



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

Our Ref: FoI/Req/17/073

Ken Foxe

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 associated with the following payments recorded in the Department's finance database, and a brief description of the work involved in each if possible:

A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	13/12/2016	Property Management Unit	MJ CLARKE & SONS	142842.2
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	11/11/2016	Property Management Unit		114556.5
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	15/12/2016	Property Management Unit		94117.5
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	08/08/2016	Property Management Unit		91890.9
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	02/11/2016	Property Management Unit	MJ CLARKE & SONS	81147.79
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE	04/10/2016	Property Management Unit	MJ CLARKE & SONS	59547.11

	ONLY				
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	15/12/2016	Property Management Unit		55786
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	09/05/2016	Property Management Unit	OPW HEADQUARTERS TRIM	40860
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	03/11/2016	Property Management Unit		36646.31
A6MAJORMNT	RENTED PREMISES - MAJOR MAINTENANCE ONLY	03/02/2016	Property Management Unit	OPW HEADQUARTERS TRIM	29078.7

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2017.

I have identified 10 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 9 of the records. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade carries out elective works on its state owned and leased properties in Ireland. These works are normally to improve security of building or to address health and safety issues. In addition, the Department currently manages and maintains 34 State-owned properties abroad. The Department also leases 113 properties abroad. These properties are utilised by the Department in pursuit of its goals on behalf of the State. They consist of offices and official accommodation which provide platforms for our Missions to promote Ireland's political, economic and cultural interests and values, provide services to our citizens, develop strategic stakeholder relationships and represent Ireland in international organisations. The network of missions abroad now stands at 80 which is smaller than many similar-sized countries such as Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Finland.

Record number one relates to the refurbishment of the Department's Registry office space in Dublin. Registry plays a critical role in delivering diplomatic post and Irish passports securely to our mission abroad. The refurbishment improved security and offers a better working environment to its staff. Record number 5 and 6 relate to a further payments for the works on the Registry of the Department in Dublin. The office of the Secretary General was also painted during these works.



Record number 2 is not being released to you at this time. It is not being granted under section 36 of the 2014 Act – Commercially Sensitive Information. The records relate to commercial information where disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in financial loss or gain to the person to whom the information related or could prejudice the competitive position of that person in the conduct of her/his profession/business/occupation. I have considered the public interest in releasing this information as the public have an interest in how the Department spends tax payers funds. However, on balance, I believe that the public interest is best served by not disclosing commercial information where it could prejudice the competitive position of the Department. The Department is open to considering granting access to this record on conclusion of this project. This is expected to conclude by the final quarter of 2017. The records which are not being released relate to ongoing capital and refurbishment works.

Record number 3 payment relates to the cost of fitting out a new Embassy in Tel Aviv. The works have delivered an Embassy which is better suited to the business needs of the Department to support its endeavours in Israel.

Record number 4 related to the costs related to the removal of asbestos from a restroom and the subsequent refurbishment of the restroom in a State owned property in Berne.

Record number 7 relates to the refurbishment costs of Ireland's representative office at the NATO Partnership for Peace.

Record number 8 relates to works to create further capacity for telephone customer care services within the Passport Service.

Record number 9 relates to maintenance of the Mission in London. Ongoing maintenance is required under the terms of the lease.

Record number 10 relates to security works on the headquarters of Irish Aid in Limerick. This work was done under the auspices of the Office of Public Works.

As part of the Department's duty of care to staff, their families and visitors to our buildings for meetings and functions, the Department must ensure that security and health and safety standards are met, as well as universal access facilities. The Department maintains appropriate health, safety and security standards in its properties overseas while also implementing any additional international standards in the location in question, as necessary.

Given the varied global locations, currency fluctuations, possible higher local costs, and the need for expert advice and specialist contractors, the expenditures associated with construction services will differ from location to location.

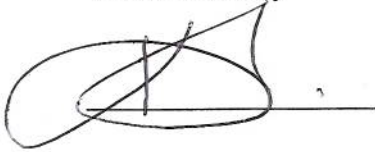
All refurbishment and maintenance at missions are conducted in line with the Department's procurement obligations under Government public tendering and contracting rules, including both National and EU Public Procurement thresholds.

### **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](mailto: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](mailto: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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Katie Morrisroe', written over a horizontal line.

Katie Morrisroe  
Assistant Principal Officer  
Property Management Unit