



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/2017/140

Date: 4 August 2017

Dear Mr. Carroll,

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

- a) The exact procedure who nominated him and how he was identified and presented as a candidate which led to the appointment of the Honorary Consul of Barcelona, Mr. Enrique Cucurella in 1992 and how he fulfilled the DFAs own internal criteria for appointment?
- b) The total amount of fees generated by the Consular office in Barcelona for all services including passport applications birth certificates visas etc. for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 broken down by each respective category?
- c) The total amount of fees retained by the consular office in Barcelona for all services rendered for each of the years for 2014, 2015 and 2016?
- d) The exact status of the additional grant of 6000 Euro paid to the Barcelona Honorary Consul and if this is the salary paid for the employment of the consular assistant at the Irish Consul office in Barcelona for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016?
- e) A breakdown of how the Consul office is maintained and run including all costs rent, telephone etc. for 2014, 2015 and 2016 and if the DFA covers these costs directly?
- f) A comprehensive list of all and any other additional expenses, travel, grants and operational costs or any other schemes or internal funding schemes by category not indicated here or publicly for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 paid by the DFA and incurred by the Irish Consul office in Barcelona?

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 31 July 2017.

Following consideration of your request, I have identified one record that falls within the scope of your request and refer to your queries outlined at b) and c) above which refers to details of the fees and expenses received by our Honorary Consulate in Barcelona in 2014, 2015 and 2016. I have included a detailed breakdown of this information in the enclosed schedule of records.

I would note that your query at section a) in relation to the appointment of our Honorary Consul in Barcelona does not come under the remit of your FOI request, as Mr Cucurella's appointment in 1992, predates the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act in 1997.

As part d) of your request, you also sought details of the status of the additional financial contribution of €6,000 which our Honorary Consulate in Barcelona receives. We have previously provided you with details as to the background to this additional funding and do not have any further information available.

As outlined previously, the appointment of an Honorary Consul is an honorary one, unsalaried and non-pensionable. Each Honorary Consul is entitled to an honorarium (currently €1,125 per annum). Honorary Consuls may also retain half of the consular fees they collect, to offset the cost of providing such services and can reclaim certain communication costs, including telephone and postage costs, on a vouched basis. I can confirm that rent and other costs associated with running and maintaining the premises used by the Honorary Consulate General in Barcelona are not paid for by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, therefore there are no records available, further to those already provided, in relation to part e) of your request.

In addition, I can confirm that no other additional expenses, grants – including travel grants – or operational costs are claimed by or paid to the Irish Consulate General in Barcelona therefore there are no records available, further to those already provided, in relation to part f) of your request.

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,

Ciara McGaughey
Consular Directorate