

11 December 2023

Connor Molloy
connor@taxpayers.org.nz

Dear Connor

Request for information

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 14 November 2023, in which you requested:

We request the following information in relation to the 'Virtual Cop' App:

- 1. How much did the app cost? (please include a breakdown of all costs e.g. planning, design, manufacturing, etc)*
- 2. How much did it cost to advertise the app? (please include the development of ads etc)*
- 3. How much does the ongoing maintenance of the app cost? (including update costs)*
- 4. How many downloads does the app have?*
- 5. How many daily and weekly visits does the app have?*
- 6. How many users spend more than an hour per day and/or per week on the app?*
- 7. How many users have used the app for longer than six months to a year?*

Virtual Cop was one component part of several different marketing campaigns between 2018 and 2023.

These campaigns successfully delivered the then government's objective of recruiting an additional 1,800 police.

Due to usual staff attrition, during that time Police recruited more than 4,350 constabulary staff.

All campaigns were delivered within budget.

The Virtual Cop App was just one way in which this campaign was deployed, with its primary use being a virtual experience for use at public events and at dedicated face-to-face recruitment events.

Virtual Cop is still being used now, and we are expecting to be using this asset for several further years.

Virtual Cop was developed as a way to for people to put themselves in the shoes of being a police officer, in the context of this being virtual reality (VR), with the intention of generating applications for becoming a police officer.

Experience shows that the majority of people want to become a police officer to make a difference in their communities. For many people, having a face-to-face conversation with someone from New Zealand Police is a key final influencing factor in their decision to apply.

VR has been developed as a long-term tool that can be used by police districts as a tool to use at community events to engage with the public, and contribute to building trust and confidence in New Zealand Police.

How much did the app cost? (please include a breakdown of all costs e.g. planning, design, manufacturing, etc)

Approximately \$634,000 (over 3 years 2019-2021) was spent on the development and production of Virtual Cop, which was developed as an opportunity to have one on one interactions with people in person using VR equipment at a range of events across the country, such as recruitment events. This is in line with costs for our major recruitment campaigns.

The breakdown of the costs include:

- Concept creation and development \$315,000
- New experience development (station experience) \$115,000
- New experience development (Police Communicators) \$150,000
- Gear and hardware \$54,000

How much did it cost to advertise the app? (please include the development of ads etc)

There was no budget allocated for the advertising of Virtual Cop and Police did not directly advertise the app, it was mentioned as part of other recruitment campaigns. A campaign using the imagery from the experience was developed as a recruitment campaign to encourage both constabulary and communicator applications over several stages. The first call to action was to visit newcops.govt.nz to apply to become a cop. Downloading the app was a secondary call to action.

How much does the ongoing maintenance of the app cost? (including update costs)

Police have spent \$5,000 in total to manage updates. There are no ongoing expenses.

How many downloads does the app have?

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as this information is not held by Police.

How many daily and weekly visits does the app have?

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as this information is not held by Police.

How many users spend more than an hour per day and/or per week on the app?

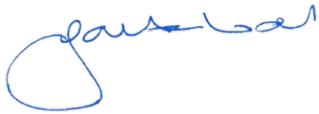
This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as this information is not held by Police.

How many users have used the app for longer than six months to a year?

This part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as this information is not held by Police.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Jane Archibald
Executive Director - Media & Communications
New Zealand Police