

# Rates explained

Tautuku Bay,  
The Catlins

As an Otago Regional Council ratepayer, your contribution plays a vital role in making this region a great place to live, work and visit.

ORC's focus is on the environment and Otago's natural resources. Our vision is that Otago's environment and communities are healthy and connected ki uta ki tai (from the mountains to the sea).

The rates you pay directly help ORC's work to protect Otago's natural resources — water, land and air — on behalf of the community.

Our work includes flood protection, natural hazard adaptation, public bus services, a ferry service in Queenstown, compliance and a regional response to natural disasters when needed. All of this helps to address regional issues and keep people and properties safe.

**Please read on for more details.**

## What you pay for

### Environment

Includes monitoring and acting to protect freshwater, air quality, biodiversity, land and soil as well as biosecurity.

GENERAL RATE	TARGETED RATE
<b>17.74M*</b>	<b>10.56M</b>

Targeted rates for catchment management and biosecurity

### Transport

Includes Orbus public transport services in Dunedin and Queenstown, Total Mobility services and regional transport planning.

GENERAL RATE	TARGETED RATE
<b>4.36M*</b>	<b>14.24M</b>

Targeted rates for public transport services

### Climate Change and Resilience

Includes flood protection and drainage, natural hazards programmes, river management and maintenance, and emergency management.

GENERAL RATE	TARGETED RATE
<b>4.35M*</b>	<b>11.63M</b>

Targeted rates for flood protection and drainage schemes, river management and emergency management

### Regional Leadership

Includes supporting elected councillors, customer service and communications, regional planning, resource consents and compliance, and 24/7 pollution response.

GENERAL RATE	TARGETED RATE
<b>26.24M*</b>	<b>0.88M</b>

Includes targeted rates for navigational safety

\*Includes Port Otago contribution (see other side for details)

## Pay your rates by direct debit

**Set up a direct debit so you don't forget to pay.**

You can choose to pay weekly, fortnightly, monthly or annually. Direct debits can be set up at any time; however, to avoid a 10% non-payment penalty on your outstanding balance, please apply by **Monday, 13 October 2025**.



Go to [orc.govt.nz/directdebit](https://orc.govt.nz/directdebit) to set this up.



## Go paperless

**Get your rates invoice by email.**

Signing up is easy at [orc.govt.nz/gopaperless](https://orc.govt.nz/gopaperless)

**0800 474 082**

# About your rates and how Otago Regional Council pays for its work

## How rates are set

Rates help pay for the work Otago Regional Council does for our communities — things like flood protection, bus services and environmental monitoring.

ORC's work is detailed in the plans we make with the community each year — either a Long-Term Plan or Annual Plan which also include the cost of work and how it will be paid for.

Rates cover the cost of about half of ORC's work, while the rest comes from other sources including Port Otago dividends, fees and charges, grants, and reserves.

## Why are there different types of rates?

The rates for each property are different depending on things like location and the services provided to that property or area.

### General rates

- Every ratepayer pays these, as the activities benefit everyone. These are subsidised by Port Otago dividends.

### Targeted rates

- Targeted rates can be a region-wide charge for certain activities or they might be specific to some areas or properties based on the benefit received.

## What's being done to reduce rates costs?

The work originally planned in 2025/26 would have meant an overall rates increase of 13.8%. However, cuts now mean an overall rates increase of 5.5%.

Contributing to this were cuts to some planned public transport upgrades, reduced inflation costs and work to gain efficiencies, including changes to work programmes.

Ratepayers are benefiting from Port Otago dividends, which offset rates. In 2025/26 this is \$20 million — an increase of \$2 million on 2024/25.

## Why is there still a rates rise?

A rates increase is still required to help fund ORC's work. This includes the investment in climate change and biodiversity strategies, as well as rising costs in areas like insurance, depreciation, and property rentals.

## What's new in 2025/26

Improving bus services remains a priority — public transport in Queenstown has been upgraded and a business case to assess Wānaka public transport options will go ahead.

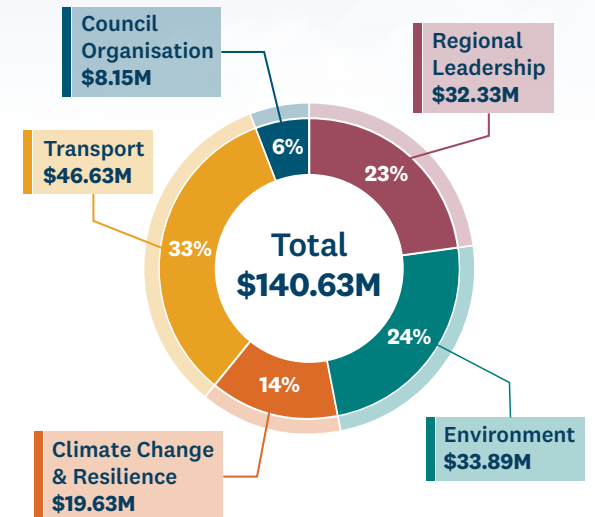
However, due to no government co-funding for additional services outside Queenstown, some Dunedin and regional services have not started, but we are investigating alternative models to achieve our community's needs.

Environmental funding has increased, and a new large-scale fund for communities starts this year.

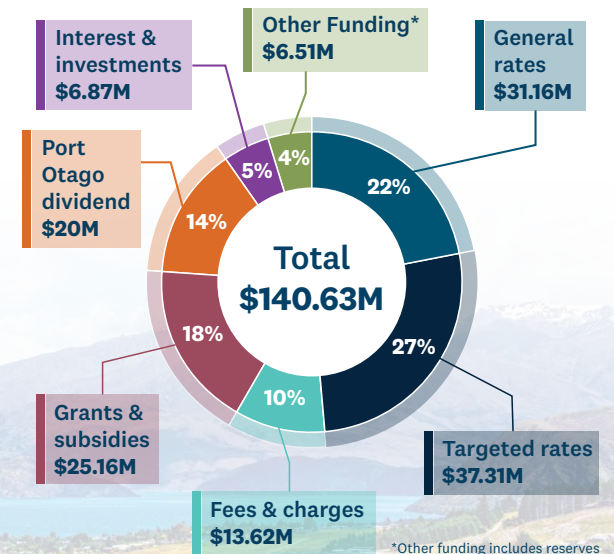
There will also be further work on natural hazards and engineering across Otago.

Read our Annual Plan:  
[orc.govt.nz/ap2025](https://orc.govt.nz/ap2025)

## How much does the work cost?



## How does ORC pay for its work?



Lake Wānaka

For more information, go to [orc.govt.nz/rates](https://orc.govt.nz/rates)