



Principal Track Engineer

Position Description – Infrastructure

Team:	Track Engineering	Location:	Wellington
Reports to:	Engineering Team Leader Track		
Role Type:	Permanent		

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

KiwiRail is in a phase of significant transformation to modernise and grow our rail and Interislander ferry services in Aotearoa.

The Principal Track Engineer supports KiwiRail's Engineering function by delivering technical excellence and continuous improvement across track infrastructure management. This role contributes to the development and maintenance of safe, reliable, and efficient rail assets through proactive asset management, assurance activities, and technical advisory. It plays a key part in shifting from reactive to proactive maintenance, ensuring compliance with standards, and enhancing customer satisfaction.

Key Accountabilities

Within the area of responsibility, this role is required to support the Professional Head of Track through the delivery of:

- Improvements and Approvals of Track Designs and standard specifications (Internal and 3rd party)
- Improvements and Approvals of Principals and Standards that align with NZ Standards.
- Review and Type Approval of new and innovative products that support delivery of track management
- Improvements to Learning and Development delivery to track staff.

The role is also required to support:

- the Engineering Team Leader in developing the Track Engineering Teams competences and capabilities
- The Engineering Assurance and Business Improvement Manager in carrying out compliance / assurance activities of the track management teams.
- The National Asset Manager through the provision of input to the Track Asset Class Strategy

The role shall also be responsible for:

- Providing expert technical advice to customers and stakeholders
- Assist with the scoping of RNIP works at an early stage
- Undertake the role of Subject Matter Expert for RFPs.
- Liaise with and support the management of Engineering Consultants
- Supporting recruitment, including being responsible for assessing candidate's technical competency
- Deliver changes to Principles and Standards as a result of recommendations from Assurance Activities

Key challenges

- Being seen as a technical lead for the track business across the organisation
- Overcoming resistance to change and improvements
- Balancing the need for proactive asset management with operational demands and resource constraints.
- Ensuring alignment of engineering practices with evolving international standards and KiwiRail's strategic goals.
- Influencing change across diverse stakeholder groups while maintaining compliance and safety.

Key Relationships Here are the key relationships relevant to this role		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Internal	Engineering Team Leader – Track		X		
	Engineering Managers and staff		X		
	Technical Director & Professional Heads		X		
	Operations Managers and Engineers			X	
	Learning and Development			X	
	Capital Projects and Metro teams			X	
External	Consultants			X	
	Contractors				X
	Suppliers	X			
	Relevant Authorities				X

What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing	• Prioritise safety in all engineering activities and decisions. • Identify and mitigate engineering safety risks. • Ensure compliance with rail safety standards and statutory requirements. • Lead by example in promoting a safe work environment. • Participate in and support safety interactions and incident reporting.
Customer Focus	• Provide responsive technical support to internal and external stakeholders. • Ensure engineering solutions meet customer needs and expectations. • Collaborate with operations and project teams to deliver value-driven outcomes. • Promote customer-focused improvements in asset performance.
High Performing Teams Skills	• Collaborate across engineering and operational teams to share knowledge and best practice. • Lead the development of learning and development modules. • Support team capability through mentoring and technical briefings. • Participate in technical committees and working groups.
Commercial Acumen	• Support cost-effective engineering decisions through sound asset management. • Contribute to product evaluations and type approvals that deliver long-term value. • Understand the commercial impact of engineering standards and assurance outcomes. • Assist in identifying opportunities for efficiency and innovation.
Technical Excellence and Innovation	• Contribute to the continuous improvement of engineering principles and documentation. • Use assurance findings to drive innovation and eliminate poor practices. • Engage in professional development and cross-disciplinary learning. • Advise the business in the understanding and management of risks related to hazards

Decision Making

The position is accountable for decisions regarding all project operational objectives and for the provision of advice to project team members and relevant stakeholders on day-to-day operational decisions.

Key decision-making requirements of the position include:

- Implementing changes to standards and practices based on assurance findings.
- Approving third-party infrastructure impacts in line with KiwiRail policies.
- Contributing to type approval decisions and technical briefings.

Human Resources Delegations	Nil
Direct reports	Nil
Finance Delegations	Nil
Budget (operating and capital)	Nil
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
- some network site visits including 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.

About you

Knowledge and experience

- You have 10+ years' experience in civil or railway engineering environments.
- You have 10+ years' experience of track design methodology, including software.
- You're experienced in asset management and track maintenance / renewals.
- You have a technical knowledge of international railway engineering principles and standards.
- You've worked with assurance processes and technical documentation.
- You're familiar with international standards (AS, EN, ISO).
- Experience in project Management and contract management is desirable.

Ways of working / Work-related qualities

- You prioritise safety and act with integrity in all situations.
- You communicate clearly and confidently with diverse audiences.
- You collaborate effectively and contribute positively to team outcomes.
- You stay calm under pressure and adapt to changing priorities.
- You seek continuous improvement and apply feedback to grow.

Other Requirements

- You can pass regular drug and alcohol screenings.
- You hold a current and valid NZ driver's licence.
- You're willing to travel nationally as required.

Qualifications

- You have a tertiary qualification in a relevant engineering discipline (Washington or Sydney Accord), or equivalent industry experience.
- Chartered Professional Engineer status or working towards it is desirable.
- Postgraduate qualifications in engineering or asset management are advantageous.
- You have a recognised Asset Management qualification from a relevant institution (Apopo, IAM, IPWEA, AMC)