



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála

Oifig na bPasanna, Teach Knockmaun, 42-47 Sráid an Mhóta Íochtarach,
Baile Átha Cliath 2 D02 TN83

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Passport Office, Knockmaun House, 42-47 Mount Street Lower, Dublin 2 D02 TN83

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2019/254

Mr. Jack Horgan Jones,
The Irish Times.

24th September, 2019.

Dear Mr. Jones,

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:

Correspondence between the Department for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Passport Office concerning implementation of the Public Services Card between September and December of 2017.

I also refer to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 29th August.

I am the Deciding Officer in this case. I have identified 2 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to refuse both records.

Access to the records has been refused as they are exempt from release under section 529 (1) (a) and (b) - Deliberative Process.

By way of explanation concerning 29 (1) (a), "deliberative" process involve the consideration of various matters so that the on-going activity of formulating, considering, weighing up, advising/recommending on particular issue(s) may proceed and includes drafting of letters and reports for the seeking of advice as part of this process. In my opinion, the records in question are part of a process that is underway and I consider that premature release would serve to undermine that deliberative process.

By way of explanation concerning 29 (1) (b), I am also required to weigh up where the balance of public interest lies in relation to my use of the exemption provided for under 29 (1) (a). In my opinion, the granting of records 1 and 2 would be contrary to the public interest, by reason of the fact that the requester may become aware of issues currently under consideration prior to a full analysis being completed and concluded upon.

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@dfa.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@dfa.ie or 01-4082857.

If you wish to, 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 staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely,


Donal O'Driscoll
Passport Service