

23rd July 2019

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Re: FOI Request Response [IE_FOI_249]

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your request dated 03rd May 2019 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, which was received on that date, for records held by Iarnród Éireann.

Request:

- Meeting minutes and emails relating to the decision to cut hedgerows beside train tracks in April 2019.
- Meeting minutes about most recent changes to the Northern Commuter timetable, and any reports on the subsequent impact of those changes.

I, Annette Reilly & Louise O'Riain, have now made a final decision to grant your request on 20th May 2019.

You have sought access to the records as listed above and I consider this an appropriate form of access in this case. Accordingly, a copy of the records is now attached including a copy of the schedule to these records.

Response:

There are no formal minutes kept in relation to timetable discussions as many of these meetings are based on general operational discussions in relation to train path, set and crew availability. It can be demonstrated that Northern Commuter performance did improve post introduction of this timetable as per attached data.

Rights of appeal

In the event that you are not happy 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 St, 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 have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Officer on 01, 7034293.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Annette Reilly & Louise O'Riain

Decision Maker

PP 

Lynette O'Toole

Freedom of Information Executive

IE_FOI_249 Response

Query

Meeting minutes about most recent changes to the Northern Commuter timetable, and any reports on the subsequent impact of those changes.

Response

There are no formal minutes kept in relation to timetable discussions as many of these meetings are based on general operational discussions in relation to train path, set and crew availability. It can be demonstrated that Northern Commuter performance did improve post introduction of this timetable as per attached data.

IE FOI 249 – Explained

Iarnród Éireann's key objective as a public transport provider is to deliver a safe, modern, and efficient railway service. The occurrence of tree related safety incidents and accidents on the network is a very real and present hazard which can impact greatly on the safe operability of our passenger trains and that is why vegetation management was and always will be an important part of the rail networks maintenance programmes.

In recent weeks, on the Portarlinton to Athlone section of line a hedgerow was cut back as part of a vegetation management programme. The reason that this hedgerow was scheduled for cutting was in the interest of railway safety. The section of track between Portarlinton and Geashill from 48 milepost and 49 milepost has been selected for tree cutting due to a number of past occurrences, where trees have caused damage to boundary fences and potential hazards for safe operation of railway.

This portion of track is already being operated at a reduced speed limit of 90mph due to horizontal curvature and low visibility. Any blockage on the line at this location can have a catastrophic effect as the driver has no time to react to an obstruction.

Irish Rail have compiled a tender document and site meeting took place on 15th of February 2019 with three certified arborists attending. Each site was visited and reviewed prior to prices being submitted as to the best methodology for the works.

IE standard on vegetation control requires the face of an embankment to be free of trees while at grade, no tree shall pose a threat of blocking line if fallen. This was the basis for the specifications issued as part of the tender documents.

Attached to the e-mail under freedom of information the following documentation has been provided to support Iarnród Éireann's decision to cut hedgerows between 48mp & 49mp:

- Line Inspection notes 31/08/2017 – highlighted in yellow is the note about a fallen tree at 48 ¾ MP and damaged fence
- Line Inspection notes 22/02/2018 – highlighted in yellow is the note about a fallen tree at 48 ¼ MP and damaged fence
- DIR 17/08/2017 – cattle on line due to tree branch damaging fence at 48 ¾ MP
- DIR 22/02/2019 – sheep on line due to tree branch damaging fence at 48 ¼ MP
- PG Report 05/09/2016 – tree to be cut 48.600 (leaning towards the track)
- Site Meeting Attendance Sheet (15/02/2019)
- Tender Document – Specifications for tree cutting between 48 MP and 49 ¼ MP Athlone Branch
- Screenshots from CCE-TMS-381 Appendix A showing ideal state of vegetation for cuttings and at grade as applicable to the section.

SENIOR TRACK & STRUCTURES ENGINEER'S LINE INSPECTION NOTES

Key Priorities:-

1. Do immediately
2. Do within 8 weeks or as indicated
3. Put into MAC Budget or maintenance programme
4. Watch defect to see if it progresses

Date of issue:

07/09/2017

Present:-

[REDACTED]

Weather: Dry with sunny spells

Distribution:

[REDACTED]

Line: Portarlinton to Athlone

Inspection Date: 31/08/2017

LOCATION	NOTES	PRIORITY	ACTION	Add to Risk Register?	RM Comment
[REDACTED]					
48%	Tree on Up side has fallen in storm damaging fence. Cut tree and restore fence.	3	DA	No	PW1 to check if can be done
[REDACTED]					

