



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

Our Ref: FOI/Req/20/139

31 July 2020

Dear Mr. Foxe,

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:

Copies of the invoices/receipts associated with the following transactions:

**A3 CONFERENCE & SEMINAR FEES MOUNT JULIET ESTATE 06/12/2019 D5053 Passport Office
Dublin 268872 € 9,022.50**

**A3 CONFERENCE & SEMINAR FEES MHL EVENT MANAGEMENT LTD 25/06/2019 I530 Strategy,
Governance & Change Unit 254526 € 7,312.35**

**A3 CONFERENCE & SEMINAR FEES MHL EVENT MANAGEMENT LTD 16/12/2019 I530 Strategy,
Governance & Change Unit 269793 € 9,477.88**

**A3 CONFERENCE & SEMINAR FEES MHL EVENT MANAGEMENT LTD 04/12/2019 I530 Strategy,
Governance & Change Unit 268900 € 10,835.30**

**A3 CONFERENCE & SEMINAR FEES KNIGHTS CATERING 12/06/2019 I530 Strategy, Governance
& Change Unit 253776 €29,210.34**

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 15 July 2020.

I have identified 5 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant access to all of the records. I have redacted bank details as these are usually not advertised by service providers on their websites. The redactions carried out on these invoices have no impact on the substance of the information contained therein.

Record 1

Record 1 is an invoice from Mount Juliet Estate, Kilkenny for €9,022.50. This invoice relates to a meeting with The Passport Six, an international group of the passport issuing authorities of Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Its aim is for member countries to share best practices and discuss innovations related to the development of passport policies.

Ireland has been an observer member of this group for a number of years and had the great honour of last year being invited as a full member, as well as being appointed to chair the group. As part of its chairing, Ireland will host the Passport Six Annual Conference at Mount Juliet Estate in Co Kilkenny. The conference was due to take place in May 2020 but has been deferred by 12 months owing to Covid19 restrictions.

An initial deposit was paid to book the venue and to hold 25 rooms. As we approach the conference and our colleagues in the Passport Six group confirm numbers attending, the final room booking will be confirmed. The estimated costs to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to include conferencing facilities and accommodation costs for 6 Irish officials, for the duration of the conference is €11,595. Delegates from other member states will be responsible for settling their own accommodation bills.

Record 2

Record 2 is for MHL Event Management Limited for €7,312.35. This invoice relates to venue hire for the use of both the Round Room and Glass Room of the Mansion House Dublin for the first day of the Departmental Heads of Mission Conference 2020 which took place on Monday January 6 2020.

As part of the Departmental Conferences, Heads of Mission from across Ireland's network of Embassies, Consulates and Representations gathered with key partners, including State Agencies, to discuss priorities, policies and challenges for Ireland in the year ahead.

The conference of Heads of Mission and with senior management at the beginning of the year is an important component of the Department's strategic planning. It facilitates discussion for business planning and goal setting in the year ahead as well as direction and priority setting for the missions overseas.

Heads of Mission also take this opportunity to hold a number of meetings in Ireland to assist and support them in delivering priority actions and objectives, not least the promotion of Ireland's offering in a range of sectors, including agri-food, tourism, education, research, development and investment.

Record 3

Record 3 is for MHL Event Management Limited for €9,477.88. This invoice relates to a further part catering costs associated with the first day of the Departmental Heads of Mission conference in which over 450 delegates and panellists were in attendance. The invoice also covers a deposit on the overall cost of production on day one of the conference.

Record 4

Record 4 is for MHL Event Management Limited for €10,835.30. This invoice relates to part catering costs during the course of the Departmental Heads of Mission Conference 2020 which was held in the Round Room of the Mansion House on Monday January 6 2020. Part of this invoice also covers the cost of an AV Technician and Lighting Technician for full day professional services.

Record 5

Record 5 is for Knights Catering for €29, 210.34. This invoice relates to catering services provided during the Departmental Heads of Mission Conference 2019 which was held in St Patrick's Hall Dublin Castle and at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Iveagh House across three days the 7th, 8th and 9th of January 2019.

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

Peter Downes
Freedom of Information Office