



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Our Ref: FoI/Req/17/012

Gráinne Weld,
Fianna Fáil Research,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2

Dear Ms Weld,

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:

All briefing material including memos, circulars, emails, background papers, minutes of meetings, reports, documents and publications provided to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade in relation to the Scottish Independence Referendum, from 23rd January 2013 to date [12 January 2017].

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 30 January 2017.

I have identified seven records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant two, part-grant another one, and refuse four of the records.

Where access has been refused, the records are exempt from release under the following sections of the Act:

- Section 30(1)(c), which applies to records which, if released, could reasonably be expected to “disclose positions taken, or to be taken, or plans, procedures, criteria or instructions used or followed, for the purpose of any negotiations carried on or being, or to be, carried on by or on behalf of the Government or an FoI body.” In relation to this part-granted record (no. 5), I have considered the public interest, and believe it is better served by redacting this material.
- Section 33(1)(c), which refers to records which, if released, could reasonably be expected to adversely affect matters relating to Northern Ireland.
- Section 33(1)(d), which refers to records which, if released, could reasonably be expected to adversely affect the international relations of the State.

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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eilís O'Keeffe". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Eilís O'Keeffe

Ireland, UK and Americas Division,
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade