



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/18089

10 May 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:

All records relating to expenditure concerning upgrades and or decorations including the purchase of any furniture and fittings by the Department Of Foreign Affairs at or for the Irish Embassy in China in the period of November/December, 2015, prior to the visit of President Higgins to China.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in issuing this reply, which was down to a change of staffing in the Property Management Unit. The information released is for November and December 2014, as discussed previously.

Attached is a breakdown of these costs. This expenditure has mainly been incurred as part of overall the planned programme of refurbishment works for our Embassy premises in Beijing. .

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

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. 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 expenditure undertaken in respect of refurbishment work was duly sanctioned in accordance with prescribed procurement procedures.

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

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

Katie Morrisroe
Property Management Unit