



Head of Passenger Crew and Onboard Experience

KiwiRail

Team:	KiwiRail for Inter-Regional Commuter, Great Journeys New Zealand and InterIslander	Location:	Wellington or Christchurch
Reports to:	General Manager – GJNZ	Job family:	TBC
Role Type:	Permanent	Salary:	TBC

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

The Head of Crew and Onboard Experience is responsible for delivering exceptional guest experiences for KiwiRail's passenger businesses.

The Head of Crew and Onboard Experience will:

- be a safety leader within KiwiRail;
- lead and inspire onboard crews and their leaders to provide a world-class service;
- lead through influence to inspire all teams engaged in the delivery of passenger services at KiwiRail - driving a customer centric culture that is collaborative, committed to excellence and where all teams are committed to the continuous improvement of our Customer experiences;
- be directly responsible for the strategic and commercial management of the on-board experience including the management of on-board crew assets and costs, food and beverage and on-board retail sales.

Guided by the Brand strategy for KiwiRail Commuter, GJNZ and Interislander, this role sets the strategy for KiwiRail's passenger crew and on-board experience, ensuring the seamless alignment and execution of daily service standards and operations ensuring safety protocols are adhered to and commercial outcomes are achieved.

The Head of Crew and Onboard Experience will work closely with cross-functional teams, including operations, maintenance, sales, marketing and unions to ensure that the passenger journey aligns with the company's vision of delivering an outstanding travel experience for all customers.

Key Accountabilities

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

Customer Experience Leadership

- **Develop and implement strategies** to deliver exceptional customer experiences, ensuring every guest interaction reflects the brand's values and standards.
- **Lead initiatives** to continually enhance service delivery, identify improvement opportunities, and maintain high levels of guest satisfaction.
- **Encourage customer feedback** to ensure continuous improvement. Work with marketing to implement onboard capabilities to survey customers.
- **Be the primary point of escalation** for customer issues, ensuring swift and effective resolution to maintain positive relationships.
- **Staff Management:** Schedule and manage staff shifts to ensure efficient service.
- **Customer Experience:** Enhance guest satisfaction through exceptional service and product offerings. Gather customer feedback to continuously improve the dining experience

Crew Management & Development

- **Motivate**, develop and lead direct reports.
- **Conduct regular evaluations**, provide constructive feedback, and implement strategies to improve individual and team performance.
- **Implement training programs** and performance management processes to ensure crew members have the skills and knowledge to excel in their roles.

Operational Excellence

- **Training.** Ensure there are systems in place for team training, skills and knowledge development, to deliver next level customer service and hit NPS targets. Promoting a continuous improvement ethos.
- **Be technologically savvy**, ensuring there are communication channels for crew to engage with the wider team through channels such as Teams.

Safety & Compliance

- Ensure all customer and crew activities comply with health, safety, and regulatory requirements, fostering a culture of safety across the team.

- Regularly review and update safety protocols and ensure all crew members are trained and aware of their responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment.

Stakeholder Engagement & Communication

- **Build strong relationships** with internal and external stakeholders, including operations, marketing, and suppliers, to ensure a seamless and integrated service experience.
- **Communicate effectively** with crew members, providing clear direction, support, and motivation to achieve team goals.
- **Work collaboratively** with other GJNZ teams including Sales & Marketing, the Contact and Travel Centre, Tour Operations and Fleet Operations to promote the brand and align with customer delivery.
- **Design and implement** innovative customer experiences.
- **Work closely** with kitchen staff, marketing, fleet operations, on-board crew leaders, on-board crew and other departments.
- **Communicate effectively** with management regarding operational needs and challenges. **Ensure safety**, working collaboratively with the Operations team to ensure safety is at the heart of customer delivery.

Financial Performance & Budget Management

- **Develop and manage the customer service** and crew budget, ensuring cost-effective operations without compromising service quality.
- **Monitor financial performance**, analyse trends, and implement strategies to optimise efficiency and profitability including but not limited to crew rosters, food and beverage sales and costs and general revenue opportunities and delivery costs.
- **Budgeting and Financial Management:** In conjunction with Manager of the Interislander production kitchen and the Head of Fleet Operations Interislander and GJNZ prepare and manage the food and beverage budget. Monitor revenue and expenses and analyse financial performance. Implement cost control measures to maximize profitability.

Continuous Improvement & Innovation

- **Drive a culture of continuous improvement**, identifying opportunities for enhancing customer and crew experiences through feedback, data analysis, and industry trends.
- **Implement innovative solutions** to improve service delivery, operational efficiency, and overall customer satisfaction.

