

APRIL 2026 EDITION

Sydney Supply Chain Market Report

Jobs, hiring trends, salary insights, skills in demand, and the Middle East supply chain impact for Greater Sydney.

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APRIL 2026 MARKET SNAPSHOT

90

ROLES ANALYSED

Cleaned weekly snapshot

2.6%

GDP GROWTH

Q4 2025 annualised

4.3%

UNEMPLOYMENT

Up 20bps since March

3.7%

CPI INFLATION

Above RBA target

KEY THEME THIS MONTH

Hormuz closure enters month two — Brent crude \$96–\$98, 230 tankers stranded in the Gulf, freight rates still 3–4x pre-crisis. Risk & resilience hiring is now urgent.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Sigma Search is a Sydney-based specialist executive recruitment firm focused on supply chain, logistics and procurement across Australia and New Zealand. This edition analyses 90 direct-employer roles captured on 20 April 2026. Recruitment agency, government panel and confidential roles excluded.

CANDIDATE MARKET

Tight at \$120k–\$180k. Top candidates off-market within 2 weeks. Counter-offers accelerating.

TOP HIRING SECTOR

FMCG (28%) leads — Kimberly-Clark, Nutricia, Danone, Suntory all running concurrent searches.

HOT SKILL RIGHT NOW

Supply chain risk & resilience — Hormuz blockade driving urgent hiring for scenario planners.

SECTION 01

Macro Economic Landscape

Australia's economy is cooling at the edges while inflation stays sticky — and the Middle East has become the dominant macro variable.

2.6%**GDP GROWTH (ANNUAL)**

Q4 2025, still above trend

4.3%**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**

Up 20bps since March

3.7%**CPI INFLATION (FEB)**

Sticky above 3%

Australia's economic story has turned in the six weeks since our March edition. Annual GDP growth is still tracking at 2.6%, but the labour market has loosened — the unemployment rate stepped up to 4.3% in March (from 4.1%), with underutilisation now at 10.2%. The RBA moved again in March, lifting the cash rate 25bps to 4.10% — the second consecutive increase — and held at the 17 April meeting while awaiting the Q1 CPI print on 29 April.

Headline CPI of 3.7% (to February) is only modestly below 3.8% the month prior — the disinflation path has effectively stalled. The RBA's problem is no longer domestic: Brent crude near US\$98/barrel, 3–4x spot freight rates, and Hormuz-driven input cost pressure are now flowing through to producer prices. Markets have pushed rate-cut pricing out to late 2026.

Sydney's port and logistics infrastructure is bearing the weight. Port Botany is handling diverted volumes from Cape of Good Hope routings. Western Sydney intermodal hubs — Moorebank, Eastern Creek — are running hot as importers pre-position inventory. The Aerotropolis build-out continues to expand mid-term capacity.

KEY MACRO SIGNALS FOR SUPPLY CHAIN PROFESSIONALS

- **Defence & Aerospace:** AUKUS procurement still accelerating — Anduril, Advanced Navigation, Honeywell, Thales, BAE Systems actively hiring.
- **FMCG:** Margin pressure intensifying as imported input costs pass through — Kimberly-Clark, Nutricia, Danone, Suntory all running concurrent sourcing searches.
- **Freight & Logistics:** 3PLs at capacity — DSV, DHL, Kuehne+Nagel, Team Global Express, Mainfreight all hiring operations leadership.
- **Energy & Resources:** Veolia, Cleanaway, Ampol, GrainCorp, Evolution Mining all active. Fuel cost volatility driving supply chain risk roles.
- **Retail:** Kmart, Coles, Bunnings, Woolworths and Luxottica running category and omnichannel searches despite softer consumer.

