



Metro

Interoffice Memo

Date	January 27, 2026
To	Yvonne Zheng Senior Manager, Audit
From	Nicole Englund <i>NE</i> Chief of Staff
Subject	Response to Response to OIG Observation on International Travel and Miscellaneous Expenses (Report No. 26-AUD-02)

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the observations included in the Office of the Inspector General's Statutorily Mandated Audit of Miscellaneous Expenses for the period of October 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

Metro acknowledges the Office of Inspector General's recommendation regarding ongoing oversight of international travel expenses. While the audit did not identify specific instances of noncompliance with Metro's Business Travel Guideline (GEN 65), Metro agrees that continued monitoring of international travel expenditures is important to ensure responsible stewardship of public funds.

Metro currently maintains established policies, approval processes, and post-travel expense review procedures designed to promote compliance with GEN 65. Management will continue to reinforce adherence to these guidelines and will evaluate whether any enhancements to monitoring practices are warranted as international travel activity evolves.

As noted in the report, during the reviewed period, nineteen Metro employees and Board Members traveled internationally at a total cost of \$118,773. Thirteen of these travelers participated in site visits and technical exchanges in Paris, France, in direct preparation for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games; five employees attended the InnoTrans Conference in Berlin, Germany, focused on innovations and best practices in bus operations; and one employee traveled to Seoul, South Korea, to participate in the teardown and inspection of pilot vehicles for rail operations.

Metro is responsible for delivering safe, reliable, and accessible transit service during a global event of unprecedented scale in the region. Metro's participation in the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games provided a unique opportunity for direct observation, coordination with host transit agencies, and real-time learning related to operations, security, accessibility, crowd management, and interagency coordination. These observations are critical to informing Metro's planning, risk mitigation strategies, and operational readiness for LA28.

Participation in the Paris 2024 Games offered a unique opportunity for Metro staff and Board members to gain firsthand insight into the complexities of planning and operating a large-scale, multi-modal transportation system during a global mega-event.

It is standard practice for delegations from future Olympic and Paralympic host cities to attend and observe the preceding Games as a mission-critical component of coordinated planning, operational readiness, and risk mitigation. During the Paris Games, Metro staff observed in real time how multiple transit agencies coordinated with host city partners and the Organizing Committee to move large volumes of passengers efficiently and safely, manage queuing and crowd control, deploy multilingual wayfinding and digital tools, and integrate operations across modes and jurisdictions. Observing these operations in real time provided context that cannot be fully replicated through reports or post-event briefings, particularly in understanding dynamic decision-making and interagency coordination during peak demand and unplanned conditions.

Many of these lessons have already informed Metro's ongoing Games planning efforts, including coordination strategies, wayfinding approaches, accessibility considerations, and crowd management planning. These insights collectively strengthen Metro's ability to reduce operational risk, improve service reliability during the Games, and ensure responsible use of public resources through informed and proactive planning.

Similarly, attendance at the InnoTrans Conference and the Seoul vehicle inspection supported Metro's ongoing efforts to improve bus and rail operations by evaluating emerging technologies, vehicle performance, and maintenance practices that cannot be fully assessed without in-person technical engagement. Attendance at the InnoTrans Conference in Berlin served a distinct and operationally focused purpose. InnoTrans is the world's largest transportation technology trade exhibition and convenes transit agencies, vehicle manufacturers, systems integrators, and operators from across the globe. Metro staff participated in targeted technical sessions and direct vendor engagements to evaluate emerging bus technologies, fleet electrification strategies, maintenance practices, and operational innovations that have been successfully deployed in large, high-frequency transit systems. This engagement supported Metro's ongoing efforts to improve bus reliability, performance, and lifecycle cost management, particularly as Metro continues to expand its zero-emission bus fleet and modernize its operations. The knowledge gained through these direct, in-person technical exchanges informs procurement decisions, operational standards, and long-term fleet strategy, helping to mitigate implementation risk and avoid costly retrofits or operational inefficiencies.

The Seoul travel similarly supported a highly specific operational need tied to rail vehicle procurement and safety. Participation in the teardown and inspection of pilot rail vehicles allowed Metro staff to assess vehicle components, systems integration, and maintainability directly. This hands-on inspection provided insights that cannot be obtained through documentation review alone and is a critical risk-management step in ensuring vehicle reliability, maintainability, and safety over the life of the fleet. Early identification of design or maintenance issues through this process helps prevent future service disruptions, unplanned maintenance costs, and warranty disputes, ultimately protecting public investment and system performance.

Metro staff remain committed to fiscal responsibility, transparency, and the prudent stewardship of public funds. All international travel during this period was planned and executed within Metro's existing annual travel budget. To prioritize these high-value learning and operational exchanges, the CEO strategically reduced or deferred other discretionary travel during the fiscal year to ensure that overall travel expenditures remained within approved budget levels. As a result, total travel spending in FY25 was maintained within the allocated budget authority.

Thank you.