

**WE'RE
GOING
PLACES.
ARE
YOU?**



Customer Experience & Service Design Manager – FRP

Position Description

Team:	Customer, Product & Brand Passenger	Location:	Wellington
Reports to:	Head of Customer, Product & Brand - Passenger		
Role Type:	Permanent / Fixed Term / Secondment		

About Us

KiwiRail's Role in Aotearoa, New Zealand

KiwiRail, a proud State-Owned Enterprise, delivers sustainable and inclusive growth for our customers, communities, and people.

For more than 150 years, rail in New Zealand has connected communities, delivered freight and passengers around the country, and showcased our spectacular scenery to the world. Our purpose—Hononga Whaikaha, Oranga mo Aotearoa (Stronger Connections, Better New Zealand)—speaks to connection with our customers and the future needs of their businesses, connection with the communities we serve and operate in, and connection with each other. KiwiRail is carrying this legacy into the future, delivering connected rail and shipping transport services that create economic, social, and environmental value for New Zealand and New Zealanders.

Our Workplace

At KiwiRail, our values define the behaviour we expect from everyone. We have a team of over 4500 people, and every connection we make with each other, our union partners, our customers and all our stakeholders must be of the highest standard.



Safety, health, and well-being are our number one priority, ensuring our people return home safe and healthy every day.



About the Role

Purpose of the role

The Customer Experience & Service Design Manager – FRP leads the design and readiness of the Interislander customer experience for the new ferries. The role translates customer insight, approved product propositions and programme requirements into practical customer journeys, service blueprints, experience standards and readiness plans.

The role connects customer experience design with operational implementation across discovery and booking, pre-travel, terminals, boarding, onboard services, disembarkation and post-travel activity. It ensures customer requirements are understood, tested and incorporated into programme and functional delivery plans.

Reporting to the Head of Customer, Product & Brand, the role works across the Ferry Replacement Programme, Product, Operations, Digital, Marketing, Revenue, People and ICT. It coordinates customer experience requirements, testing and assurance, while programme and functional leaders retain responsibility for technical delivery, operational implementation and launch approval.

This fixed-term role is predominantly focused on FRP and Interislander. Targeted support for wider Passenger customer experience priorities will be agreed with the Head where capacity permits and does not compromise programme milestones.

Key Accountabilities

Within the area of responsibility, this role is required to:

Customer Experience Strategy and Service Design

- Translate Passenger's customer direction and the approved Interislander proposition into an integrated future customer experience.
- Develop and maintain customer journeys and service blueprints across digital, terminal, vessel and frontline touchpoints.
- Define customer needs, service concepts, supporting processes and experience requirements.
- Connect customer-facing activity with the systems, people and operational processes required to deliver it.
- Ensure requirements are considered early in vessel, terminal, technology, product and service decisions.
- Maintain visibility of customer experience gaps, dependencies and decisions requiring resolution.

Customer Insight and Research

- Define the customer research and insight needed to inform FRP decisions.
- Use feedback, complaints, behavioural data and operational evidence to identify needs and pain points.
- Work with research specialists and frontline teams to test assumptions and service concepts.
- Include a range of customer needs, including families, international visitors and people with accessibility requirements.
- Translate findings into clear design choices and prioritised requirements.

Customer and Service Readiness

- Lead Passenger's customer experience and service-readiness contribution to FRP within agreed programme governance.
- Define readiness requirements, acceptance criteria and accountable delivery owners.
- Work with Operations, People, Digital, Marketing and ICT to incorporate requirements into their plans.
- Coordinate customer and frontline trials, simulations and testing.
- Track issues and readiness evidence, escalating unresolved risks through the relevant governance.
- Support a controlled transition into service and handover to ongoing owners.

Accessibility and Experience Standards

- Embed inclusive design and accessibility into physical, digital and service requirements.
- Develop practical experience principles and service standards.
- Review programme outputs against agreed customer requirements.
- Work with authorised specialists on safety, accessibility, technical and operational requirements.
- Identify departures from standards and agree corrective action or escalation.

