



National President's Report

In Australia between December and March, it is common to experience fire or severe storms as the summer heat hangs over our country. This is the season for fire or flood disasters and emergencies! State, District and Local Emergency Management Committees everywhere are preparing for the worst. EHA members know the importance of the recovery phase in an emergency and it has to start as soon as it is declared to be safe!

In the summer of 2012-13 we have seen the bush fires lay to waste much of the south east of Tasmania and New South Wales and parts of South Australia and Victoria. The tropical cyclones battering the coast and inland of Queensland and Western Australia have tested the locals once again. Flash floods in northern and southern regions around WA have caught people by surprise. People who live and visit these areas in the school holidays suffer unimaginable losses when they can't get their belongings out in time as they evacuate the region. Eventually these people will pick up the pieces, if any remain. The recovery is usually conducted by experienced, knowledgeable and skilled Environmental Health Practitioners, EHA members.

There is no denying the multidisciplinary team that comes together in the

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National President's Report cont.

recovery phase of an emergency to get the local community back to a state of 'business as usual'. This happens because of the regular training that EHA members go through to respond when required.

It is difficult to ignore the efforts of first responders during the height of disasters like earthquakes, fires, floods, cyclones and storms as they appear on every news broadcast in the country and beyond. What cannot be forgotten is the important recovery work that EHA members perform along with their Local Government and State Government colleagues in the impacted communities of Australia.

This important recovery work brings people back to a life that they would consider normal and safe enough to go back to school and to work or to operate as close as possible in their original community. Threats of disease outbreaks through plagues of insect vectors or outbreaks of pathogens that thrive in damaged liquid and solid waste management systems and exposure to other hazardous materials, like asbestos and bulk chemical spills, challenge the skills of EHA members to protect their local communities.

I applaud the fantastic efforts of our EHA members in emergency management at this time, as they are at the forefront of the recovery phase in all states and territories of Australia.

Non-government organisations and emergency management stakeholders are alerted to the fact that the EHA member associations, their employer organisations and as individual EHA members, our EHA Professionals promote the important recovery work that must take place if the communities of Australia are to recover from these disasters and emergencies.

Finally, I look forward to a cool change and to see some green come back into our vast country. This will be a sure sign of environmental recovery.

The next important event is the EHA National Conference in Perth at the end of September 2013. This coincides perfectly with IFEH World Environmental Health Day 2013 where we can all catch up to talk about our EM recovery experiences. All information is available from the EHA website as these two events approach later in 2013. I offer my thanks for all the important efforts of our members at this difficult time across Australia.

Joseph Zappavigna

National President

STRATEGIC PLANNING



EHA Strategic Plan Adopted

The Board of Environmental Health Australia adopted the 2012-15 strategic plan at its November meeting prior to the recent National Conference on the Gold Coast. The plan sets the Vision, Mission, Corporate Goals and Key Result Areas for the national body and establishes values for the Environmental Health Profession. Look for “value” of the month in coming newsletters where we will be seeking your input.

The core components of the strategic plan include the following:

Vision

Environmental Health Australia aspires to enhance the practice of Environmental Health to provide a healthy, safe and attractive natural, built and social environment for all of the communities of Australia.

Mission Statement

Environmental Health Australia is the premier environmental health professional organisation in Australia. Environmental Health Australia will continue to develop and maintain a quality environmental health workforce and advocate for enhanced environmental health standards for, and on behalf, of all the communities of Australia.

The National body is focused on three (3) broad key result areas;

- Organisational - the continued improvement of organisational capacity focused on improving sustainability and resources.

Current projects include;

- i) The establishment of a new organisational website to better service members, with online services;
- ii) The employment of National Executive Officer Victoria Mohkami to manage the National office and assist Associations with the delivery of services;
- iii) The Re-establishment of an internet based peer review journal.

- Professional practice - the enhancement of professional environmental health practice through development of standards of practice, professional development and certification/accreditation schemes.

Current projects include;

- i) A review of the existing Continuing Professional Development programme with re-launch of the programme early in 2013;
- ii) Establishment of an internet based CPD Scheme via the organisations new website that will simplify the administration of the scheme for members and staff alike.