Brand Representation & Ambassadorship

- **Serve as a brand ambassador**, ensuring that crew members embody the company's values and consistently deliver a premium service that aligns with brand expectations.
- **Marketing and Promotions:** Collaborate with other departments to develop marketing strategies to promote food and beverage offerings. Collaborate with marketing on social media and other channels to engage potential customers.

Retail Management

- **Staff:** Training on retail offerings for on on-board crew. Influencing staff roster patterns and low muster crew plans to ensure adequate coverage of retail outlets.
- **Sales and merchandising management:** Drive sales through effective merchandising and promotional strategies. Ensure products are presented effectively to maximise sales. Stay updated on current retail trends and competitor offerings. Gather customer feedback to improve services and product offerings.
- **Budgeting and Financial Management:** Prepare and manage the retail budget. Monitor sales performance and adjust strategies to meet financial goals including identifying opportunities for growth. Generate regular reports on sales, inventory, and customer feedback. Use data analysis to inform decision-making and improve performance. Present findings to upper management and recommend changes.
- **Retail Operations Management:** Work with store crew to oversee inventory levels, including ordering and replenishing stock. Implement inventory control measures to minimize shrinkage.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with other departments (e.g., marketing, operations) to ensure alignment. Engage with stakeholders to promote the retail segment of the tourism business.

Food and Beverage Management:

- **Operational Management:** In conjunction with the Manager of the Interislander production kitchen and the Head of Fleet Operations Interislander and GJNZ oversee daily operations of all food and beverage outlets and ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations. Ensuring the maintenance of high standards of food quality and presentation.
- **Quality Control:** Ensure consistent quality of food and beverages across all outlets. Address any quality issues promptly to maintain brand standards.
- **Menu Development:** Guided by Brand strategy for Interislander and GJNZ, collaborate with chefs to design and update menus based on seasonal availability and customer preferences – creating innovative, profitable dishes and beverage pairings.
- **Inventory Management:** In conjunction with the Manager of the Interislander production kitchen and the Head of Fleet Operations Interislander and GJNZ oversee ordering and inventory of food and beverage supplies. Implement inventory control systems to minimize waste and ensure quality. Manage supplier relationships.
- **Collaborate with local vendors** to source premium ingredients.
- **Trends and Innovation:** Stay updated on food and beverage trends in the tourism industry bringing inspiration and insights to internal teams responsible for food production. Experiment with new concepts and ideas to enhance the guest experience.

Key Relationships		Manage /Lead	Deliver to	Collaborate with	Advise or inform
Here are the key relationships relevant to this role					
Internal	Fleet Operations & Customer Delivery: GJNZ, IIL & Commuter			✓	
	GJNZ & IIL Crew Leaders	✓		✓	
	Customer Contact Centre & Travel Centre Manager & Team			✓	
	Head of marketing & trade			✓	
	F&B Managers GJNZ & IIL	✓		✓	
	Transitional Projects Manager IIL			✓	
	Internal service providers			✓	
	Head of Customer & Tour Operations			✓	
	Service Operations Managers IIL & GJNZ	✓		✓	
	GJNZ & IIL Onboard Delivery Teams	✓		✓	
	Human Resources Manager			✓	
	Wider KR team			✓	
External	Customers		✓		
	RMTU			✓	
	Local and central government transport sector agencies		✓	✓	

What you will do to contribute

Health Safety and Wellbeing

- Foster a strong culture of safety and wellbeing, encouraging safe practices and behaviours within the team.
- Establish and enforce safety procedures, ensuring full team compliance.
- Identify and assess workplace risks, developing proactive strategies to mitigate potential hazards.
- Effectively manage and respond to safety incidents and near-misses, ensuring timely and appropriate action.
- Provide ongoing support for physical and mental health of team members, promoting a healthy work environment
- Ensure the organisation's full compliance with all relevant legislation, regulatory requirements, policies and procedures.
- Ensure compliance with all Employment Legislation, Employment Contracts, and Human Resources policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Manage escalated accidents, injuries, hazards and potential incidents within the Customer Experience team, and implement recommendations.

