

T: 0131-244 3322
E: simon.stockwell@gov.scot

David Thompson
Producer
BBC Nolan Show

By email: David.Thompson02@bbc.co.uk

Our ref: FOI/17/01320 A 18196514

20 June 2017

Dear Mr Thompson

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002
CHANGING CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS REGISTERED OUTSIDE OF SCOTLAND TO
MARRIAGE IN SCOTLAND
CORRESPONDENCE FROM ARLENE FOSTER MLA**

Thank you for your request dated 15 June 2017 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

Your request

You asked for all written correspondence between the Minister for Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland (Arlene Foster) and the Minister for Local Government and Community Empowerment (Marco Biagi) during 2015.

Response to your request

I enclose a copy of the information you requested. This exchange of correspondence is the only exchange of correspondence between Ms Foster and Mr Biagi that the Scottish Government is aware of.

The Scottish Government has also published this information at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/changing-civil-partnerships-registered-outwith-scotland/>, along with an exchange of correspondence on the same subject (changing civil partnerships registered outside of Scotland to marriage in Scotland) between Mr Biagi and Simon Hamilton MLA, then the Minister of Finance and Personnel in the Northern Ireland administration.

By way of general background, under the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014, couples in a civil partnership registered in Scotland can change their relationship to

marriage. In 2015, a Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) was made so that couples in a civil partnership registered outside Scotland could also change their civil partnership to a marriage in Scotland.

The SSI is at www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2015/371/contents/made and guidance for couples is at www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//registration/guidance-notes-to-change-a-non-scottish-civil-partnership-into-a-marriage.pdf

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your FOI request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to Paul Johnston, Director General Learning and Justice, Scottish Government, Room 1N.10, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG email: paul.johnston@gov.scot Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

Yours sincerely

SIMON STOCKWELL
Family and Property