



Metro Protection Operations Manager - Auckland

Position Description

Team:	Protection Metro	Location:	Auckland
Reports to:	Protection Manager - Metros		
Role Type:	Full Time, Fixed Term		

About Us

KiwiRail's Role in Aotearoa, New Zealand

KiwiRail delivers sustainable and inclusive growth for our customers, our communities and our people.

For more than 150 years, rail in New Zealand has connected communities, delivered goods and people around the country and showcased our spectacular scenery to the world. Our purpose 'Stronger Connections, Better New Zealand,' speaks to connected people, networks, journeys, experiences, and ways of working that move KiwiRail, the transport sector and New Zealand forward.

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.



Health, safety and wellbeing is our number one priority. Good safety is good business

About the Role

Purpose of the role

As the Metro Protection Operations Manager - Auckland your primary responsibility is building and maintaining KiwiRail's Protection brand internally and externally. The Metro Protection Operations Manager - Auckland will provide the day-to-day leadership of the people and functions associated with the Auckland Metro Protection business unit. This role focuses on managing protection measures within high-density, urban rail environments, where safety risks and operational demands are heightened due to complex rail traffic and diverse stakeholder needs.

The Metro Protection Operations Manager - Auckland leads metro-specific protection strategies, coordinates compliance efforts, and collaborates closely with stakeholders to ensure the continuous safe operation of KiwiRail's metro services. The Metro Protection Operations Manager - Auckland will help lead and coordinate the most efficient and productive track protection method to maximise field team productivity and minimise the disruption to trains without compromising safety.

Health and Safety is an important part of how KiwiRail operates. You will be a safety leader and will be expected to "walk the safety talk"

Key Accountabilities

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

- Lead and manage Metro-protection services to ensure the safety of internal and external customers operation in the rail corridor.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with both internal and external customers, ensuring effective collaboration to support a seamless protection service.
- Deliver safety activities safety that align with national safety policies and address local risks and requirements.
- Apply subject matter expertise and support to programmes focused on continuous improvement of policy and procedure linked to compliance and safety.
- Design and lead improvement initiatives with the workforce (within the context of High Performance, High Engagement protocol as necessary) and create a highly engaged, empowered team.
- Conduct regular assessments and audits of protection activities to monitor compliance, safety performance, and efficiency.
- Lead post incident learning and timely closure of corrective actions.
- Develop, test and deliver innovative approaches to the task of protection, aligned to the future needs of the metro areas.
- Collaborate with other Protection Managers to share knowledge and lessons learned.
- Collaborate with other leaders to align with Auckland Metro Operations.
- Provide leadership and development to Protection Team Leaders and Protection staff, fostering a culture of safety, high engagement and continuous improvement.
- Support the Protection Manager – Metros when required and as requested.

Key challenges

- Balancing metro safety requirements with operational demands and service delivery to ensure minimal disruption to rail services.
- Navigating and managing relationships with various stakeholders across regions, metros, and central operations to ensure cohesive safety management.
- Support and guide the transformation of the Protection Team Leaders to fully engaged and effective leaders.
- Lifting safety performance to reduce incidents and lift safety standards to achieve and consistently meet KiwiRail safety targets.
- Stakeholder management is critically important in a large and complex organisation, including the RMTU union.
- Adapting safety protocols and protection planning to address changing rail network conditions, weather impacts, and other environmental factors.
- Mentor, coach and guide Protection Team Leaders and Safety Protectors to operate efficiently and safely while embodying safety leadership.
- Support the continuous improvement of the wider Auckland Metro Protection work group across Safety, Health and Wellbeing.