Improvement and Cross-functional Delivery

- Maintain a prioritised FRP customer experience backlog linked to programme milestones.
- Work with the Business Improvement Manager, Ships Crew and functional owners on process design and implementation planning.
- Define outcomes, dependencies, responsibilities and measures for agreed improvements.
- Contribute to Passenger's integrated roadmap and quarterly priorities.
- Build practical service design capability and effective cross-functional ways of working.

Key Challenges

- Translating customer expectations into services that are safe, accessible, commercially appropriate and operationally achievable.
- Influencing programme decisions where delivery and resources sit outside the role's direct control.
- Connecting vessel, terminal, digital, product and frontline workstreams into a coherent customer experience.
- Identifying customer requirements early enough to influence design and avoid late rework.
- Balancing customer value, cost, programme timing and operational feasibility.
- Preparing for future services while operational teams continue delivering existing services.
- Maintaining clear boundaries between customer experience design, product ownership, marketing and operational implementation.
- Making readiness gaps visible and securing timely decisions through programme governance.
- Completing effective handover before the fixed-term role ends.

Key Success Measures

Success in this role will be demonstrated through:

- Agreed customer journeys, service blueprints and experience standards completed against programme milestones.

- Customer requirements incorporated into relevant programme and functional plans, with named owners and acceptance criteria.
- Research and testing findings visibly influencing design decisions.
- Accessibility requirements considered throughout design and readiness activity.
- Clear visibility of readiness status, dependencies, unresolved issues and risks.
- Trial findings recorded, prioritised and resolved or formally accepted through the appropriate governance.
- Customer-information and frontline-training requirements supplied in time for delivery.
- Effective coordination between Product, Operations, Digital, Marketing, Revenue and programme teams.
- Prioritised improvements delivered by accountable owners against agreed outcomes.
- Standards, documentation, measures and outstanding actions handed over to ongoing owners before the role ends.

Specific targets and milestones will be agreed with the Head of Customer, Product & Brand and relevant programme leaders.

Key Relationships Here are the key relationships relevant to this role		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Internal	Head of Customer, Product & Brand		✓	✓	✓
	FRP leadership and relevant KiwiRail workstreams		✓	✓	✓
	Interislander operational, vessel and terminal leaders			✓	✓
	Direct Reports	✓		✓	✓
	Product, Digital, Marketing and Business Improvement teams			✓	✓
	Revenue, Trade and customer service teams			✓	✓
	Interislander Operations, vessel and terminal teams			✓	✓
	C&G Enterprise – Head of Customer Experience			✓	✓
	People, ICT, Safety and other enabling functions			✓	✓
	Employee union delegates			✓	✓
External	External FRP delivery partners and relevant workstreams			✓	✓
	Port and terminal partners			✓	
	Technology suppliers and implementation partners			✓	✓
	Customer research and accessibility organisations			✓	✓
	External safety, regulatory and technical specialists			✓	✓
	Customers and research participants			✓	✓

	Approved service design consultants and specialist suppliers			✓	✓
	External union officials			✓	✓



What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing	• Integrate safety and wellbeing into service design, research, testing and readiness planning. • Obtain appropriate approvals for research and trials involving operational locations, employees or customers. • Ensure customer concepts and requirements are reviewed by relevant safety and operational specialists. • Raise emerging risks, incidents and near misses promptly. • Consider frontline workload and safe working practices when developing service requirements. • Manage team priorities to support sustainable performance.
Customer Focus	• Represent customer needs in programme and functional decisions. • Understand the differing needs of customer groups across the full travel journey. • Use research and evidence to test assumptions rather than relying solely on internal views. • Design clear and consistent transitions between booking, terminal, onboard and post-travel experiences. • Consider accessibility, reassurance, information needs and recovery when services are disrupted. • Ensure the proposed experience reflects what operational teams can deliver consistently.
High Performing Teams Skills	• Lead and develop confirmed direct reports, setting clear deliverables, ownership and performance expectations. • Coordinate specialist contributions across functions without duplicating line-management responsibilities. • Facilitate constructive discussions between customer, commercial, technical and operational teams. • Make decisions, dependencies and unresolved issues visible. • Provide timely feedback and support capability development. • Engage frontline employees and representatives through agreed processes when proposed ways of working may affect their roles. • Escalate resource conflicts and delivery risks early.
Commercial Acumen	• Assess customer experience options against customer value, cost, commercial priorities and operational feasibility. • Work with Product and Revenue teams to understand the implications of service concepts, paid experiences and customer choices. • Distinguish essential requirements from enhancements that can be staged or deferred. • Support business cases with clear customer outcomes, benefits and delivery requirements. • Use approved resources and suppliers within financial and procurement requirements.