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHT

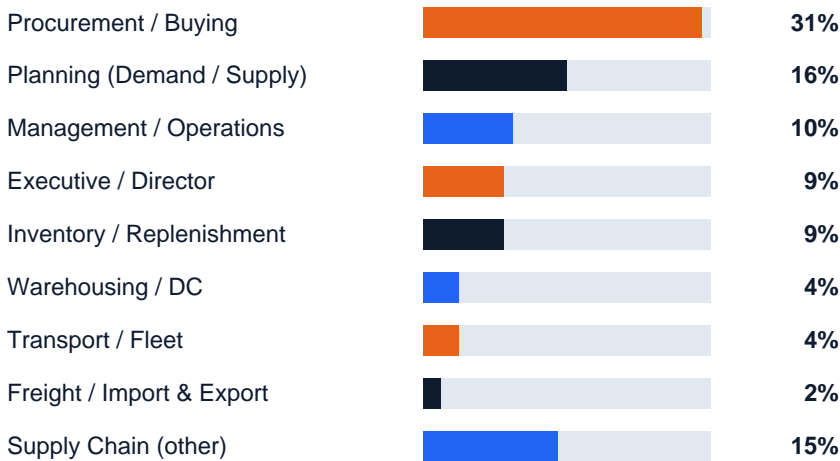
The headline unemployment rise to 4.3% masks a sharply different picture in supply chain. Our April data shows procurement share holding at 31% of advertised roles, with planning roles nearly tripling to 16% of visible adverts — a direct consequence of employers scrambling to build scenario-planning and risk capability in response to the Hormuz blockade. Counter-offers are now near-universal at the \$140k–\$180k band. Employers running open advertising for supply chain leadership continue to find the best candidates are already in conversation elsewhere.

SECTION 02

Job Market Overview

Our analysis of 90 direct-employer supply chain roles captured in the Sydney market on 20 April 2026. Recruitment agency, government panel and confidential advertiser roles have been excluded to focus on genuine employer demand.

ROLES BY FUNCTION



MARKET COMPOSITION

- **90 roles** from direct employers — agencies and panel roles excluded
- **Broad-based** across FMCG (28%), Retail (19%), Industrial/Energy (19%), Healthcare (8%), 3PL (7%)
- **Planning share doubled** to 16% — direct response to Hormuz disruption
- **Executive tier active** 17 roles at \$200k+ — 8.9% of total

KEY TAKEAWAY

Procurement and buying roles hold the top spot at 31% of all advertised positions — continuing the trend from March (30%) but now driven by a sharper motivation. Where Q1 procurement hiring was about cost optimisation post rate-rise, April hiring is about supplier diversification and risk mitigation in response to Hormuz. Planning roles have more than doubled their share (16%, up from 6% in March) — IBP, demand planning, and vendor replenishment roles are flooding the market as FMCG principals rebuild forecasting capability for a volatile input environment. Management & Operations at 10% reflects sustained 3PL and site-leadership demand. Freight-specific roles look under-represented at just 2% — this is a methodological artefact, not a softening of demand; freight forwarders are primarily hiring through LinkedIn Recruiter and direct networks.

SECTION 03

Who's Hiring

A snapshot of the most active employers in the Sydney supply chain market for the week of 20 April 2026. Recruitment agencies and government panel roles have been excluded.

MOST ACTIVE EMPLOYERS (MULTIPLE OPEN ROLES)

COMPANY	OPEN ROLES & FUNCTIONS	SECTOR
Kimberly-Clark Australia	2 roles — Senior Supply Planner AU; Inventory & Service Manager	FMCG
Nutricia Australia	2 roles — Vendor Replenishment; Demand & Customer SC Manager	FMCG / Nutrition
Danone	2 roles — Demand & Customer SC; Vendor Replenishment Planner	FMCG / Dairy
Accor (Pacific)	2 roles — Category Manager Technology; Category Manager Beverage	Hospitality
Luxottica Retail	2 roles — Assortment & Implementation; Procurement Category MKT	Retail / Eyewear
Ramsay Health Care	2 roles — Catalogue & Master Data; Clinical Category Procurement	Healthcare
Dematic	2 roles — Indirect Procurement Buyer; Director, Site Groups	Industrial / Automation

RECENTLY ADVERTISING AT SENIOR / EXECUTIVE LEVEL (\$200k+)

