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1,400 give views on gay issue

GOVERNMENT offices have been inundated with last-minute submissions of views on the homosexuality issue, with at least 1,400 submissions received by last night.

Mr Bart Ireland, an assistant secretary of the Security Branch, said submissions posted before last Friday's deadline for the consultation period had taken several days to reach his office.

He said he would analyse all the collected views from next week.

Mr Ireland said public views on whether homosexuality should be decriminalised – and if so, to what extent – seemed to be widely spread over the three options put forward for public consultation in the paper.

"I have so far detected no overwhelming support for any one particular option but since so many more submissions have arrived all of a sudden, we'll have to wait till the analysis has been completed," said Mr Ireland.

He said it was hoped results of the three-month consultation would be submitted to the Executive Council by early next month.

The options in the paper included leaving the law intact, decriminalising homosexuality and reducing the penalty for violating the law, which at present carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.