

EA Networks

Commercial Manager - Contracting & Networks

Candidate Briefing Information

April 2026



The Role

Commercial Manager - Contracting & Networks

- Drive financial performance and profitability across two complex portfolios
- Turn technical strength into commercial excellence
- Influence network growth and investment decisions at scale
- Ashburton based + highly competitive salary + relocation support

About the Company:

EA Networks is a community-owned electricity distribution business and fibre optic communications network supporting Mid Canterbury with essential infrastructure and services. Alongside its regulated network, EA Networks operates a substantial contracting business, delivering construction, maintenance and connection services across the electricity and fibre sector.

The talented team at EA Networks are passionate about their business and their region and are committed to building a sustainable energy future that works for everyone. From everyday essentials to cutting-edge technology, they make sure the community has the safe, accessible, and affordable power.

About The Role:

This is a rare 'hands-on' commercial leadership role ideal for a commercially sharp operator who enjoys being close to the work, influencing outcomes, and building capability in a community-owned organisation with real scale and complexity.

Reporting to both the GM Contracting and GM Networks, this senior role is responsible for the commercial and financial performance of the contracting and networks business providing leadership across tendering, pricing, contract risk, forecasting, reporting and cashflow, while acting as the commercial link across two complex portfolios.

A key focus will be strengthening commercial discipline in operational teams, improving cost management and overall performance and supporting future growth and network investment.

The role oversees a team of three.

Skills & Experience:

You will be a commercially astute leader with significant experience in contracting, infrastructure or regulated environments, and a preference for taking a practical, hands-on approach.

You will bring:

- A relevant business or commerce degree
- Sound financial leadership across project-based operations

- Strong tendering, pricing and contract management capability with a track record of improving bid quality and long-term contract performance
- An ability to influence and lift commercial capability in technical teams
- Experience working in a dual-reporting or matrix environment
- Proven people leadership and an ability to create high performing teams
- A continuous improvement mindset used to challenging existing operating models, systems and behaviours
- Recognition as a trusted influencer and an ability to engage and influence across all levels
- Alignment with a community-owned, values-based, safety-focused organisation.



The Company

About EA Networks

EA Networks is a locally owned, co-operative utilities company serving Mid-Canterbury. Based in Ashburton, it owns and operates the region's electricity distribution network alongside an advanced fibre optic communications network, supporting homes, farms and businesses across the district.

In addition to its network operations, EA Networks runs a well-established contracting business, delivering works across electricity and fibre infrastructure both within Mid-Canterbury and beyond. This combination of regulated network assets and competitive contracting activity creates a dynamic commercial environment with real scale and complexity.

Being locally owned and governed, EA Networks has deep connections to the community it serves. It reinvests in infrastructure that delivers long-term economic benefit, while also actively supporting local initiatives, schools and facilities.

Above all, EA Networks is focused on delivering safe, reliable and resilient infrastructure, with a clear purpose: keeping the lights on and the region connected, while supporting sustainable growth for Mid-Canterbury.



Lauriston solar farm

EA Networks results

2024/2025



Financial

\$20.2M Total capital spend
\$334.3M Total assets



Network

3,140 km Overhead lines and cables
Average customer outage duration 57 minutes



Community

\$3.0M Discount returned to customers
\$112,709 Sponsorship and Energy Advocacy community funding

History

EA Networks' origins date back to 1921, when it was established as the Ashburton Electric Power Board. From its early beginnings as a small, locally focused generator and distributor, the organisation has evolved alongside the region it serves.

Significant growth occurred during the 1970s, driven by increased irrigation demand, which saw the expansion of the sub-transmission network across the district. Ongoing investment through the late 20th century introduced higher-capacity voltages, with much of the network now operating at 66kV sub-transmission and 22kV distribution levels.

In 2008, EA Networks began developing its fibre optic network to support electricity network communications, later expanding capacity to provide broadband services along the fibre route. This diversification reflects EA Networks' ability to evolve in response to technology and customer needs.

Rebranded as EA Networks in 2012, the organisation today supplies electricity line services to more than 19,500 consumers and manages close to 3,000 kilometres of overhead lines and underground cables, delivering essential services across a large and diverse geographic area.

