



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/18/128

12 June 2018

Mr Declan O'Farrell

Dear Mr. O'Farrell

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

All records related to the granting of the contract for the most recent Blue Star Programme, including all records related to the tender process, applications received etc.

I have identified 14 records that fall within the scope of your request.

I have made a decision to grant full access to 12 of these records, part access to 1 record (no. 7) and withhold 1 record (no 14), which are listed in the schedule attached.

In respect of the latter two records referred to above, I should advise that –

Record 7 contains the Tender evaluation committee notes for the award of the contract. The section showing the criteria and scoring awarded by the committee has been granted as have the declarations of no conflict of interest and confidentiality undertakings. The comments of the committee on the tender have been withheld on the grounds of referring to commercially sensitive information. In examining this record I have taken the public interest into account, inter alia, the need to achieve openness, transparency and accountability in decision-making. I have balanced the public interest in ensuring this Department is accountable for all monies spent with the interests of suppliers of services to the Department. To ensure the companies concerned would not be unduly impeded in the effective pursuit of their business, I have decided the wider public interest is best served by refusing access to part of record 7 on the grounds of it containing commercial information.

Record 14 is the contract entered into between this Department and European Movement Ireland on 24 July 2017 valid to 24 July 2020. As the contract contains commercially sensitive information I have taken the decision to withhold this document. I can advise you however that the value of the 3 year contract is €133,900. In examining this record I have taken the public interest into account, inter alia, the need to achieve openness, transparency and accountability in decision-making. I have balanced the public interest in

ensuring this Department is accountable for all monies spent with the interests of suppliers of services to the Department. To ensure the companies concerned would not be unduly impeded in the effective pursuit of their business, I have decided the wider public interest is best served by refusing access to record 14 on the grounds of it containing commercial information.

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

Stephen Ryan
EU Affairs and Coordination
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
78 Harcourt Street
Dublin 2