

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Distribution System Operator (DSO) Strategy Lead

Location: Rangiora, Canterbury	Reports to: Head of Future Networks	Team: Network
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About MainPower NZ Ltd

MainPower is the electricity lines company serving the communities of Waimakariri, Hurunui and Kaikōura. With a century-long legacy, we take great pride in owning, operating, and maintaining the essential infrastructure of poles, wires, and underground cabling that powers homes and businesses throughout our network.

With a commitment to safety and reliability, MainPower ensures a secure electricity supply to over 44,000 connections, positively impacting the lives of the people who call North Canterbury home. From bustling urban centres like Rangiora and Kaiapoi to the picturesque farmland of Hurunui, the renowned wine country of the Waipara Valley, and iconic tourist destinations of Hanmer Springs and Kaikōura, MainPower plays a vital role in supporting the diverse needs of our region.

Position Purpose

The DSO Strategy Lead role is to ensure the strategic and technical leadership, leading or contributing to initiatives to help shape MainPower's role in a changing New Zealand energy environment. This is a collaborative role built on a foundation of deep network and energy system knowledge, focused on providing industry-leading strategies and solutions across network transformation, flexibility and market design or participation, non-network solutions, DER orchestration, network investment analysis and planning.

Key Accountabilities

Key Result Area	Accountabilities
Leadership <i>Lead DSO Strategies and Initiatives.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide senior strategic and technical leadership to the Future Networks team and wider business across strategic thinking, DSO concepts, electricity markets, DSO technology architecture, network investment, consumer technology, and network operations.Provide senior technical and strategic leadership on innovations and opportunities to improve Future Networks and plans and investment strategies.Research and present opportunities to improve network management, network performance, operations and resilience, driving continuous improvement and innovation with a focus on value for our consumers.

<p>DSO Strategy and Initiatives</p> <p><i>MainPower's strategic approach to DSO capability development.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support MainPower's DSO strategy and develop an associated DSO roadmap with initiatives aligned with industry thinking, focusing on collaboration with our peers. Design local flexibility products (constraint management, voltage support, peak reduction), procurement rules, neutrality safeguards, and verification/settlement processes. Coordinate and align with industry stakeholders. Explore flexibility procurement and develop a market participation framework (products, neutrality principles, dispatch/verification, settlement, and data transparency), aligned with EA guidance. Develop transparent data/tools such as capacity maps, signals, performance reporting to enable retailers/aggregators and Commercial and Industrial customers to engage and participate. Build a toolkit to compare traditional network reinforcement with flexibility options such as technical viability, reliability, consumer outcomes etc. Support development of a <i>Non-Wires Alternatives</i> (NWA) portfolio of non-network deferral/augmentation options to support network planning. Explore DSO system architecture for ADMS/DERMS, SCADA/OMS/GIS integration, and interfaces to aggregators/flex providers/DER direct (OpenADR/IEEE 2030.5 where appropriate).
<p>Network Development Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support integration of DSO concepts and strategies into AMP planning processes. Support network analysis and development of MainPower's Network Development investment plan (10-year to 30-year). Provide power system modelling support to the Future Networks and Network Operations teams, through competent use of load flow software such as Sincal or PowerFactory. Support development and maintenance of advanced network load and energy forecasting models.
<p>Industry Engagement</p> <p><i>Represent MainPower and contribute to industry initiatives and working groups.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Head of Future Networks with industry initiatives, working groups and work with EDB peers to collaborate, standardise and align Future Network and DSO activities.

