

NEW ZEALAND (/NEWS/NATIONAL) / COVID-19 (/NEWS/COVID-19)

Wellington council spends more than \$300k on post-occupation cleanup

3:40 pm on 8 May 2022



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The anti-mandate protest in the capital earlier this year has cost the Wellington City Council more than \$300,000.



Rubbish left at Parliament grounds on 3 March, 2022, following a three-week occupation by anti-mandate and other protesters. Photo: RNZ

The council has just released information and documents (<https://wellington.govt.nz/contact-us/information-requests/responses-to-information-requests/information-relating-to-protest-activity>) related to the 23-day occupation of Parliament Grounds and the surrounding streets.

While it is yet to confirm the final cost, the council expects it has spent \$235,000 on contractors to fix roads, footpaths, and to clean up the central business district at the end of the occupation.

The council estimates it has spent a further \$100,000 on direct costs, like staffing, security and cleaning.

This excludes the cost of cleaning and fixing Parliament Grounds and Victoria University, as the council is only responsible for council land and property.

The documents released also show between 10 February and 1 March parking wardens issued 615 tickets to vehicles illegally parked in the CBD.

As of early May, only 213 tickets had been paid, while six have been either appealed, cancelled or waived.

Figures previously released to RNZ show the police operation set up to respond to the illegal occupation cost taxpayers more than \$430,000.

'Operation Convoy' resulted in hundreds of police officers being sent to Wellington to restore order in the capital during the occupation.

Information released to RNZ under the Official Information Act shows the police spent \$438,548 up until 28 February. (<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/464462/policing-of-anti-mandate-protest-cost-more-than-430k-excluding-wages>)

The cost breakdown does not include the two-day period leading up to the confrontation that saw riots on Parliament's lawn.

The police expenditure covered accommodation, food supplies, consumables, airfares and vehicles and helicopter hire costs.

The police spent \$158,430 on travel, \$153,516 on accommodation, \$78,024 on food, \$32,147 on vehicles/ equipment and \$16,431 on 'other' expenses.

The total cost breakdown, which doesn't include the personnel costs of the police officers assigned to the operation, comes to a total \$438,548.



Some of hundreds of police officers deployed to Parliament during the occupation. Photo: RNZ