

## Alcohol Action Ireland Freedom of Information Request Information

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, we hereby request the following information – all briefing notes, letters or emails shared, minutes, and any other correspondence or communications in relation to the meeting between Ibec and the Minister for Health (details supplied).

Details: <https://www.lobbying.ie/return/113959/ibec>

**RE: Meetings with Alcohol Action and IBEC | Returns by COB Thurs 25th May**

**From:** [Redacted]

**Sent:** Monday 8 May 2023 17:10

**To:** [Redacted]; Tobacco and Alcohol Control Unit  
<[Tobacco\\_and\\_Alcohol\\_Control\\_Unit@health.gov.ie](mailto:Tobacco_and_Alcohol_Control_Unit@health.gov.ie)>

**Cc:** Minister Burke Office <[Minister\\_Burke\\_Office@health.gov.ie](mailto:Minister_Burke_Office@health.gov.ie)>

**Subject:** RE: Meetings with Alcohol Action and IBEC | Returns by COB Thurs 25th May

[Redacted]

The policy that this unit does not engage in any way with the alcohol industry, as with the tobacco industry, was set down by the then Chief Medical Officer over 10 years ago. If the Minister wishes someone from this unit to attend a meeting with the alcohol industry, we will need a written instruction from the current Chief Medical Officer that this longstanding policy has been reversed and that the Department of Health now engages with the alcohol industry.

It is worth noting here that the HSE has a similar non-engagement policy with the alcohol industry since 2015 so the Department and the HSE would be out of step if such a change were to be made.

[Redacted]

**From:** [Redacted]

**Sent:** Monday 8 May 2023 15:46

**To:** Tobacco and Alcohol Control Unit <[Tobacco\\_and\\_Alcohol\\_Control\\_Unit@health.gov.ie](mailto:Tobacco_and_Alcohol_Control_Unit@health.gov.ie)>;  
[Redacted]

**Cc:** Minister Naughton Office <[Minister\\_Naughton\\_Office@health.gov.ie](mailto:Minister_Naughton_Office@health.gov.ie)>

**Subject:** RE: Meetings with Alcohol Action and IBEC | Returns by COB Thurs 25th May

Hi all,

Drinks Ireland have confirmed that they are available to meet with the Minister.

There has been a slight change to the meeting times:

Drinks Ireland: May 30<sup>th</sup> 16:00 – 16:30 (“While the main topic is the Public Health Alcohol Act and in particular the proposed alcohol labelling regulations, I will forward agenda and attendance later this week”)

Alcohol Action: May 30<sup>th</sup> 16:30 – 17:00

Grateful if you could let me know if an official will attend either or both meetings?

Thanks,

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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**Private Office of the Minister of State for Public Health, Wellbeing & the National Drugs Strategy**

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**An Roinn Sláinte**

Department of Health

**Bloc 1, Plaza Miesach, 50 - 58 Sráid Bhagóid Íochtarach, Baile Átha Cliath, D02 XW14**

Block 1, Miesian Plaza, 50 - 58 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin, D02 XW14

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[@roinnslaite](mailto:health.gov.ie)

**From:** [Redacted]

**Sent:** Friday, May 5, 2023 3:56 PM

**To:** Tobacco and Alcohol Control Unit <[Tobacco and Alcohol Control Unit@health.gov.ie](mailto:Tobacco_and_Alcohol_Control_Unit@health.gov.ie)>; [Redacted]

**Cc:** Minister Naughton Office <[Minister\\_Naughton\\_Office@health.gov.ie](mailto:Minister_Naughton_Office@health.gov.ie)>

**Subject:** Meetings with Alcohol Action and IBEC | Returns by COB Thurs 25th May

Hi [Redacted],

As discussed, Minister Naughton would like to meet with both Alcohol Action and IBEC in separate meetings, and has requested an official to attend each meeting.

- Alcohol Action – Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup> 16:00 – 16:30 CONFIRMED
- IBEC – Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup> 16:30 – 17:00 TBC

I am awaiting the agenda and list of attendees which I will forward once received, grateful if we could have the briefing back by Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> COB

I'll keep you updated on the IBEC meeting.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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**Private Office of the Minister of State for Public Health, Wellbeing & the National Drugs Strategy**

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**An Roinn Sláinte**

Department of Health

**Bloc 1, Plaza Miesach, 50 - 58 Sráid Bhagóid Íochtarach, Baile Átha Cliath, D02 XW14**

Block 1, Miesian Plaza, 50 - 58 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin, D02 XW14

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[@roinnslaite](mailto:health.gov.ie)

**From:** Cormac Healy  
**Sent:** Monday 8 July 2024 12:35  
**To:** Minister's Diary <MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie>  
**Cc:** Private Secretary MoH <privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie>  
**Subject:** RE: HEA-MD-00344-2024 - Meeting with Minister Donnelly

**[Redacted],**

Thank you for this.