<p>Health and Safety Support</p> <p><i>Provide support to the Network department to contribute towards a culture of health and safety.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 'safety by design' is considered and integrated in DSO and Future Networks activities. • Positively contribute to MainPower's health and safety culture through active support and adherence to internal policies and procedures. • Act as a role model for health and safety practices and policies.
<p>Audit, Risk and Compliance Management</p> <p><i>Identification, assessment, monitoring and management of risks, using the Risk Management Framework.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure MainPower's risk framework is incorporated into DSO and Future Networks activities. • Attend industry best practice courses, events and ensure that MainPower's Future Network and DSO approaches, approaches, policies and procedures are current and world class. • Research, understand and apply relevant industry standards and procedures.
<p>Team Participation</p> <p><i>Contribute to and work with the Network team and wider Company, to deliver a constructive workplace culture.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Head of Future Networks is made aware of issues and kept informed of Future Networks and Electricity Industry activities. • Provide quality service and support to all contact areas within MainPower, including backup support as required. • Participate fully in meetings with colleagues, contributing as appropriate and supporting colleagues as required. • Engage with and develop positive and effective relationships with customers, staff members, suppliers, and contractors. • Share technical knowledge and expertise; provide training for other staff as required, and customer knowledge to enhance customer service. • Provide support to MainPower during emergency response and adverse weather events. This support may include work that draws on current or previous experience within the industry or secondment to other areas of the business as required in order providing support to the customer and community. • Undertake any further responsibilities as requested by the Head of Future Networks.
<p>Professional Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in performance reviews with the Head of Future Networks.

<p><i>Undertake all professional development required to fulfil position competencies and accountabilities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conjunction with the Head of Future Networks, prepare and keep current a professional development plan. • Participate in 1-on-1 meetings to discuss progress and address any training or resourcing requirements of the role.
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Key Relationships

Internal

- All MainPower staff

External

- Customers
- Key Suppliers, advisors and consultants
- Industry bodies (such as ENA, EEA, and Transpower)
- Other Electricity Distribution Businesses.

Qualifications/Experience

Qualifications

- Tertiary level electrical engineering qualification or similar relevant qualification.

Experience

- A comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the electricity industry, preferably with at least 10+ years' experience in electricity network planning, electricity markets and market design, flexibility procurement, network operations, electricity regulations and policy.

Competencies

In order to be effective in the position, the DSO Strategy Lead shall have and be able to demonstrate the following **skills and experience**:

- An ability to think strategically and demonstrated experience in transforming strategy into plans.
- Strong knowledge of industry regulations, standards and best practices.
- Knowledge and experience with ADMS/DERMS architectures and grid-edge integration; practical familiarity with OpenADR and IEEE 2030.5 (or equivalent).
- Deep knowledge of NZ frameworks: EA Code/consultations (FNF workstreams, DSO developments, distribution pricing, flexibility guidance) and ComCom Part 4 (DPP/ID/innovation allowances).

- Experience with TSO–DSO coordination models (international or NZ pilots) and UK Open Networks learnings (neutral market facilitation, flexibility KPIs).
- Experience in writing professional documents, standards, and guides targeted at a range of audiences.
- A competent user of complex network analysis systems, ADMS, power flow and GIS software, data analytics platforms; and the ability to quickly adapt to new systems.
- A customer centric, results orientated approach to business decision making.
- An ability to take initiative combined with sound judgement.
- A good planner with the ability to prioritise workload.
- Excellent communication and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to work constructively in a team.

In order to be effective in the position, the DSO Strategy Lead shall have and be able to consistently demonstrate the **attributes and behaviours** described below:

- Demonstrates professionalism and earns respect and loyalty from stakeholders.
- Proactive, energetic, enthusiastic, and positive.
- Persistent in achieving goals, aligning personal objectives with company aims.
- Committed to the Network Function and company objectives.
- Supports the goals and objectives of colleagues.
- Plans and directs effectively, making impactful decisions across the company.
- Champions MainPower's Health, Safety, Environmental, and Quality initiatives, setting standards and driving continuous improvement.
- Continuously updates knowledge and skills through training and education.

This document is not intended to be exhaustive in terms of detailing the role and responsibilities of the position but to at least to provide a 'flavour' of the requirements of the role – you may be asked to complete other duties for the betterment of the business from time to time.