LOCATION	NOTES	PRIORITY	ACTION	Add to Risk Register?	RM Comment

SENIOR TRACK & STRUCTURES ENGINEER'S LINE INSPECTION NOTES

Key Priorities:-

Date of issue: 26/02/2018

1. Do immediately
2. Do within 8 weeks or as indicated
3. Put into MAC Budget or maintenance programme
4. Watch defect to see if it progresses

Present:-

[REDACTED]

Weather: Overcast but dry

Distribution:

[REDACTED]

Line: Portarlinton to Athlone

Inspection Date: 22/02/2018

LOCATION	NOTES	PRIORITY	ACTION	Add to Risk Register?
[REDACTED]				
48¼	Tree on Up side has fallen in storm damaging fence. Cut tree and restore fence.	3	DA	No
[REDACTED]				

LOCATION	NOTES	PRIORITY	ACTION	Add to Risk Register?

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

C.T.C. Report
Friday 22nd February 2019

C.T.C. P.A. TEST REPORT

Zone	Time of test	Faulty Stations	Comments	Stations Tested
All Stations	08.45hrs	None	-	All available

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

C.T.C. DUTY MANAGER TEXT ALERTS

	TIME SENT	INC NO.	
■	■	■	[REDACTED]
■	■	■	[REDACTED]
■	■	■	[REDACTED]
■	■	■	[REDACTED]
■	■	■	[REDACTED]
■	■	■	[REDACTED]
■	■	■	[REDACTED]

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

Incident No	Incident Date and Time	Incident Title	Summary of events	Location type	Occurred at	Internal Report Category (Category)	Train Id	Depart time	Depart from	Arrival to
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
INC-35417	22/02/2019 09:50	Animal Incursion - Sheep at 48 1/4mp Portarlinton/Geashill	Signaller advised that A803 reported sheep on line at 48 1/4mp Portarlinton/Geashill. Trains cautioned.	Milepost	Portarlinton to Athlone - 48.440	Animal Incursions	a803	22/02/2019 07:15	Westport	Dublin Heuston
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Tralee
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Cork

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Drogheda
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Drogheda
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Dublin Connolly
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Sligo
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Grand Canal Dock
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Malahide
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Newbridge
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Greystones

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Drogheda
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Maynooth

Duty Manager C.T.C.

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

C.T.C. Report
Thursday 17th August 2017

C.T.C. P.A. TEST REPORT

Zone	Time of test:	Faulty Stations	Comments	Stations Tested
All Stations	07.43hrs	Tara Street showing fault Seapoint showing fault		All stations

- As per running notice issued 07.04.16: Due to Connolly WTT alterations, E208, E209, may be delayed 5/10 minutes from Howth Jctn. and E117 and E120 may be delayed by 5/10 minutes (Mondays to Saturdays).
- As per weekly circular 3668: Due to timetable alterations, E219, E220, E820, P616, D811, D812, E821, D814 and E225 may be delayed by 5 minutes.
- As per weekly circular 3779: Due to Sligo alterations D924, A914, A913 and P670 may be delayed by 10 minutes.
- As per weekly circular 3779: Due to timetable alterations E924 may be delayed by 5 minutes.

C.T.C. DUTY MANAGER TEXT ALERTS

TIME SENT		
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
7.	11.52hrs	A709 09.30 Galway - Hstn operating +20 WLC Cattle on the line 48.75 mile post (Geashill - Port.). TD
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	
■	■■■■	

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

Incident No	Incident Date and Time	Incident Title	Summary of events	Location type	Occurred at	Internal Report Category (Category)	Train Id	Depart time	Depart from	Arrival to
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
INC-21579	17/08/2017 11:25	Cows on the line at 48.1320 Portarlinton	Driver A709 reports a number of cows blocking the line at 48.1320 MP. CCE in attendance. A709 + P210 delayed +25. K800 +15	Milepost	Portarlinton to Athlone - 48.1320	Animal Incursions	A709	17/08/2017 09:30	Galway	Dublin Heuston
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