I confirm that we are available to meet at 3:30pm on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August, as suggested.

Regards

Cormac

Cormac Healy  
Director, Drinks Ireland  
Ibec  
84/86 Lower Baggot Street  
Dublin 2  
D02 H720

W: <http://www.drinksireland.ie>



**From:** Minister's Diary <MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 8, 2024 10:03 AM  
**To:** Cormac Healy  
**Cc:** Minister's Diary <MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie>; Private Secretary MoH <privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie>  
**Subject:** HEA-MD-00344-2024 - Meeting with Minister Donnelly

Dear Cormac,

Minister Donnelly will be in a position to meet with you on Wednesday the 28th of August 2024 at 3:30pm.

Perhaps you would confirm with the Diary Section (email: [ministersdiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:ministersdiary@health.gov.ie)) that this arrangement is suitable to attendees your end.

Yours sincerely,

**[Redacted]**

Private secretary to the Minister for Health

**From:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>

**Sent:** Friday, July 5, 2024 2:39 PM

**To:** Cormac Healy

**Cc:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>; Private Secretary MoH <[privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie](mailto:privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie)>

**Subject:** HEA-MD-00344-2024 - Meeting with Minister Donnelly

Dear Cormac,

I will check for the next available date in the Minister's diary and get back to you next week.

Yours sincerely,

**[Redacted]**

Private secretary to the Minister for Health

**From:** Cormac Healy

**Sent:** Friday, July 5, 2024 1:52 PM

**To:** Private Secretary MoH <[privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie](mailto:privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie)>

**Cc:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>

**Subject:** RE: HEA-MD-00344-2024 - Meeting with Minister Donnelly

Dear **[Redacted]**,

Thank you for your note below and we very much welcome the opportunity to meet with Minister Donnelly.

I was hoping that it would just be myself and my Chairman (Pat Rigney, The Shed Distillery) from our side.

Unfortunately, my Chairman is out of the country all next week with customers.

Do you think it would be at all possible that we could meet the following week, if the Minister's diary allowed.

I understand if this cannot be accommodated but would appreciate if you could look at it.

In terms of proposed agenda, we would like to cover the following:

1. Outline Drinks Ireland policy priorities document (Pride of Place) – see attached
2. Discussion on implementation of the PHAA – line of sight on roll-out of remaining provisions, implementation issues associated with new labelling provisions.
3. Future engagement between drinks manufacturing industry and Department of Health

My mobile number is **[Redacted]**.

Regards

Cormac

Cormac Healy

Director, Drinks Ireland  
Ibec  
84/86 Lower Baggot Street  
Dublin 2  
D02 H720  
W: <http://www.drinksireland.ie>



**From:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 5, 2024 10:17 AM  
**To:** Cormac Healy  
**Cc:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>; Private Secretary MoH <[privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie](mailto:privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie)>  
**Subject:** HEA-MD-00344-2024 - Meeting with Minister Donnelly

Dear Mr Healy,

On behalf of Minister Donnelly, I would like to thank you for your correspondence attached.

Due a change in the Minister's diary I am pleased to inform you that Minister Donnelly will be in a position to meet with you on Wednesday the 10th of July 2024 at 3:30pm. This is due to be an in-person meeting but can change to VC at short notice.

Perhaps you would confirm with the Diary Section (email: [ministersdiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:ministersdiary@health.gov.ie)) that this arrangement is suitable to attendees your end.

I would be grateful if you would forward the proposed agenda and names of the delegation (up to a maximum of 4 people) that will be attending at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

**[Redacted]**

Private secretary to the Minister for Health

**FW: Rescheduled - HEA-MD-00344-2024 Meeting with Drinks Ireland**

**From:** [Redacted]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 28 August 2024 17:33  
**To:** Minister's Office [ministers\\_office@health.gov.ie](mailto:ministers_office@health.gov.ie); Minister's Diary

[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)

**Cc:** Tobacco and Alcohol Control Unit [Tobacco\\_and\\_Alcohol\\_Control\\_Unit@health.gov.ie](mailto:Tobacco_and_Alcohol_Control_Unit@health.gov.ie)

**Subject:** FW: Rescheduled - HEA-MD-00344-2024 Meeting with Drinks Ireland

Hi **[Redacted]**,

Just to follow up on the meeting the Minister had with Drinks Ireland earlier today, I want to clarify that no TACU officials were requested to be in attendance at today's meeting.

