



Strategic People Partner

People and Capability

Team:	People and Capability	Location:	Auckland
Reports to:	General Manager – People Partnering		
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 Strategic People Partner plays a central role in enabling this transformation by providing high-impact, forward-thinking HR support to Tier 3+ business leaders. This role acts as a trusted advisor and strategic coach—driving culture, talent, assuring capability, change leadership, and organisational development across assigned portfolios. With a strong understanding of KiwiRail's operational goals and challenges, the Strategic People Partner delivers people strategies that support business success and long-term workforce resilience.

Key Accountabilities

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

- Partner with business leaders to shape and deliver strategic workforce, culture, and leadership solutions that support KiwiRail's enterprise priorities.
- Provide thought leadership on organisational design, leadership capability, and change readiness to enable successful business transformation.
- Contributing to the design and delivery of enterprise-level People Strategy projects, ensuring alignment with KiwiRail's strategic direction and organisational goals.
- Act as a key liaison for assigned Tier 3+ leaders bringing insight, influence, and a unified HR/People perspective.
- Engage in and actively contribute to strategic capability planning, succession, and capability planning to meet current and future resourcing needs.
- Interpret and use workforce data—such as labour cost, turnover, diversity, and risk indicators—to shape strategic HR/People decisions.
- Maintain deep awareness of KiwiRail's operational priorities to align HR/People initiatives with business outcomes.
- Lead strategic change initiatives, including organisation development, culture initiatives, and engagement strategies.
- Identify opportunities for HR to add value through networking, internal relationship-building, and anticipating organisational needs.

Key challenges

- Influencing culture and strategic people decisions in diverse and high-paced operational business units.
- Embedding long-term people strategies without direct leadership authority or transactional responsibility.
- Translating complex workforce data and external trends into meaningful business insight and action.

Key Relationships Here are the key relationships relevant to this role		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Internal	GM – People Partnering		✓	✓	
	Tier 3+ leaders		✓	✓	✓
	Wider People Partnering and P&C Team			✓	✓

	Centres of Expertise (e.g., Recruitment, HRIS, L&D, Employment Relations)			✓	✓
	Health, Safety and Wellbeing team			✓	✓
External	HR service providers and external consultants			✓	✓
	Employment legal and advisory professionals			✓	✓
	HR networks and professional forums			✓	✓



What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing	• Champion KiwiRail's safety-first values across all strategic initiatives. • Promote wellbeing in capability planning, change, and leadership engagement. • Identify psychosocial risks and guide leaders to create psychologically safe environments. • Support a culture of inclusive and respectful behaviour across the business. • Incorporate wellbeing metrics and insight into people strategies.
Customer Focus	• Partner with leaders to create and embed a shared outlook for KiwiRail's future workforce. • Understand business unit priorities and ensure people initiatives directly support delivery outcomes. • Build strong, trusted relationships with internal customers and act as a strategic coach. • Use customer insight to shape proactive people solutions that enhance employee experience. • Communicate people strategies in a way that brings clarity and purpose to the business.
High Performing Teams Skills	• Work in close collaboration with the People and Performance Practice Lead to ensure effective assignment of project and business development work activities to respond to business unit priorities and needs. • Contribute to the design and implementation of leadership capability and engagement initiatives. • Support and advise on culture-building activities aligned with KiwiRail values and objectives. • Provide strategic input to succession, talent, and team performance initiatives. • Offer coaching to build leadership confidence in managing and growing their teams. • Embed practices that enable engagement, accountability, and performance.
Commercial Acumen	• Interpret business data, risks, and challenges to shape P&C recommendations. • Analyse and report on workforce information (e.g., cost of labour, turnover, leave, risk metrics). • Leverage insight to drive value through improved workforce performance and efficiency. • Stay connected to internal and external market drivers and reflect these in people strategies. • Identify key opportunities for HR to contribute to exceeding business performance.

**Strategic Change &
Organisational
Development**

- Lead cultural and change initiatives that align people behaviours with strategy.
 - Support implementation of people strategy within assigned business units.
 - Actively engage in organisational design projects to ensure fit-for-purpose structures.
 - Maintain up-to-date knowledge of legislation and HR practice to inform business advice.
 - In partnership with GM People Partnering, contribute to strategic planning and implementation across the team.
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Decision Making

This is a strategic individual contributor role with delegated People Leader authority. The role has responsibility for influencing strategic people decisions within business units and providing guidance that supports operational and enterprise outcomes.

Human Resources Delegations	People Leader
Direct reports	Nil
Finance Delegations	Level 8 Nil Capex
Budget (operating and capital)	TBC
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 bring 10+ years' experience in strategic HR partnering or senior advisory roles in large complex and operational, unionised environments.
- You have led or supported assuring capability, talent strategy, change, and culture initiatives, including the facilitation of team-based OD activities that strengthen capability and alignment at the business unit level.
- You understand business drivers and can translate them into practical people strategies.
- You are skilled in workforce analytics and apply data to influence leadership decisions.
- You have experience in project and change management in a large organisation.
- You have strong awareness of employment law and industrial relations risk in the NZ context.
- You can engage confidently with executive-level stakeholders and provide trusted counsel.

Ways of working / Work-related qualities

- You prioritise safety and are confident addressing risks and wellbeing needs.
- You understand your stakeholders' needs and deliver people solutions that are practical, value-adding, and future-focused.
- You are calm and focused when navigating ambiguity and complex change.
- You build rapport quickly and collaborate well across functions and levels.
- You value inclusion and support a culture where all people can thrive.

Other Requirements

- You can pass regular drug and alcohol screenings.
- You have a current and valid NZ driver's licence.
- You are available to travel nationally when required.

Qualifications

You need either:

- A relevant tertiary qualification in Human Resources, Organisation Development, or Business
- Or equivalent experience in strategic people partnering and organisational development

