



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

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2018/296

18th December 2018

Dear Requester,

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 any correspondence between Minister Coveney (and his private office) and the public relations firm Cameo Communications and/or its employees in the period 1 January 2017 to current date.'

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 14 December 2018.

I have identified 8 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the attached schedule. I have made a decision to part-grant all records.

Please note that there was some content in the correspondence which has been "*blacked out*" as I consider this information outside the scope of the request. This correspondence has no function with regard to Ministerial or Departmental correspondence.

The correspondence has also been edited to remove personal details of the individuals concerned under section 37(1) of the Act. While Section 37(1) Personal Information is a mandatory exemption I am still obliged to consider whether the public interest would be best served by releasing the records in full. I have taken into account the benefit to the public to be given access to correspondence in a manner which demonstrates transparency and accountability of the Department. I have particularly considered whether releasing the personal information, which includes names, addresses, email addresses etc., would provide any additional benefit in this regard. I have weighed this against the right of individuals to have their personal information remain private. The personal information which I have redacted does not have any bearing on the substance or detail of the records, and does not diminish or alter the views expressed, and as such, I am satisfied that on balance the decision to do so is correct.

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

Jennifer Mangan