



Our Ref: Fol/Req/19286

24 October 2019

Dear Ms. Phelan,

I refer to the request you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department on the 27 September 2019 as follows:

1. *The number and names of Ministers/TDs (including the Taoiseach) that travelled to New York for the UN assembly last week.*
2. *The number of civil servants that travelled with each Minister/TD (including the Taoiseach) to the UN and their grade*
3. *A breakdown of the cost of flights over to New York and return to Dublin for each Minister/TD (including the Taoiseach) and the cost of return flights for every civil servant that travelled with the Minister/TD they work for.*
4. *The name and cost per night of the hotel that each Minister/TD (including the Taoiseach) and the civil servants (without identifying the civil servant) stayed in and for how long*
5. *A breakdown detailing what Ministers/TDs/civil servants (including the Taoiseach) flew business or economy class*
6. *Did any Minister/TD/civil servant (including the Taoiseach) have use of the Aer Lingus or any other lounge while at the airports*
7. *Were any gifts bought to bring to the UN assembly and at what cost and what were they*
8. *Details of any other expenses incurred and paid for by the State regarding the trip to the UN assembly*
9. *The mode of transport and at what cost was each Minister/TD/civil servant (including the Taoiseach) chauffeured to their destinations*
10. *What expenses did each person that travelled incur?*
11. *What was the standard expense allowance for each public servant, was there per diems?*
12. *What expenses were incurred for catering for receptions and the details of these including the where they were held.*

The Taoiseach and seven ministers travelled to the 74<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly in New York. They were as follows:

An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, T.D. travelling from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> September

An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney, T.D. travelling from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> September

Minister for Health, Simon Harris, T.D. travelling from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> September

Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Richard Bruton, T.D. 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone, T.D. travelling from 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> September.



Minister of State for European Affairs, Helen McEntee, T.D. travelling from 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September

Minister of State for Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon, T.D. travelling from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September

Minister of State with responsibility for Defence, Paul Kehoe, T.D. travelling 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September

A number of officials travelled with each Minister. Below is the list of officials that travelled with each delegation and their role.

Taoiseach's delegation;

Brian Murphy – Chief of Staff

John Callinan – Second Secretary General, Dept. of Taoiseach

Helen Blake – Assistant Secretary General, Dept. of Taoiseach

Nick Reddy – Private Secretary to the Taoiseach

Sarah Meade – Assistant Government Press Secretary

Garda Protection Officer

Tánaiste's delegation;

Clare Brosnan – Private Secretary to the Tánaiste

Barbara Cullinane – Policy Director

Laura McGonigle – Special Advisor,

Minister for Health's delegation;

Sarah Bardon – Special Advisor

Colm O'Reardon – Deputy Secretary General, Dept. of Health

Laura Magahy – Deputy Secretary General, Dept. of Health

Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment's delegation;

Sarah O'Neill – Special Advisor

Brian Carroll – Assistant Secretary General, Dept. of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

Michaela Sullivan – Private Secretary to the Minister



Minister for Children and Youth Affairs' delegation;  
Lisa Hughes – Private Secretary to the Minister

Minister of State for European Affairs' delegation;  
David Lea – Private Secretary to the Minister of State

Minister of State for Diaspora and International Development's delegation;  
Anne Griffin – Private Secretary to the Minister of State

Minister of State with responsibility for Defence's delegation;  
Maurice Quinn – Secretary General, Dept. of Defence  
John Coughlan – Special Advisor  
Cliona O'Sullivan – Private Secretary to the Minister of State  
Michael Malone – Commodore, Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service  
Gavin McCarthy – Lieutenant Commander, Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Service  
Bernie Maguire – Principal Officer

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade only holds records of the flights where this department paid or partially paid for the flight. These are provided in the below table. For details of other Ministers' flights, the respective Department should be contacted. In respect of the flights paid for by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, these were the Tánaiste and his delegation; Minister of State McEntee and Minister of State Cannon and his delegation. With regard to Minister Zappone's flight, part of cost will be paid for by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and part by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Passenger	Cost	Airline, Class
Tánaiste Simon Coveney	€1349.67	Aer Lingus, Economy Class
Laura McGonigle	€1077.67	Aer Lingus, Economy Class
Barbara Cullinane	€1117.56	Aer Lingus, Economy Class
Clare Brosnan	€1120.65	Aer Lingus, Economy Class



Minister Katherine Zappone	Awaiting for the Department to be invoiced for these flights	Aer Lingus/Delta, Economy Class & Business Class
Minister of State Helen McEntee	€1396.49	Aer Lingus, Economy Class
Minister of State Ciaran Cannon	€882.80	Aer Lingus, Economy Class
Anne Griffin	€882.80	Aer Lingus, Economy Class

The Tánaiste, Minister of State McEntee and Minister of State Cannon along with their delegation flew economy class, Minister Zappone flew economy class to New York and business class on her return flight to Dublin.

No lounge use was purchased by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials. I have been advised that Minister Zappone used 51<sup>st</sup> & Green lounge in Dublin at her own expense and used the Delta lounge in New York's John F. Kennedy airport, the cost of which was included in her ticket.

All Ministers and their delegations stayed at the Fitzpatrick Grand Central Hotel, 141 East 44<sup>th</sup> St., New York at US \$499 per night with the exception of Minister of State Cannon and his delegation which stayed at the Fitzpatrick Manhattan 687 Lexington Ave. New York at US \$499 per night.

No gifts were bought or given out by any Minister from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, nor by Minister Zappone.

In relation to transport costs, these are detailed in the below table.

Taoiseach	US \$1390	People carrier hire for the delegation
Tánaiste	0	Used the Consul General's car
Minister Harris	US \$92.19	Taxis for the delegation
Minister Bruton	US \$16.77	Taxis for the delegation
Minister Zappone	US \$127.07	Taxis for the delegation
Minister of State McEntee	US \$219.23	Taxis for the delegation
Minister of State Kehoe	US \$382.32	Taxis, Uber, Minivan hire for airport pick up for the delegation
Minister of State Cannon	US \$85.63	Taxis for the delegation



At the time of this request no travel or subsistence request had been submitted for any of delegates covered by this request.

The catering costs for dinners hosted throughout the period of the Ministerial visits in the residence of Ireland's Ambassador to the United Nations came to a total US \$2410.

A reception held on the Irish Naval Service vessel the LÉ Samuel Beckett in New York on the 27<sup>th</sup> September cost €1940.

The standard expense allowance per diem for civil servants is detailed in the following link which is publicly available on the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's website <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/per/2017/07.pdf>

### 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](mailto: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 the FoI Unit at [foi@dfa.ie](mailto:foi@dfa.ie), or 01 – 408 2857.

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

Conor Black  
United Nations Policy