



Metro

Interoffice Memo

Date	September 24, 2025
To	Karen Gorman Inspector General
From	Conan Cheung Chief Operations Officer William Scott <i>WS</i> Chief of Police/Emergency Management
Subject	26-AUD-01 Metro Call Boxes in Metro Rail Stations and Major Bus Terminals

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) performed an audit of Metro Call Boxes in Metro Rail Stations and Major Bus Terminals. Although OIG found that Metro generally complies with policies and procedures governing the operation and maintenance of customer-facing call boxes, several issues were identified. Therefore, the actions below will be taken by Operations to comply with the audit recommendations:

Recommendation #1: Enhance routine inspection and cleaning protocols, especially in stations with high ridership (including elevator areas), to ensure all units are clean and free of graffiti.

Management Response: Agree; FCM's graffiti abatement service levels consist of daily inspections and graffiti abatement as necessary.

Custodial Services will inspect and wipe down the call boxes 2x daily, once during the first and second shift. The custodial team will report graffiti to the FCM Help Desk whenever it's discovered.

Completion Date: August 31, 2025

Recommendation #2A: Establish anti-graffiti measures.

Management Response: Agree; FCM contractor will continue to inspect the equipment daily and remove graffiti as necessary.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #2B: Increase surveillance to deter vandalism.

Management Response: Agree; SSLE will work with our security personnel and law enforcement partners to develop a strategic plan targeted at increasing surveillance to provide more frequent patrols and other mitigating activities in areas that experience higher vandalism.

Completion Date: February 28, 2026

Recommendation #3: Conduct a staffing assessment to ensure sufficient personnel are available to effectively respond to and prevent vandalism and graffiti-related incidents and repairs.

Management Response: Agree; SSLE will conduct a staffing assessment of our current staffing and deployment priorities, as well as the feasibility of reallocating field resources to respond to and prevent vandalism and graffiti incidents. We will also consider utilizing CCTV monitoring to identify acts of vandalism in progress and deploy resources in response.

Completion Date: February 28, 2026

Recommendation #4: Explore external/outside noise-canceling technology and methods at loud stations.

Management Response: Partially Agree; The customer-facing phones installed on the C Line have handsets allowing passengers to hear and communicate with the CCTV observers. As part of the upcoming Call Point Blue Light Project, we will incorporate specifications that require noise-cancelling technology to ensure clearer and more effective communication.

Completion Date: December 31, 2025

Recommendation #5: Enhance the volume of the call boxes to overcome noise.

Management Response: Partially Agree; In March 2025, Operations and Engineering worked with ITS Voice Administration to adjust the volume for all customer-facing phones via the PBX and Gateway switches.

Completion Date: Complete

Recommendation #6: Standardize numbering protocols across all stations and provide durable, clearly visible labels for identification and operational purposes.

Management Response: Agree; When a passenger places a call, CCTV observers can immediately identify which phone is being used through caller ID. Inspectors labeled the extension numbers displayed on the faceplates of the customer-facing phones for reference. However, passengers do not need to inform the observer of the phone number they're calling from, as the system is already programmed with caller ID functionality.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #7: Ensure all numbering is correct and resistant to internal and external environmental conditions.

Management Response: Agree; When a passenger places a call, CCTV observers can immediately identify which phone is being used through caller ID. Inspectors labeled the extension numbers displayed on the faceplates of the customer-facing phones for reference. However, passengers do not need to inform the observer of the phone number they're calling from, as the system is already programmed with caller ID functionality.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #8: Conduct a comprehensive review and validation of the call box inventory to ensure accurate categorization of customer-facing and non-customer-facing units.

Management Response: Agree; Earlier this year, Operations Engineering conducted a field audit to ensure that both customer-facing and non-customer-facing phones were correctly associated with their designated extension numbers.

Completion Date: Complete

Recommendation #9: Update the inventory records based on field verification and implement a regular audit process to maintain inventory and data accuracy going forward.

Management Response: Agree; Operations will work with ITS Voice Administration to perform periodic audits to verify records are accurate.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #10: Work with Information Technology Services to verify the accuracy and integrity of data used in the reports.

Management Response: Agree; Operations will work with ITS Voice Administration to perform periodic audits to verify records are accurate.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #11: Identify methods to document and categorize the type or purpose of the calls, e.g., Informational, emergency, testing, mischief, and prank calls.