Ownership and Structure

EA Networks operates as a co-operative, trading as Electricity Ashburton Limited. The business combines a Network Division, responsible for asset ownership and management, with a Field Services (Contracting) Division delivering operational and commercial works.

The majority shareholding is held by the Ashburton District Council, alongside rebate shareholdings owned by connected electricity consumers. Each consumer shareholder has an equal vote, reinforcing EA Networks' strong community focus and accountability to those it serves

For further information on EA Networks, please click [here](#).

To view the EA Networks Annual Report 2025, please click [here](#).

To view the EA Networks 2025 Year in Review, please click [here](#)



Chloe Guthrie
Cable Joiner



Tim Eastwood
Leading Hand Line Mechanic
Sathira Konganige
Line Mechanic

Position Description

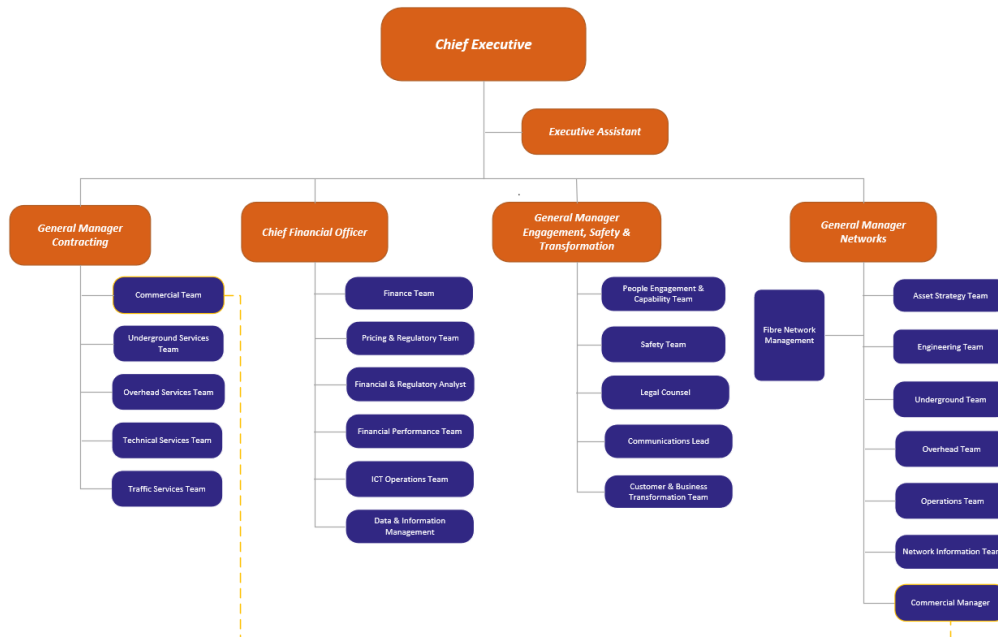
Position: Commercial Manager - Contracting & Networks
Reports to: General Manager Contracting & General Manager Networks
Team: Contracting
Direct Reports: (FTE 4.0):
Date modified: March 2025

Purpose:

Reporting to both the GM Contracting and GM Networks, this position is responsible for:

- the commercial and financial performance of Contracting and Networks.
- Providing commercial leadership, financial management, budgeting, forecasting, WIP management, analysis, monitoring, reporting, invoicing, pricing and support.
- Ensuring the required commercial outcomes are achieved and strategic opportunities realised.

Business Structure:



Authorities:

Financial: as per Delegations & Authority Policy

Public Statements: Nil

Key Responsibilities

1: Health, safety, quality and wellbeing

Demonstrated by:

- Directly responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of all reporting staff.
- Be safe for yourself, set high standards and lead by example, coaching others to follow.
- Proactively manage risks.
- Continuously assess situations for safety of yourself and others.
- Proactively report all near misses and incidents.
- Meet or exceed all applicable health and safety legislation, Codes of Practice, Standards, Policies, Procedures and Work Practices.
- Carry out incident investigations as necessary and support the Safety Team Manager in the event an ICAM investigation is required.
- Implement and embed corrective actions as required.
- Carry out competency assessments and audits in accordance with business requirements.
- Manage all subcontractors used to ensure (as a minimum) full health and safety compliance.
- Participate in site visits to ensure a good understanding of how field staff currently deliver works and what impacts/opportunities commercial decisions have/could have to ensure we set our staff up to succeed.

