



Our Ref: FOI/Req/2019/297

11/11/2019

Dear Mr. Higgins,

I refer to the request which you made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department as follows:

- 1. A breakdown of the total cost of the Department's presence at the National Ploughing Championship 2019.***
- 2. The number of staff deployed from the Department for the event and the cost of deploying the staff with a breakdown of the expenses.***
- 3. The cost of the Department's stand at the National Ploughing Championship and breakdown of the costs.***

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 15 October 2019.

In 2019, for the first time at the National Ploughing Championships (NPC), over 150 Exhibitors from Government Departments, Agencies and State-Supported bodies were located in the one area, "The Government of Ireland Village". Within the "Village", Departments, Agencies and bodies were grouped in marquees and tents on the basis of services, supports, and policy areas. In this context, at the NPC 2019, information about the implementation of the Government's "Global Ireland – Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025" initiative and the work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) were presented in the "Global Ireland" marquee.

The Department participated in the NPC in order to increase public understanding of public services provided by the Department and the ways in which the Department and Ireland's diplomatic missions abroad engage with Ireland's international partners and wider audiences to advance the interests of Ireland and Irish citizens. Highlighted within the "Global Ireland" marquee were public services and supports offered by the Department, including Online Passport Renewals, Consular Assistance and Consular Services; Ireland's membership of the European Union and ongoing Brexit-preparedness



work; implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals; and Ireland's campaign for an elected seat on the UN Security Council.

1. The total cost of the Department's presence at the National Ploughing Championships 2019 was €58,170.22. This comprises both the cost of the "Global Ireland" marquee and the travel and subsistence, transport, and accommodation costs of the DFAT volunteers who staffed the marquee, as set out below.
2. The Department was represented at NPC 2019 by 14 volunteers who staffed the "Global Ireland" marquee across each of the three days of the Championships, and one additional member of staff who attended for one day. Costs incurred by the Department in respect of these staff amounted to €10,754.13, of which €2,765.13 related to travel and subsistence calculated in accordance with published Civil Service travel and subsistence rates; €6,300 in respect of overnight accommodation for the 14 DFAT volunteers staffing the "Global Ireland" marquee; and €1,689 related to DFAT-organised local bus transport which transferred staff between the NPC site and overnight accommodation each day. A number of staff from other Government Departments also travelled on the local bus transport organised by DFAT.
3. The total cost of the "Global Ireland" marquee was €47,416.09. This amount includes expenditure of €34,310.44 towards costs including plot and marquee rental, exterior signage design and provision, power supply, and marquee construction. Expenditure of a further €13,105.65 was incurred in respect of the interior graphic design and fit-out of the "Global Ireland" marquee. In respect of the latter, in light of "sustainability" being a core overarching theme of the Government's presence at the NPC 2019, and in support of cost-effectiveness, the interior fit-out of the "Global Ireland" marquee utilised pre-existing designs and exhibition panels where possible.

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.

Aisling O'Boyle

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Communications Officer

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