

Private and Confidential

21st September 2016

Re: FOI request 2016/314

[REDACTED]

I refer to the below request received by this Department on 26th August 2016, which you made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for certain records held by this Department.

I was assigned as the Decision Maker in this case. I made a final decision in relation to your request on 21st September 2016.

I have set out my responses to your request as follows:

1. The number of former private secretaries (appointed before 1 February 2012) in your department currently receiving the 50% allowance including a breakdown of the number of former private secretaries to ministers, ministers of state or heads of department; the cost of allowances to these in 2015.

Response: The number of former Private Secretaries (appointed before 1 February 2012) in this department currently receiving the 50% allowance is 5 (3 who served as Private Secretaries to former Ministers and 2 who served as Private Secretaries to former Secretary Generals). The cost of these allowance in 2015 was €38,877.22.

2. The number of former private secretaries in your department appointed after 1 February 2012 and at what percentage level they are receiving an allowance (under the terms of last year's civil service arbitration board decision), and which type of private secretary they were; the cost of allowances to these in 2015.

Response: The number of former Private Secretaries in this department appointed after 1 February 2012 is 1 (Private Secretary to the Minister). The percentage level at which they are receiving an allowance is currently 50% which is in accordance with the terms of last year's civil service arbitration board decision. The cost of this allowance in 2015 was 0.

3. The number of active private secretaries in your department in 2015 broken down by what kind of private secretary they were.

Response: The number of active Private Secretaries in this Department in 2015 was 3 (1 Private Secretary to the Minister, 1 Private Secretary to the Minister of State, 1 Private Secretary to the Secretary General).

4. The number of private secretaries in your department at present broken down by what kind of private secretary they are.

Response: The number of Private Secretaries in this Department at present is 3 (1 Private Secretary to the Minister, 1 Private Secretary to the Minister of State, 1 Private Secretary to the Secretary General).

In the event that you are not satisfied with this decision/information provided you may seek an internal review by writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 or by emailing foi@education.gov.ie within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification, where a day is defined as a working day excluding the weekend and public holiday. The review would be conducted by a more senior member of staff of this Department.

If you have any queries in relation to this information you can contact me by email at eilis_oliver@education.gov.ie or at telephone at 01-889 6452.

Yours sincerely,

Eilis Oliver
HR Unit