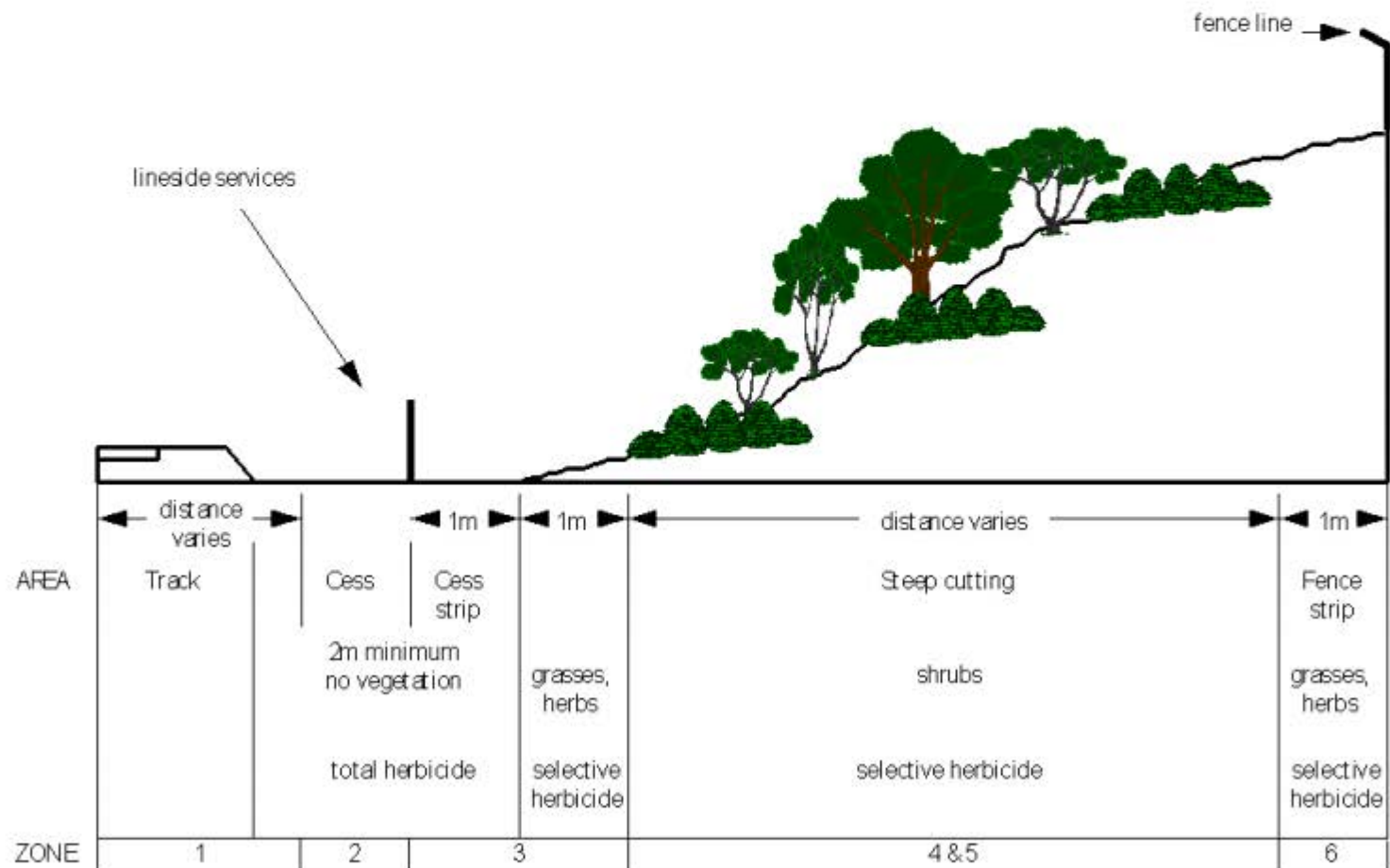
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]			[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]			[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

DAILY INCIDENT REPORT
PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE BOARD'S STAFF ONLY

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Duty Manager C.T.C.

Appendix A Ideal State for Vegetation Controls on Cuttings, Embankments and at Grade



Vegetation Controls on Cuttings

Number of report forms used in this Report:

104

Inspection Date:

05/09/2016

Section 1. Patrol Details

PATROL GANGER'S NAME

LINE

Branch line

PATROL GANGER'S LENGTH

42/49

Section 2. Faults cleared by Ganger during patrol

Inspection Date	Location Miles & Yards (From - To)	U/D	Details of Fault
05/09/16	x10008		closed gates

Use another form, if required

Section 3. Faults for the attention of the Permanent Way Inspector
(Items still requiring attention)

Inspection Date	Location Miles & Yards (From - To)	U/D	Details of Fault	Date work complete (if not completed state why) To be completed by P.W.I.
05/09/16	48.34/49		Sweep.	
	48.1100		shock	
	48.600		Cut Trees leaning towards the track.	
	47.830		3x muddy spots.	
	47.440		Repair Fence.	
	44.1520		2x muddy spots.	

