

**An Coiste um Chuntais
Phoiblí**

Teach Laighean
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Tel: (01) 6183867
Ríomhphost:
pac@oireachtas.ie



**Committee of Public
Accounts**

Leinster House
Dublin 2

Tel: (01) 6183790
Email: pac@oireachtas.ie

20th December, 2012

Ferghal Blaney
Political Correspondent
Irish Daily Mail
33 Ballsbridge Wood
Shelbourne Road
Dublin 4

Re: FOI Request on PAC trip to Mozambique

Dear Mr. Blaney

I refer to your FOI request dated 28th November, 2011 in relation to the visit by a delegation of PAC Members to Mozambique. As discussed with you in recent days with our Communications Unit, I am satisfied to provide details of the costs that are available to me and to publish these in the coming days outside of FOI. I am doing so as this will enable me to deal more comprehensively with your request especially as the main costs were met by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the refund request to the Oireachtas has only been received this week.

You should note that the PAC was invited to visit an Irish Aid programme country by the Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Committee agreed at its meeting on 20th September to send a delegation to Mozambique which receives the largest amount the Irish Aid budget, which in 2012 was €37 million.

As regards the details of the trip the following is the information now available to me:

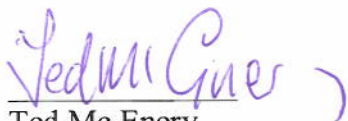
1. Three members of the Committee visited Mozambique: the Chairman of the Committee John Mc Guinness TD, John Deasy TD and Michael Mc Carthy TD.
2. As Clerk to the Committee, I accompanied the delegation. In addition, a senior member of staff from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and from the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General were part of the delegation.
3. The costs arising from the trip in respect of the three Members and myself will be met from the budget of the Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas Service and the costs of the other two delegates will be met by their respective organizations.
4. The delegation departed Ireland on Sunday 25th November and travelled via London and Johannesburg to Mozambique. The delegation departed Mozambique on Saturday 1st December and arrived back in Ireland on Sunday 2nd December, 2012.
5. All arrangements in relation to flights and hotel accommodation were made by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
6. All the delegation travelled economy class.
7. On the cost of the flights, the total cost of the flights to be met from the Oireachtas

- account is €7,738.84.
8. On accommodation: the delegation stayed in the Hotel Aquaris in Bilene, which is about 300km outside Maputo for two nights as this was adjacent to a number of projects that are situated in the Inhambane province and that were on the itinerary for the visit. The cost per night was €64.10 per night. The Committee stayed three nights in Maputo and stayed in the Hotel Cardosa: the cost per night at this hotel is €131.64. All of the formal meetings held by the Committee including with the Vice Minister for Finance, the Court of Auditors and the IMF were in Maputo. The total cost therefore of hotel accommodation that will be met by the Oireachtas is €2,092.53.
 9. In terms of gifts, the Committee presented a pen which cost €28.50 to the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs in Mozambique.
 10. The delegation did not entertain third parties while in Mozambique, so costs of functions or refreshments that you mention in your letter did not arise: The delegation attended a working breakfast with people from the Irish community who are engaged in business in Mozambique, two receptions held at the Ambassador's residence where we met the representatives of other donors and also NGOs who are leading the delivery of services on the ground in Mozambique. In addition, the delegation were guests at meals organized by the Embassy. Where any meal was so provided and in accordance with the civil service subsistence allowances abroad circular, a deduction was made from the subsistence claim of each member of the delegation. The claims for subsistence have not been processed at the time of writing, but the amounts are small and reimburse the delegation for the normal costs of providing their own meals which arise for all officials and Members who travel abroad.
 11. There are a small number of other costs which reimburse the delegation for instance for travel to the airport, the use of personal phones while abroad and the pharmacy bill which cover prescribed medicines that are required for travelling to Mozambique. These form part of the subsistence claims mentioned at 10 above and have not been paid to date. The Houses of the Oireachtas Service was also billed directly for the inoculations that were administered to the delegation and which are also required in respect of those travel to a country where for instance malaria is an issue.

I have outlined the costs associated with the PAC visit to Mozambique that will be met by the Houses of the Oireachtas Service. I do not have details of the costs arising for the Department and for the office of the C&AG but I suggest they will not be different to those pertaining to myself or a member of the delegation. There are, as I have outlined at points 10 and 11 above, outstanding claims which have not been paid but these in the main will only be reimbursing those who travelled for expenses incurred.

I trust what I have outlined above deals with your query.

Yours sincerely



Ted Mc Enery
Clerk to the Committee