



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

Mr. Martin Grant  
Irish Independent  
Independent House  
27-32 Talbot Street  
Dublin 1

19<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Our Ref: Fol/Req/15085

Dear Mr. Grant,

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:

- The total expenditure by the Department since the current Government came to power in 2011 up until date of receipt of this request (cross-referenced by suppliers) for coffee, tea, sandwiches, cakes, pastries. Please provide the breakdown per each year (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015).

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

I am the responding officer on this occasion and I have identified one record that falls within the scope of your request which is listed in the schedule below. I have made a decision to grant you access to it. The record covers supplies of sandwiches etc. from outside suppliers for events such as briefings, conferences and professional development in addition to the supply of tea bags etc. supplied for in-house preparation for meetings.

SCHEDULE OF RECORDS FROM 01.01.14 TO 31.12.2014		
Record no.	Description	Granted/Part-Granted/Refused
1	<i>Information on the total expenditure by the Department since 2011 to September 2015 cross-referenced by suppliers for a) tea, b) coffee, c) sandwiches and d) biscuits/pastries/cakes</i>	Granted

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has almost 800 staff in Ireland spread over six locations in Dublin with offices in Limerick and Cork. Tea, coffee, sandwiches and other refreshments are provided at a wide range of Departmental events including at meetings with outside agencies on a range of issues including programme management associated with Irish Aid partner countries, meetings with state agencies and meetings with interlocutors to advance government policies. The Department also organises other events and conference for outside contacts.

In addition, the Department has lead responsibility for emergencies overseas affecting Irish citizens which often demand an extensive out-of-hours consular response. Since 2011 the centre has dealt with eleven such events, including major emergency involving Irish citizens abroad where the Department's standing Crisis Centre has been activated. During such late-night crisis response appropriate refreshments, including tea, coffee and sandwiches, are provided to staff working in the consular crisis centre.

Refreshments are also provided where staff attend training, briefings, professional development and networking events in their own time, e.g. during lunchtimes or in the evenings and are provided in-house to ensure that no time is lost and that useful networking and exchange of information takes place during any breaks. Where possible, healthy options, such as sliced fruit, wraps, wholemeal bread and vegetarian options are included, as part of our approach to wellness at work.

#### **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



Frances Kiernan