Key Relationships		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Here are the key relationships relevant to this role					
Internal	Protection Manager - Metros		✓	✓	✓
	Auckland Protection Team Leaders	✓		✓	
	Auckland Safety Protectors	✓			
	Safety, Health and Wellbeing			✓	✓
	Business Support			✓	✓
	Auckland Metro Operations Managers		✓	✓	✓
External	Contractors			✓	✓
	Project Managers (Internal and External)			✓	✓

What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing

- Drive KiwiRail's SHW standards and establish an engaged safety culture within the Auckland Metro Protection team.
- Conduct safety audits, risk assessments, and implement corrective measures based on third-party review findings.
- Lead Auckland Metro safety initiatives and incident investigations, ensuring that outcomes reinforce best practices in rail corridor protection.
- Promote a culture of safety and wellbeing within your team
- Respond effectively to safety incidents and near-misses
- Support team members' physical and mental health

Customer Focus

- Establish a customer-first approach within the Auckland Metro Protection team, ensuring all internal and external stakeholders experience responsive, compliant, and safety-focused service.
- Provide guidance to Auckland Metro Protection Leads in stakeholder engagement, promoting constructive relationships and effective communication on protection standards and responsibilities.

High Performing Teams Skills

- Set clear performance standards aligned with KiwiRail's goal
- Lead the Auckland Metro Protection team through change, developing roles and responsibilities that align with KiwiRail's vision for safety and customer service.
- Support Auckland Metro Protection Leads to embrace their leadership roles, providing coaching and development resources to build a skilled, engaged team.
- Facilitate ongoing training and professional growth opportunities for all team members, promoting a collaborative and solution-oriented team culture.
- Actively seek diverse perspectives in problem-solving
- Identify opportunities for coaching and mentoring

Commercial Acumen

- Support the Protection Manager – Metros in the effective management of the Auckland Metro protection budget within the allocated region, ensuring effective cost management and cost recovery for services provided.
- Evaluate and improve operational processes to maximise efficiency, optimise resource allocation within the centralised planning structure.
- Understand and comply with procurement guidelines
- Work with suppliers to ensure quality outcomes
- Recognise how financial decisions impact KiwiRail's overall position

Risk Management

- Apply appropriate risk management frameworks
- Identify and forecast risks, issues, and opportunities across all operational service delivery.
- Lead risk assessments and develop management strategies
- Implement risk controls and engage stakeholders in risk management

Human Resources Delegations	D
Direct reports	6 (40 – 50 total staff reporting)
Finance Delegations	\$100,000 opex \$10,00 capex
Budget (operating and capital)	\$500,000
Travel Delegations	Nil
Statutory powers	Nil

Physical demands and the nature of work

This role is administration-based and requires:

- prolonged sitting and high computer usage
- limited walking, standing, twisting, bending (at the waist), crouching (bend knee)
- carrying of laptop and paperwork when alternating between home and office
- limited lifting of up to 7 kg archive boxes

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.

Knowledge and experience

- You have significant experience 3 - 5+ in rail or infrastructure management
- You have 3 - 5+ years' experience in leading frontline teams in a fluid and dynamic operational environment.
- You have a background in managing resources to achieve smooth, coordinated delivery.
- You understand rail protection and access management.
- You understand risk assessment and response deeply, using this knowledge to improve operational outcomes and ensure compliance.
- You are an experienced in remote leadership, including of people and activity spread over a large geographic area.
- You are skilled in developing team leads, fostering accountability, and supporting their growth in leadership and safety responsibilities.
- You have experience or have supported leading culture change programmes.
- You have experience of working with labour unions, including within a High Performance, High Engagement frame, to achieve balanced outcomes.

Ways of working / Work-related qualities

- You are a values based leader.
- You personally lead safety.
- You communicate a clear vision, inspiring and guiding your team towards shared goals.
- You make informed, operational decisions, balancing immediate needs with long-term objectives.
- You build collaborative relationships across all levels, promoting trust and open communication.
- You drive accountability, setting high standards and ensuring follow-through on commitments.
- You remain adaptable, effectively managing change and steering the team through shifting priorities.
- You foster a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging innovation and proactive problem-solving.
- You prioritise safety and performance, embedding these values in all aspects of team operations

Other Requirements

- You can pass regular drug and alcohol screenings
- You have a current and valid NZ Driver's Licence

Qualifications

Desirably, you need either:

- Post tertiary education experience or equivalent work experience.

And

- You hold relevant rail certifications would be advantageous.