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EHA Strategic Plan Adopted cont.

- Environmental health advocacy - the enhancement of environmental health advocacy through the development of environmental health policy positions, policy networks and relationships, and advocacy mechanisms

Current projects include;

- i) The development of an organisational Communication Strategy including media protocols for Associations, the Board and National President, Special Interest Forums and Regional Groups;
- ii) The establishment of eNewsletter distribution to the Board, Associations and individual Members utilizing the organisations website.
- iii) A continued and expanded role and representation on national advisory bodies such as enHealth, ANZFA and ACOSH.

The Board of EHA Ltd is always interested in your feedback on the Boards strategic direction and encourages members to provide any comments via their Branch Council or directly to the National Office. The plan is available at www.eh.org.au or contact your Branch Executive Officer.

Environmental Health Australia - 38th National Conference 2013

The 38th National Environmental Health Australia and the 67th Annual State Conference Environmental Health Australia (Western Australia) Incorporated, will be held at the Parmelia Hilton, Perth, Western Australia from 24-26 September 2013, and will incorporate World Environmental Health Day. Pre Conference Workshops are planned for Monday 23rd September 2013 and a half day Post Conference workshop on Friday 27th September 2013 (TBC).

ADVANCE NOTICE AND CALL FOR PAPERS

The 2013 National Conference Committee is seeking appropriate papers on the following topics. The committee will review papers for applicability to the field of environmental health, originality, current significance of topic, scope of interest and appeal to the profession, and balance of theory and practical application.

- Improving Environmental Health Practice
- Environmental Health Workforce
- Environmental Health Impact Assessment
- Enhancing Environmental Health Governance
- Public Health Planning and Policy Development
- Indigenous Environmental Health
- Developments in Waste Management
- Hazardous Wastes/Contaminated Sites
- Environmental Management and Pollution Control
- Water Quality & Catchment Management
- Wastewater Management & Reuse
- Emergency and Recovery Management
- Risk Management & Risk Communication
- Emerging Technologies
- Noise Control
- Global Warming & Renewable Energy
- Food Safety
- Allergies & Allergens
- Epidemiological Surveillance and Environmental Health Indicators
- Communicable Disease, Pathogens & Vector Control
- Environmental Health Education and Training
- Occupational Health and Safety



Updates from the States ...



New South Wales

President's report - Shannon McKiernan

Welcome to 2013. This year presents new challenges for the profession. We are already seeing bushfires and flooding across the state and it is a reminder to us all of the importance and hard work Environmental Health Officers undertake at a state and local level.

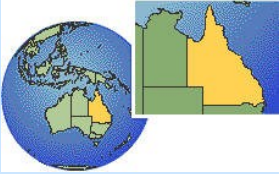
We have our annual conference in May and look forward to seeing each and every EHO in New South Wales. The theme "Let's make a Difference" is close to my heart as that is why I chose this profession in the first place. I want to see many presentations from across the state so we can share and learn from our experiences. Call for Papers closes on 1 March so start sending them in. I am also seeking some key note speakers from key stakeholders and look forward to sharing these announcements in the coming weeks.

EHA (NSW) INC in conjunction with the NSW Food Authority held the first of the Best Practice Workshops, *Seafood Handling for EHOs* at the Sydney Fish Markets on 15 November 2012. Twenty-seven (27) EHOs from around the state braved the early start for the training provided by Mark Boulter – Risk & Compliance Manager of Sydney Fish Markets. The day incorporated a tour of the Sydney Fish Markets to see how seafood is handled, processed and stored from both a wholesale and retail perspective. The training topics covered HACCP operational controls, temperature control, freshness assessment methods, handling guidelines, hygiene, fish names, bivalve molluscs identification, ice making and a hands-on session grading the freshness of seafood for sale. I am humbled by the very positive feedback from our first Best Practice workshop in Seafood Handling. I see this as the future of our training objectives in order to improve our role and relationships with key stakeholders.

A big thank you to our sponsors and supporters of all our events. Without this support the professional development program would suffer as a consequence.

Lastly thanks for the tireless work of the board and other volunteers in 2012 and again for this coming year. No one gets paid for these roles and it is amazing to see the passion and belief in EHO members.