2: Analysis, monitoring and reporting of Contracting and Network financial and operational performance

Demonstrated by:

- Provide commercial leadership, coaching and advice across Contracting and Networks.
- Lift Operational Manager's commercial acumen through coaching and assisting them to make better informed commercial decisions.
- Support the General Manager Contracting and Networks in the annual budgeting process, quarterly forecasting, monthly productivity and operational business reporting.
- Interpret and provide accurate monthly detailed analysis and reporting, and its individual profit/cost centres, financial and operational performance against agreed targets.
- Provide monthly reporting and analysis of labour productivity levels to support informed decisions around optimisation of labour and plant resources.
- Ensure visibility of revenue and resourcing pipeline for contracting and overall project management delivery.
- Working with the General Manager Contracting and General Manager Networks, develop and monitor operational KPI's to drive financial and operational performance.
- Ensure invoicing is complete, accurate and submitted on time and all debtors are followed up to maximise cash flows.
- Review monthly reports on the financial performance of key projects highlighting variances to discuss with the relevant Operational Manager.
- Support internal and external audit processes including distribution of requirements to the wider team and review/collation of all information required by both internal and external auditors.

3: Optimisation of business profitability

Demonstrated by:

- Constructively challenge business operating model, corporate allocations, processes and management decisions to bring about service and performance improvements.
- Lead monthly variance analysis to understand root causes and work closely with the operational managers to challenge practices and ensure appropriate actions are agreed and implemented in a timely manner.
- Oversee the annual and any ad hoc rate review processes across Contracting and Networks to ensure commercially sound outcomes.
- Optimise pricing, profitability and risk for new and existing external contracts including leading the response to proposals and developing partnerships.
- Highlight opportunities for the reduction of costs and growth of revenue to drive EBIT growth.
- Proactively analyse financial results and report risks to achieving budgeted revenue(s) and EBIT to the General Manager Contracting.

4: Contracting development and evaluation of strategic business opportunities

Demonstrated by:

- Carry out tendering, pricing and contract management with a focus on improving external tender quality, margin protection and long-term contract performance.
- Develop commercial strategies and provide commercial and financial advice, support and assist in the decision-making process associated with the development and endurance of Contracting's:
 - annual operational plan
 - specific contracting agreements, tenders, or quotations
- Regularly evaluate organisational capability against opportunities and propose strategies to develop our capability, value streams and address gaps.
- Assist with the plant and equipment capital expenditure proposal and approval process.

5: Change control

Demonstrated by:

- Lead the change control process across Contracting and Networks. Work with the teams to assess any financial or commercial implications with each change. Keep the GM's informed of any concerns with any proposed change and brief the GM accordingly on each proposed change prior to acceptance.
- Oversee the application of change control process from the service provider side ensuring compliance with agreed processes for change.
- Ensure proposed changes to our service contracts are challenged both technically and commercially by the SME's during approval process.

6. New Connections

Demonstrated by:

- Undertake pricing and regulatory reconciliation (NPV) analysis for each quotation provided from Underground, Overhead, major industrial load customers and generation customers for all new connections / extensions / upgrades / downgrades as necessary.
- Maintain discipline of designers using Salesforce for all new power supply requests.
- Deliver expert stakeholder engagement to address questions regarding subdivisions and related matters.

7. Networks Customer Liaison and Project Management

Demonstrated by:

- Ensure coordinated, professional and timely interactions with major customers include the relevant internal stakeholders.
- Review project management, programme delivery processes and cost estimation tools across the Networks function.
- Take responsibility for creating, updating, and following processes, incorporating feedback and collaboration with practitioners.
- Provide leadership for the continuous improvement programme direction including collaboration, creation or overseeing development by the wider Network team for
 - Regulatory change management
 - Efficiency/effectiveness improvement

8: Professional development

Demonstrated by:

- At all times be up to date with regulatory requirements and industry trends.
- Attend relevant and value adding professional courses and programmes.

