



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

13 July 2018

Mr. Ferghal Blaney,
Political Reporter,
Irish Daily Mirror,
Leinster House, Dublin 2

Dear Mr. Blaney,

I refer to your recently submitted request for information, made under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, in which you requested the following:

“All records and details held in the department in relation to any travel that was undertaken by members of the department to the Web Summit in Lisbon last November.

These to include, but not be limited to, the following:

- *All costs in relation to air fares, including what class travelled*
- *All costs in relation to hotel accommodation during the trip*
- *All costs in relation to conference fees paid for attendees*
- *The numbers of persons from the department that attended*
- *The names or department positions of those persons who attended*
- *Any further details relevant to the trip, for instance, per diems, expenses or subsistence claims submitted after the event in connection with Web Summit.”*

I refer also to the acknowledgment of your request which was sent to you on 19 June and to your agreement by subsequent telephone conversation with my colleague Mr. Alan Farrelly that the deadline for reply to your request could be extended to Friday 13 July.

The table attached at annex to this letter details the names and positions of Department staff who attended in an official capacity at the 2017 Web Summit and corresponding expenditure incurred by the Department.

Attendance by Department staff at the 2017 Web Summit presented an opportunity to learn about new digital communications technology solutions that may be applicable in advancing our work on behalf of Ireland and Irish citizens, and to network and exchange insights with governmental and other key actors in the digital communications field.

As is indicated in the attached table, three out the four Departmental attendees were not required to pay conference fees. In the case of the Director General of the Department's Policy & Communications Division, this arose as he was invited to participate in the Web Summit as a facilitator for discussions on the Forum Stage, which brings together world leaders, policy makers and academics to discuss technological issues.

The Director General also availed of the opportunity while in Lisbon to meet separately with counterparts at the Portuguese Foreign Ministry. This additional element is also duly reflected in the travel and other related expenditure amounts incurred.

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

Paul Sheehan
Higher Executive Officer
Communications Unit

Web Summit - Lisbon, 6-9 November 2017: Attendance by DFAT Staff / Expenditure Incurred

Name	Position	Air Fares	Accommodation	Conference Fees	Travel / Subsistence
Mr. Bobby McDonagh	Director General, DFAT Policy & Communications Division	€313.98	€1460.00	-	€258.99
Ms. Orla Tunney	Ambassador of Ireland, Portugal	-	-	-	-
Ms. Ciara Traynor	Director, DFAT Web & Digital Section	€141.98	€202.50	€425.00	€226.26
Mr. Tom Redmond	Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Ireland, Portugal	-	-	-	-