Leadership

- Implement Customer Services teams strategic plan to collaboratively achieve Kiwirail's KPI's.
 - Develop and maintain strong partnerships with relevant stakeholders and external organisations.
 - Oversee Crew Managers to ensure they conduct performance reviews in line with organisational standards and expectations.
 - Address performance issues promptly and constructively.
 - Champion values, behaviors, and objectives that promote an integrated, collaborative work environment, driving high performance and quality service delivery.
 - Ensure all team members possess and maintain the required skills and competencies, with robust plans in place for ongoing training and qualification compliance.
 - Ensure commitment and buy-in to continuous improvement projects by coordinating the input, support, and communication between teams.
 - Provide leadership that nurtures a culture of innovation, initiative, problem ownership, personal accountability, and engagement.
 - Lead by example, creating a work environment that promotes initiative, problem ownership, and personal responsibility.
 - Ensure there is visibility of key information in your area of accountability so that it is easily shared and understood by the business as a whole.
 - Establish channels that enable team members to contribute their delivery and improvement ideas, ensuring these are shared with and addressed by the executive team.
 - Lead a team to develop and implement strategic strategies, actions and KPI's for growth of revenue, yield and market penetration with a customer led process.
 - Provide monthly reports to the GM.
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**Customer Service &
Operational Performance**

Crew & training

- Maintain oversight of staffing levels and leave liability.
- Work with Customer Contact Manager to ensure cross-team collaboration.
- Ensure all staff are trained to deliver products to a quality level of customer expected delivery.
- In conjunction with the OD & Training Team, develop Customer experience, conflict resolution and other training that would enable the team to deliver customer centric experiences.
- Facilitate regular workshops to encourage team discussions on opportunities for service improvement.
- Work collaboratively with teams to introduce new service offerings, ensuring systems and processes are in place to support smooth operations.

Customers

- Ensure quality delivery of all Kiwirail services including standard and premium services. Ensure the best level customer service, streamlined systems and processes and a customer led lens for all delivery.
- Lead investigations and provide responses and resolutions to escalated customer complaints and feedback.
- Work closely with the Travel Centre & Tour Operations team on the implementation of Customer feedback framework.
- Establish clear objectives for their team and ensure all staff are aware of customer service objectives, strategies, performance targets and processes.
- Responds to and resolves customer complaints and suggestions.

Procedures

Oversee records management, ensuring all team members understand and follow the policies and procedures related to the creation, maintenance, retention, and destruction of records.

Develop, monitor and review service operations standards ensuring that they are in line with agreed operational targets.

- Manage the collection and collation of operations information and statistics as required.
- Collaboratively design, update and implement processes around:
 - Customer complaints and concerns
 - Customer incidents.
- Work collaboratively to provide the business with 24/7 coverage to respond to disruptions situations across GJNZ trains.
- Use data to drive decision making.

Finance

- Take responsibility for team-led operational costs, including managing staffing levels, wages for onboard crew, food and beverage (F&B) delivery expenses (including minimising wastage), and overseeing PGF project delivery related to F&B, customer, and crew services. Identify and
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implement strategies to develop and grow new revenue streams while optimising existing ones.

- Manage the financial budget for the business area, ensuring targets are met consistently.
- Ensure operations are conducted in a safe and cost-effective manner, identifying potential cost-saving opportunities without compromising the customer experience.
- Ensure your team have a thorough understanding of company expenditure and budgets when recruiting, rostering and general area spend.
- Collate and report all costs relating to business area including budgeted spend and disruptions.
- Work with leadership team to implement new revenue source initiatives.
- Authorise refunds, voids and variations at delegation levels when required.

Human Resources Delegations	TBC
Direct reports	3 – 5 (total staff reporting, approx.)
Finance Delegations	TBC
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

- Minimum of 5 years employee leadership and development, including coaching and mentoring.
- Proven management experience gained in the service industry or a customer focused organisation, coupled with exceptional customer focus – both internal and external tech savvy / experience and confidence in using a range of IT programs.
- Commercial experience managing budgets, and ensuring business area profitability.
- Ability to engage with staff members and build effective relationships with internal and external customers.
- Previous experience within transport, hospitality or tourist focussed industry.
- Previous experience within a customer focused environment.
- Experience working in a highly unionised on call environment.
- A working understanding of NZ employment and health and safety legislation.

Ways of working / Work-related qualities

- Customer focused, always striving for continuous improvement
- Experience building rapport with business partners
- You're flexible and practical
- You have a commercial mindset
- You value diversity and help create an inclusive workplace

Other Requirements

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

Qualifications

You need either:

- Relevant operational experience from a comparable industry
- Tertiary qualification (Tourism, business management or similar)
- You hold relevant industry certifications

**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.