



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2**

Our Ref: FoI /Req/2016/130

21 September 2016

Valerie Flynn

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2016/130

Dear Ms Flynn,

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

1. The number of private secretaries (appointed before 1 February 2012) in your department currently receiving the 50% allowance including a breakdown of the number of former private secretaries to ministers, ministers of state or heads of departments; the cost of allowance to these in 2015.
2. The number of former private secretaries in your department appointed after the 1 February 2012 and at what percentage level they are receiving an allowance (under the terms of last year's civil service arbitration board decision), and which type of private secretary they were; the cost of allowances to those in 2015
3. The number of active private secretaries in your department in 2015 broken down by what kind of private secretary they were.
4. The number of private secretaries in your department at present broken down by what kind of private secretary they are.

As the responding officer to your request I am forwarding you the following information;

- (1) Please note that this department currently have a total of six officers in receipt of the 50% allowance having been appointed prior to 1 February 2012, four former Private Secretaries to the Minister of State and two as former Private Secretary to the Secretary General. The gross total cost would be €52,333.00, as officers are subject to capped income under the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA). The capped income is implemented where salary and allowance exceeds €65,000.00 per annum, the amount in excess is subject to review under the HRA.
- (2) There is currently one former Private Secretary to the Minister of State, appointed after 1 February 2012, in receipt of the 50% allowance, reduced this year to 40%. Gross amount paid €10,343.00 subject to capped income under the Haddington Road Agreement.

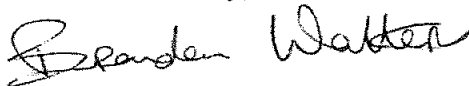
- (3) There were five active Private secretaries employed in 2015, one Private Secretary to the Minister, three Private Secretaries to each Minister of State and one Private Secretary to the Secretary General.
- (4) There are currently four active Private Secretaries employed in the department one Private Secretary to the Minister, two Private Secretary to each Minister of State and one Private Secretary to the Secretary General.

Officers that are promoted while in receipt of a Private Secretary allowance would have the allowance included with their salary under the process of pay and promotion. Once the calculations have been completed the officer would be placed on the most beneficial salary point to her/him. This would be normal practice for current and former officers that were/are in receipt of a Private Secretary allowance.

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, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfat.ie

Yours sincerely,



Brendan Watters
Human Resources Section