

19 December 2025

Crux
C/- Peter Newport
Sent via email to peter.newport@crux.org.nz

Request for Official Information LG25-0341 - CCTV

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 3 December 2025 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

- 1. How many CCTV cameras does QLDC have or control in the Queenstown CBD, Wānaka and Frankton areas?**
- 2. What was the total cost of these cameras - an approximate figure will be acceptable.**
- 3. What are the cameras used for - and by whom within the council?**
- 4. How many of these cameras are accessed, accessible or controlled by Cougar Group/Security Ltd or their affiliate companies?**
- 5. Have cameras been installed and paid for by QLDC at the request of Cougar or affiliates? If so, how many, where and at what cost?**
- 6. What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of content accessed/recorded by these cameras?**
- 7. Has QLDC received any complaints from regulators or members of the public about the use of these cameras and the content that access/record?**
- 8. Do any other outside agencies have access to these cameras apart from Cougar - for example NZ police?**

QLDC RESPONSE

In response to your request, we consulted with both the QLDC Property and Infrastructure Directorate and the QLDC Assurance, Finance and Risk Directorate.

Release of information

- 1. How many CCTV cameras does QLDC have or control in the Queenstown CBD, Wānaka and Frankton areas?**

QLDC currently operates approximately 447 CCTV cameras across the district, including both internally facing cameras within Council facilities and externally facing cameras.

3. What are the cameras used for - and by whom within the council?

CCTV cameras support a range of operational functions across Regulatory, Planning & Infrastructure, and Community Services teams. Uses include crime prevention, parking and regulatory enforcement, wildfire and environmental monitoring (including lake levels, water bores and waterways), and staff and customer safety.

4. How many of these cameras are accessed, accessible or controlled by Cougar Group/Security Ltd or their affiliate companies?

Cougar Group is contracted to maintain QLDC's CCTV network and operates the centralised system within their secure premises. They have system-level access to support maintenance and network management.

5. Have cameras been installed and paid for by QLDC at the request of Cougar or affiliates? If so, how many, where and at what cost?

No cameras have been installed at the direct request of Cougar. All installations are initiated by Council in response to an identified incident or business requirement. Cougar may make recommendations, but new installations can only proceed with Council approval and are subject to available funding through the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan.

6. What measures are in place to protect the security and confidentiality of content accessed/recorded by these cameras?

Cougar operates a secure communications room that is accessible only to verified and pre-approved personnel. All individuals accessing footage must complete the requirements set out in QLDC's CCTV Policy and hold the appropriate security clearances. Access is role-based: QLDC officers may only view footage relevant to their operational responsibilities, and no staff member has access to all cameras.

7. Has QLDC received any complaints from regulators or members of the public about the use of these cameras and the content that access/record?

We conducted a search of the QLDC Request for Service (RFS) system to identify any complaints specifically relating to the use of CCTV cameras and the content they access or record.

QLDC does not have a dedicated complaint category for CCTV, as this has not been a significant issue within the community. Based on our review, we were unable to identify any complaints directly concerning the use of these cameras or the nature of the footage captured. Most RFS's received relate to infringements rather than concerns about camera usage or content.

In fact, some members of the public have lodged requests to access CCTV footage or have encouraged its use to improve visibility and security in their business, street, or local area.

We also conducted a keyword search for "CCTV" across these records, but no relevant complaints or concerns regarding camera usage or content were identified.

8. Do any other outside agencies have access to these cameras apart from Cougar - for example NZ police?

Yes. New Zealand Police may access footage in accordance with QLDC's CCTV Policy.

Decision to refuse information

2. What was the total cost of these cameras – an approximate figure will be acceptable.

We have good reason under section 17(e) of the LGOIMA for refusing the information requested. We consider it is necessary to refuse the requested information based on the following ground:

- Section 17(e) – that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Section 17(e) of the LGOIMA clarifies that a local authority is not required to provide information that does not exist or cannot be found despite reasonable efforts. This ensures that the absence of information is not due to negligence but reflects its genuine non-existence.

Following consultation with the QLDC Assurance, Finance and Risk Directorate, and after undertaking reasonable searches of Council's records, it has been confirmed that Council does not hold information recording the total cost of the CCTV cameras currently operated across the district. It is also not possible to provide an approximate figure, as Cougar invoices group multiple items together and do not separately identify CCTV costs.

As this information is not held by Council, this part of your request is refused under section 17(e) of the LGOIMA. While Council is unable to create or provide information that is not held within its records, we remain committed to assisting where possible.

Right to review the above decision

Note that you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about this process is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please contact Naell.Crosby-Roe@qldc.govt.nz (Director Democracy Services).

We trust that the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,
Renee

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