

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

Our Ref: FOI/Req17028

Mr. Cormac McQuinn,  
Irish Independent,  
Independent House,  
27-32 Talbot Street,  
Dublin 1, D01 X2EI.

1<sup>st</sup> March 2017

Dear Mr. McQuinn,

I refer to the request you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

*“Copies of all correspondence to/from Diageo Ireland and the Department between September 1, 2016 and February 1, 2017. A copy of the minutes of all meetings between Diageo executives/representatives and Minister Charlie Flanagan in the same period.”*

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 14<sup>th</sup> February.

I have identified two records that fall within the scope of your request and have made a decision to grant one record in full and part-grant a second. Both records are listed in the schedule attached.

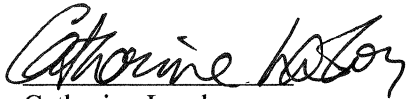
I have considered Section 36 of the Act in making my decision not to release certain information. Access to certain confidential information is essential in order to allow the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to execute its functions. In certain instances, such information may also be of a commercially sensitive nature. In this case, I am satisfied that these documents contain commercially sensitive information, the release of which could reasonably be expected to have adverse business consequences for the organisation concerned.

In weighing these adverse consequences against the public interest, I have again considered the right of the public to have access to information; the need for an open, transparent and accountable civil service; and the need for decision-making processes to be adequately scrutinised. I am satisfied that the balance favours refusal rather than release on this occasion.

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 four 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Lawlor', written in a cursive style.

Catherine Lawlor  
Desk Officer, Trade Division