Use another form, if required

Patrol Ganger

Signature

Date: 05/09/16

P.W.I.

Signature

Date: 05/09/2016

Date all work complete: ___/___/___

NOTE: All sections (apart from shaded area) to be completed by Patrol Ganger who holds 3rd (pink) copy.
2nd (Yellow) copy to go to Mobile Ganger.
Top (White) copy to go to P.W.I. who completes shaded area.
When fully completed, this report should be retained and filed in the P.W.I. office for 2 years (minimum).

3.0 Vegetation Control between 48MP and 49 ¼ MP, Geashill, Division 21

Scope of work:

- Contractor shall cut trees growing along the boundary wall down to 2.5m above ground level (See Figures 3.1-3.4):
 - Downside – single tree at 48MP
 - Downside from 48mls 100yds Athlone Branch to 49mls 0yds Athlone Branch – approx. 1,600m
 - Upside from 48mls 100yds Athlone Branch to 49mls 440yds Athlone Branch – approx. 2,000m
- Where a tree stump (greater than 150mm) has been mulched and the stump remains jagged the contractor must saw cut the tree stump to ensure no sharp edges;
- Contractor to approach all property owners that will be affected by the works and liaise directly with property owners before, during and after the works;
- Contractor must agree terms and conditions with all property owners prior to entry onto their property. These terms and conditions are entirely between the contractor and the property owner;
- If property owner restricts the contractor from cutting any vegetation on Iarnród Éireann boundary/property, Iarnród Éireann Engineer must be immediately notified of the situation;
- The contractor must saw all trees into manageable lengths (2.5m) and stack in an agreed location;
- All accesses used by the contractor are to be made good and returned to original condition or better (take photographs as proof of condition of access prior to works commencing);
- The Iarnród Éireann Engineer must be notified if removing hedge/trees will compromise the formation;
- If it is not possible to remove the trees stumps/hedge row without compromising the formation the Iarnród Éireann Engineer must be notified;
- The contractor to make good any damage caused by the works to the property of both Irish Rail and property owners including any reseeding required as a direct result of the works;
- The contractor must repair any boundary fence that is damaged as a result of the works to the satisfaction of the Iarnród Éireann Engineer;
- Before commencement of any works the PWI must be given at least 2 weeks' notice;
- It is the contractor's responsibility to arrange protection for the works with the PWI in a timely manner;
- No works can take place without the knowledge and consent from the PWI;
- Tidy up and hand over site

NAME

COMPANY

SIGNATURE

Tree Cutting – Division 21

ATH19-001

1.0	General Specification/Conditions	2
2.0	Vegetation Control near 46 $\frac{3}{4}$ MP, Clonygowan, Division 27	4
3.0	Vegetation Control between 48MP and 49 $\frac{1}{4}$ MP, Geashill, Division 21	7
4.0	Vegetation Control at 62 MP, Coolnahiley, Clara, Division 21	13
5.0	Vegetation Control at Clonnydonnin Yard, Division 21	16
6.0	Vegetation Control at 77 MP, Clonbonny, Athlone, Division 21	19

Freedom of Information Request:
Schedule of Records for **IE_FOI_249** : 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
1	07.09.17	Copy of 170831 Portarlinton to Athlone Inspection Notes_Redacted	2	Part grant	S36/S37	Commercially sensitive information/Personal information
2	26.02.18	Copy of 180222 Portarlinton to Athlone Inspection Notes_Redacted	2	Part grant	S36/S37	Commercially sensitive information/Personal information
3	22.07.19	DIR 19.02.22 (003)_Redacted	4	Part grant	S36	Commercially sensitive information
4	17.08.17	DIR170817_Redacted	4	Part grant	S36	Commercially sensitive information
5	12.07.19	Ideal State for Vegetation Control on Cuttings - CCE-TMS-381	1	Grant		
6	15.07.19	IE_FOI_249 Explained	1	Grant		
7	12.07.19	IE_FOI_249 response	1	Grant		
8	05.09.16	Patrol Ganger's Sheet_Redacted	1	Part grant	S37	Personal information
9	09.07.19	Tender Document - Specifications	1	Grant		
10	15.02.19	Tree Cutting - Site Meeting Attendance Sheet	1	Part grant	S37	Personal information

Signed

Freedom of Information / Data Protection Executive