

23rd August 2018



Re: Response - FOI request IE_FOI_174

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

1. *Is Irish Rail currently considered over staffed or have staff numbers reduced in the last 5 years?*
2. *Is the option of voluntary severance available to all staff at all times?*
3. *How is the figure an employee's severance payment calculated?*
4. *And what criteria must an employee fill to be eligible for voluntary severance.*
5. *How many employees applied for and received voluntary severance over the past 5 years and the totals paid to those employees. (Not individually as I assume this info is unavailable. But collectively by year)*
6. *Finally can this info be given year by year, 2015. 2016 etc*

I, Norman Harte, Decision Maker have now made a final decision to part grant your request on 23rd August 2018. You have sought access to staffing of Irish Rail and information of the Voluntary severance. I consider appropriate to part grant the information and indicate the ground effected. Accordingly, the schedule of these records is enclosed.

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 the documents that this body considers relevant to your request. It describes each document and refers to the sections of the FOI Act which apply to prevent release. The schedule also refers you to sections of the detailed explanation given under heading 2 below, which are relevant to the document in question. It also gives you a summary and overview of the decision as a whole.

2. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions to deny access

The FOI Act 2014 Schedule 1: section 6, subsection (p) grants to Iarnród Éireann an exemption in relation to its freight and Europort business. Therefore in line with the Act I have redacted figures and numbers from the year 2015.

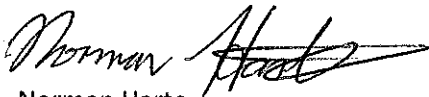
3. Appeal

In the event that you are unhappy with this decision you can make an appeal in relation to this matter, you can do so by writing to the FOI Unit, Corporate Communications, Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail, Connolly Station, Amiens Street, Dublin 1 or by e-mail to foi@irishrail.ie. You should make your appeal 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 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 wish to discuss the above, please contact the FOI officer at 01-7034293.

Yours sincerely,



Norman Harte

Decision Maker,
Human Resources

Freedom of Information Request:
 Schedule of Records for IE_FOI_174 : Summary for Decision Making

Record No.	Date of Record	Brief Description	No. of Pages	Decision: Grant/Part Grant/Refuse	Section of Act if applicable	Record Edited/Identify Deletions
IE_FOI_174	23.08.18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is Irish Rail currently considered over staffed or have staff numbers reduced in the last 5 years?1. Is Irish Rail currently considered over staffed or have staff numbers reduced in the last 5 years? 2. Is the option of voluntary severance available to all staff at all times? 3. How is the figure an employee's severance payment calculated? 4. And what criteria must an employee fill to be eligible for voluntary severance. 	2	Grant	N/A	N/A
IE_FOI_174	23.08.18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. How many employees applied for and received voluntary severance over the past 5 years and the totals paid to those employees. (Not individually as I assume this info is unavailable. But collectively by year) 6. Finally can this info be given year by year, 2015, 2016 etc 	2	Part grant	Schedule 1: section 6, subsection (p)	Page 2: year 2015

Signed 
 IE Decision Maker

IE_FOI_174 Response Document

1. *Is Irish Rail currently considered over staffed or have staff numbers reduced in the last 5 years?*

Iarnród Éireann makes decision on staffing levels in line with projected business needs and requirements. Staffing levels have reduced in line with the business needs of the organisation, through retirements and voluntary severance.

2. *Is the option of voluntary severance available to all staff at all times?*

An employee can apply for voluntary severance at any time, however there is no automatic right to voluntary severance. Each application for voluntary severance will be considered in the context of current and future business needs and service provision priorities. A business case must be made and approved by all relevant parties in each case prior to an offer of voluntary severance.

3. *How is the figure an employee's severance payment calculated?*

Voluntary Severance is calculated as follows:

A. Statutory Entitlement under Redundancy Payments Act (RPA)

Colleagues paying Class A PRSI will receive a payment of 2 weeks' pay for each completed year of service (a pro rata payment applies in respect of a part year), plus one bonus week. A weeks' pay is subject to a ceiling of €600.

An equivalent payment will be made to those paying Class D PRSI, however as it is not a statutory entitlement this will be liable for taxation.

B. Ex Gratia Payment

An ex gratia payment of 3 weeks' pay for each completed year of service will apply. Weekly pay is based on contract rate or salary at date of exit.

Capping

The lesser of the following capping's will apply:

- a. Maximum payment of 2 years' salary;
 - b. ½ salary payable to age 60 for salaried employees, age 66 for wages grade employees.
 - c. A maximum payment of €120,000.
4. And what criteria must an employee fill to be eligible for voluntary severance.

Voluntary Severance is open to those with a minimum of 2 years' continuous service. Voluntary Severance is not applicable to Salaried Employees over age 60. Please see 2 above

5. How many employees applied for and received voluntary severance over the past 5 years and the totals paid to those employees. (Not individually as I assume this info is unavailable. But collectively by year)
6. Finally can this info be given year by year, 2015, 2016 etc

Response to requests 5 and 6

Voluntary severance Yearly	2017		2016		2015		2014		2013	
	Number	€	Number	€	Number	€	Number	€	Number	€
Redacted (2015)	27	2,232,000	20	1,674,000			7	629,000	45	4,665,000
Adjusted (2015)					36	3,856,000				