COMPANY	ROLE	SECTOR
Abbott Australasia	Head of Supply Chain	Medical Devices
GrainCorp	National Operations Manager — Riverstone	Agribusiness
Amazon	Operations Manager, New Site	E-commerce
Kmart	Omnichannel Fulfilment Centre Manager	Retail
Anduril	Logistics Manager, Australia	Defence
Honeywell	Senior Strategic Sourcing Manager	Industrial
Veolia ANZ	General Manager, Resource Recovery NSW	Waste / Utilities
Cleanaway Operations	State Fleet Maintenance Manager NSW/ACT	Waste
VISY	State Manager NSW — Metro Operations	Packaging
Team Global Express	Branch Manager	3PL
ACCIONA Australia	Procurement Manager	Construction
St Vincent's Health	Group Non-Clinical Procurement Manager	Healthcare
RATP WSA	Head of Operations Control Centre	Rail / Transit
Advanced Navigation	Head of Production	Defence Tech
Dematic	Director, Site Groups	Automation

SECTOR SNAPSHOT

FMCG / FOOD & BEV (28%)

Largest hiring sector — Kimberly-Clark, Nutricia, Danone, Suntory, Colgate, Reckitt, Metcash, Arnott's, Coca-Cola Europacific, Ampol. Margin compression + input cost inflation driving procurement & planning hiring.

RETAIL (19%)

Woolworths, Coles, Kmart, Bunnings, Luxottica, IKEA, Accor, Zimmermann, Seafolly. Category mgmt & omnichannel fulfilment dominant. Consumer softness driving sharper category accountability.

INDUSTRIAL & ENERGY (19%)

Veolia, Cleanaway, VISY, Evolution Mining, GrainCorp, Honeywell, Rexel, ACCIONA, Downer EDI, Service Stream, John Holland. Energy transition & waste infra driving steady hiring.

3PL & DEFENCE (10%)

3PL (7%): DSV, DHL, Kuehne+Nagel, Team Global Express, Mainfreight. Defence (3%): Anduril, Advanced Navigation — AUKUS momentum sustained despite broader geopolitical stress.

SECTION 04

Salary Insights & Hiring Trends

Our data captures roles advertised at \$80,000+ base salary, representing the mid-to-senior end of the market — typically professionals with 3+ years experience, team leaders, managers and directors.

85%

PERMANENT

Dominant

13%

FIXED-TERM

Rising on ME uncertainty

2%

CASUAL / TEMP

Specialist only

WORK ARRANGEMENT BREAKDOWN

62%

Hybrid (2–3 days)

34%

On-site

4%

Remote

AVERAGE SALARIES BY ROLE LEVEL (\$80K+ MARKET)

ROLE LEVEL	AVERAGE SALARY	TYPICAL RANGE
Supply Chain Director / VP	\$240k	\$200k – \$290k+
Head of Procurement	\$210k	\$185k – \$245k
General Manager – SC / Logistics	\$198k	\$170k – \$250k
IBP / S&OP Manager	\$165k	\$148k – \$190k
Supply Chain Manager	\$160k	\$142k – \$185k
Senior Buyer / Category Manager	\$148k	\$132k – \$170k
Logistics Manager	\$138k	\$122k – \$160k
Demand / Supply Planner	\$125k	\$112k – \$145k
Procurement Officer / Buyer	\$114k	\$100k – \$128k
Warehouse Manager	\$98k	\$85k – \$115k

