



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

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

Our Ref: FoI/Req/17/132

Mr. Sean Dunne,  
The Irish Times Building,  
24-28 Tara St.,  
Dublin 2.

3<sup>rd</sup> August 2017

Dear Mr. Dunne,

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:

- “1: The sick leave records for the Department of Foreign Affairs for years 2015 and 2016.
- 2: A total of the number of day’s staff were absent from work due to illness.
- 3: The total number of people that were missing for years 2015 & 2016 in total.”

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

I am the responding officer in this case.

I have identified two records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. The records are reports requested by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade from PeoplePoint on sick leave in the Department for the years 2015 and 2016 in preparation for the annual preparation of sick leave statistics by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. These reports contain the sick leave data for 2015 and 2016 held on the HRMS (Human Resources Management System) and as such are lists of personal, confidential information such as staff name, PPS number, date of birth, gender, details of the type of sick leave taken, current assignment etc.

Given the content of the record in question, I have made a decision to refuse access to the records under Sections 30 (1) (b) and 37 (1) as to release the information would disclose personal information which is confidential to the officer concerned and would breach staff-HR confidentiality which is essential to enable this office perform its functions.

*Section 30 (1)(b) Subject to this section, a head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if, in the opinion of the head, access to the record concerned would have a significant,*

*adverse effect on the performance by an FOI body of any of its functions relating to management (including industrial relations and management of its staff)*

*Section 37 (1) Subject to this section, a head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if, in the opinion of the head, access to the record concerned would involve the disclosure of personal information (including personal information relating to a deceased individual).*

I have carefully considered the public interest in the context of access information and am satisfied that on balance the public interest is best served by refusing access to the records in question and protecting the privacy of officers concerned.

However, I am happy to provide the summary information from the records which answers your questions without breaching the confidentiality of the officers concerned.

Sick leave in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has been recorded as follows for 2015 and 2016;


<b>Year</b>	<b>Total days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>
2015	8,280	608
2016	9,611	653

### **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

  
Tricia Everitt  
Human Resources