	• Avoid creating requirements without an identified owner, implementation route or resource assessment.
Customer Experience and Service Design	• Develop and maintain the future Interislander journey from discovery and booking through travel and post-travel activity. • Produce service blueprints showing customer interactions, frontline tasks, supporting processes and system dependencies. • Translate approved product propositions into practical experience requirements. • Work with Product Development on service concepts and product interfaces, while Product retains ownership of the offer and proposition. • Work with Digital Product and ICT on customer requirements for booking, information and other digital services. • Coordinate physical and digital touchpoints, including wayfinding, information and accessibility. • Present options and recommendations with clear evidence and trade-offs. • Maintain a record of approved requirements, design decisions and changes.
Research, Insight and Experience Measurement	• Establish a research plan aligned to the decisions and milestones requiring customer evidence. • Use existing insight before commissioning additional research. • Gather feedback from customers, frontline teams and relevant accessibility specialists. • Test concepts, prototypes and service scenarios with appropriate participants. • Translate research findings into actionable requirements and priorities. • Work with relevant analytical teams to define future customer and service measures. • Establish baselines and arrangements for monitoring the experience after launch. • Follow consent, privacy and information-management requirements.
Service Standards and Accessibility	• Develop practical standards for customer information, service interactions and transitions across the journey. • Embed accessibility and inclusive design in requirements for physical environments, digital touchpoints and frontline service. • Work with specialists to identify appropriate requirements and assurance methods. • Review material programme outputs against agreed experience standards. • Document exceptions, impacts and decisions requiring escalation. • Agree ongoing ownership of standards with the relevant Passenger and operational teams.
Readiness, Trials and Assurance	• Develop a customer experience readiness plan aligned with programme milestones. • Identify required processes, procedures, customer information, training inputs and system capability.

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- Agree accountable owners, acceptance criteria and evidence requirements for readiness activities.
 - Work with People and operational leaders to translate service requirements into training and role expectations.
 - Coordinate customer and frontline testing, trials and simulations.
 - Track issues through to resolution or formal acceptance by the authorised owner.
 - Provide evidence-based readiness recommendations at programme gates.
 - Escalate unresolved customer and service risks without assuming technical, safety or operational approval authority.
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Business Improvement and Implementation Coordination

- Maintain a prioritised customer experience backlog focused on FRP deliverables.
 - Work with the Business Improvement Manager and functional owners to turn approved requirements into process improvements and implementation plans.
 - Identify dependencies, benefits, measures and delivery resources.
 - Monitor progress and escalate barriers through agreed governance.
 - Ensure Operations and functional owners retain responsibility for implementing agreed changes and sustaining performance.
 - Provide targeted support to other Passenger priorities only where agreed with the Head and compatible with FRP commitments.
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Cross-functional Planning and Handover

- Contribute to Passenger's integrated roadmap and rolling quarterly priorities.
 - Agree responsibilities and handovers across Product, Digital, Marketing, Revenue, Operations and FRP.
 - Work with the Senior Marketing Manager so customer promises and launch communications reflect approved services and readiness.
 - Work with customer service and operational teams on communication requirements, while those teams retain ownership of day-to-day customer and disruption communications.
 - Maintain accessible requirements, standards, research, decisions and testing records.
 - Plan handover to permanent owners before the fixed term ends.
 - Ensure outstanding actions, risks, measures and review requirements have clear receiving owners.
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Role Boundaries

- Senior Marketing Manager: owns consumer brand and marketing strategy, campaigns and launch marketing.
- Product Development Manager: owns product and proposition development.
- Website and Technology UX Lead: leads platform requirements and development with ICT.
- Operations and functional leaders: own implementation, frontline delivery and sustained operational performance.
- Customer service teams: own routine customer and disruption communications.
- This role: owns FRP customer journey and service design, experience requirements, standards, readiness coordination and assurance within its agreed remit.

