



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

Our Ref: Fol/Req/18/196

7 August 2018

Dear Requester,

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. All correspondence between ministers in the department and Fine Gael political director Alan Holmes between the period 14 June 2017 and 09 July 2018.*
- 2. All correspondence between special advisers in the department and Fine Gael political director Alan Holmes between the period 14 June 2017 and 09 July 2018.*

I refer also to our communication of 10 July and the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 24 July.

Departmental records refers to records made or received by the Department and held by it in the course of its business. The core business of this Department is predominately concerned with providing independent and impartial policy advice – including in areas such as international political and security policy, advancing reconciliation and cooperation on the island of Ireland, EU enlargement and external relations- to the Tánaiste and Government. The information you have requested refers to party political issues. For the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act the requested records are not held by the Department and the Department has no control or authority over records not held by it. In that light I am refusing your request on administrative grounds under Section 15(1)(a) *-the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken.*

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.

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