



Commercial Finance Manager – Freight

Finance

Team:	Finance	Location:	Auckland / Wellington
Reports to:	General Manager Commercial – Customer & Growth	Job family:	Finance
Role Type:	Permanent		

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 4,500 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

The Commercial Finance Manager – Freight (CFM Freight), serves as a strategic business partner to provide financial oversight and commercial insight for KiwiRail's C&G functions for Freight.

This role supports the General Manager Commercial – Customer & Growth (GMCC&G) for Freight.

The CFM Freight will partner with the C&G team, alongside other Finance leaders to drive performance outcomes and enhance financial value by focusing on the key value drivers of safety, customer proposition, yield and volume growth, contribution margin, line returns, network performance, asset utilisation, and financial processes related to revenue management, costing and account receivables.

Strategic focus: Focuses on strategic performance management. This role uses commercial insights to influence sales strategy, drive growth initiatives, and optimise overall business performance. It's about the "why" and "how" behind sales outcomes.

Scope of influence: Influences a broad range of commercial levers—sales performance, customer segmentation, channel strategy, and profitability. Often works cross-functionally with finance, marketing, and operations to shape commercial direction.

Business insights: Leverages data-driven insights to identify trends, opportunities, and risks. This role is analytical and forward-looking, often involved in forecasting, performance reviews, and strategic planning.

The CFM Freight will work closely with various business unit support teams and the financial control teams to capture, classify and process all the business transactions into accurate, timely and relevant financial information.

The CFM Freight's responsibilities include managing CAPEX and OPEX spend within agreed budget and forecast and aligning financial outcomes with KiwiRail's operational and strategic goals.

Key Accountabilities

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

Financial Management / Reporting / Business Unit Support

- Work professionally as a member of the wider KiwiRail Finance team; provide reporting and analysis of business activity; co-ordinate and participate in the preparation of weekly/monthly/annual finance reports; co-ordinate and participate in the preparation of the annual budget and periodic reforecast of KiwiRail's financial performance
- Provision of information to support and enable KPI and other reporting and analysis.
- Provide assistance and support to relevant business units to build their understanding and confidence in financial information and underlying finance systems, processes and procedures; provide an effective interface between the business and Finance
- Develop effective business partnerships which demonstrate a clear understanding of the business, key cost and revenue drivers, business and financial performance indicators, business models etc.
- Provide high quality and timely analytical support for projects, strategic initiatives, business development proposals and other initiatives
- Ensure that financial policies and standards are understood and provide relevant business units with the knowledge to ensure and capability to ensure full compliance.
- Continuously identify and implement opportunities for improving, integrating, streamlining and sharing processes and/or service delivery.

Budgeting / Forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the preparation of KiwiRail's annual budget and periodic forecasts. Review work completed within the Finance team in relation to Budget and Forecast preparation across the Freight business unit. Act as a gatekeeper of the IBP process for demand planning in the Freight business unit. Deliver Budget and Forecast presentations to leadership teams, identifying and explaining key variances.
Month End Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the regular financial reporting and analysis to Business Unit managers and Senior members of the KiwiRail Finance Team. Prepare the C&G Performance review and EXCO performance review packs for the Freight business unit Responsibility for reporting requirements as detailed by the corporate office in a timely manner. Oversee the reconciliation of specific balance sheet accounts. Overview and as required participation in regular operational reviews and activities (e.g. stock takes)
Strategic Business Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with Freight team to align financials with KiwiRail's strategic priorities, driving operational efficiencies and optimising asset utilisation. Provide strategic financial guidance, support, and analysis to the C&G and Corporate leadership teams, influencing business decisions and investment strategies. Lead business case development and interrogation to ensure commercial opportunities are explored.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively work with and support Business teams to ensure agreed services for the business are delivered. Contribute to leadership and development of the Finance team and be a role model across the team and wider business Support and guide Business Unit managers and team leaders in developing their knowledge and skills in the finance area

Key challenges

- Balancing stakeholder demands and working across Freight functions to ensure alignment in budgeting, forecasting, and reporting requirements.
- Providing timely and actionable financial and commercial insights to support decision-making in a fast-paced environment with evolving priorities.
- Navigating the complexities of each business unit and ensuring robust financial controls are in place for ongoing and future capital projects.
- Becoming proficient in SAP and other reporting systems, understanding their interactions, and understanding the limitations, as well as strengths of all systems.
- Being viewed as key strategic partners for the C&G leadership teams.
- Developing a value-add commercial finance team to support C&G to efficiently and safely manage financial decisions.