Decision Making

The Customer Experience & Service Design Manager – FRP makes specialist customer experience and service design decisions within approved Passenger direction, programme scope and governance.

The role:

- Determines research, journey-mapping and service-design approaches.
- Develops customer experience requirements and recommends service concepts and standards.
- Prioritises the agreed CX backlog within approved milestones and capacity.
- Coordinates testing and recommends whether customer experience acceptance criteria have been met.
- Agrees delivery contributions and dependencies with functional owners.
- Escalates material gaps, changes, resource conflicts and unresolved risks.
- Makes expenditure commitments only within formally approved delegations.

Material changes to product propositions, programme scope, investment or operational arrangements require approval from the relevant accountable leaders.

The role provides customer experience assurance and readiness recommendations. Final programme, technical, safety and operational approvals remain with authorised decision-makers.

Human Resources Delegations	People Lead
Direct reports	3
Finance Delegations	Level 7: \$250,000
Budget (operating and capital)	TBC
Travel Delegations	Nil
Statutory powers	Nil

Physical demands and the nature of work

The role involves:

- Sustained computer use, research, analysis and documentation.
- Regular workshops and collaboration across geographically dispersed teams.

- Visits to vessels, terminals and other operational or programme locations.
- Walking and standing during site reviews, customer research and trials.
- Carrying a laptop and light workshop materials.
- Domestic travel and agreed flexibility for programme testing, trials and launch activity.

Operational-site activities must follow applicable access, induction and safety requirements.

Your role may include other tasks suited to your level, as your manager directs. This job description shows your current duties. We'll review and update it with you if your responsibilities change.

About you

Knowledge and Experience

- Significant experience in customer experience, service design, customer strategy or service transformation.
- Demonstrated ability to translate customer insight into journeys, service blueprints, standards and operational requirements.
- Experience supporting readiness within a complex programme or major service change.
- Strong research, facilitation and analytical skills.
- Ability to integrate physical, digital and frontline service requirements.
- Understanding of accessibility and inclusive design.
- Experience coordinating testing, trials and acceptance evidence.
- Ability to influence decisions where resources and delivery sit outside direct control.
- Experience leading people or coordinating specialist teams.
- Strong written communication and disciplined management of requirements, decisions and risks.
- Transport, travel, hospitality or other operational service experience would be advantageous.
- Experience alongside capital-programme, engineering or technical teams would be advantageous.

Ways of Working / Work-related Qualities

- You keep customer needs visible while understanding operational and commercial constraints.
- You turn insight into practical requirements and clear recommendations.
- You involve the right people early and make ownership explicit.
- You challenge assumptions constructively and explain trade-offs.
- You work effectively through influence and agreed governance.
- You distinguish your accountabilities from those of delivery owners.
- You maintain focus on priorities, milestones and achievable outcomes.
- You communicate risks early and follow actions through to resolution.
- You build capability and leave clear documentation for ongoing owners.

Other Requirements

- Ability to travel between relevant KiwiRail, terminal, vessel and programme locations.
- Ability to participate in approved trials and readiness activity as reasonably required.
- Current New Zealand driver licence where required for approved travel.
- Ability to meet applicable KiwiRail safety, drug and alcohol, and employment requirements.

Qualifications

A relevant tertiary qualification in service design, customer experience, design, business, research or a related discipline, or equivalent significant professional experience.

Practical examples demonstrating customer journey design, service implementation and readiness outcomes are required.

**CREATING
STRONGER
CONNECTIONS**

KiwiRail 