



16 June 2020

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2020/096

Dear Ms Wilson

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

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 21 May 2020.

In response to your request my answer is as follows:

1. The amount spent by each Irish Embassy and or Consular General Office for either Business or first class airline tickets for work related business in the years 2019 and to-date in 2020.

The table below lists the cost of business class air travel incurred by the Missions in 2019. No costs for business class fares in 2020. The Department does not use first class air travel.

Mission	Number	2019
Abuja	1	2,572.42
Addis Ababa	1	2,064.50
Bogotá	4	7,199.14
United Nation - New York	2	8,399.48
Pretoria	3	6,029.90
Tokyo	1	7,136.88
Wellington	2	9,913.79
Total		43,316.11

2. The criteria that must be met before either business or first class airlines tickets can be purchased; If each Irish Embassy or Consulate General Office must inform DFAT HQ first setting out the reasons why business or first class airlines tickets should be purchased; or is it at the discretion of person applying for business or first class airlines tickets if they should be purchased providing they met or exceed the criteria required to purchase those type of airlines tickets.

All official travel undertaken by officers of the Department is in accordance with the travel policy for all Government Departments set by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform with the aim of achieving value for money for expenditure necessarily incurred consistent with the effective discharge of official duties.



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

The Department's policy is that for flights of more than seven hours or where, the overall duration of a journey by air involving more than one flight is in excess of twelve hours (excluding overnight stop-over), Heads of Division or Mission may authorise Business Class travel, as long as the additional cost can be met from the relevant Mission/Division travel budgets. In addition, the Department's policy is not to use first class air travel.

Mission budgets are applied for and agreed with HQ Finance Division annually. The cost of all travel, including business class, must be covered from within their budget. Missions have no discretion to exceed the agreed level of spending. Any requests for additional funding must be sanctioned by HQ Finance Division.

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

Brian Hanniffy
Finance Division
Tel: (01) 4780822, 408 2244(direct)
E-mail Brian.Hanniffy@dfa.ie