



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

**Department of Energy  
& Climate Change**  
3 Whitehall Place,  
London SW1A 2AW  
[www.gov.uk/decc](http://www.gov.uk/decc)

Vincent Ryan  
Email: request-202527-88c24420@whatdotheyknow.com

Ref No: FOI 14/0489

14 April 2014

Dear Mr Ryan,

Thank you for your email of 18 March 2014 to the Department. In your email you requested the following information:

*“I wish to request all correspondence with Irish authorities and companies planning to, or already operating in Ireland in relation to the generation of renewable energy in Ireland and its subsequent sale and transmission to the UK national grid.*

*All correspondence should include but not be limited to all emails and notes on meetings and phones calls between the relevant bodies.”*

I can confirm that the Department holds the information requested. We have considered your request in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) as the information you have sought disclosure of does, in our view, fall within the definition of ‘environmental information’ as stated in the EIRs. To the extent that the information requested is not environmental, your request has also been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

### **Environmental Information**

We believe that the exception in regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIRs applies to the information you have requested. This exception provides that a public authority may refuse to disclose information



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

requested when the request for information is manifestly unreasonable. This exception is subject to the public interest test. We have applied a presumption in favour of disclosure as required by regulation 12(2) of the EIRs.

In applying this exception we have considered the public interest in disclosing the information. We recognise that disclosure could enhance public understanding of proposals for Irish/UK renewable energy trading and facilitate the accountability and transparency of Government decisions.

However the amount of information you have requested is substantial. Gathering it together would be likely to cause a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Department's other work. We believe that your request would place a substantial and unreasonable burden on the resources of the Department and remove resources available to undertake the core work of the Department.

We therefore consider the balance of the public interest lies in favour of withholding the information.

### **Non-environmental Information**

Section 12 of the FOIA allows public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

There will have been numerous contact with the Irish authorities and relevant companies resulting in large volumes of correspondence. Gathering the information you have requested would be likely to involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Department's other work. We estimate that it will take us in excess of 3.5 working days to search for, identify locate, retrieve and extract the information relating to the generation of renewable energy in Ireland and its subsequent sale and transmission to the UK national grid that you have requested. Therefore your request will not be progressed further.



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope and being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain. For example by focusing on a specific project, meeting, or company or providing a narrower timeframe for the documentation which you wish to obtain. However, I should add that if the scope of your request is reformulated, to the extent that the request is for environmental information, exceptions to disclosure under the EIRs may still apply. In relation to any non-environmental information, you may wish to bear in mind when clarifying your request the £600 limit mentioned above. Exemptions to disclosure may still apply under FOIA to any refined request.

#### Appeals Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be sent to the Information Rights Unit at:

Information Rights Unit  
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET  
E-mail: [foi.requests@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foi.requests@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

Yours sincerely,

**Department for Energy and Climate change  
Office of Renewable Energy Deployment  
3 – 8 Whitehall Place  
London  
SW1A 2HH**