Request for information under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act)

Dear Sirs,

We hereby request a copy of the information set out below in accordance with section 12 of the FOI Act.

**Information Request in respect of the rating valuation system applied to wind farms**

Please provide:-

1. All communications between the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (the Department) and the following entities in relation to the valuation assessment applicable to wind farms between January 2013 and May 2015:-
   - Valuations Office,
   - Department of Environment, Community and Local Government,
   - Department of Public Expenditure and Reform,
   - Department of Finance,
   - Commission for Energy Regulation,
   - Limerick City and County Council,
   - Any other local authority, city or county council.

2. All communications between the Department and authorities in Northern Ireland or Scotland in relation to the valuation assessment applicable to wind farms between January 2013 and May 2015.

3. Any briefing note, memo, direction or report prepared by the Department or any of the above named entities in relation to the valuation assessment for wind farms between January 2013 and May 2015.

4. Confirmation as to whether a working group or other such committee was put in place involving the above listed entities or other participants in respect of the rating valuation system for wind farms.
5. All briefing notes, memos reports or other documents (including in draft form) prepared by
the working group or other such committee referred to in point 4.

We confirm that the requested information should be furnished by email to the following email
addresses:

We await hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,
22/05/2015

FOI Request Reference: FOI/2015/46

I refer to your request which was received by this office on 13/05/2015 which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for records held by this FOI body. Your request sought:

Information in respect of the rating valuation system applied to wind farms.

The decision maker handling your request is Mr Errol Close, Decarbonisation Policy and Coordination Division, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, 29-31 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2 and they can be contacted at 01 6782633. A final decision on your request would normally be sent to you within 4 weeks, where a week is defined as 5 working days excluding the weekend and public holidays. This means that you can expect a decision letter to issue not later than 11/06/2015.

There are some limited situations under the FOI Act which could mean that the period for a final decision may be longer than this 4 week period. If this occurs in the case of your request, you will be advised promptly in writing setting out the reason and the new decision date.

Should our final decision not reach you on time, please feel free to contact the decision maker named above to discuss any problems that may have arisen. If you have not heard from us once the allotted time has expired, you are automatically entitled to appeal for a review of the matter. This review proceeds on the legal basis that the initial request is considered to be refused once the specified time for responding to it has expired. The review is a full and new examination of the matter carried out by a more senior member of staff.

In the event that you need to request such a review, you can do so by writing to FOI Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Elm House, Earlsvale Rd, Cavan, Co Cavan or alternatively by sending an e-mail to FOIUNIT@dcenr.gov.ie. You should state that you are seeking this review because an initial decision was not sent to you within the time allowed for a response. In that event, you would normally have 4 weeks (after the initial decision should have been sent to you) in which to make the appeal. Consideration will be given to late applications in appropriate circumstances.

Should you wish to discuss the above, please contact me by telephone at 01 6782903.

Yours sincerely,

Carmel Conaty
FOI Unit
11 June 2015

Re: FOI Request FOI/2015/46

I refer to the request which you made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for records held by this body:

The request was for the following:

1. All communications between the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (the Department) and the following entities in relation to the valuation assessment applicable to wind farms between January 2013 and May 2015:-
   - Valuations Office,
   - Department of Environment, Community and Local Government,
   - Department of Public Expenditure and Reform,
   - Department of Finance,
   - Commission for Energy Regulation,
   - Limerick City and County Council,
   - Any other local authority, city or county council.

2. All communications between the Department and authorities in Northern Ireland or Scotland in relation to the valuation assessment applicable to wind farms between January 2013 and May 2015.

3. Any briefing note, memo, direction or report prepared by the Department or any of the above named entities in relation to the valuation assessment for wind farms between January 2013 and May 2015.

4. Confirmation as to whether a working group or other such committee was put in
place involving the above listed entities or other participants in respect of the
ingrating valuation system for wind farms.

5. All briefing notes, memos reports or other documents (including in draft form)
prepared by the working group or other such committee referred to in point 4.

I, Errol Close, have now made a final decision to part grant your request on 5th June 2015. The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision. This explanation has the following parts:

1. a schedule of all of the records covered by your request;
2. an explanation of the relevant findings concerning the records to which
access is denied, and
3. a statement of how you can appeal this decision should you wish to do so.

This letter addresses each of these three parts in turn.

