



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

13 May 2020

Our Ref: FOI/Req/20/078

Dear Mr Patterson,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 16 April and your response to my extension request of 11 May 2020.

The Department purchases cars for missions abroad to facilitate the functioning and operations of the missions. These cars are owned by the Department.

Mission staff are required to undertake a significant volume of travel in the performance of their official functions. This ranges from city journeys during the working day and in the evening to long journeys of up to several hundred kilometres by road. In addition, many missions operate in locations with limited public transport or with significant security issues which require access to an official vehicle. Official vehicles also provide an important logistical support to Missions.

In respect of your request, my response is as follows:

1) The number of state owned cars and or vans that are allocated to each Irish Embassy and or Consulate General Office in tabular form as of 6 April 2020
and

2) The age of each state owned cars and or vans that have been allocated to each Irish Embassy and or Consulate General Office in tabular form as of 6 April 2020

The details requested, including Multilateral missions, are contained in Appendix A

3) The frequently in which state owned cars and or vans are due for replacement eg All state owned vehicles that are aged over 12 years old and or have reached more than 250,000 kms are due for replacement; The grade within the DFA that has final say in giving approval for the replacement of state owned vehicles; All requests for replacement of state owned vehicles must be approved of an official at the grade of Assistant Secretary General and above

It is the Department's policy that official cars are only purchased or replaced as necessary, e.g. where there are security or safety considerations; or the cost of maintenance/operating costs are no longer economical. When sanctioning the purchase of cars for missions abroad, consideration is given to the climate, terrain, safety and security issues which prevail in the country as well as environmental concerns. Purchases are sanctioned by the Chief Financial Officer (Assistant Secretary General).

4) The budget allocation that DFA has in the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 in tabular form for the purchase of state owned vehicles; Is there a maximum allocation that is provided to purchase state owned vehicles eg A Embassy purchasing a new state owned vehicle has a limit of €50,000 or equivalent to purchase that vehicle



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The budget for each of years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 are detailed below:

Year	Budget
2017	600,000
2018	648,479
2019	700,000
2020	626,200

The purchase of official vehicles is carried out locally in accordance with sanction from Headquarters and is based on a competitive process to ensure that the market is tested and the most cost-effective option is selected. As different pricing models and conditions prevail across markets, e.g. import regimes, taxation, etc., it is not possible to set a maximum allocation across missions.

It is standard to purchase mid-range vehicles. In all cases road conditions, environmental issues and operational needs are considered.

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

Brian Hanniffy
Finance Division
Tel: (01) 478 0822, 408 2244 (direct)
E-mail Brian.Hanniffy@dfa.ie