

Telefón }  
Telephone } 00353 1 4082000

Tagairt }  
reference }



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

Baile Átha Cliath 2  
Dublin 2

20 January 2015

Mr Kevin Burns  
RTÉ News & Current Affairs  
RTE  
Donnybrook  
Dublin 4

Our reference: FoI/Req/2014/117

Dear Mr Burns

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for details of the Emigrant Support Programme (ESP) funding since 2007 to the GAA towards the Games Development Officers (renamed Community Development Administrators in 2011) in the UK and to the FAI towards their UK Welfare Officer.

The following table sets out the ESP funding providing to the GAA since 2007 towards Games Development in UK and to the FAI since 2008 (when this funding was first applied for) towards the UK Welfare Officer Programme:

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>GAA</b>	€370,930	€302,241	€274,258	€216,891	€286,336	€250,000	€250,817	€225,000
<b>FAI</b>		€50,000	€50,000	€42,000	€42,000	€42,000	€42,000	€42,844

**Background to ESP funding to the GAA towards the Community Development Administrators in the Britain:**

In 2007 the Department entered a strategic partnership with the GAA to primarily support community orientated GAA activities in Britain and North America. This partnership has facilitated greater strategic direction in the further development of the heritage and sport dimension of emigrant services abroad. Since 2007 this funding partnership has facilitated Emigrant Support Programme support for GAA's Games Development Officers/ Community Development Administrators in Britain. ESP funding is currently provided towards 9 posts in the Britain i.e. 7 Community Development Administrators and 2 two Senior Games Development & Logistics Managers – one in London and one covering all other regions in Britain. The Community Development Administrators (CDA) each operate in one of the seven County Board regions in Britain i.e. Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Lancashire, London, Warwickshire, Yorkshire and Scotland (the CDA for Scotland also acts as National Universities Coordinator). These posts are co-funded by the GAA and this Department on the basis that no more than 50% of the post costs are provided from the ESP. The GAA Games Development project in Britain provides games opportunities, skill development initiatives and training which serve to enhance personal development, health and well-being as well as providing an important Irish community support network.

Since 2012 the Emigrant Support Programme funding to the GAA towards Games Development has been divided between support for Games Development in Britain and North America and a Global Games Development Fund. The aim of the Fund is to support GAA projects abroad, outside of Britain and the US, which deliver and promote meaningful developmental games opportunities and which also further the aims of the Emigrant Support Programme. This involved no significant increase in the overall ESP funding to the GAA. 22 projects were supported during 2014 across the globe from this fund in areas as diverse as Myanmar and Montreal. The ESP amount to the Fund for these projects was €45,000. This is matched by the GAA, to make an overall fund of €90,000 per annum.

As I understand from our recent conversation your query relates particularly to the welfare role of the GAA and FAI projects supported through the ESP, you may also be interested in two other GAA projects this Department has supported:

### **Striving and Surviving in Australia Guide**

The 'Striving and Surviving in Australia Guide' developed by the GAA's Community & Health section in Croke Park following extensive consultation via questionnaire with members in their Australasian club network was launched by GAA President, Mr Liam Ó Néill and Minister for Diaspora Affairs, Mr Jimmy Deenihan T.D., in November 2014. The accompanying wallet card aims to highlight key issues you should be aware of if travelling through or moving to Australia. It includes top tips from Irish people who have already gone through this experience as well as links to social media sites and other services designed to support the Irish in Australia. All GAA members applying for an international transfer to Australia will be given a copy while all clubs in Australia will be issued with a digital version of the resource for distribution amongst all members and the local Irish community.

While no ESP funding was sought or provided towards this project, it was launched in collaboration with this Department.

A more in-depth resource for the Irish abroad including tips on how international GAA units contribute to the health and wellbeing of their members is being developed.

### **Mind Ur Buddy**

In 2014 Pieta House, the established counselling provider providing free services for those who need them, particularly those at risk of suicide and self harm, received an ESP grant of €72,258 to extend their crisis services to the United States.

The funding will enable Pieta House to set up a pilot programme with the three main Irish centres in New York: the Aisling Center, the New York Irish Center and the Emerald Isle Immigration Center.

In addition, Pieta House will work in partnership with the GAA to deliver the Mind Ur Buddy Programme to GAA members in New York. Mind Ur Buddy is a peer support programme designed to help individuals spot when a colleague or teammate may be in suicidal crisis. Pieta House aims to train 500 GAA members in New York.

This funding to Pieta House included €10,414 towards "Mind Ur Buddy" training.

### **Background to ESP funding to the FAI towards the UK Welfare Officer Programme:**

The FAI UK Welfare Officer Programme was established in 2008 to provide a support service to young Irish players who relocate to the UK. This programme provides a support service to the players and also a support network for their parents and families. Since 2008 the programme has been funded on a 50:50 basis by the ESP and the FAI. The current funding is based on 50% of the costs for salary, expenses and fees for 1 full time Welfare Officer and 2 part-time/ contract Welfare Officers.

The 83 documents listed in the attached schedule are hereby released further to your request. Of these documents, 49 are granted in full and 34 are part-granted.

**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@dfat.ie](mailto:foi@dfat.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@dfat.ie](mailto:foi@dfat.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



Cecily McKenna  
Irish Abroad Unit

Tel: 01 4082375