



- Board of Directors
Executive Committee

4/10/2012 Board Meeting

Revised 8-3

Subject

Amend Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code regarding travel policy and general provisions relating to inspection trips

Description

Metropolitan's travel policy meets all current laws and IRS reporting guidelines and was last updated in April 2009. A survey of other governmental agencies indicates that Metropolitan's policy is in line with the majority of other public agencies' current travel policies. The Chairman of the Board asked staff to perform a review of the policy and make recommendations on ways it could be further strengthened and improved. In addition, the Chairman of the Board asked that staff review the Inspection Trip Policy (last updated in August 2009) and make recommendations for clarifications to this policy as well.

The amended policy was reviewed with the Executive Committee on March 27, 2012. Based on comments received at the meeting, the limit on meeting and conference attendance was clarified to include additional meetings where the Board member is representing Metropolitan in a leadership position. Also, reimbursement for overnight lodging was changed from living outside Los Angeles County to outside a 35-mile radius of the meeting location.

Finally, the inspection trip procedure was modified to allow additional family members to attend if space is available with the advance written approval of the Chairman of the Board.

Travel

As part of this review, staff surveyed several other public agencies and generally found that Metropolitan's travel policy was similar. Based on this review, a few changes are proposed to the travel policy as follows:

Travel: The current policy allows directors to travel anywhere in California, Nevada or Arizona on District business without prior approval of the Chairman of the Board. The proposed change would limit this authorization to within Metropolitan's service area. All other travel would require the approval of the Chairman of the Board in advance of the travel.

Limits on conferences/meetings: It is proposed that each director be limited to three meetings/conferences relating to District business per calendar year for which there is a registration fee and/or related travel/lodging expenses. Attendance at additional meetings/conferences would not be at the expense of Metropolitan, unless approved by the Chairman of the Board (e.g., representing Metropolitan in a leadership position for an organization, speaking at a meeting or conference on behalf of Metropolitan, importance of having Metropolitan represented at the meeting, etc.)

Lodging: Metropolitan's policy currently requires that lodging be obtained at government or group rates. The proposed change clarifies that the traveler should obtain moderately priced accommodations based on prevailing rates in the area if government or group rates are not available.

Lodging per diem: This change would provide the traveler with the option of requesting reimbursement for lodging at the IRS-published per diem rate for the area of travel.

Reimbursement for lodging and meals when attending monthly board or committee meetings: This change would limit reimbursement for directors attending monthly board and committee meetings to only those directors who reside outside a 35-mile radius of the meeting location or when reasonably required under the circumstances (e.g., evening or early morning meetings, etc.) and approved by the Chairman of the Board.

Meals: This change would limit reimbursement for meals to the IRS-published per diem rates for the area of travel. Directors would need to provide receipts even though reimbursement is limited to the IRS per diem rate.

Business meals: Business meals occur when a director or employee has a meal with someone (other than an employee or director of Metropolitan) for the purpose of conducting the business of the District. While alcoholic beverages have not normally been reimbursed, this change to the policy clarifies that alcoholic beverages would be excluded from reimbursement.

Items of personal benefit: While items such as in-room movies, mini-bar snacks and beverages, and alcoholic beverages have not normally been reimbursed, this change to the policy clarifies that such items would not be reimbursed by Metropolitan.

Inspection Trips

It is recommended that the Administrative Code be amended to clarify that it is the responsibility of each director to ensure the inspection trip guests meet the guidelines provided in the Code Section. In addition, there is a proposed change to clarify that the sponsoring director may be accompanied by one family member (including spouse or significant other) on inspection trips and clarifies that minor children would not be permitted to attend inspection trips. If space is available, additional family members may accompany the director with the advance written approval of the Chairman of the Board.

Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 2416(3) requiring the Executive Committee to study, advise, and make recommendations with regard to policies and procedures to be considered by the Board or committees thereof, except for policy matters within the jurisdiction of a specific standing committee.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is not defined as a project under CEQA because it involves continuing administrative activities, such as general policy and procedure making (Section 15378(b)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines).

The CEQA determination is: Determine that pursuant to CEQA, the proposed action is not subject to CEQA pursuant to Section 15378(b)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Board Options

Option #1

Adopt the CEQA determination and the proposed revisions to the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code set forth in Attachment 2.

Fiscal Impact: Limitations on travel expense reimbursement will result in lower expenditures for travel.

Option #2

Do not amend the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code.

Staff Recommendation

Option #1



Gary Breaux
Chief Financial Officer

4/3/2012

Date



Jeffrey Kightlinger
General Manager

4/3/2012

Date

Attachment 1 – Proposed Amendments to the Administrative Code (with changes marked)

Attachment 2 – Proposed Amendments to the Administrative Code (clean version)

Ref# cfo12617671

Division VI**PERSONNEL MATTERS**

Article 2

EXPENSE ACCOUNT REGULATIONS

Sec.

