



Design Planner

Infrastructure – Integrated Planning

Team:	National Planning	Location:	Palmerston North
Reports to:	Integrated Planning Team Leader		
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 Design Planner is responsible for overseeing and managing the delivery design planning of projects across various media, ensuring that all design processes are meeting agreed deadlines. This role plays a critical part in bridging designs with practical execution, ensuring that design outputs are completed in the approved timeframe and strategically aligned with business objectives.

The Design Planner collaborates closely with designers, project managers, Production and Asset teams and other stakeholders, establish realistic project timelines, and drive seamless workflow integration. By maintaining a clear focus on quality, consistency, and stakeholder expectations, this role ensures that all design initiatives contribute meaningfully to the organisation's broader goals and long-term success.

Key Accountabilities

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

- Develop and maintain an integrated schedule to manage works delivery, including dependencies and critical paths.
- Conduct monthly forecasts with production leads, analysing changes and potential impacts.
- Maintain a rolling 18–24-month plan for long-term alignment and strategic planning, forecast labour, plant, and material requirements, regularly updating it to reflect changes.
- Ensure efficient and optimised planning by coordinating activities and informing stakeholders of schedule changes.
- Act as the interface between regional teams and other departments, facilitating communication and early notifications.
- Provide high-quality monthly reports with financial forecasts, delivery progress, and risk assessments for governance and external reporting.
- Provide precise financial and delivery forecasts, ensuring targets are met and integrated into project planning.
- Implement continuous improvement initiatives and benchmark processes against industry standards to enhance efficiency.

Key challenges

- Balancing the demands of BAU and Major Projects while ensuring maintaining accuracy of the design delivery plan.
- Maintaining effective collaboration with cross-functional teams and managing interdependencies to ensure seamless project integration.
- Driving continuous improvement in design delivery planning processes to enhance productivity and efficiency in a dynamic, fast-paced environment.
- Cross-Disciplinary Coordination: Managing and integrating infrastructure projects across various disciplines, while identifying and resolving potential conflicts to enable seamless design delivery.
- Standardisation and Consistency: Collaborating with other Team Leaders and the National Planning Manager to standardise design planning processes and ensure consistency in practices across regions.

Key Relationships Here are the key relationships relevant to this role		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Internal	Planning Team Leader		✓		✓
	Planning Team		✓	✓	
	Integrated Planning Team		✓		✓
	Integrated Delivery Leaders		✓		✓
	Project/Programme Leaders		✓	✓	✓
	Engineering Team		✓	✓	✓
	Track Machine Group			✓	✓
External	Contractors/Suppliers		✓	✓	✓
	Regulatory Bodies			✓	



What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing

- Champion a proactive safety culture, ensuring the team adheres to KiwiRail's health and safety guidelines.
- Monitor and manage safety risks associated with planning and resource allocation activities.
- Conduct regular safety briefings and promote wellbeing initiatives within the team.
- Respond effectively to safety incidents and near-misses
- Support yourself and team members' physical and mental health
- Promote and adhere to KiwiRail's health and safety standards, ensuring a proactive approach to personal and team safety.
- Lead by example in fostering a safety-first culture and ensuring compliance with all rail safety system standards, procedures, and statutory requirements.
- Conduct safety audits and inspections to ensure compliance with safety protocols.
- Report all accidents and incidents to your immediate supervisor within one hour.
- Ensure that health and safety practices are integrated into all planning and scheduling activities.
- Comply with rail safety standards and report hazards and incidents promptly, ensuring adherence to KiwiRail's health and safety requirements.

Customer Focus

- Ensure that planning and scheduling align with customer requirements, supporting excellent service delivery.
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to resolve issues that impact customer satisfaction.
- Drive improvements in planning processes that directly enhance customer experience.
- Respond quickly to customer needs
- Work with colleagues to improve customer outcomes

High Performing Teams Skills

- Foster a high-performance culture by providing coaching, support, and clear direction to team members.
- Conduct regular performance reviews and set measurable goals for individual and team development.
- Encourage knowledge sharing and collaboration to enhance team capabilities.
- Seek and respond constructively to feedback on your performance
- Share knowledge and support colleagues in their professional growth

Commercial Acumen

- Optimise resource allocation to reduce costs and improve planning efficiency.
- Support the National Planning Manager in identifying cost-saving opportunities within project and resource planning.
- Track and report on budget performance for integrated planning activities
- Work with suppliers to ensure quality outcomes

- Recognise how financial decisions impact KiwiRail's overall position
- Provide precise financial and delivery forecasts, ensuring targets are met and integrated into project planning.
- Collaborate with finance and production teams to align budgets with schedules and adjust forecasts based on progress.
- Develop financial models to support forecasting, budgeting, and reporting on results and variations.

