

Our Ref: FoI/Req/16/018
Justin McCarthy,
Morning Ireland
RTÉ,
Donnybrook,
Dublin 4

Dear Mr McCarthy,

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:

All documents, including internal memos, advice to the Minister and Secretary General, correspondence or other documentation related to any proposal to invite members of the British Royal Family or British Government to take part in events commemorating the 1916 Rising.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 22 February 2016.

I have identified 39 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to grant 6 of the records, part-grant 3 of the records, and refuse 30 of the records.

Where access has been refused, the records are exempt from release under section S29 (1)(a) Deliberative Process; S35(1)(a) Information obtained in confidence; S33(1)(d) International Relations; S33(2)(b) International Relations; S37(1) Personal Information.

With regard to the question of invitations to members of the British royal family or British Government to take part in events commemorating the 1916 Rising, I should note that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade does not lead on the development or delivery of 2016 Commemorative programme within Ireland. The Government has however made clear that the events in the Ireland 2016 State Ceremonial programme will be moments for national commemoration. Therefore high level representatives of Ireland's international partners will not be in attendance at these Easter events although as is normal for many State Ceremonial events, members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Ireland may be invited to particular events.

We have also considered events taking place outside of Ireland in processing your request, as part of the Global and Diaspora strand of the 2016 Commemorative Programme. The major focus of the hundreds of events being delivered by the Embassy network throughout 2016 is to engage with the Diaspora and Ireland's friends around the world to look back over the past hundred years, remember the events of 1916 and celebrate the achievements of the last century. Our Embassy in London is delivering an extensive range of events to commemorate the 1916 centenaries. Public figures, including members of the British royal family or British Government, are invited to Embassy events, where appropriate.

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

Eleanor Farrell
