



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Secretariat-General

Directorate E - Policy Co-ordination II

The Director

By registered letter with acknowledgment of receipt

Rachel Tansey
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Belgium

Advance copy by email:

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Dear Madam,

Subject: Your application for access to documents – Ref GestDem No 2016/719

We refer to your e-mail dated 14 February 2016 in which you make a request for access to documents, registered on 15 February 2016 under the above mentioned reference number. In the request you asked for access to "*all correspondence (including emails), as well as notes, minutes or any other reports of meetings, relating to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), between [the officials of the Secretariat-General of the Commission] and representatives of ECPA (European Crop Protection Association) and/or CropLife (International or America), including any consultancy or consultant acting on either organisation's behalf, since 1 September 2014*".

On 17 February 2016 our service sent you a request for clarification (Article 6(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001) asking to provide us with more detailed information, for example, the subject matter discussed during the meetings, or reference number of specific documents or the names of those involved in drafting the documents.

On the same day, 17 February 2016, you replied that you are not in position to further clarify your request for information which you seek to obtain, other than mentioning consultancy firm FTI Consulting Belgium that may have represented or acted on behalf of ECPA and that CropLife International is listed as a client of consultancy firm Edelman Public Relations Worldwide that may have acted on its behalf.

Following your clarifications provided and after performing a search in our documents data base we regret to inform you that no documents that would correspond to the description given in your application, were found. Indeed, as specified in Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, the right of access as defined in that regulation applies only to existing documents in the possession of the institution.

Given that no such documents have been identified, the Commission is not in a position to handle your request.

In accordance with Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, you are entitled to make a confirmatory application requesting the Commission to review this position.

Such a confirmatory application should be addressed within 15 working days upon receipt of this letter to the Secretary-General of the Commission at the following address:

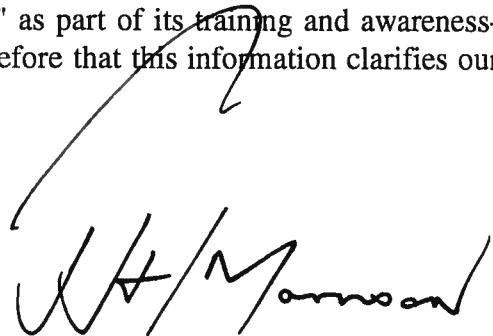
European Commission
Secretary-General
Transparency unit SG-B-4
BERL 5/282
B-1049 Bruxelles

or by email to: sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu

Regarding your request for information under the Code of Good Administrative Behaviour for a list of meetings attended by Secretariat-General officials with ECPA and/or CropLife (or any representative acting on their behalf), which covered issues relating to TTIP, since 1 September 2014, you are aware that, as part of its transparency initiative, since December 2014 the Commission has decided to publish information on all meetings of interest representatives with Commissioners, their Cabinets¹ and their Directors-General. These Decisions² do not apply to other staff categories than the ones covered by the Commission Decisions and therefore such list of meetings does not exist.

Furthermore, I would like to recall that the recommendation addressed to all staff to check the credentials of a given interest representative to make sure they feature on the Transparency Register is already stipulated in the Commission Practical Guide to Staff Ethics and Conduct. The Secretariat-General constantly promotes this "good practice" as part of its training and awareness-raising actions on relations with interest groups. I hope therefore that this information clarifies our policy in that regard.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JH/Morrison', with a long, sweeping flourish above it.

James Morrison
Director

¹ This refers to members of the Commissioner's cabinet in the function group AD (Administrator).

² Decisions C(2014) 9048 and (C(2014) 9051 of 25.11.2014.