SALARY INTELLIGENCE: WHAT WE'RE SEEING IN THE APRIL MARKET

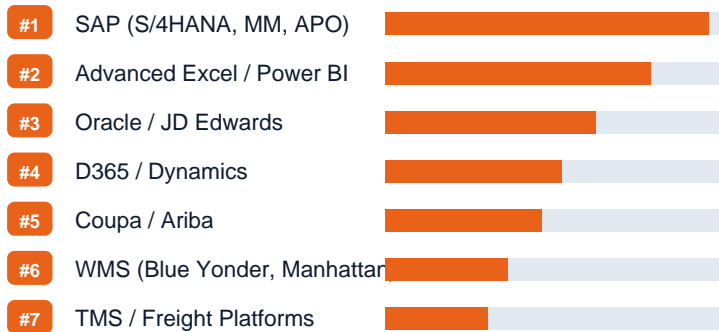
Salary benchmarks have moved up 1.5–3% since the March edition — modest in absolute terms, but notable against a loosening headline labour market. The \$140k–\$180k band is still the most contested, with Hormuz disruption now creating premium pricing for candidates with risk-and-resilience experience — IBP practitioners, supplier-risk modellers, and sourcing managers with alternative-market depth (India, Vietnam, Mexico) are consistently fielding three or more approaches. Counter-offers at this tier routinely reach 15–20% above the original offer. At the executive level (\$200k+) the pipeline is active but narrow — 17 roles visible in our April data, with Head of Supply Chain and GM Operations titles commanding \$220k–\$250k base plus STI. Fixed-term transformation contracts are creeping up (13% of market, from 12% in March) as employers hedge against a longer crisis tail.

SECTION 05

Skills & Systems in Demand

Employers are increasingly looking beyond traditional supply chain competencies. In the April market, risk & resilience, supplier diversification and scenario-planning depth have become explicit premium skills.

TECHNICAL SKILLS & ERP SYSTEMS



HARD SKILLS

- S&OP / IBP process ownership
- Supplier risk & alternative-market sourcing
- Demand forecasting (statistical + scenario)
- Contract renegotiation under disruption
- Data analytics (SQL, Python, Power BI)
- Lean / Six Sigma / continuous improvement

SOFT SKILLS

- Crisis leadership & calm under pressure
- Stakeholder mgmt (cross-functional)
- Executive comms (board-level reporting)
- Supplier relationship management
- Change & transformation leadership
- Team development & capability build

CERTIFICATIONS THAT STAND OUT

CIPS (Chartered)

APICS CSCP

CPIM

Lean / Six Sigma

PMP / PRINCE2

MCIPS

WHERE THE ROLES ARE: SYDNEY GEOGRAPHY

Western Sydney

Wetherill Park, Eastern Creek, Moorebank

Logistics, DC, 3PL operations. Accelerating as Cape-routed cargo arrives. Highest volume zone in April.

Macquarie Park

Corporate FMCG belt

Planning, procurement, category. Kimberly-Clark, Nutricia, Danone, Reckitt, Fisher & Paykel all hiring concurrently.

CBD / Surry Hills

Corporate & professional services

Corporate SC strategy, energy, financial services, pharma head offices. Abbott, Ramsay, St Vincent's, Optus.

Port Botany / Mascot

Port precinct

Freight forwarding, import/export, customs. Under pressure from rerouted Asia-Europe volumes. DSV, Kuehne+Nagel active.

SECTION 06

Middle East Crisis: Month 2 Update

Seven weeks after US-Israeli strikes on Iran triggered the closure of the Strait of Hormuz on 28 February, the crisis has settled into a painful, unresolved steady state. For Sydney supply chain leaders, this is now the defining operating condition of 2026.

STATUS AS AT 20 APRIL 2026

Hormuz remains effectively closed — 95% of pre-crisis commercial transits are still blocked. 230 loaded oil tankers are stranded in the Gulf. A 26 March announcement permitting transits for China, Russia, India, Iraq and Pakistan has not been implemented in practice. Iran is reportedly imposing tolls exceeding US\$1m per vessel. Brent crude is trading US\$96–\$98 (down from a Q1 peak of US\$118). US military operations to reopen the strait, underway since 19 March, are ongoing. Ceasefire talks have stalled.

IMPACT ON AUSTRALIA'S SUPPLY CHAINS — WEEK 8

Fuel Prices Flowing Through

Retail diesel in Sydney up 14–18% since mid-Feb. Port Botany trucking surcharges being reset monthly. Major 3PLs have invoked fuel adjustment clauses against FMCG clients.