Design Scheduling & Planning

- Develop and maintain an integrated schedule to manage works delivery, including dependencies and critical paths.
- Conduct monthly forecasts with production leads, analysing changes and potential impacts.
- Maintain a rolling 18–24-month plan for long-term alignment and strategic planning, forecast labour, plant, and material requirements, regularly updating it to reflect changes.
- Ensure efficient and optimised planning by coordinating activities and informing stakeholders of schedule changes.
- Drive high standards in planning by maintaining delivery schedules and supporting production leads with best practices and training.
- Identify and mitigate risks by proactively spotting critical pinch points and developing contingency plans.
- Integrate all delivery plans and ensure compliance and efficiency in planning and coordinating various works.
- Coordinate and optimise resources by managing allocation, avoiding conflicts, and ensuring timely project delivery.
- Ensure design planning processes are followed, including work orders, audits, and asset completion forms.
- Prepare and update weekly/fortnightly/monthly work plans, ensuring accurate and timely information.
- Resolve scheduling conflicts and plan the design Renewals programme 18–24 months out for long-term visibility.
- Facilitate weekly planning meetings, document issues, and follow up on actions.
- Distribute weekly/fortnightly/monthly schedules to all key stakeholders and help build contingency into scheduled works.
- Represent Infrastructure Services in planning meetings and support monthly capital and renewals reviews.
- Promote a proactive safety approach and integrate safety practices into all planning and scheduling activities.

Collaboration and Communication

- Act as the interface between regional teams and other departments, facilitating communication and early notifications.
- Organise and lead meetings to align project activities, resolve conflicts, and maintain open communication with all stakeholders.
- Collaborate with Asset and Production leads to develop detailed plans, ensuring all necessary elements are identified and planned.
- Liaise with various teams to ensure planned activities are accurately reflected and not in conflict.

Performance Monitoring and Reporting

- Provide high-quality monthly reports with financial forecasts, delivery progress, and risk assessments for governance and external reporting.
- Develop and present detailed progress reports to senior management, using data-driven insights to highlight concerns and recommend actions.
- Maintain accurate records of activities, changes, and decisions, ensuring comprehensive and timely reporting.
- Conduct regular risk assessments and collaborate with project teams to implement mitigation strategies.
- Integrate risk management into all planning activities, maintaining a proactive approach to addressing potential risks.
- Provide accurate reporting to stakeholders and Finance teams, including NZTA, regarding major works completed monthly.
- Report on scheduled vs. actual work, identify constraints, and implement mitigations with managers.

Continuous Improvement

- Implement continuous improvement initiatives and benchmark processes against industry standards to enhance efficiency.
 - Develop and maintain planning guidelines aligned with organisational goals and objectives.
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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 design decisions.

Key decision-making requirements of the position include:

- Determining the optimal allocation of national resources—such as designs, to ensure it meets the expectations and priority of regions, metros and projects.
- Prioritising projects and activities to ensure seamless integration of multiple initiatives, balancing the needs of infrastructure planning teams, Capital Projects, and regional leads.
- Identifying and resolving scheduling conflicts or resource constraints, particularly in high-impact areas like Block of Line activities, to support smooth project execution.
- Making real-time adjustments to resource plans and schedules based on changing project demands, safety considerations, and customer requirements.
- Assessing and implementing process improvements within planning and scheduling to enhance productivity and efficiency, aligned with organisational KPIs.
- Making strategic decisions in collaboration with cross-functional teams to ensure that all planning aligns with KiwiRail's standards for health, safety, and wellbeing.

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
- 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 have significant experience in planning, monitoring, and forecasting project/work activities, ideally within infrastructure or rail environments.
- You have the ability to develop and maintain design integrated programme schedules.
- You possess strong analytical skills to interpret data and generate accurate forecasts.
- You have proficiency in reporting and analysing actual costs and timeframes against design planned estimates
- You have experience with project management tools such as P6, Microsoft Project, and Excel
- You have experience in conducting regular risk assessments and assist with updating risk registers.
- You have the ability to provide high-quality monthly reports for internal governance and external reporting.

Ways of working / Work-related qualities

- You communicate well at all levels
- You are customer focused
- You exhibit a commercial mindset, understanding the cost implications of planning decisions.
- You are proactive in identifying risks and addressing issues
- You are adaptable and solution-oriented, able to thrive in a dynamic, fast-paced environment.
- You are organised, responsive and dependable
- You value diversity and help create an inclusive workplace

Other Requirements

- You must pass regular drug and alcohol screenings
- You have a current and valid Full NZ Driver's Licence
- You are willing to travel nationally as required for the role

Qualifications

You need either:

- You hold a relevant engineering, project management degree or equivalent qualification.

**CREATING
STRONGER
CONNECTIONS**

The KiwiRail logo, featuring the word "KiwiRail" in a bold, sans-serif font, followed by a stylized graphic of a kiwi bird's tail feathers.