

28th April 2017

Mrs. Sarah Bardon

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2017/061

Dear Ms Bardon,

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:

I wish to seek all records of expenses incurred by the Minister and the Minister of State(s) on their St Patrick's Day trip.

I am the deciding officer for your request. I have identified the records that fall within the scope of your request. I have made a decision to grant all of the records, except for Document 5. , which is part redacted.

All official travel undertaken by the Minister or Ministers of State is in accordance with the central aims of the Department's travel policy, which is based on the travel policy for all Government Departments laid down by the Department of Finance (circular 11/81 and letter on foreign travel dated 31/3/1998), which is to minimize official travel costs and to achieve value for money for expenditure necessarily incurred, consistent with the effective discharge of official duties. Hotel accommodation at moderately priced hotels is reserved for the Minister or Ministers of State in the city where the official business is to be transacted. Ministerial mileage expenses are paid in accordance with rates and regulations set down by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Mileage expenses are a monthly total and reflect business related travel across Ireland during the respective month, and incorporate deductions for any personal-related travel.

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@dfat.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@dfat.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

Leo Blake,
Finance Division,
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade,
76/78 Harcourt Street,
Dublin 2.