



EMBASSY OF IRELAND, LONDON

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2015/093

Mr Christopher Hastings

23 October 2015

Dear Mr Hastings,

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:

Please note that I am only interested in information which relates to the period January 1 2010 to January 1 2013.

Please note that the reference to Embassy below should be taken to mean the Embassy and or any of the staff at the Embassy.

1...During the aforementioned period did the Irish Embassy in London exchange correspondence and communications including emails with His Royal Highness Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales. If the answer is yes can you please supply copies of this correspondence and communication including emails. Please note that I am interested in receiving both sides of the correspondence and communication.

2...During the aforementioned period did the Irish Embassy in London exchange correspondence and communications including emails with the private office of His Royal Highness Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales and or anyone else acting on his behalf. If the answer is yes can you please supply both sides of the correspondence and communication including emails. Please note that I am interested in receiving both sides of the correspondence and communication.

3...During the aforementioned period did the Ambassador hold face to face talks with His Royal Highness on a particular issue (s). If the answer is yes can you please provide the following details. In the case of each meeting can you state the date, the time and the venue. In the case of each meeting can you please provide a list of all those present. In the case of each meeting can you please provide an outline of the topics under discussion. Please do include details of meetings conducted by official representatives of the Ambassador and or the Prince of Wales. Please do not include details of any chance meetings or meetings which took place at purely social events.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 8 October 2015.

In relation to **Part 1**, there is no record of written or email correspondence between the Embassy of Ireland and HRH The Prince of Wales between 1 January 2010 and 1 January 2013.

In relation to **Part 2**, I have identified 12 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule (Part 2) attached. In the schedule, I have provided a short description of the record and the date of the correspondence in each case. I have decided to refuse the release of the 12 records, on the following basis:

I have a mandatory obligation to refuse the release of nine of these records, under S33(2)(b)(i) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, as they are records of other states, which contain information the disclosure of which is prohibited by that state. Following careful consideration, I have decided that these nine records are also exempt from release under S33(1)(d) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014, as release of the records could reasonably be expected to affect adversely the international relations of the State.

I have made a decision to refuse the release of three of these records (records 1, 5 and 10), under S33(1)(d) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 as release of the records could reasonably be expected to affect adversely the international relations of the State.

S33 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 is set out in Annex 1 for your information.

In relation to **Part 3**, I can confirm that the Ambassador did not hold face to face talks with HRH The Prince of Wales between 1 Jan 2010 and 1 Jan 2013. However, Ambassador Bobby McDonagh did host a reception at the Embassy of Ireland on 9 November 2010 in honour of the Irish community in Britain, where HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH the Duchess of Cornwall were guests of honour. The attendance by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall at a reception at the Embassy of Ireland in London was a historic occasion, since it was the first such visit to the Embassy by a senior member of the British Royal Family. The reception in honour of the Irish community in Britain included Irish people from all walks of life *inter alia*, business leaders, voluntary workers, as well as representatives from the world of fashion and theatre, all of whom are making an important contribution to British society.


The Ambassador and Embassy officials held four preparatory meetings with officials from Clarence House in advance of the reception in November 2010. The topic under discussion at each meeting was the idea for the reception and then the details of the reception. A table of these meeting is set out in Annex 2 attached, with details of the date, time and venue as well as a list of participants. There are two records on file in relation to these meetings, set out in the attached schedule (Part 3). Both records are communications between Embassy London and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. I have made a decision to refuse the release of both records under S33(2)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act and S33(1)(d) of the Act, as release of the records could reasonably be expected to affect adversely the international relations of the State

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. 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, 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,


Cathy Barnicle
Embassy of Ireland