- 6320. Policy
- 6321. Expense Reimbursement Rates
- 6322. Supervision
- 6323. Definitions
- 6324. Authorization for Domestic Travel
- 6325. Authorization for International Travel
- 6326. Authorized Expenses
- 6327. Route and Mode of Travel
- 6328. Other Expenses
- 6329. Funds
- 6330. Lobbying
- 6331. Preparation, Approval and Processing of Claims
- 6332. Audit

§ 6320. Policy.

Payment for travel and other expenses incurred by directors and employees shall be allowed only for the purpose of furthering the interests of the District. An expense shall be deemed to be incurred to further the interests of the District when it is incurred for an activity that has a significant and meaningful link to the purposes, policies, and interests of the District. It is the purpose of these regulations to furnish rules, guidelines and procedures to assist directors and employees in claiming reimbursement of all such expenses. Expenditures will be closely scrutinized and only those considered to be necessary will be allowed. Directors and employees shall repay the District for disallowed expenses incurred on their behalf.

§ 6321. Expense Reimbursement Rates.

Expenditures for lodging, meals, transportation and other activities, as authorized in accordance with Sections 6324, 6325 and 6326, should provide for reasonable comfort and convenience. It should be borne in mind, however, that public funds are being spent and that only a reasonable level of expense is warranted. Except as otherwise set forth in an applicable Memorandum of Understanding with a District employee association, all reimbursements of travel expenses are subject to the following limits:

(a) Lodging shall be obtained at government or group rates, when available. For conferences and organized educational activities, lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum

group rate published by the sponsor of the conference or activity. If ~~there is~~ no government or group rate ~~available, then lodging expenditures will be subject to the limitations of Section 6321(e)~~ is available the traveler should obtain moderately priced accommodations based on prevailing rates in the area. The traveler may request per diem at IRS-published rates for the area of travel or, if the traveler is covered by a bargaining unit, then at the rate established pursuant to the applicable Memorandum of Understanding in lieu of reimbursement for actual lodging expense.

(b) Transportation costs and costs associated with transportation will be reimbursed according to the requirements of Section 6326.

~~— (c) Reimbursement to directors for meals, lodging, and other actual and necessary expenses (excluding costs described in Section 6321(a) or 6321 (b)) shall not exceed \$850 per day.~~

(c) Reimbursement for meals is limited to the IRS-published per diem rate for the area of travel or the rate established by an applicable Memorandum of Understanding. Directors must provide a receipt for each meal even though reimbursement will be limited to the IRS per diem rate.

§ 6322. Supervision.

As circumstances vary considerably in those instances where directors and employees must incur expenses, care by those incurring expenses, and supervision by those approving expense accounts are the most effective controls over expenditures. When expenses that might be regarded as out of the ordinary are foreseen, the approving officer's instructions should be sought beforehand.

§ 6323. Definitions.

(a) "Employee" shall mean directors and employees unless specifically stated otherwise. Employees within a bargaining unit which has a Memorandum of Understanding with the District shall be governed by its provisions to the extent it provides for reimbursement of expenses or per diem. Where authorization for an employee to travel is required from a "Department Head or group manager," the term shall mean the positions so identified by the organizational chart contained in the most recent annual District budget adopted by the Board. In the case of a director, the terms shall be deemed to mean the Chairman of the Board.

(b) "Travel" shall mean attendance at meetings, conferences, or other functions on District business at other than the employee's headquarters or temporary headquarters or, in the case of directors, their residences or places of business, whichever is applicable. Employees shall not be in travel status to the extent that they travel to perform job assignments related to District facilities within designated service or maintenance areas unless it is overnight. A specific headquarters shall be designated for each employee.

(c) "Overnight travel" shall mean travel which prevents employees from spending their usual sleeping hours at their residences.

(d) "Temporary headquarters" shall mean District facilities other than their regular headquarters where employees are instructed by their immediate supervisors to report on a temporary basis.

(e) "Business meal" shall be one in which employees provide non-employees and themselves meals and beverages ordinarily associated with normal eating customs under circumstances which are generally considered to be conducive to furthering the business of the District. A "business meal" unless otherwise justified does not include a meal furnished by an employee to someone in expectation that another meal will be furnished to the employee or in repayment of one previously furnished. A "business meal" shall also include employees' meals at business meetings away from a District facility with non-employees who pay for their own meals, or at a business program sponsored by a business or professional association where the subject matter of the discussion is of importance to the District. Employees (not including directors) ordinarily may not themselves partake in, or provide for others, business meals without prior authorization by their group, assistant group or section manager provided, however, whenever an employee who customarily performs District job assignments at a specific location, or locations, is required to be at a substantial distance from that location on District business during a period when a meal is usually partaken, the employee shall be reimbursed by the District for the expense of meals partaken at such other locations. In addition to the above, a Department Head may authorize meals for employees under special circumstances.

§ 6324. Authorization for Domestic Travel.

(a) Directors

(1) Directors are authorized to travel anywhere within ~~the States of Arizona, California and Nevada~~ Metropolitan's service area on District business, subject to the limitations on travel reimbursements in section 6326(e)(1).