Shannon McKiernan



Queensland

EHA 37th National Conference November 2012 – Hilton Surfers Paradise.

The 37th National Conference was held over three days, 150 delegates per day and more than 50 presenters on a diverse range of topics . Keynote Presenter highlights;

Tim Costello CEO World Vision Australia, reminded delegates that de-regulation makes the most vulnerable in our community more vulnerable.

Dr Phil Jauncey encouraged delegates in their everyday communication to have more faith in their communication skills and be more natural in communication style.

Christopher Zinn urged the importance of EHOs marketing themselves better, especially in regard to the critical service they provide to the Community. He suggested that the profession is undervalued because the profession itself does not sufficiently explain and market its own roles and responsibilities.

Dr Karl Kruszelnicki entertained delegates on Wednesday afternoon with his charisma, making his presentation both fun and funny.

John Merritt CEO of EPA Victoria, gave an overview of the risk based approach they are taking in Victoria, highlighting Best Practice.

The Hon Andrew Powell MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection Qld, willingly shortened his presentation to take questions from the floor, given that green tape reforms were open for comment in Queensland. He gave an overview of legislative change.

Interspersed throughout the three days were great networking and social events;

- Welcome function on Sunday evening where delegates met their interstate counterparts,
- Surfers Paradise beach walks and surfing lessons for early-risers,
- EH Quiz Spectacular was both EH trivia and EH scientific,
- The Conference Dinner on Tuesday night saw delegates transported to Seaworld for a private 'dolphin show', up close and personal with 'BJ the sea-lion', EH Award presentations, dinner and dancing.

The winner of the Environmental Health Professional of the Year 2011 Award, sponsored by JJ Richards & Sons, was David Bellman, with a Highly Commended to Angela Lawson.

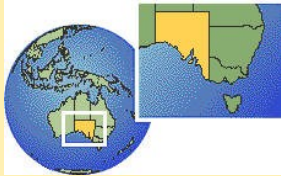
The winner of the Young Environmental Health Professional of the Year 2011 Award, sponsored by Coles Supermarkets Australia, was Luke Cantwell, with a Highly Commended to Peta Morton.

The President's Award 2011 went to Nina Bertram.

A conference proceedings CD will be available shortly to delegates, presenters and sponsors and evaluation form for delegates can be accessed at http://www.eh.org.au/forms/command/display_form?formID=13



The Hon Andrew Powell MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection Qld with Bruce Morton



South Australia

President's report - Susan Bennett (also National Director)

On 7 December 2012 the South Australia Branch of Environmental Health Australia welcomed Members to the 2012 Annual General Meeting. The President reports that in 2012 EHA (SA) Inc. had a successful year. Meeting on 10 occasions; five face to face and five via teleconference.

In 2013 the Board will have two teleconference meetings and one face to face meeting. This will allow regional and time poor members to participate in decision making processes. All of the new Public Health Council meetings had representation by EHA (SA) Directors and EHA (SA) was represented at the Department of Health's Memorandum of Understanding Working party and the various project teams.

There are two Directors representing the SA on the National Board. They attended two face to face meetings and all National teleconference meetings held this year. The Directors could not attend the National AGM.

EHA (SA) participated in an enHealth Workforce review consultation group lead by EHA National. Two Position Papers were endorsed and a new policy provides EHA (SA) with a strategic framework. Work on the underpinning procedures have been further developed.

EHA (SA) continued to work with SA Health on the Clandestine Drug Lab procedure project;

EHA (SA) produced two "Board News" publications for members. EHA (SA) liaised with the SIG and Forum Convenors to identify how best to meet the needs of SIG members.

Funding of \$22,000 was received from SALGA for a project to develop marketing tools aimed at school leavers to attract them to the Environmental Health profession. We are hoping this project will not only be used in SA but nationally in the long term.

EHA SA Board obtained funding from SALGA to review and bring into line with the new Public Health Act 2011, relevant EHA Knowledge Base documents. We look forward to continuing to work with SALGA in reviewing and developing further Environmental Health documents;

EHA (SA) have established a Finance Committee and continue with our "Parking Lot" so great ideas and concepts are not lost. We welcomed four new valued members to our Board, Cimone Bourke from Kelliedy Jones Lawyers, Dale Mazzachi from Norman Waterhouse Lawyers, Alex Stedman from Adelaide Hills Council and Dr Kirstin Ross from Flinders University of South Australia.

