



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

Mr. Pat Leahy
Political Editor / Deputy Editor
The Sunday Business Post
Hambleden House
19-26 Lower Pembroke St
Dublin 2

11 February, 2014

Dear Mr. Leahy,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 for records held by this Department, in which you requested:

- All documents concerning the disposal of wine by the Department in 2013 and 2014;
- Any internal communications within the department both prior to and subsequent to the disposal;
- Any communications between the officers responsible for the disposal and staff in the Minister's office and in the press office, regarding same

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you 23 January, 2014.

The Department holds a stock of wine for use in relation to State and Official hospitality. The stock facilitates provision of wines suitable for official events at a significant discount from the cost of purchasing them from caterers at the time they are required. As a general rule, wine served at official functions costs less than €20. Following a review of wine stock held by the Department in 2013, it was decided that the possibility of selling the higher value wines would be explored.

Following a preliminary review of the stock held by the Department conducted by a leading Irish wine expert, the Department approached a number of wine merchants in the UK and Ireland over a period of months with a view to ascertaining the market value of wine held and sought expressions of interest.

The Department received 7 expressions of interest. On the basis of these expressions of interest, the Department negotiated the sale of a package in December 2013 for 4 labels with

a view to recouping the original outlay by the Department. The wine was sold to a single wine merchant based in Ireland.

The Department continues to be in contact with wine merchants regarding the market value of its wine stock, most recently in late January 2014. Stock that has been identified will be disposed of in due course, subject to market conditions. This process is ongoing and it is anticipated that it will take place periodically.

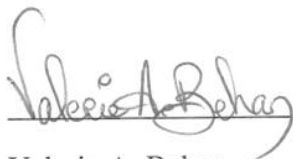
I have identified 12 records that fall within the scope of your request. These records are listed in the attached schedule.

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. A fee applies for an appeal, with the exception of an appeal against the imposition of a fee, the level of this fee has been set at €75. Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque made payable to the Secretary General, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

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



Valerie A. Behan

Protocol Officer