



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2

28 October 2015

Our Ref: FoI/Req/2015/094

Cormac McQuinn,
3rd Floor,
Independent House,
27-32 Talbot Street,
Dublin 1

Dear Mr McQuinn,

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:

Under the FOI Act I wish to request the following records related to MoS Dara Murphy.

- Full details of mileage and subsistence claims for any domestic travel
- All details of expense claims for foreign travel including flights (including cancellations), accommodation, car hire and other items charged to expenses.
- Receipts and invoices for the five most expensive overseas meetings

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 12th October, 2015.

I have identified 2 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule below. I have made a decision to grant all records.

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SCHEDULE				
Record Description		Granted/Part-Granted/Refused	Number of pages	Section exempted under:
1.	Details of expense claims for foreign travel including flights (including cancellations), accommodation, car hire and other items charged to expenses and details of mileage and subsistence claims for any domestic travel	Granted	1	N/A
2.	Receipts and invoices for the five most expensive overseas meetings	Granted	25	N/A

As you will appreciate, the role of Minister of State at the Departments of the Taoiseach and Foreign Affairs and Trade with special Responsibility for European Affairs and Data Protection includes an obligation to undertake a significant amount of official travel overseas.

This Department is fully compliant with the Department of Finance guidelines on foreign travel. The Department also operates its own detailed internal travel guidelines and practices which ensure cost effective travel, both in Headquarters and throughout our network of 80 diplomatic missions abroad.

The central aim of the Departmental travel policy, which applies to both Ministers and officials, is to minimise official travel costs and to achieve value for money for expenditure necessarily incurred, consistent with the effective discharge of official duties.

Ministerial mileage expenses are paid in accordance with rates and regulations set down by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

Mileage expenses are a monthly total and reflect business related travel across Ireland during the respective month, and incorporate deductions for any personal-related travel.

With regard to overseas travel, names and/or details of accompanying officials (apart from the Minister's Private Secretary) and other delegation members outside the scope of your request have been removed from the record.

The return portion of journey Cork/Luxemburg on 10/10/2014 (Ref: 1) was purchased in business class as there were no economy seats available. The Minister only travels economy class apart from exceptional circumstances whereby there are no economy seats available and that trip is essential.

In relation to the return portion of journey on 15-20/03/2015(Ref: 4) Minister Murphy returned with the Taoiseach after European Council in the Government jet.

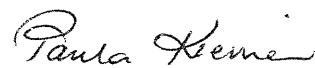
Regarding the Minister's trip to Luxembourg for the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 15 June 2015, as the meeting ended one day earlier than expected and as the return air ticket could not be changed, a new ticket was purchased to enable the Minister to return to Ireland one day ahead of schedule. There was a saving on hotel and subsistence expenses that would otherwise have been paid had the Minister spent the night in Luxembourg.

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



Gerard Gleeson

PP