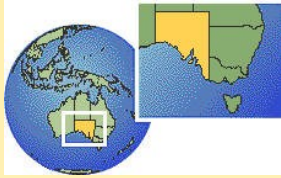
A report on the outcomes of the members survey undertaken in 2011 which looked at the current demographics of the membership was completed, endorsed by the Board and supplied to SA Department of Health and SALGA for future planning.

We held a very successful National Conference in March with special thanks to the Northern Alliance councils of Tea Tree Gully, Salisbury and Playford. Not only was this conference successful measured by attendance, it also demonstrated by the bringing together a wide variety of speakers and topics and how collaboration between organisations can result in personal and professional excellence;

The EHA (SA) Food Seminar in May was very successful as was the 'free to members' "Food Recall" half day seminar. Thank you to Angela and her committees for her hard work in bringing those seminars together.

EHA (SA) established a conference committee who have commenced planning the 2013 State Conference. It is a conference with a difference that looks holistically at Public health in South Australia.

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South Australia

President's report Cont.

The first half of the year saw the Board's attention focused on EHA (SA) Inc. financial position now and into the future. The Directors worked on a clear direction of where the Association should be and analysed and consulted with major stakeholders on how to get there. The second half of the year saw two Vice Presidents being appointed with further training provided and strategic planning and endorsement of documents.

There are many changes taking place within the field of Environmental Health at a national and state level with the implementation of new legislation, competing elements and a changing workforce. This means we cannot be complacent and rely on old practices, we need to be innovative, look holistically and look to the future. We need to set clear and achievable aims and identify avenues to develop and grow as an organisation that:

1. Is a leading figure in professional development;
2. Is recognised and respected by stakeholders as the peak body whose contribution is sort after;
3. Has a strong membership who respects and values the mission, goals and values of the association and profession;
4. Listens to its members and is proactive in fulfilling their needs and expectations and provides an avenue for their thoughts to be heard; and
5. Leads the way in good public health outcomes.

This all takes time, effort and commitment. The President is confident with the work the 2012 Board has addressed this year and will rise to the challenge in 2013. Thanks is expressed to those that had provided their time, commitment and hard work in 2012, with special thanks going to Adrian Hill, Dane Abbott, Jamie Tan, Steve Sowter, Sally Modystach, Tina Marie Aghiana, Karin Prince, Cassie Tuck, Angela Sorger for their contribution to the various Special Interest Groups and forums.

Thank you to the various people representing EHA SA Inc on the various working groups and to their employers for facilitating these valued members involvement. Finally thank you to Mina our Executive & Public Officer for all her dedication to keeping EHA (SA) Inc. matters and the Board on track.

Thank you also to the outgoing Board of:

Rebekah Schubert from Port Adelaide Enfield;

Paul Kelly from Norman Waterhouse Lawyers;

Nicole Moore from Onkaparinga;

Helen Psarras from SA Health;

Sally Modystach from ;

Alex Stedman from Adelaide Hills;

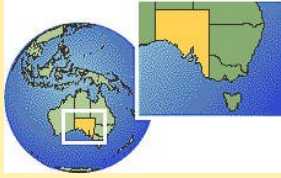
Kirstin Ross from Flinders University;

Angela Sorger Vice President from Alexandrina;

Louise Jarvis also Vice President now from Alexandrina and previous from Mount Gambier;

Karen Rokicinski, from Alexandrina and is stepping down this year after serving considerable time on the Board as member and Vice President. Karen had been on the Board since 2008 and was thanked for all her hard work.

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South Australia

President's report Cont.

The outgoing President reflected that looking back, previous Presidents had brought to EHA their own speciality. Some, their focus was on raising the profile through meetings with key stakeholders, others it was by addressing National issues. The 2011/2012 President's focus had been on establishing the frame work for a strong organisation, communication with members and developing mechanisms for members' views to be voiced. The new President would have a different and beneficial focus. Susan looked forward to being able to work with the new Board and continuing to develop the framework for a strong organisation both in South Australia and for the National body.