(2) Other domestic travel on District business by directors shall be undertaken only with the prior approval of the Chairman of the Board or, on the Chairman's referral, the Executive Committee. In considering whether to give such approval, the criteria set out in Section 6320 shall be applied. The Chairman, or the Board Executive Secretary acting at the Chairman's direction, shall advise the director in writing in advance that the travel is authorized.

(3) Where a director expects to be absent from the State for personal reasons for more than 60 days, that director shall, in advance of departure, request approval from the Board in order to comply with Government Code Section 1062.

(b) Employees

(1) Employees if authorized by their supervisors may travel anywhere within Southern California (including Bakersfield) to carry out their job assignments.

(2) Group managers are authorized, and may authorize their staff, to travel anywhere within the United States to carry out a job assignment.

§ 6325. Authorization for International Travel.

(a) The General Manager is authorized to approve travel of District personnel to foreign countries, when necessary as an incident to the evaluation of bids or the administration of contracts, and for participation in conferences, inspection trips, meetings or exchanges of potential benefit to the District. The General Manager shall report all international travel approved pursuant to this section to the Chairman of the Board in advance of such travel being taken, together with a written justification for the travel pursuant to the criteria set forth in subpart (c).

(b) All requests for international travel by directors or Department Heads shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Board in advance of the travel date for participation in conferences, inspection trips, meetings or exchanges of potential benefit to the District. The Chairman of the Board shall authorize the international travel when appropriate pursuant to the criteria set forth in subpart (c). The Chairman or the Board Executive Secretary acting at the Chairman's direction shall, in advance of such participation, advise, in writing, any director whose participation is authorized.

(c) The Chairman, in approving international travel by a director or Department Head, and the General Manager, in approving international travel by a member of the staff, shall consider, among others, the following criteria:

(1) Whether significant personal contacts of direct and significant benefit in the conduct of the District's affairs will be made as the result of such participation;

(2) Whether technical or administrative information to be gained by participation will be of direct and significant benefit in the conduct of the District's affairs;

(3) Whether the cost of participation, including both travel costs and time taken from other District assignments, is warranted by the anticipated benefits to be gained by the District through new knowledge, contacts, or technology; and

(4) Whether dissemination of information about the District to the target audience will significantly contribute to the protection of the District's rights and properties.

(d) The Chairman of the Board shall report quarterly to the Executive Committee on all international travel which has been approved pursuant to this section for directors, Department Heads, and staff members.

§ 6326. Authorized Expenses.

(a) Transportation Costs and Costs Associated with Transportation. - Authorized transportation expenses may include common carrier fares, rental of automobiles, parking fees, and use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate provided for in any applicable memorandum of understanding. If no memorandum of understanding is applicable, the rate shall be the standard mileage rate permitted at the time by the Internal Revenue Service in computing a deduction for business mileage; provided, however, that for employees in the classifications listed in Section 6500, mileage for use of personal automobiles on District business shall be reimbursed only as provided in the Operating Policy then in effect which sets forth the vehicle allowances and related benefits for such employees.

(b) Overnight Travel. - In addition to those expenses described in Section 6326(a), authorized expenses while traveling overnight on District business also may include reasonable telephone calls to the employee's family, meals, lodging, baggage handling, tips, and any other reasonable incidental expenses of the trip which are business related rather than personal in nature. If a family member should accompany an employee, subject to the requirements of Section 6321, lodging expense may only be reimbursed at the applicable rate for a single room to be occupied by only one person. ~~Travel costs, meals and all other incidental expenses for a family member are not authorized unless approved in advance in writing by the Department Head or the Executive Committee after a determination has been made that the family member's participation is appropriate.~~

Subject to the requirements of Section 6321(c), the District shall pay lodging, meal and other reasonable incidental expenses incurred at the destination required for business purposes when travel is extended for a time beyond what is normally required for such purposes (i.e., over a weekend), if the extension of time reduces the transportation costs that would otherwise have been incurred, thereby resulting in a net cost savings overall. Whenever such situations occur, they shall be fully described on the expense claim form subsequently prepared to document the travel activity. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District shall not pay for transportation costs other than to and from the destination required for business purposes.

(c) Business Meal. - Business meal expenses may include the cost of meals and beverages ordinarily associated with normal eating customs, provided that no alcoholic beverages may be provided at District expense. An adequate description of the purpose of the meal and the names of guests and their affiliations shall be provided whenever claiming reimbursement for business meals ~~which include one or more guests~~.

A meal furnished to a fellow employee will only be reimbursed if: (a) both would be entitled to reimbursement; (b) if the meal is in connection with a business discussion with a non-employee; or (c) ~~while~~ both employees are in overnight travel status.

An employee while in overnight status or director who provides a business meal to another person at a hotel, where the employee or director is staying on District business, or at a restaurant, when the bill is directly forwarded to the District for payment, must indicate on the

~~employee's~~ expense account or reimbursement request who the guest was and the business reason for the expense.

(d) Transportation. - The type of transportation employed shall be selected on the basis of the lowest overall cost to the District after all costs are considered, including the travel time and the salary of the employee; provided, however, that travel by common carrier bus shall not be required.

Trips which require travel in excess of 200 miles one way shall be made by commercial airline unless the circumstances dictate otherwise. Reimbursements for any transportation costs for trips over 200 miles one way by any form of transportation shall generally not exceed the standard round-trip airline coach airfare in effect at the time, ~~as established by the Manager, Contracting Services,~~ plus any personal auto mileage and airport parking that would have been incurred and reimbursable if airline transportation had been used. ~~In lieu of this, if a person is authorized to obtain their own ticket for a trip on a commercial airline, that person can receive the amount of the standard round-trip airline coach airfare in effect at the time, as established by the Manager, Contracting Services, plus any personal auto mileage and airport parking costs incurred.~~

~~Whenever practicable, all air travel ticketing shall be made by the Manager, Contracting Services upon receipt of a written request approved in accordance with Section 6324. Directors' travel requests shall be coordinated through the office of the Board Executive Secretary.~~

Determination of the standard round-trip coach airfare, for purposes of establishing a reimbursement limit on optional forms of travel, shall be made in advance whenever practicable. All airline travel shall ~~only~~ be by airplane coach or economy class except: (1) when ~~the Manager, Contracting Services finds that~~ coach or economy seats are unavailable at the time of ticketing, or (2) where the Department Head or the Board's Chairman finds that some physical problem, essential business, or exceptional circumstance warrants travel in a higher class. ~~An employee who obtains airline tickets from the Manager, Contracting Services for the purpose of combining personal travel with District travel, or for travel with a family member, shall prior to receipt of such ticket, either make payment for the portion of cost attributable to personal travel or to the family member's travel, or agree in writing to reimburse the District for such cost not later than the date of travel.~~

(e) Limitations and Non-Reimbursable Expenses

(1) Directors may attend up to three meetings and conferences related to District purposes per calendar year at District expense (including registration and reasonable travel expenses). Attendance at additional meetings and conferences in a calendar year will not be at the expense of Metropolitan, unless approved in advance by the Chairman of the Board. Reasons for approval of additional meetings include representing Metropolitan in a leadership position for an organization, speaking at a meeting or conference on behalf of Metropolitan, or similar representation of Metropolitan.

(2) Costs of overnight stays for directors attending board and committee meetings will be paid or reimbursed by the District only for directors residing outside of a 35-mile radius of the meeting location Los Angeles County or when reasonably required under the circumstances

(such as for attendance at evening or early morning meetings, to accommodate director driving restrictions, or other similar situation), and approved by the Chairman of the Board).

(3) The expenses of a director's spouse or other family member who accompanies the director on District business shall not be borne by the District or reimbursable to a director unless specifically authorized in writing by the Chairman of the Board (or Executive Committee) in advance as an expense necessary for the proper representation of the District. Such reimbursements shall be reported as income of the recipient, as required under applicable tax law.

(4) Items of personal benefit, including but not limited to in-room movies, entertainment and mini-bar snacks and beverages are a personal expense and will not be paid or reimbursed by the District. No alcoholic beverages will be paid for or reimbursed by the District.

(~~5~~) The expenses of an employee or director shall not be reimbursed by the District to the extent that they are reimbursed by another party.

§ 6327. Route and Mode of Travel.

(a) Travel must be by the most direct route, considering the mode of transportation used. Additional expense resulting from travel by an indirect route for the personal interest of the employee is not chargeable to the District, but is to be reported on claims for reimbursement and identified as chargeable to the employee.

(b) The department head or group manager shall reject or reduce claims for reimbursement of expenses resulting from unauthorized travel or inappropriate selection by the employee of class of transportation, lodging, or meals.

(c) Department heads, assistant department heads, group, assistant group, and section managers are authorized and may authorize other employees to approve transportation orders to check out pool cars from the Los Angeles headquarters garage. Directors requiring the use of District vehicles shall place their requests through the General Manager.

§ 6328. Other Expenses.

Expenses not otherwise covered by these regulations and not exceeding \$100 may be approved by the group manager if consistent with the requirements of Sections 6320 and 6321. Those in excess of \$100 shall be approved by the department head.

Division II**PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO BOARD, COMMITTEES
AND DIRECTORS**

Article 2

INSPECTION TRIPS

Sec.

- 2610. Authorization
- 2611. Colorado River Aqueduct System
- 2612. State Water Project
- 2613. One-Day Inspection Trips
- 2614. Alternative Inspection Trips
- 2615. General Provisions

...

§ 2615. General Provisions.

(a) The purpose of these inspection trips is to disseminate District information; provide elected and appointed officials, members of the business and environmental communities, members of the media, and other leading citizens and interested persons from each member public agency with visual inspection of District and related facilities; and acquaint them with issues facing the water industry and the District's operations, programs, and objectives, both present and future. Each director shall be responsible for the individual selection of guests, the choice of inspection trip and the inspection trip dates.

(b) It is each director's obligation to periodically sponsor inspection trips.

(c) Inspection trip guests should be selected from within the area of the public agency represented by the sponsoring director. Each director should ~~strive to~~ select guests who occupy positions of leadership in their communities and other interested persons as described in subsection (a) above. The sponsoring director may be accompanied by one family member (including spouse or significant other). No minor children shall be permitted to attend. If space is available, additional family members may accompany the director with the approval by the Chairman of the Board in writing in advance of the inspection trip.

(d) Directors may co-sponsor a trip with another director to maximize resources and serve the best interest of the District.

(e) Directors shall accompany their guests on inspection trips they sponsor except in cases of illness, emergency or other exceptional circumstances, and shall accompany them throughout all portions of the trip. In the event that a sponsoring director is not available, another director from the district or an approved director designee from a member agency must accompany the trip if cancellation is not feasible.

(f) The number of invited guests on any District inspection trip should be approximately 36.

(g) Payment of District expense for transportation and meals on any inspection trip is limited to the normal travel routes to and from District facilities.

(h) If the director sponsoring the trip so desires, a reasonable amount of time will be set aside during the inspection trip for a discussion of the water problems of the member public agency as they relate to the District. Reasonable distribution of written material concerning the member public agency also will be permitted.

(i) Itineraries, transportation, lodging and meals for District inspection trips shall be standardized to the extent possible in order to minimize costs. Variations from standard itineraries to accommodate special conditions may be authorized by the Chairman.

(j) Directors are urged to consider scheduling their Colorado River Aqueduct inspection trips for Thursday, Friday and Saturday or Saturday, Sunday, and Monday rather than Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in order to allow two trips to be conducted over the same weekend and, thus, accommodate more directors' requests for preferred-month dates.

(k) Trip groups numbering ten or less may be required to share the guest quarters at Gene Field Headquarters with another group or groups.

(l) The Office of the Board will not accept reservations for inspection trips prior to April 1 for the following fiscal year.

(m) Inspection trip dates are assigned on a date/time-request-received basis. Scheduling conflicts will be resolved by consultation with affected directors. Any unresolved scheduling conflicts shall be referred to the Chairman.

(n) In the event a director is unable to schedule a trip because of lack of an open date when he/she submits his/her reservation, he/she shall be accorded priority the next fiscal year.

(o) Alcoholic beverages will not be provided at District expense. Directors shall assume the sole responsibility for the purchase, costs and use of any alcoholic beverages during an inspection trip. Staff shall not purchase or serve alcoholic beverages during an inspection trip.

(p) Directors sponsoring inspection trips are responsible for the conduct and behavior of all guests attending an inspection trip. Upon being informed, or otherwise becoming aware of, any improper behavior or activity, the sponsoring Director shall take appropriate measures, in coordination with Metropolitan tour staff, to address such behavior or activity, up to and including removal of any person or persons from the inspection trip. Directors or guest observing any action or event that is inappropriate shall report such activity as soon as possible to the supervising Director, or after the tour is concluded, to the Board Chairman, for appropriate action. District staff observing an action or event that is inappropriate shall report such activity

as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor and/or to the Chief Administrative Officer or Chairman for appropriate action.

(q) Tipping of district employees, is strictly prohibited and any employee accepting a gratuity is subject to dismissal. The District staff representative on the trip will handle the tip for the bus driver and any other tips which are appropriate.

(r) The District will pay all necessary expenses incurred during an inspection trip.

(s) As a security measure, the sponsoring Director shall submit a manifest of all guests to the District in advance of the inspection trip. In an emergency situation, the District may interrupt and/or cancel any inspection trip in accordance with district security policy, which shall include closure of all Metropolitan facilities to visitors.

(t) Directors within the same member public agency may transfer inspection trips among themselves if the transfer is in the best interests of the District. Acceptance of an inspection trip sponsored by another director shall not affect a director's right to sponsor an inspection trip under the other provisions of this chapter. Directors of one public agency may not transfer their inspection trips to directors of another public agency except for reasons stated in paragraph (e) above.

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§ 6320. Policy.

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§ 6321. Expense Reimbursement Rates.

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(a) Lodging shall be obtained at government or group rates, when available. For conferences and organized educational activities, lodging costs shall not exceed the maximum

group rate published by the sponsor of the conference or activity. If no government or group rate is available the traveler should obtain moderately priced accommodations based on prevailing rates in the area. The traveler may request per diem at IRS-published rates for the area of travel or, if the traveler is covered by a bargaining unit, then at the rate established pursuant to the applicable Memorandum of Understanding in lieu of reimbursement for actual lodging expense.

(b) Transportation costs and costs associated with transportation will be reimbursed according to the requirements of Section 6326.

(c) Reimbursement for meals is limited to the IRS-published per diem rate for the area of travel or the rate established by an applicable Memorandum of Understanding. Directors must provide a receipt for each meal even though reimbursement will be limited to the IRS per diem rate.

§ 6322. Supervision.

As circumstances vary considerably in those instances where directors and employees must incur expenses, care by those incurring expenses, and supervision by those approving expense accounts are the most effective controls over expenditures. When expenses that might be regarded as out of the ordinary are foreseen, the approving officer's instructions should be sought beforehand.

§ 6323. Definitions.

(a) "Employee" shall mean directors and employees unless specifically stated otherwise. Employees within a bargaining unit which has a Memorandum of Understanding with the District shall be governed by its provisions to the extent it provides for reimbursement of expenses or per diem. Where authorization for an employee to travel is required from a "Department Head or group manager," the term shall mean the positions so identified by the organizational chart contained in the most recent annual District budget adopted by the Board. In the case of a director, the terms shall be deemed to mean the Chairman of the Board.

(b) "Travel" shall mean attendance at meetings, conferences, or other functions on District business at other than the employee's headquarters or temporary headquarters or, in the case of directors, their residences or places of business, whichever is applicable. Employees shall not be in travel status to the extent that they travel to perform job assignments related to District facilities within designated service or maintenance areas unless it is overnight. A specific headquarters shall be designated for each employee.

(c) "Overnight travel" shall mean travel which prevents employees from spending their usual sleeping hours at their residences.

(d) "Temporary headquarters" shall mean District facilities other than their regular headquarters where employees are instructed by their immediate supervisors to report on a temporary basis.

(e) "Business meal" shall be one in which employees provide non-employees and themselves meals and beverages ordinarily associated with normal eating customs under circumstances which are generally considered to be conducive to furthering the business of the District. A "business meal" unless otherwise justified does not include a meal furnished by an employee to someone in expectation that another meal will be furnished to the employee or in repayment of one previously furnished. A "business meal" shall also include employees' meals at business meetings away from a District facility with non-employees who pay for their own meals, or at a business program sponsored by a business or professional association where the subject matter of the discussion is of importance to the District. Employees (not including directors) ordinarily may not themselves partake in, or provide for others, business meals without prior authorization by their group, assistant group or section manager provided, however, whenever an employee who customarily performs District job assignments at a specific location, or locations, is required to be at a substantial distance from that location on District business during a period when a meal is usually partaken, the employee shall be reimbursed by the District for the expense of meals partaken at such other locations. In addition to the above, a Department Head may authorize meals for employees under special circumstances.

§ 6324. Authorization for Domestic Travel.

(a) Directors

(1) Directors are authorized to travel anywhere within Metropolitan's service area on District business, subject to the limitations on travel reimbursements in section 6326(e)(1).

(2) Other domestic travel on District business by directors shall be undertaken only with the prior approval of the Chairman of the Board or, on the Chairman's referral, the Executive Committee. In considering whether to give such approval, the criteria set out in Section 6320 shall be applied. The Chairman, or the Board Executive Secretary acting at the Chairman's direction, shall advise the director in writing in advance that the travel is authorized.

(3) Where a director expects to be absent from the State for personal reasons for more than 60 days, that director shall, in advance of departure, request approval from the Board in order to comply with Government Code Section 1062.

(b) Employees

(1) Employees if authorized by their supervisors may travel anywhere within Southern California (including Bakersfield) to carry out their job assignments.

(2) Group managers are authorized, and may authorize their staff, to travel anywhere within the United States to carry out a job assignment.

§ 6325. Authorization for International Travel.

(a) The General Manager is authorized to approve travel of District personnel to foreign countries, when necessary as an incident to the evaluation of bids or the administration of contracts, and for participation in conferences, inspection trips, meetings or exchanges of potential benefit to the District. The General Manager shall report all international travel approved pursuant to this section to the Chairman of the Board in advance of such travel being taken, together with a written justification for the travel pursuant to the criteria set forth in subpart (c).

(b) All requests for international travel by directors or Department Heads shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Board in advance of the travel date for participation in conferences, inspection trips, meetings or exchanges of potential benefit to the District. The Chairman of the Board shall authorize the international travel when appropriate pursuant to the criteria set forth in subpart (c). The Chairman or the Board Executive Secretary acting at the Chairman's direction shall, in advance of such participation, advise, in writing, any director whose participation is authorized.

(c) The Chairman, in approving international travel by a director or Department Head, and the General Manager, in approving international travel by a member of the staff, shall consider, among others, the following criteria:

(1) Whether significant personal contacts of direct and significant benefit in the conduct of the District's affairs will be made as the result of such participation;

(2) Whether technical or administrative information to be gained by participation will be of direct and significant benefit in the conduct of the District's affairs;

(3) Whether the cost of participation, including both travel costs and time taken from other District assignments, is warranted by the anticipated benefits to be gained by the District through new knowledge, contacts, or technology; and

(4) Whether dissemination of information about the District to the target audience will significantly contribute to the protection of the District's rights and properties.

(d) The Chairman of the Board shall report quarterly to the Executive Committee on all international travel which has been approved pursuant to this section for directors, Department Heads, and staff members.

§ 6326. Authorized Expenses.

(a) Transportation Costs and Costs Associated with Transportation. - Authorized transportation expenses may include common carrier fares, rental of automobiles, parking fees, and use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate provided for in any applicable memorandum of understanding. If no memorandum of understanding is applicable, the rate shall be the standard mileage rate permitted at the time by the Internal Revenue Service in computing a deduction for business mileage; provided, however, that for employees in the classifications listed in Section 6500, mileage for use of personal automobiles on District business shall be reimbursed only as provided in the Operating Policy then in effect which sets forth the vehicle allowances and related benefits for such employees.

(b) Overnight Travel. - In addition to those expenses described in Section 6326(a), authorized expenses while traveling overnight on District business also may include reasonable telephone calls to the employee's family, meals, lodging, baggage handling, tips, and any other reasonable incidental expenses of the trip which are business related rather than personal in nature. If a family member should accompany an employee, subject to the requirements of Section 6321, lodging expense may only be reimbursed at the applicable rate for a single room to be occupied by only one person.

Subject to the requirements of Section 6321(c), the District shall pay lodging, meal and other reasonable incidental expenses incurred at the destination required for business purposes when travel is extended for a time beyond what is normally required for such purposes (i.e., over a weekend), if the extension of time reduces the transportation costs that would otherwise have been incurred, thereby resulting in a net cost savings overall. Whenever such situations occur, they shall be fully described on the expense claim form subsequently prepared to document the travel activity. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District shall not pay for transportation costs other than to and from the destination required for business purposes.

(c) Business Meal. - Business meal expenses may include the cost of meals and beverages ordinarily associated with normal eating customs, provided that no alcoholic beverages may be provided at District expense. An adequate description of the purpose of the meal and the names of guests and their affiliations shall be provided whenever claiming reimbursement for business meals.

A meal furnished to a fellow employee will only be reimbursed if: (a) both would be entitled to reimbursement; (b) if the meal is in connection with a business discussion with a non-employee; or (c) both employees are in overnight travel status.

An employee while in overnight status or director who provides a business meal to another person at a hotel, where the employee or director is staying on District business, or at a restaurant, when the bill is directly forwarded to the District for payment, must indicate on the expense account or reimbursement request who the guest was and the business reason for the expense.

(d) Transportation. - The type of transportation employed shall be selected on the basis of the lowest overall cost to the District after all costs are considered, including the travel time and the salary of the employee; provided, however, that travel by common carrier bus shall not be required.

Trips which require travel in excess of 200 miles one way shall be made by commercial airline unless the circumstances dictate otherwise. Reimbursements for any transportation costs for trips over 200 miles one way by any form of transportation shall generally not exceed the standard round-trip airline coach airfare in effect at the time, plus any personal auto mileage and airport parking that would have been incurred and reimbursable if airline transportation had been used. Determination of the standard round-trip coach airfare, for purposes of establishing a reimbursement limit on optional forms of travel, shall be made in advance whenever practicable. All airline travel shall be by airplane coach or economy class except: (1) when coach or economy seats are unavailable at the time of ticketing, or (2) where the Department Head or the Board Chairman finds that some physical problem, essential business, or exceptional circumstance warrants travel in a higher class.

(e) Limitations and Non-Reimbursable Expenses

(1) Directors may attend up to three meetings and conferences related to District purposes per calendar year at District expense (including registration and reasonable travel expenses). Attendance at additional meetings and conferences in a calendar year will not be at the expense of Metropolitan, unless approved in advance by the Chairman of the Board. Reasons for approval of additional meetings include representing Metropolitan in a leadership position for an organization, speaking at a meeting or conference on behalf of Metropolitan, or similar representation of Metropolitan.

(2) Costs of overnight stays for directors attending board and committee meetings will be paid or reimbursed by the District only for directors residing outside of a 35-mile radius of the meeting location or when reasonably required under the circumstances (such as for attendance at evening or early morning meetings, to accommodate director driving restrictions, or other similar situation), and approved by the Chairman of the Board.

(3) The expenses of a director's spouse or other family member who accompanies the director on District business shall not be borne by the District or reimbursable to a director unless specifically authorized in writing by the Chairman of the Board (or Executive Committee) in advance as an expense necessary for the proper representation of the District. Such reimbursements shall be reported as income of the recipient, as required under applicable tax law.

(4) Items of personal benefit, including but not limited to in-room movies, entertainment and mini-bar snacks and beverages are a personal expense and will not be paid or reimbursed by the District. No alcoholic beverages will be paid for or reimbursed by the District.

(5) The expenses of an employee or director shall not be reimbursed by the District to the extent that they are reimbursed by another party.

§ 6327. Route and Mode of Travel.

(a) Travel must be by the most direct route, considering the mode of transportation used. Additional expense resulting from travel by an indirect route for the personal interest of the employee is not chargeable to the District, but is to be reported on claims for reimbursement and identified as chargeable to the employee.

(b) The department head or group manager shall reject or reduce claims for reimbursement of expenses resulting from unauthorized travel or inappropriate selection by the employee of class of transportation, lodging, or meals.

(c) Department heads, assistant department heads, group, assistant group, and section managers are authorized and may authorize other employees to approve transportation orders to check out pool cars from the Los Angeles headquarters garage. Directors requiring the use of District vehicles shall place their requests through the General Manager.

§ 6328. Other Expenses.

Expenses not otherwise covered by these regulations and not exceeding \$100 may be approved by the group manager if consistent with the requirements of Sections 6320 and 6321. Those in excess of \$100 shall be approved by the department head.

Division II**PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO BOARD, COMMITTEES
AND DIRECTORS**

Article 2

INSPECTION TRIPS

Sec.

- 2610. Authorization
- 2611. Colorado River Aqueduct System
- 2612. State Water Project
- 2613. One-Day Inspection Trips
- 2614. Alternative Inspection Trips
- 2615. General Provisions

...

§ 2615. General Provisions.

(a) The purpose of these inspection trips is to disseminate District information; provide elected and appointed officials, members of the business and environmental communities, members of the media, and other leading citizens and interested persons from each member public agency with visual inspection of District and related facilities; and acquaint them with issues facing the water industry and the District's operations, programs, and objectives, both present and future. Each director shall be responsible for the individual selection of guests, the choice of inspection trip and the inspection trip dates.

(b) It is each director's obligation to periodically sponsor inspection trips.

(c) Inspection trip guests should be selected from within the area of the public agency represented by the sponsoring director. Each director should select guests who occupy positions of leadership in their communities and other interested persons as described in subsection (a) above. The sponsoring director may be accompanied by one family member (including spouse or significant other). No minor children shall be permitted to attend. If space is available, additional family members may accompany the director with the approval by the Chairman of the Board in writing in advance of the inspection trip.

(d) Directors may co-sponsor a trip with another director to maximize resources and serve the best interest of the District.

(e) Directors shall accompany their guests on inspection trips they sponsor except in cases of illness, emergency or other exceptional circumstances, and shall accompany them throughout all portions of the trip. In the event that a sponsoring director is not available, another director from the district or an approved director designee from a member agency must accompany the trip if cancellation is not feasible.

(f) The number of invited guests on any District inspection trip should be approximately 36.

(g) Payment of District expense for transportation and meals on any inspection trip is limited to the normal travel routes to and from District facilities.

(h) If the director sponsoring the trip so desires, a reasonable amount of time will be set aside during the inspection trip for a discussion of the water problems of the member public agency as they relate to the District. Reasonable distribution of written material concerning the member public agency also will be permitted.

(i) Itineraries, transportation, lodging and meals for District inspection trips shall be standardized to the extent possible in order to minimize costs. Variations from standard itineraries to accommodate special conditions may be authorized by the Chairman.

(j) Directors are urged to consider scheduling their Colorado River Aqueduct inspection trips for Thursday, Friday and Saturday or Saturday, Sunday, and Monday rather than Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in order to allow two trips to be conducted over the same weekend and, thus, accommodate more directors' requests for preferred-month dates.

(k) Trip groups numbering ten or less may be required to share the guest quarters at Gene Field Headquarters with another group or groups.

(l) The Office of the Board will not accept reservations for inspection trips prior to April 1 for the following fiscal year.

(m) Inspection trip dates are assigned on a date/time-request-received basis. Scheduling conflicts will be resolved by consultation with affected directors. Any unresolved scheduling conflicts shall be referred to the Chairman.

(n) In the event a director is unable to schedule a trip because of lack of an open date when he/she submits his/her reservation, he/she shall be accorded priority the next fiscal year.

(o) Alcoholic beverages will not be provided at District expense. Directors shall assume the sole responsibility for the purchase, costs and use of any alcoholic beverages during an inspection trip. Staff shall not purchase or serve alcoholic beverages during an inspection trip.

(p) Directors sponsoring inspection trips are responsible for the conduct and behavior of all guests attending an inspection trip. Upon being informed, or otherwise becoming aware of, any improper behavior or activity, the sponsoring Director shall take appropriate measures, in coordination with Metropolitan tour staff, to address such behavior or activity, up to and including removal of any person or persons from the inspection trip. Directors or guest observing any action or event that is inappropriate shall report such activity as soon as possible to the supervising Director, or after the tour is concluded, to the Board Chairman, for appropriate action. District staff observing an action or event that is inappropriate shall report such activity

as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor and/or to the Chief Administrative Officer or Chairman for appropriate action.

(q) Tipping of district employees, is strictly prohibited and any employee accepting a gratuity is subject to dismissal. The District staff representative on the trip will handle the tip for the bus driver and any other tips which are appropriate.

(r) The District will pay all necessary expenses incurred during an inspection trip.

(s) As a security measure, the sponsoring Director shall submit a manifest of all guests to the District in advance of the inspection trip. In an emergency situation, the District may interrupt and/or cancel any inspection trip in accordance with district security policy, which shall include closure of all Metropolitan facilities to visitors.

(t) Directors within the same member public agency may transfer inspection trips among themselves if the transfer is in the best interests of the District. Acceptance of an inspection trip sponsored by another director shall not affect a director's right to sponsor an inspection trip under the other provisions of this chapter. Directors of one public agency may not transfer their inspection trips to directors of another public agency except for reasons stated in paragraph (e) above.