



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Our Ref: Fol/Req/17/205

Date 17th November 2017.

Dear Mr. McConnell,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

* a list of all Irish embassies around the world and the monthly rent paid for said embassies where applicable

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 24th October 2017.

I have identified 1 record that falls within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant that record. The record is for the average monthly rent payable in 2016 for Irish Embassies around the world. These figures have been provided to you in euro.

The Embassies rented abroad by the Department are key platforms for providing services to our citizens and promoting Ireland's interests and values abroad. The main purpose of these premises is to enable officers to host events which raise awareness of Ireland and allow us to capitalise on trade, economic and cultural opportunities. They are venues which are used to promote Irish products and services abroad. The venues serve to showcase Irish art, design and food produce to an international audience; they are used to host events on behalf of, but

not exclusively for; IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Tourism Ireland, Bord Bia and Irish Higher Education Institutions. Official premises serve as a showcase for Irish arts, crafts and products.

The amount that the Department pays for rent on each Irish Embassy can vary from one year to the next. This Department is subject to market forces and currency fluctuations, therefore we can have increases or decreases in line with the market locally or in line with the terms of a lease for example indexation in line with the local consumer price index.

- The steps which the Department takes to ensure that the best value is sought on the rent paid for Irish Embassies are as follows when we are first renting a property our Embassy officials (in conjunction with the relevant divisions in HQ) negotiate leases, using local agents and lawyers, to ensure that we test the market thoroughly and ensure best value for the money in the market.
- We utilise our business and diplomatic contacts to gain local knowledge and to understand the local market trends

Brexit is undoubtedly one of the most significant challenges the country will face in the coming years. Ireland will need to grow its presence in fast-growing emerging countries as well as deepen our market penetration in more developed markets and our diplomatic missions overseas will continue to be crucial in this. The priority of Department will be to support the growth of Ireland's share of international trade, employment and investment and the diversification of our markets where needed. The Embassy network is crucial to this growth.

A number of our Embassies are co-located with Irish State Agencies such as the IDA and Enterprise Ireland or with officials from another Irish Government Department in an Ireland House arrangement. In these cases, this Department pays the full rent on the premises and is refunded by the relevant State Agency or Government Department.

In our four most expensive rental properties, I will provide further context. The Irish Embassy in London is one of the largest in our network. It provides wide range of support services to our Irish community in Great Britain and in supporting our trade relationship. In Beijing, the

Embassy is a compound which provides office accommodation, official promotional activity space and staff accommodation. In Tokyo, Embassy is co-located with Enterprise Ireland and the IDA in an Ireland House arrangement. In New Delhi, the Embassy is co-located with the Visa office of the Department of Justice and Enterprise Ireland.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfa.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely



Katie Morrisroe
Property Management Unit