1. Schedule of records
A schedule is enclosed with this letter, it shows four records that this Department
considers relevant to your request.

2. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions to deny access
I made a final decision to grant your request on 5th June 2015. If you have any
queries regarding this correspondence you can contact me by telephone at 01-
6782633. The record is being made available to you in paper format with this letter.

3. Rights of appeal
In the event that you are unhappy with this decision you may appeal it. In the event
that you need to make such an appeal, you can do so by writing to the Freedom of
Information Unit, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources,
Elm House, Earlivale Road, Cavan, Co. Cavan or by email to foi.unit@dcenr.gov.ie.
Your correspondence should include a fee of €30 for processing the appeal. Payment
should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque
made payable to the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.
If you wish to make payment by electronic means please contact the FOI Unit. You
should make your appeal within 4 weeks from the date of this notification, where a
day is defined as a working day excluding, the weekend and public holidays. 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 body.
Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact me by telephone on 01-6782633.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Errol Close
Assistant Principal Officer
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record No.</th>
<th>Brief Description &amp; Date of Record</th>
<th>File Ref.</th>
<th>No. of Pages</th>
<th>Relevant facts</th>
<th>Findings/conclusions (Public Interest Considerations, If applicable)</th>
<th>Grant/refuse/part-grant</th>
<th>Basis of Refusal: Section of Act</th>
<th>Record edited/Identify deletions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>E-mail from DCENR to Valuation Office and response from Valuation Office to DCENR</td>
<td>FOI/46/0207 14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dated 02/07/2014</td>
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<td>Grant</td>
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<td>E-mail from Valuation Office to DCENR.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Dated 26/11/2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Briefing note on rates legislation</td>
<td>FOI/46/1912 14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dated 19/12/2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>Refuse</td>
<td>Deliberative Process</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Briefing on rates on wind farms</td>
<td>FOI/46/2602 14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dated 26/02/2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>Refuse</td>
<td>Deliberative Process</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Errol Close

From: Lavelle, Declan <Declan.Lavelle@VALOFF.IE>
Sent: 02 July 2014 12:28
To: Errol Close
Subject: RE: Contact details

Errol,
Thank you for your e-mail.
I will pass on your contact details to my colleagues.
Regards
Declan.

Declan Lavelle
Head of Valuation Services

Valuation Office, Block 2, Irish Life Centre.
Abbey Street Lower, Dublin 1

declan.lavelle@valoff.ie
+353-1-8171032
+353-87-6784751
www.valoff.ie

Errol Close
Assistant Principal Officer
Renewable and Sustainable Energy Division
Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
29–31 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2
Phone: (0)1 678 2633
Mobile: (0) 86 732 9465
E-mail: errol.close@dcenr.gov.ie

Errol Close

From: Margaret McCarthy
Sent: 28 May 2015 11:59
To: Errol Close
Subject: FW: Wind Farms and REFIT

Margaret McCarthy | Higher Executive Officer | Decarbonisation Policy & Coordination Division
Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources
29-31 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2, Ireland
www.dcenr.gov.ie | @dcenr
T:+353 1 6783205 | E:margaret.mccarthy@dcenr.gov.ie

From: Margaret McCarthy
Sent: 26 November 2014 14:36
To: Errol Close
Subject: FW: Wind Farms and REFIT

Errol

I spoke to Mr Cahill and explained REFIT for suppliers. Could I talk about his query on your return please?

M

From: Cahill, Liam [mailto:Liam.Cahill@VALOFF.IE]
Sent: 26 November 2014 13:00
To: Margaret McCarthy
Subject: Wind Farms and REFIT

Margaret

My name is Liam Cahill from Valuation Office and I spoke with you earlier re Wind Farms. The Valuation Office is an office of the Dept of Public Expenditure & Reform. We are currently looking at wind farms in Limerick in connection with the Limerick Revaluation.

I was hoping to get an insight into the pricing structure for electricity generated by wind farms. We have been supplied with the financial statements for wind farms and I was trying to establish the relationship between revenue and the amount of electricity generated.

So for example, a large wind farm with revenue in 2013 of €5 million, I was hoping to calculate the number of MW Hr of electricity generated and the unit price per MW Hr.

Can you advise?

Regards
Liam Cahill

Team Leader
Valuation Office Ireland

01 8171092