What we expect:

Health & Safety Always:

- Actively participating in health and safety responsibilities outlined in EA Networks' H&S Management programme.
- Following all established work procedures with regard to the requirements for health and safety, including the use of PPE.
- Identifying and reporting hazards.
- Adhering to all health and safety practices and rules.
- Actively promoting and supporting health, safety and wellbeing initiatives.

Continuous Improvement:

- Taking the initiative to improve work practices and to get the best possible outcome.
- Looking for opportunities to improve systems, processes and work practices – both within your own position and our company as a whole.

Customer Excellence:

- Acting as an ambassador for EA Networks, going above and beyond to always provide both internal and external customers with exceptional service – approachable, interested and friendly.
- Treating everyone with respect – taking time to listen, learn and understand. Problems and complaints are acknowledged, solutions identified and promptly acted upon.
- Taking responsibility for the achievement of the organisational levels of service, measures, and targets as they relate to the role.

Teamwork:

- Working together as one team.
- Willingly sharing your knowledge and experience.
- Open, honest, considerate and respectful communication.
- Demonstrate positivity and respect and support and care for your colleagues.
- Demonstrate initiative and commitment to team objectives.
- Actively participating in group activities.
- Being open and receptive to change.
- Positive response to requests for assistance from within your own team and other teams; demonstrating adaptability and willingness.

Performance & Development:

- Taking a full and active role in performance development plan discussions with your manager (prepares, participates, follows through). Identifying and following through on opportunities for personal and professional development.
- Demonstrating commitment to up-skilling and further developing specialist knowledge and best practice initiatives.
- Participating in training opportunities with an open mind.

Civil Defence Emergency Management:

- Assisting EA Networks in preparing for, and responding to an emergency.
- After establishing the safety of members of your household, you may be assigned duties to assist EA Networks in an emergency.

Personal Accountability:

- Being a positive role model and promoting EA Networks favourably.
 - Be approachable, personable, willing and consistent
 - Work within and contribute to all EA Networks policies and standards

Employees are expected to carry out such other duties and responsibilities as may be requested from time to time by their supervisor or manager which are generally consistent with the objectives of the position.

Person Specification:

Qualifications:

- Business or Commerce Degree with Accounting / Finance Major 10+ years Management / Financial Accounting experience - Tertiary qualification in business, management finance, engineering or similar.
- Class 1 Drivers Licence.

Experience:

- Significant experience with a minimum of 10+ years in a contracting and/or electricity distribution sector or similar regulated business.
- Exposure to highly regulated and high risk environments.
- At least five years previous experience in a leadership role.
- Proven experience with motivating and driving high performing teams.

Skills, knowledge and personal attributes

- 5+ years' experience in a leadership role.
- Safety driven.
- Management / Financial Accounting background with experience in ERP/MRP systems.
- Proven financial management experience, preferably in a contracting environment.
- Experienced in, and passionate about providing leadership and support in a diverse multicultural working environment.
- Accomplished at working constructively as an integral part of a management team.
- Able to show strategic initiative and demonstrate a high level of professionalism as is expected in a senior role.
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- Ability to build, and strengthen strong interpersonal and collaborative working relationships.
- Proven organisational and planning skills.
- Demonstrated innovative thinking.
- Robust numerical and analytical skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- An aptitude to foresee challenges, read situations and respond efficiently and effectively.
- Tenacity in taking problems through to successful outcomes despite potential barriers.

Sheffield Contacts



Jane Pollitt – Senior Consultant



Ph +64 3 353 4354, **Email** jane.pollitt@sheffield.co.nz

With her more 25 years' experience in strategic planning, corporate governance, people capability, culture and communications, Jane is keenly interested in working closely with her clients to find the perfect match. On this project she will assess all applications, prepare recommended longlists and interview selected candidates getting to know their aspirations and career highlights and experiences relevant to the role.



