

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FSTB(Tsy)036**

**(Question Serial No. 1805)**

Head: (76) Inland Revenue Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ()  
Programme: (4) Taxpayer Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Inland Revenue (TAM Tai Pang)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

It is estimated that in the coming year the number of over-the-counter enquires to be processed by the Inland Revenue Department will increase markedly to 460 000 while the number of complaints to be processed will also increase slightly to 300. What are the main reasons for the increases?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ting-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 70)

Reply:

The numbers of counter enquiries at the Central Enquiry Counter and complaint cases handled by the Complaints Section of the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) have been maintained at over 400 000 and almost 300 respectively over the past five years. The relevant statistics are tabulated below:

Financial Year	No. of counter enquiries	No. of complaints
2017-18	427 000	255
2018-19	470 000	256
2019-20	444 000	212
2020-21 (Revised Estimate)	406 000	290
2021-22 (Estimate)	460 000	300

To minimise the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the community, the IRD implemented special work arrangements intermittently during the period from end-January 2020 to mid-February 2021 and only provided limited services under such arrangements. Hence, the number of counter enquiries dropped in the year 2020-21. The IRD estimated that the number of counter enquiries in the year 2021-22 will return to the level similar to that for the past few years if the pandemic continues to subside.

Having considered the numbers of complaint cases handled in the past, the IRD has estimated the number of cases at 300 for each of the past five years, and the same is estimated for the year 2021-22.

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