The new 2013 Board was endorsed with:

New President Angela Sorger;

Vice Presidents Louise Jarvis and Susan Bennett;

Board Members, Helen Psarras, Paul Kelly, Sally Modystach, Kirsten Ross, Rebekah Schubert, Cimone Bourke, Nicole Moore and Anthony Jennings; and

Alex Stedman and Dale Mazzachi are Associate members taking up positions on the EHA (SA) Inc. Board for 2013.

Susan Bennett

EHA (SA) Inc 2012 President



Tasmania

President's report - Mark Dwyer (also National Director)

Hearty congratulations are offered to Clare Harding (Central Coast Council) and Glenys Nicholls (Latrobe Council) for graduating with the Bachelor of Health Science (Environmental Health) from the University of Tasmania mid way through 2012. Both Clare and Glenys presented their research projects at EHA professional development seminars during the year. Well done to you both!

The state conference was held at the Southern Lights Hotel, Kingston in early October and was an outstanding success. Keynote speakers included Dr Anne Astin PSM, chair of the Food Regulation Implementation Sub Committee, and Nina Bertram, EHO, who presented on the Queensland floods. The conference included technical tours to an energy sustainable high school and a salmon hatchery and included a vineyard luncheon. The conference dinner was a memorable highlight with delegated regaled in vintage dress theme. Melissa Burn (Launceston City Council) was awarded the annual Gold Medal Award for the best academic achievement for a graduating student.

The final organised activity for the year was the December professional development seminar and BBQ lunch at The Grange Function Centre in Campbell Town. Topics presented included environmental roles of water authorities, emergency management scenario, OzFoodNet update, a range of relevant food safety issues, delegate research project and Scores On Doors.

I am pleased to report that we have a new Board member to add to our ranks – Simone Hayers (Hobart City Council) has accepted an invitation to join the Board. This brings us up to 9 Board members who are interested and motivated to build further on the momentum and direction we have created for the EH profession in Tasmania.

One of the most significant achievements by the Board in 2012 was the establishment of a scholarship program for students in the 2nd year of the University of Tasmania course. The scholarship program was established in conjunction with DHHS who provided scholarships for two first year students. It is hoped that this ongoing program will be widely promoted to attract potential students into the EH course well into the future.

Technical tour lunch – Home Hill Winery.



Conference dinner – Hobart City Council team.





Western Australia

President's report - Vic Andrich

EHA 2013 National Environmental Health Conference – 24-26 September 2013 Perth (incorporating World Environmental Health Day – 26 September 2013)

EHA (WA) is excited about hosting the next National EHA Conference planned for September 2013 in Perth and planning is well under way. To help celebrate World Environmental Health Day, EHA (WA) is proud to announce that Australian icon Harry Butler will be attending and presenting at the conference. For those of the newer generation, Harry was at the forefront of sustainability before it was fashionable. You can check out You-Tube clips online. A snapshot of his profile is provided below:

William Henry "Harry" Butler AO CBE is an Australian naturalist and environmental consultant. He is a populariser of science and natural history for both child and adult audiences and, as conservation consultant to the Barrow Island oilfield and many other projects, has played a major role in environmental conservation and restoration in Australia. He presented the popular ABC television series *In the Wild*. He also authored the books *In The Wild*, *In the Wild (Part II)* and *Looking at the Wild*.

- In 1970, Butler was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. In 1980 this was upgraded to Commander level (CBE).
- In 1979, Butler was named the Australian of the Year, jointly with Neville Bonner.
- In 1993, he was awarded a cash prize for his 30 years of work with the petroleum industry.
- On 4 March 2012, he was added to the National Trust of Australia's National Living Treasures list.
- On 11 June 2012, he was named an Officer of the Order of Australia for "distinguished service to the community through the promotion of public understanding of natural history and wildlife conservation, to the development of collaborative environmental partnerships with industry, and to the community."

Don't forget our 'Call for Papers' – see our website for details (www.eh.org.au). There are also great online airline deals to be had – so book now and secure your travel plans. It will be a great conference – see you there!

