



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
Department of Foreign Affairs

Our Ref: Fol/Req/21/205

Date: 30/09/2021

Dear Mr. Lowth

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 all records referring and relating to the Minister for Foreign Affairs' phone hacking from 2020 and 2021 to the present date (02/09/2021).

Searches of any mobile phones, relevant private email addresses and messaging services (including but not limited to WhatsApp, Signal) should be considered when processing this request.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 15/09/2021.

I have identified 15 records that fall within the scope of your request. The records are listed in the schedule attached. I have made a decision to refuse 15 of the records.

Where access has been refused, the records are exempt from release under section 33 (3) (c) (iii) of the FOI Act which states that; .

“33 (3) A head shall refuse to grant an FOI request if the record concerned—

(c) contains information communicated in confidence—

(iii) (whether generated in the State or elsewhere) in the possession of a public body in relation to planning for, or responses to, threats or incidents in respect of network and information security”.

Section 33 (3) (c) (iii) is a mandatory exemption. The 15 records I am refusing contain information communicated in confidence in relation to an incident in respect of network security.

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, (€10 for medical card holders). A copy of the medical card should be provided to avail of the reduced fee. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082618.

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

Robert Drummond

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