



Our Ref: Fol/Req/20/103.

June 24, 2020.

Dear Mr. O'Brien,

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:

Copies of any correspondence between Lieutenant Colonel Ian Byrne and Ireland's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, the ambassador, Geraldine Byrne Nason, and the deputy ambassador, Brian Flynn from January 1 to April 30, 2020.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on June 9th and to your willing agreement to extending the time within which the reply might issue.

I have identified 1 record that falls within the scope of your request. The record is listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to refuse access to the record.

In declining access, the record is exempt from release under Section 37, Personal Information. Section 37(1) of the FOI Act provides that, subject to the other provisions of the section, an FOI body *shall* refuse a request if access to the record concerned would involve the disclosure of personal information. I am satisfied that the public interest in favour of granting the request does not outweigh the public interest in protecting against the invasion of privacy that could result from placing any personal information concerned in the public domain. In this regard, the language of section 37 recognises the very strong public interest in protecting the right to privacy. I am satisfied that, on balance, the public interest is best served by protecting the privacy of the officer and refusing access to the relevant record.

The record referred to concerns the process of finding and approving suitable personal rental accommodation for the officer.

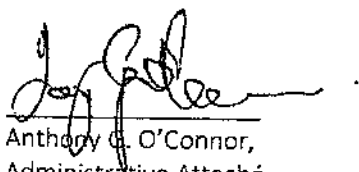
Right of Appeal

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.

Any appeal should be made 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.

An appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department. Thank you for your understanding of the delay in responding to your request.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony G. O'Connor', written over a horizontal line.

Anthony G. O'Connor,
Administrative Attaché,
Permanent Mission of Ireland to
The United Nations, New York.