Manual of Best Practice in Environmental Health in WA

EHA (WA) is completing a best practice manual for EHOs in WA. The Manual was originally compiled over 10 years ago and still holds pride of place in many local governments. There have been many changes in legislation and with the ever broadening scope of environmental health, its time for a complete and thorough overhaul.

Regional Meetings

South West Regional Group: A regional meeting of EHOs was held in the Shire of Capel in September with 24 members attending. The event included presentations from the SW Population Health Unit and a Public Health Planning workshop. Many thanks is expressed to the Shire of Capel and Colin Dent (Manager Environmental Health – Capel) and his team.

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Western Australia

WA President's report cont.

North West EHO Group: Environmental Health Officer's from around the North West came together for a regional group meeting in Broome on the 21st - 23rd November 2012. This was the first time in a couple of years that the group had got together. The three day event included interactive training and workshops which was well attended by EHOs from Exmouth to Newman and north to Kununurra. The meeting was strongly supported by the Department of Health (DOH) who supplied many presenters. The NWEHO Group meeting was timed to coincide with the Pilbara/Kimberley Aboriginal Environmental Health (AEH) Group Meeting and included an overlap session on the Wednesday morning. This was a great initiative as presenters travelling to the region could reach a wider audience at the same time.

The group was very appreciative of the efforts by Dimity Hargrave (Manager Environmental Health – Broome) and her team in organising the 3 days of meetings/workshops. Thanks must also be extended to the Shire of Broome for hosting and sponsoring (catering) and Shire of Derby/West Kimberley for sponsoring (catering) and the DOH and other agencies that provided staff to present over the three days.



Victoria

Environmental Health Australia welcomes new Victorian memberships. Administrative matters are currently being handled by our New South Wales Association. Please e-mail nsw@eh.org.au for further details.



CALL FOR PAPERS

The Bangkok declaration recognizes that an increasing number of children's diseases are associated with environmental exposure; also, it is acknowledged that more and more children are exposed to unsafe environments, in the places where they are conceived and born, where they live, learn, play, work and grow up.

The concept of **Children's Environmental Health** is today an important focus of attention for the experts, since environment-related diseases in childhood are a global public health problem.

Being aware of this reality, the Portuguese Society of Environmental Health (PSEH), in a publishing synergy with the Magazine of Salud Ambiental (Environmental Health), is calling for the submission of **articles especially on Children's Environmental Health issues**, which will be the feature theme of the forthcoming edition of June 2013.

The articles must comply with the standards described in the website of the Magazine of Salud Ambiental, be written in English, Castilian or Portuguese and sent to the electronic address of the PSEH, saude.ambiental@ipbeja.pt by April 15, 2013.

Despite this feature theme, the magazine's global body will go on publishing articles on other environmental health topics, which will also be welcome for publication in this or in other future editions.

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International News

At a recent meeting of the IFEH Board, it was agreed that the theme for World Environmental Health Day 2013 will be "**Emerging Environmental Health Risks & Challenges For Tomorrow**". The theme is sufficiently broad to allow members across the globe to interpret and relate it to their individual challenges and priorities. Members, when considering celebrating WEHD under the 2013 theme may wish to have reference to such topic areas as: sustainability, climate change, healthy environments, eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, etc. WEHD takes place on **26th September 2013** and we are looking forward to increased participation and support from Member Associations in our 3rd year of celebration.

In May 2013, IFEH will hold their Council Meeting in Renfrew, Glasgow, Scotland and in June 2013 IFEH are holding a Disaster Management course in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.

Please note that in July 2014 IFEH 13 World Congress is being hosted by National EH Association (NEHA) in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

Please visit www.IFEH.org for more information on all of these events."

Web Advertising

If you would like to place an ad on our website, please send an e-mail to national@eh.org.au with the appropriate text and logo specifications (412X282 pixels).

The rate is \$100.00 plus GST (until 30 June 2013)

The logo for Environmental Health Australia (EHA) features the letters 'EHA' in a stylized, white, serif font. The letters are interconnected, with the 'E' and 'H' sharing a common horizontal bar. The 'A' is also connected to the 'H'. The logo is set against a dark blue background.

National Newsletter

Summer 2013

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