Key Relationships Here are the key relationships relevant to this role		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Internal	General Manager Commercial – Customer & Growth		✓	✓	

	C&G Freight Leadership Team		✓	✓	
	C&G Freight Market Team		✓	✓	
	C&G Freight Customer Delivery Team		✓	✓	
	C&G Freight Customer Value Team		✓	✓	
			✓	✓	
External	Vendors and Contractors		✓	✓	
	Customers		✓	✓	
	External Auditors		✓	✓	



What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively support KiwiRail's Zero Harm initiatives, promoting a culture where safety and well-being are prioritised across all finance-related activities. • Collaborate with project managers to identify and address potential health and safety risks in Freight finance processes. • Report and investigate any incidents or near-misses, implementing corrective actions to maintain a safe working environment.
Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate and actionable financial insights that enable Freight teams to meet project timelines, quality standards, and customer expectations. • Act as a proactive finance partner to the Freight teams, helping them make data-driven decisions that enhance customer satisfaction and project delivery. • Regularly gather feedback from internal and external stakeholders, using it to improve financial services and processes in alignment with customer priorities.
Commercial Acumen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the development and monitoring of Freight budgets, forecasts, and cost controls to ensure efficient capital use and maximise financial returns. • Provide critical financial analysis to identify cost-saving opportunities and potential risks. • Support business unit investment decisions and business cases with detailed cost-benefit analysis, enabling informed decisions that drive long-term value.
High-Performing Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear performance standards aligned with KiwiRail's goal • Build a supportive and cooperative team environment • Provide timely and constructive feedback • Actively seek diverse perspectives in problem-solving • Identify opportunities for coaching and mentoring
Process Optimisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement process improvements to streamline financial reporting, ensuring timely and accurate data for decision-making. • Enhance the use of financial systems like SAP and Power BI across the Freight finance functions. • Establish clear procedures for capitalisation and asset management, reducing inefficiencies and improving data accuracy. • Collaborate with other finance leaders to share best practices, integrating innovative solutions that improve service delivery and financial insight.

Decision Making

The position is responsible for key decisions that shape the financial and operational success of Freight business units. This includes:

- **Financial Tracking and Insight:** Ensure accurate financial tracking and provide insights to support initiative outcomes.
- **Risk Management:** Identify and mitigate financial risks, advising on solutions to maintain business stability.

- **Resource Allocation:** Allocate financial resources effectively, aligning with business priorities and transformation goals.
- **Strategic Performance Management:** Guide business decisions to ensure Freight business units are financially sustainable and aligned with KiwiRail's strategic objectives.
- **Stakeholder Advisory:** Offer informed, timely advice to project teams and stakeholders on operational and financial issues.

Human Resources Delegations	Nil
Direct reports	0
Total team	1
Finance Delegations	As per role specific delegations
Budget (operating and capital)	As per role specific delegations
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.

About you

Knowledge and experience

- You demonstrate experience in high-level financial reporting, budgeting, and forecasting for large and complex businesses.
- You possess a working knowledge of ERP systems, particularly SAP, and are adept at leveraging these for financial and asset management.
- You have a track record of strategic financial partnership with senior management, including influencing and challenging decisions.
- You can use computer tools for information management
- You know how KiwiRail interacts with other agencies and the Government

Ways of working / Work-related qualities

- You act as a change agent and can drive business transformation to strategically align business practices
- You communicate effectively with stakeholders at all levels, fostering a culture of transparency and trust.
- You exhibit strong decision-making abilities, showing agility and strategic insight in a complex project environment.
- You demonstrate resilience and adaptability, working effectively under pressure and navigating organisational change.
- You prioritise customer needs, aligning financial strategies to deliver high-value outcomes for KiwiRail.
- You champion diversity, inclusion, and collaborative practices, contributing positively to KiwiRail's work culture.

Other Requirements

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

Qualifications

- You hold a degree in finance, accounting, or a related field.
- Relevant professional certification (e.g., CPA, CA) is preferred.

**CREATING
STRONGER
CONNECTIONS**