Freight: Cape Routing Normalised

Cape of Good Hope now the default for Asia-Europe trade. +10–15 days transit, +40–60% cost. Spot rates 3–4x pre-crisis. War-risk premiums on all Gulf-adjacent cargo.

Fertiliser Supply Squeezed

Gulf urea & DAP flows disrupted into plant window. National Farmers' Federation warning of 20–35% input cost uplift for grain & horticulture. GrainCorp hiring procurement.

Port Botany Running Hot

Diverted vessels arriving in clusters. Terminal dwell times up 2–3 days. Western Sydney intermodal congestion spilling into retailer DCs. Storage rates up 20%.

DISRUPTION TIMELINE — WHERE WE ARE NOW

PERIOD	STATUS / EXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS
Week 1–2 (Mar)	Booking stops, surcharges, vessel rerouting, insurance withdrawal from Hormuz.
Week 3–5 (Mar–Apr)	Cape routing normalised; first wave of diverted cargo arrives at Sydney & Melbourne.
WEEK 6–8 (NOW)	Port congestion, fuel pass-through, fertiliser supply gaps visible, contract renegotiations accelerating.
Month 3–4 (May)	Forecast: structural cost uplift 8–15% locked in. Reshoring / nearshoring decisions accelerating.
Month 4–6 (Q3)	Forecast: if unresolved, permanent re-routing becomes base case. Insurance and war-risk markets re-price.

SECTION 06 (CONT.)

What This Means for Hiring

The combination of Hormuz disruption, stalled disinflation, and a sticky 4.10% cash rate is reshaping what Sydney employers actually need from supply chain leaders in Q2 2026.

- **Supplier diversification is now table stakes.**

Every FMCG procurement search in our April pipeline is asking for alternative-market experience — India, Vietnam, Mexico, Eastern Europe. Candidates with demonstrable supplier-risk mapping work are commanding 10–15% premiums.

- **Risk & resilience moves from buzzword to KPI.**

Scenario planning and supply continuity are now standard scorecard items. Candidates who can stand up a supplier-risk model, run stress tests, and brief an exec committee are fielding 3+ approaches.

- **IBP / S&OP talent remains the scarcest asset.**

Planning role share tripled to 16% of visible adverts this month. The best IBP managers, particularly with multi-site ANZ FMCG experience, continue to be placed off-market within 2 weeks.

- **Fixed-term transformation roles are rising.**

13% of April market (up from 12% in March). 12-month contracts tied to supply chain restructuring and cost optimisation are the preferred hedge against ongoing uncertainty.

- **Salary pressure concentrated at mid-senior.**

The \$140k–\$180k band remains the most competitive. Counter-offers now routinely reach 15–20% above the original. Employers who move slowly are losing their preferred candidate within 2 weeks of first interview.

About Sigma Search

Sigma Search is a Sydney-based specialist executive recruitment firm focused exclusively on supply chain, logistics and procurement roles across Australia and New Zealand. With 15+ years of executive search experience, we work on retained and exclusive assignments to source senior talent that is typically off-market and cannot be found through traditional advertising channels.

Our clients engage us because we bring market intelligence, not just CVs — and in a market defined by disruption, that intelligence is never more valuable.

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WHY RETAINED SEARCH DELIVERS BETTER OUTCOMES

Off-Market Access

The best supply chain candidates at \$140k+ are not browsing job boards. They respond to direct, confidential approaches from recruiters who understand their specialisation.

Speed of Process

In a market where top candidates field multiple approaches, a structured retained search with clear milestones moves faster and wins more often.

Market Intelligence

Retained search includes live salary benchmarking, competitor mapping and candidate feedback — intelligence that improves the hire and informs workforce planning.

Commitment & Focus

Retained assignments receive dedicated resourcing and senior consultant time from day one, rather than competing for attention in a contingent pile.

This report has been prepared by Sigma Search for general market information purposes. Salary data represents market observations from advertised roles and direct candidate engagement and should be used as a guide only. All role data sourced from direct employer advertising in the Sydney metropolitan area. Agency, government panel and confidential roles excluded. © Sigma Search 2026.