Management Response: Disagree; Categorizing the types of calls will take CCTV Observers away from other essential duties like monitoring the station cameras. The categorization doesn't seem to serve a purpose for improving the call box operations. CCTV Observers already log calls from the call boxes for testing purposes, log calls that require follow-up (informational), coordinate emergency response with either law enforcement or Rail Controllers (emergency), but have no means of identifying if a call is mischief, prank, or the call dropped for another reason.

Completion Date: N/A

Recommendation #13: Consider installing clear signage stating that the emergency call box is for emergency use only, and misuse is subject to penalties.

Management Response: Agree; Operations will investigate if there are Federal, State, County/City laws applicable violations and penalties that may apply if call boxes are misused and work with the signage and graphics team to identify and pilot new signage if appropriate.

Completion Date: September 30, 2025

Recommendation #14: Consider implementing refresher courses or as-needed training for all CCTV Observers and other personnel involved in call box operations, to include the use and features of the new call boxes installed in the system.

Management Response: Agree; CCTV Observers and CCTV Supervisors are already provided training when new rail/bus stations, extensions, or lines are tested and turned over to ROC/BOC for systems integration. Training is also provided when new call box operating systems are implemented or replaced and when standard operating procedures (SOPs) are revised.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #15: Enhance coordination among departments involved in call box maintenance, inspections, and testing to ensure call box checks are adequate, effective, and reduce redundant checks and inefficiencies.

Management Response: Agree; Earlier this year, Operations and Transit Ambassador Leadership developed a schedule to reduce the number of customer-facing phone checks on the system. The RTOS and Ambassadors are assigned to different stations daily, so the overlap of testing phones has been reduced. Also, if a customer-facing phone is found inoperable, staff place an “Out of Service” sticker on the phone and then report it to Communication Systems to perform the repair. In addition, the Communication Systems team performs preventative maintenance on the call boxes annually. A revised procedure/plan for checking the call boxes has been drafted and is being reviewed by the stakeholders to ensure the call box checks are conducted at a frequency that ensures they are working correctly. Reviews are also being conducted of the call box back office systems to improve system status and reporting.

- Long-Term: IM&E is working with a vendor to procure a Line Status Monitor system to be installed for all Rail Line customer-facing phones. LSM will be installed on B&D lines. The equipment is in procurement and is estimated to be received in October 2025. The installation process will take a couple of months, and the estimated completion date is the end of 2025.

Completion Date: Complete

Recommendation #16: Once the prototypes of the Call Point Blue Light Project are installed, evaluate their effectiveness and conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis based on the knowledge gained from the pilot program.

Management Response: Agree; A cost-benefit analysis will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program.

Completion Date: June 30, 2026

Recommendation #17: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the existing camera infrastructure to identify performance gaps and limitations.

Management Response: Agree; Operations Engineering will conduct the audit of Metro’s existing infrastructure to identify any critical deficiencies in need of address.

Completion Date: December 31, 2026

Recommendation #18: Ensure the new system being considered meets Metro's needs as an upgrade to high-resolution, reliable camera systems with enhanced capabilities such as pan, tilt, and zoom (PTZ) functionality for improved coverage and flexibility, and will replace obsolete call boxes and legacy cameras with a unified system that offers superior image quality and remote monitoring capabilities.

Management Response: Agree; Evaluation of the specified design and performance criteria for updates to Metro’s camera systems is incorporated into capital project 205672: Rail Operation, Safety and CCTV System Upgrade.

Completion Date: December 31, 2027

Recommendation #19: Consider integrating Artificial Intelligence and automation in any future camera systems deployed in Metro Rail Stations.

Management Response: Agree; Preliminary research on AI systems integration is in progress and will continue to be explored in future capital improvement projects for Metro Rail surveillance systems.

Completion Date: December 31, 2028

Recommendation #20: Continue to hold regular meetings or discussions with CCTV Observers to identify recurring issues in surveillance monitoring.

Management Response: Agree; ROC Management conducts monthly RAP sessions with Rail Controllers, CCTV Observers, and CCTV Supervisors to identify issues affecting systems, infrastructure, and working conditions. Reported issues are tracked and communicated to the appropriate maintenance group/department for corrective actions.

Completion Date: Ongoing

Recommendation #21: Expand surveillance coverage by installing functional cameras in previously unmonitored areas, such as the Willow Station patron and employee parking lot.

Management Response: Agree; As part of its FY27 capital project requests, SSLE will seek \$40 million for a CCTV Upgrade and Video Analytics initiative. If approved, the scope will include the Willow Station patron and employee parking lot.

Completion Date: December 31, 2028 (If approved)

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