARLY 300 Hongkong travellers were refused entry to Britain last year, a Home Office spokesman said yesterday.

Last year's figure of 296 from a total of 60,300 compares with 310 out of 61,300 refused entry in 1987. Both represent a one-in-2,000 ratio.

The spokesman said the main reason for entry refusal was that the British Dependent Territory citizens had failed to satisfy British immigration officers that they were seeking entry as visitors.

Commenting on an article in a Hongkong Chinese

daily yesterday, the spokesman said he was unaware of the reported Home Office document to the Hongkong Government on cases of locals refused entry to Britain.

Meanwhile, the Government's London Office will review in October whether to keep its immigration hotline for travellers from Hongkong.

The office's chief community services officer, Mr Rupert Cheung Ming-bor, said the hotline had received 14 complaints and 48 inquiries.

The hotline was set up in November following numerous complaints that Hongkong passport holders were

being discriminated against by British immigration officials and barred from entry.

Mr Cheung said most of the 14 complaints involved Hongkong travellers who were refused entry to Britain.

One Hongkong resident seeking entry as a tourist was detained by UK immigration officials because he could not tell of any travel plans and lied that he had no friends in Britain, which he had.

"Officials also found in his luggage school certificates, diplomas and a considerable sum of cash. He was therefore refused entry," he said.