Emma Gifford - Search Consultant



Ph +64 3 374 9355, **Email** emma.gifford@sheffield.co.nz

Emma has a strong analytical and research background, with over 20 years experience in professional services and consultancy firms. She combines an interest in what makes businesses work well with a genuine interest in candidate care and enjoys working in an environment with a strong team focus that delivers quality outcomes for our clients.



Julie Black - Practice Lead Assessments,

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Ph +64 3 353 4361, **Email** julie.black@sheffield.co.nz

Julie is a resourceful, organised and adaptable person who joined the Sheffield team in 2012 initially in the executive search team. She now leads the Assessment practice, undertaking, interpreting and reporting on psychometric assessments for selection, learning and career development. She possesses a sound understanding of strategic practice, offering a supportive professional approach complemented by maturity, initiative and commercial acumen to contribute to any project with impact.



Gina Moore - Project Coordinator



Ph +64 3 353 4362, **Email** gina.moore@sheffield.co.nz

Gina joined the Sheffield team in 2018 and comes from a highly specialised administrative background with extensive experience in the recruitment industry. In her role Gina assists candidates through the recruitment process with communications, coordinating interviews, and providing timely updates. Gina ensures that candidates are kept informed, making the recruitment journey seamless and rewarding.

Our Process



Search and Advertising

During this period a Sheffield consultant may contact you to discuss your application, explore your motivation for applying and assess your suitability and fit with the key competencies of the role. All applications received will be acknowledged via email.



Candidate Review

Sheffield will provide a formal report of all applications received with summarised candidates' information from CVs and cover letters, to the client for their consideration. All candidates will be advised of the status of their application within a week of the advertised closing date.



Consultant/Longlist Interviews

The lead consultant will interview those candidates selected for progression either face to face or via video meeting depending on location. The format will be a behavioural-based interview where you will be asked to provide examples from your career in relation to key competencies of the role. This will also be a chance to discuss motivations for applying and general career background, as well as to answer any queries you may have about the role.



Recommendations for Shortlist

From the initial longlist interviews, Sheffield make recommendations for shortlist to the client. We also provide a formal report to our client including summary points from your longlist interview. Those candidates not selected for further progression will also be advised at this stage.



Client/Shortlist Interviews

If you are progressing to the shortlist/client interview stage, you will be contacted and arrangements will be made for a suitable time for interview. We ask for your flexibility to make this work as easily for the client as possible.



Due Diligence and Decision

If you are the successful candidate this will involve reference checking and probity of education, employment and police records as well as online searches. Sheffield will support you with any due diligence required on your part. Unsuccessful candidates will also be informed at this stage and feedback will be provided.

How to Apply

Candidates can apply, in strict confidence, online at www.sheffield.co.nz.

To apply by email, please attach your cover letter and CV in PDF format where ever possible and send to cvchc@sheffield.co.nz quoting 9185aa.

Applications close on 10 May 2026. Emails will be electronically acknowledged, and further correspondence may be by email. For more information please phone Jane Pollitt on +64 3 353 4354.

Sheffield has prepared a Candidate Handbook which provides you with valuable information and suggestions for your job search. To read through the handbook please visit: [Candidate Handbook](#)

Working with Sheffield

You can expect that Sheffield will:

- Act with utmost integrity, honesty & with complete confidentiality
- Treat you with respect & comply with all relevant laws & policies
- Maintain a high level of communication throughout a recruitment process
- Demonstrate the highest levels of individual skills & knowledge

In return, we would like to expect that you will:

- Be up front and completely honest with us
- Prepare thoroughly for all interviews
- Treat your consultant as the potential employer with the same courtesy and respect they show you
- Work closely with your consultant

The information contained in this document is a reflection of the essential elements of the position and company history as represented to Sheffield by EA Networks and is not intended as a formal position description. It will be subject to further elaboration or clarification at a later stage in the selection process and Sheffield accepts no liability for any representations made in good faith.

Trusted advisors in
sourcing, selecting and
shaping leaders for
over 60 years

sheffield 
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