Dear Mr McLean

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 29 December 2016. You asked:

a. How much money was actually saved by not paying the Winter Fuel Allowance to the UK pensioners who reside in France and Spain in the winter of 2014/15

b. Why was Southern Ireland not declared a warm country as it's average winter temperature is actually higher than that of South West England

For the winter of 2014/15 Winter Fuel Payments were made to UK pensioners residing in France and Spain therefore no savings were made.

With regard to your question about average winter temperatures. The Government worked with the Met Office to develop as robust a methodology as possible, and to analyse comparable winter temperature data across all EEA countries. The report which I attach for your information shows the average temperature for Ireland to be 5.5°C which is colder than the average temperature for South West England which is 5.6°C.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy FoI Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk