



February 2010

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► **WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF YOUR BOAV NEWSLETTER FOR 2010!**

In January we experienced the first 'Code Red' fire danger ratings and saw the impact only two such days had on regional tourism. We will continue to monitor this issue and work with Tourism Victoria and the CFA to improve bushfire messaging and provide members with information and updates. In conjunction with VECCI, we are also continuing to provide feedback on the warning system to the State Government.

In January we farewelled VECCI's General Manager of Tourism and Events, Anthony McIntosh. He will certainly be missed by the BOAV team here, and we look forward to working with his successor following the recruitment process.

The year promises to be another busy year for BOAV members, with plenty of opportunities to learn, network, get involved, stay connected and have your say on issues impacting our industry. Read on, and I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events soon.

**Anita Donnelly**

**Executive Officer**

### ▶ 2009 QANTAS AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARDS

The National 2009 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards will be held on Friday 26 February 2010, with the winners of each category announced at the formal awards ceremony at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart.

We wish the following BOAV members all the best at this year's awards:

- Melbourne Aquarium – Major Tourist Attractions
- Brambuk the National Park and Cultural Centre – HOSTPlus Award for Indigenous Tourism
- Bunyip Tours – Destination Melbourne Award for Tour and/or Transport Operators
- Melbourne Metro YHA - Best Backpacker Accommodation
- Old Melbourne Gaol Crime & Justice Experience - National Trust of Australia - Heritage & Cultural Tourism

The Qantas Australian Tourism Awards recognises and promotes excellence in tourism. They are the pinnacle of achievement for the tourism industry across Australia.

[Click here](#) for more information on the awards

### ▶ BOAV INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS FACT SHEETS

#### **[Suggestions for combating bed bugs](#)**

Bed bugs affect all accommodation providers from backpacker hostels to 5 star hotels – pests do not discriminate.

Learn practical advice and tips on how to combat this common problem within the accommodation industry.

[Click here](#) to view this fact sheet.

BOAV has developed a number of other handy business resources, designed to help members stay up-to-date with safety regulations, legislation, laws and trends that apply to the accommodation industry.

Click on the links below to view our other fact sheets available on our website:

- [10 Reasons Why Websites Fail](#)
- [Advice for Regional and Local Tourism Organisations – Helping Businesses Become More Sustainable](#)
- [Green Design](#)
- [Helpful Hints for Assisting People with a Disability](#)

- [Holiday Accommodation Guide - a guide for providers and booking agents](#)
- [Information and Advice for Employers of Backpackers](#)
- [Responsibilities and Liquor Laws - Changes to the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998](#)
- [Search Engine Optimisation](#)
- [Single Price Advertising](#)
- [Starting Up A Touring Business](#)
- [Starting Up A Tourist Attraction](#)
- [Starting Up An Accommodation Business](#)
- [Tax Information for Backpackers](#)
- [Tips for Dealing with Swine Flu Issues](#)
- [Top 15 Things Backpackers Can Do To Be Green](#)



## **TOURISM AND EVENTS INDUSTRY WELL REPRESENTED IN THE VECCI STATE BUDGET SUBMISSION**

The VECCI State Budget Submission strongly advocates on behalf of all tourism and events members including those of BOAV, VTIC, VEIC, HMAA and TAV.

The tourism and events sector is vulnerable to fluctuations in the general economic environment and has been impacted by the recent downturn in the economy.

As such, it is important that the 2010-11 State Budget is used not only to assist the tourism and events sector recover from the effects of the downturn, but also help position the industry for sustainable real growth through a combination of strategic investment and marketing investment.

The submission recognises the following issues:

- the need to invest in key infrastructure assets such as the Melbourne Exhibition Centre and Melbourne's airports;
- the opportunity to capitalise on Victoria's abundant natural attractions;
- the increasing importance of public safety and the need to reduce anti-social behaviour;
- the importance of continued funding for marketing; and
- the need for product development, including pre-development research and planning.

Together with sector specific recommendations, tourism and events members stand to benefit from the many State-wide recommendations presented on behalf of all VECCI members. These recommendations include:

- a reduction in payroll tax;
- a reduction in the middle-upper land tax rates;
- a reduction in average employer WorkCover premiums;
- a freeze on the indexation of all fees, fines and charges, together with no new or extended taxes or charges;
- the introduction of a Major Projects Facilitation Act to cover major non-transport projects;
- funding to support the development and commercialisation of low carbon energy technologies; and
- ongoing support for bushfire preparedness.

Advocacy and representation for the industry will continue over the coming months as VECCI CEO Wayne Kayler-Thomson and other senior representatives meet with various State Ministers to advocate strongly on behalf of members, reinforcing the recommendations highlighted in the State Budget Submission.

For the full submission [click here](#)



## BOAV EXPO INDUSTRY FUNCTION

On Thursday 18 February, BOAV hosted the Expo Industry Function, which was held at Fed Square in Melbourne's CBD. Delegates came from around Australia to network with fellow industry professionals who were involved in the Backpacker Expo that weekend.

Guests were treated to a brief tour of the Screen Worlds exhibition at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI), where they were able to step back in time with the video games, cartoons and TV shows of their youth. They then made their way across to Il Pomodoro, for networking, drinks and canapés, while enjoying the gorgeous summer evening.

At the end of the function, Bunyip Tour's very kindly transported guests to the Nomads Industry after-party in their buses, where guests could continue the festivities.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the following sponsors, whose generous contributions made this night possible;

- Destination Melbourne
- Tourism Victoria
- YHA
- Base Backpackers St Kilda
- International Exchange Programs (IEP)

We'd also like to thank ACMI and Il Pomodoro for hosting the night's events.



## SMALL ACCESS TO FINANCE - HAVE YOUR SAY AS INQUIRY KICKS OFF

A Senate Inquiry is currently underway investigating the issue of small business access to finance.

In order to strengthen our advocacy in this area, VECCI encourages small businesses to provide information outlining their own experience and concerns.

If you have experienced difficulty accessing finance as a small business operator in the past 6 months, we would like to hear from you.

Please contact **Jodie Wickham**, Senior Policy Adviser, on email [jwickham@vecci.org.au](mailto:jwickham@vecci.org.au) or phone (03) 8662 5337.

The Inquiry is expected to cover the following areas:

- The costs, terms and conditions of finance and changes to lending policies and practices affecting small businesses;
- The importance of reasonable access to funding to support small business expansion and the sector's contribution to employment growth and economic recovery;
- The state of competition in small business lending and the impact of the Government's banking guarantees;
- Opportunities and obstacles to other forms of financing, for example, equity to support small business 'start ups', liquidity, growth and expansion;
- Policies, practices and strategies to enhance access to small business finance that exist in other countries; and
- Any other related matters.

Members wanting to provide their own submissions direct to the Senate Committee should do so by **31 March 2010**.

For more information on the Inquiry click [here](#)



### EXPERIENCING DELAYS IN LIQUOR LICENSING APPLICATIONS?

In addition to concerns over increased costs associated with the new risk-based liquor licensing fees, member feedback indicates that there are also delays occurring in the processing of applications.

If you have experienced a delay in your liquor license application, or have experienced other related difficulties, we would like to know.

Please contact Senior Policy Adviser, Jodie Wickham on email [jwickham@vecci.org.au](mailto:jwickham@vecci.org.au) or phone (03) 8662 5337.

This information will assist with our policy and advocacy activities in this area.



### WORLD NOMADS "VAN-TASTIC ADVENTURES"

The World Nomads "Van-tastic Adventures" backpacker promotion that Tourism Victoria has been supporting has now come to a close.

Victorian winner, Tim Akroyd (from the UK) was a wonderful ambassador for Victoria travelling extensively around Victoria, videoing, blogging and photographing each step of his six week journey.

Tim visited the Great Ocean Road, Melbourne, Bellarine Peninsula, Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula, Phillip Island, Wilsons Promontory, Gippsland and the High Country, sometimes participating in up to three activities a day generously supplied by participating Victorian operators.

Tim's trip concluded in Melbourne on Federation Square, where highlights of his Victorian trip played on the big screen.

Tourism Victoria would like to thank all BOAV members who participated in the promotion and who helped make Tim's six week adventure in Victoria such a success and will help inspire young independent travellers to have their own fantastic Victorian adventure.

We encourage you to check out Tim's footage on the links below:

Travel Videos here:

<http://vantastic.worldnomads.com/index.php/about-vantastic-adventures/stage-3-active-vic/>

Photos here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vantasticadventures/sets/72157622742702874/>

Travel Journal/blog here:

<http://journals.worldnomads.com/timmyski/>

At the end of the adventure, the viewing public will vote for the best video produced during the year-long, 13,000 kilometre adventure – and the winning team will take home \$10,000 cash so we will be encouraging everyone to help vote for Tim and Victoria to be the winning state, in 2010.

Additional information on this promotion can be found on the attached press release.

## ► **CONFUSION AS MODERN AWARDS AND THE NEW SAFETY NET COMMENCED ON 1 JANUARY 2010**

Some employers may have found themselves caught out by the new safety net that came into effect on 1 January 2010. On that date, existing awards and statutory minima were replaced by 122 modern awards and 10 national employment standards.

On 4 December, the AIRC made the final stage 4 modern awards. This final stage included the highly contentious 'Miscellaneous Workers Award', which at times has threatened to extend award coverage to those employees who have not historically been award-covered. In this instance, the AIRC has, correctly, narrowed the scope of coverage of this Award.

To view full Media Release [click here](#).

## ► **SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT LINE**

The Small Business Support Line provides an initial single point of contact to access information and referral services that assist small businesses.

Advisers will be able to provide information, assistance or referral on small business issues including:

- business planning
- registration and licences
- e-business and online assistance
- marketing and promotion
- government initiatives, grants and assistance
- employing staff
- importing and exporting
- insurances
- government regulation
- personal stress and hardship counselling
- human resource management
- other issues small business are dealing with during the global recession.

The Support Line advisers may refer you to the nationwide network of Business Enterprise Centres, other small business advisory services or government agencies around Australia.

For more information contact the SBSL on 1800 777 275 or email [sbsl@innovation.gov.au](mailto:sbsl@innovation.gov.au).

Another useful service for small business is [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au)

## ► **ALLEGED ACCOMMODATION "SCAMMERS"**

HMAA has received feedback from Birches Serviced Apartments regarding three alleged "scammers" who had been staying with them.

The people Birches Service Apartments have raised their concerns about have been described as three ladies:

- "Mother" aged approximately 65 years, slim build with short, grey hair.
- "Daughter" (may be known as Skyla Thompson), aged 39 years with auburn hair, dark brown eyes, larger build, generally wearing long t-shirts, leggings and sports shoes.
- "Daughter" aged approximately 20 years, with auburn hair, brown eyes, larger build, generally wearing long t-shirts, leggings and sports shoes.

The story the three people in question told Birches is that their husband and father is dying, and they are waiting on funds from overseas. Allegedly, emails arrive to the accommodation provider from their lawyer/QC or book publisher; however, it is believed that they are likely to be all from the same aol.com account with different names attached to them. It is alleged that all these various alias emails are actually operated by the trio.

If you are concerned about anyone staying with you and believe they may be suspicious, do not hesitate to contact the police.

### ▶ VICTORIAN TOURISM OPERATORS ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

To assist the Victorian tourism industry, a comprehensive guide to crisis management was launched by the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, the Hon. Tim Holding MP.

The online tool, *Open for Business: Crisis Management for Tourism Businesses* was developed to better equip tourism operators to prepare for, respond to and recover from crises such as bushfire, drought and floods.

The tool kit is another government initiative to ensure tourism in Victoria's regional areas remains strong. Developed in response to the impact of last year's severe bushfires, *Open for Business* includes tools, tip and case studies designed to complement the *Crisis Communications Handbook for Regional and Local Tourism*.

To view the *Open for Business: Crisis Management for Tourism Businesses* online tool go to the Policy, Advocacy and Representation page on [www.boav.com.au](http://www.boav.com.au)

### ▶ HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE BUS RESTRICTIONS TO SWANSTON STREET

If you are an operator impacted by the bus restrictions to Swanston Street – we'd like to hear from you.

This short survey seeks to assess the impact of the decision by the City of Melbourne to ban access of all buses from Swanston Street, from 7am to 7pm, starting 1 November 2009. Your feedback will greatly assist us in continuing to advocate on behalf of members on this issue.

To complete the survey, please access the link below:  
<http://fs16.formsite.com/vecci/SwanstonStreet/index.html>

### ▶ REGULATION BREACH WARNING PERIOD IS OVER

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has warned travel operators that the "informing and educating" period of price advertising breaches of the Trade Practices Act is over.

Companies that fail to declare the full price of accommodation, fares and travel services will face litigation and be fined.

The ACCC's policy of informing and educating about pricing breaches of the act will be replaced by enforcement and litigation.

The Trade Practices Act came into force last May to stop companies understating the real price of goods and services in a range of industries. According to the ACCC, the travel industry, led by airlines that were one of the main focal areas of the legislation, was among the worst offenders.

Advertised prices for goods and services must include all charges including taxes,

fees and special charges. The advertised price must be what the consumer is expected to pay.

To view full article [click here](#).

### ▶ VICTORIAN ACCOMMODATION SEES QUARTERLY RISE

Victoria's accommodation sector has seen an increase in revenue for the second consecutive quarter, with a 0.3 per cent rise in the three months to September.

The September quarterly results released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics last week showed that while Victorian accommodation takings increased slightly, takings in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australian all declined.

National revenue fell by 0.8 per cent for the fifth consecutive quarter. Australian takings from accommodation have declined by around 10 per cent in real terms since the previous peak in the June quarter 2008.

The room occupancy rate fell slightly in Victoria reflecting an increase in the number of rooms available. The change in national room occupancy rate was minimal.

Growth prospects for Victoria's accommodation sector are expected to be spurred on by the opening of the 658-room Crown Metropool early this year.

### ▶ AUSTRALIAN TRAVELLER GIVES BACK TO THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

*Australian Traveller* has announced a special marketing incentive for tourism operators with an offer to give all of its February advertisers an additional advertisement free of charge.

Businesses that advertise in *Australian Traveller Magazine* will be entitled to equivalent space in a supplement called *The Little Book Of Big Savings*, which features holiday offers for readers.

[Click here to enquire about advertising rates.](#)

### ▶ VECCI TRAINING

VECCI have announced some new Short Courses for their 2010 training calendar, available to all BOAV members.

#### **Sales and Marketing:**

- Effective Selling has been replaced with 2 x 1 day programs: Selling Strategies that Work and Selling Fundamentals and Advanced Selling
- Standing out from the Crowd – Meaningful Product Differentiation
- How to Attract more Quality Clients to Grow your Business
- Basic Marketing Skills
- Advanced Marketing Skills
- Powerful Branding
- Develop a Basic Marketing Plan
- Develop an Advanced Marketing Plan
- Your Business Success – Setting Up and Running
- Direct Marketing Campaigns
- Social Media

Members are also able to attend the following VECCI briefings at no cost.

- OHS:
  - Harmonisation of OHS legislation in Australia - what it means for you and your business
- WPR:
  - Fair Work Act (non-Government Funded)
  - Modern Awards and National Employment Standards (NES)

Further details on the above courses are available from <http://www.vecci.org.au/Training>

### ▶ GREEN LEARNING

The green jobs industry is growing every year, and with the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme soon to be implemented, every business needs to be aware of the opportunities available in a low-carbon economy.

Environmentally-friendly businesses are those that make a conscious decision to choose sustainable practices. Customers, staff and suppliers increasingly want to work with and for these businesses. Sustainability in the workplace is fast becoming a key to giving your business the competitive edge.

VECCI offers a range of training courses, from two-hour seminars to diploma qualifications, to help your business and staff stay up to date with the latest developments in environmental business practices.

To find out more visit [www.vecci.org.au](http://www.vecci.org.au)

### ▶ GREEN CLEANING

The clean green revolution is here and it's time to find out how to be environmentally friendly and chemical-free, while also maintaining high standards of cleanliness. In AMG issue 28 it was reported that cleanliness was the number one priority for travellers. Holidaymakers are also becoming more environmentally conscious and are increasingly paying attention to green initiatives.

Green cleaning is a term that describes cleaning processes that use non-toxic and biodegradable products, with the aim of protecting human health as well as the environment.

To view full article [click here](#).

### ▶ WORLD CANCER DECLARATION

Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), in conjunction with Cancer Council Australia, is bidding to host the World Cancer Congress in Melbourne in 2014. It is a 2,000 delegate Congress that would most likely be held in late August over a five day period. They will be submitting a bid document to the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) by the end of March. One of the key initiatives of the UICC is the **World Cancer Declaration** which was developed by international cancer control advocates to bring the cancer crisis to the attention of policymakers worldwide.

For the purpose of the Melbourne Bid Document and Presentation, they are aiming for as many Australian Organisations and Individuals as possible to sign the declaration this month. They are able to track the number of signatures they have been able to obtain.

Signing is a **very fast** process, you can sign as an organisation and as an individual by clicking on the link:

[http://www.uicc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=14227&Itemid=737](http://www.uicc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14227&Itemid=737)

If you would be willing to sign the declaration and forward this email onto family, friends and colleagues to show your support for Cancer Control and assist with the bid from Melbourne for the 2014 Congress, it would be greatly appreciated.



## ▶ BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

### Get to know your Deputy Chair...

**Name:** Brad Holland

**Title/Role:** Executive Director, International Exchange Programs

**Place of birth:** Sydney, Australia

**Zodiac sign:** Scorpio

**Favourite holiday destination:** Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon

**Dream holiday destination you've not yet travelled to:** South America – Peru, Brazil and Argentina



**A location you'd never go back to:** I haven't found a bad one yet

**Favourite movie:** E.T. – one of the best films of all time!

**Most prized personal possession:** A golden ticket from Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory

**When I was a child I wanted to be...** an astronaut or a circus clown

**If you could have three people to dinner who would they be and what would you cook?** I would have Nelson Mandela, Richard Branson, and Elvis over for a good ol' Aussie barbeque on the banks of the Yarra.



## ▶ SENDER FILMS TO SHOOT IN VICTORIA

Sender Films is a leading producer of outdoor adventure films based in Boulder, CO USA. We balance action with storytelling, passion with humor, and spectacular footage with compelling characters to create critically acclaimed films. We have won numerous national and international awards and currently have a television series titled "First Ascent" airing on National Geographic International channels world-wide.

This April we are embarking on our first Australian adventure as we join The North Face expedition team to create a film featuring places like the Grampians and Mount Arapiles. The Sender Films team often relies on outside funding to make these films possible. In addition to funding, we are eager to make connections and meet people involved in the backpacking community in Victoria. To view some of our film trailers please visit our website at [www.senderfilms.com](http://www.senderfilms.com).

We are looking for boat transport, tourism boards, airlines or just awesome people

who would like to get involved. If you think you can assist us with our project, please e-mail [matekason@gmail.com](mailto:matekason@gmail.com). We look forward to connecting with you!

## ▶ LATEST IN RESEARCH

### **VISA CHANGES RECOMMENDED TO BOOST BACKPACKER TOURISM IN AUSTRALIA**

New research exploring strategies to boost backpacker tourism in Australia has recommended the introduction of new short-term working holiday visas for international students on completion of their studies. Researchers have estimated that nationally these students represent a potential new market that surpasses the more than half a million backpackers who presently visit Australia each year.

Researchers have also proposed changes to the conditions of the existing Working Holiday Maker Visa which is secured by a significant proportion of international backpackers. In 2007-08 visitors using these visas were estimated to be worth \$1.8 billion to the national economy. The suggested changes include the ability to extend the visas and a reduction in required working hours.

The research from Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre (STCRC) surveyed holidaying backpackers' in eight popular Australian backpacker destinations. It identified that for more than 40 per cent of international backpackers the working holiday was principal to their Australian visit.

These strategies include the development of technology centres for 'techpackers', backpackers seeking technology enabling travel experiences, new high-energy adrenalin experiences and expansion of healthy lifestyle opportunities in regional centres.

Survey respondents were asked to assess the importance of seven emerging backpacker holiday trends and the ability for Australia to deliver product or experiences in line with the trends. A dominating trend was travelling to experience intense physical adrenalin experiences such as skydiving, bungee jumping, skiing, rafting, diving, surfing and trekking. The top five countries listed as delivering such experiences were New Zealand (42 per cent), Australia (36 per cent), Africa (four per cent), Canada (three per cent) and South America (two per cent).

The research *The Evolution of the Backpacker Market and the Potential for Australian Tourism* is available for download [HERE](#) or at the STCRC bookshop

<http://www.crctourism.com.au/bookshop>.

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### **TOURISM FORECASTING COMMITTEE (TFC) FORECASTS 2009 ISSUE 2 – 30 DECEMBER 2009**

The Australian tourism industry was negatively affected by the global financial crisis in late 2008 and through 2009. It was expected that international arrivals to Australia would slow; however, Australia has been one of the better performing international tourism destinations supported by an increase in international aviation capacity and a favourable exchange rate in early 2009.

For further details, including forecasts per International market, refer to the full report which will be available at <http://www.tra.australia.com/forecasts.asp>

## ▶ UPCOMING EVENTS

### **ATEC BACKPACKER AND YOUTH INDUSTRY CONFERENCE**

### Registrations now open

The Australian Tourism Export Council and the Backpacker Tourism Advisory Panel are proud to hold the annual ATEC Backpacker & Youth Industry Conference in the beautiful and historic Tasmanian capital - Hobart.

As with Symposium, the conference is all about looking to tourism's future – putting the past twelve months behind us and planning how to prosper as the global economy recovers. Industry representatives from all over Australia will gather to hear about topics including business diversification, global youth and backpacker insights and social media.

You will also have the opportunity to participate in interactive break-out sessions where we will discuss sector-specific issues, challenges and solutions that will help shape a sustainable future for our industry.

[Click here for a program overview](#)

[Click here for the registration form](#)

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### 2010 VICTORIAN TOURISM CONFERENCE

The 2010 Victorian Tourism Conference will be held on **19 and 20 May**. Some of the key themes to be discussed at this year's conference are:

- What do travellers really think of Melbourne and Victoria
- Media
- Websites and Gen Z. Are you ready?
- Surviving external pressures on your business
- Marketing

As we are still developing the full program for the conference we would love to hear from you any speaker and topic suggestions. Thank you to everyone who has already provided us with valuable feedback. Stay tuned to our conference website [www.victoriantourismconference.com.au](http://www.victoriantourismconference.com.au) for all the up to date information.

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### 2010 AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL TOURISM CONVENTION 16 – 20 August 2010

The 2010 Australian Regional Tourism Convention will be held Monday 16 August to Friday 20 August in the gorgeous Yarra Valley and the Dandenongs region of Victoria.

The Australian Regional Tourism Network (ARTN), producers of the Convention and the peak national body representing regional tourism practitioners, are excited and proud of the program which is already well into development.

For more information [click here](#).

#### Important dates:

April – BOAV Professional Development workshop, Grampians, Victoria  
Mid November – Adventure Travel and Backpacker Expo, Brisbane (TBC)

***Member contributions welcome***



Backpacker Operators Alliance of Victoria (BOAV)  
Ph: 03 8662 5145  
Fax: 03 8662 5462  
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Mail: 486 Albert Street  
East Melbourne VIC 3002

This email was sent to "".

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<http://www.vecci.org.au>

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