Had a request to attend been made to the unit we would have to advise that there is a long-standing directive from the CMO that officials in the Department do not engage with industry which has been in place for many years.

Regards

**[Redacted]**

**From:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>

**Sent:** Friday, July 5, 2024 10:31 AM

**To:** Tobacco and Alcohol Control Unit <[Tobacco\\_and\\_Alcohol\\_Control\\_Unit@health.gov.ie](mailto:Tobacco_and_Alcohol_Control_Unit@health.gov.ie)>; **[Redacted]**; **[Redacted]**

**Cc:** Minister's Diary <[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)>; Private Secretary MoH <[privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie](mailto:privatesecretaryMoH@health.gov.ie)>; Ministerial Events Briefings and Speeches <[ministerialbriefingsandspeeches@health.gov.ie](mailto:ministerialbriefingsandspeeches@health.gov.ie)>

**Subject:** HEA-MD-00344-2024 Meeting with Drinks Ireland

Dear all,

Due to a change in Minister Donnelly's diary, he has agreed to meet with Drinks Ireland on Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 at 3:30pm. This is due to be an in-person meeting in the Minister's office in Leinster House but may change to VC at short notice.

Apologies for the short notice we would be grateful if you would prepare appropriate briefing material and submit by eSubmission by 12pm Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of July 2024.

Please use attached executive summary for briefing (max. of 2 pages). Supplementary briefing can be added if necessary.

Please refer to this SOP Ministerial Speeches and Briefings SOP if you need further clarity of the process.

Once submitted via eSubs, can you please email the [Ministersdiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:Ministersdiary@health.gov.ie) to confirm eSub number so we can track it this end.

An Agenda has been requested and will be forwarded to you upon receipt.

Many thanks,

**[Redacted]**

Clerical Officer

Minister Donnelly's Diary Team  
Minister Donnelly's Private Office

**An Roinn Sláinte**  
Department of Health

**Bloc 1, Plaza Miesach, 50 - 58 Sráid Bhagóid Íochtarach, Baile Átha Cliath, D02 XW14**  
**Block 1, Miesian Plaza, 50 - 58 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin, D02 XW14**

[MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie](mailto:MinistersDiary@health.gov.ie)

**Note of meeting between Minister Donnelly with IBEC & Drinks Ireland**

28<sup>th</sup> August 2024, DoH, 15:45

**Attendees:**

Cormac Healy, Director of Drinks Ireland

Pat Rigney, Chair Drinks Ireland

Stephen Donnelly TD, Minister for Health

Paraic Gallagher, Special Advisor

**[Redacted]**, DoH

**Discussion:**

The Minister opened the meeting and thanked both Cormac Healy and Pat Rigney for seeking the meeting.

Pat Rigney gave an overview of his work with the Shed distillery and made the point that Drinks Ireland represents a mix of levels and scales across the drinks industry. He made the point that the drinks industry employs c. 10,000 employees and has exports of c.€2bn. The changes in alcohol consumption were noted – particularly the move towards moderations. Drinks Ireland feels that there is a need to look at the Public Health Alcohol Act through the prism of where we are now rather than where we were historically.

Drinks Ireland also noted that the drinks industry is heavily regulated but that there is a high-level of compliance with regulations.

In reference to alcohol labelling coming into effect in 2026, Drinks Ireland noted that while they will comply with the labelling regulations, consideration needs to be given about how it can be done in a effective and efficient manner. They are seeking engagement to get clarity on the process for rollout (will there be a crossover period) and label sizing (particularly on miniature bottles)

Drinks Ireland also questioned the requirement to give grams of alcohol per container on the bottles, noting that while this may be useful for beer, it would not be useful for spirits where full bottles are usually not drunk in a single sitting.

Drinks Ireland are seeking a liaison in the Department of Health to engage with on these issues. They also raised the possibility that ongoing engagement would help in ensuring the drinks industry was not surprised when new regulations were enacted.

Minister Donnelly noted that the Department is responsible for the policy. However, clarity on many of the questions raised would most likely come from the organisation enforcing the

regulations. Minister agreed that engagement was required but would need to consider how best this could be achieved.

The Minister thanks attendees and agreed to remain in contact.

**[Redacted]** DoH  
30/08/2024