

NEW SOUTH WALES NEWSLETTER



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA

RTSA

Railway Technical Society of Australasia
NSW Chapter
Mail: PO Box 6238, Kingston, ACT, 2604

MAY 2009

RTSA NSW CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday 3rd JUNE

11.30 for 12.00 in the

CENTRAL STATION - CONCOURSE MEETING ROOM

(next to Lost Property, opposite platform 2)

PLANS FOR THE SYDNEY METRO



Our proposed June topic, the new PPP A-Trains, has had to be postponed at short notice. As a replacement we have a talk about the proposed **Sydney Metro Line(s)**.

As most members will be aware various plans and proposals for heavy rail and Metros have come and gone with great rapidity in the last few years. The current proposal, for a Central to Rozelle line, as the first step to an as yet undefined larger Metro system, now has the Government's attention and commitment.

Tim Parker, General Manager, Metro Delivery will give us a view from the inside, away from all the media and political ballyhoo, on what could be a turning point for Sydney's public transport.

The usual light lunch and refreshments will be available prior to the meeting proper.

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SPECIAL ADDITIONAL MEETING

Tuesday 16th JUNE
11.30 for 12.00 in the
CENTRAL STATION - CONCOURSE MEETING ROOM
(next to Lost Property, opposite platform 2)

BOMBARDIER TRAXX LOCOMOTIVES



Dr Janis Vitins, Director Locomotive Marketing and Product Planning is visiting Australia briefly and has been kind enough to agree to speak to us at a special meeting on Tuesday 16th June.

Dr Vitins will give us a presentation on contemporary European locomotive design, with specific reference to the Traxx family of locomotives.

As most members would be aware there is a large amount of main line electrification in Europe, but with at least five mainstream voltages and power systems. As well there is a significant requirement for diesel powered locomotives for use 'beyond the wires'. The Traxx family is a single 'platform' designed for any (or any combination) of electric application as well as diesel propulsion – a new and interesting take on the 'standard locomotive' concept.

This presentation will take us through some concepts and developments that are not altogether familiar to us here, given our mainly diesel freight operation with predominantly American inspired technology as the norm.

The usual light lunch and refreshments will be available prior to the meeting proper.

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AN ABUNDANCE OF MEETINGS

As well as the two RTSA meetings advertised on pages 1 and 2 of this Newsletter we also have a third – a joint PWI, RTSA and IRSE meeting hosted by the PWI.

PWI has moved the joint meeting with IRSE and RTSA to May to avoid burdening other industry colleagues with the PWI AGM in August. The joint meeting will now be on Thursday 28th May at 16.30, at the PWI's usual Masonic Centre venue (corner Goulburn and Castlereagh Sts in the City).

The presentations will be :-

1. The PWI presenters will be David Sheppard and Neville Nichols from John Holland, they will be presenting on "Westrail and Kowloon Station", followed by a little something on the Trackwork Services Alliance.
2. Damian Brizzi will be giving a review of his visit overseas which he undertook as part of his prize for winning the PWI 2007 Young Achiever's Award.
3. The IRSE presenter will be Trevor Moore who's presentation will be on "Signals Staff Competency Assessment & Certification - the ARTC Approach".

Members and friends of RTSA will be welcome on the night to hear this full and interesting program.

LOST AND FOUND

A coat was found in our meeting room after the last meeting. The owner should contact Andrew Honan at 0407 921 152.

THUMPING THE TUB: Max Michell

A copy of the TransAdelaide 2005 – 2010 Strategic Plan drifted onto my desk recently. Although a little dated it has quite a bit of interesting material in its 4 pages. TransAdelaide now is basically responsible for running the trains and trams in Adelaide. Rail patronage is not high (in fact is by far the lowest of the five major mainland capital cities) but that does not stop Adelaide from being quite advanced in what they say and more importantly what they do. Their vision --- "Our vision is that the rail system will form the backbone of a vibrant integrated public transport system".

Among other items they note that –

"We have a **plan** which will

- Fully realise the value of existing infra-structure
- Maximise the long term benefits of all spending
- Deliver socially inclusive outcomes
- Provide significant environmental benefits"

"Through improved infra-structure and better service design we will provide a system that has increased service frequencies, shorter travel times, improved amenity and better connectivity"

"As a business we will:

- Improve asset stewardship
- Improve performance
- Control costs
- **Make it happen**" [my emphasis]

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There follows three pages of summarised strategies ranging from recommissioning stored railcars to extension of services, increasing use of inter-peak services, achievement of Registered Training Organisation status, and an environmental management program. The interesting point is that most strategies that have a reference to a specific documented project in the underlying Rail Revitalisation Action Plan.

The key issue here is planning leading to action. It is obvious that planning is integrated across all urban modes ("improved connectivity through integration of bus train and tram services") and that it has a strong customer focus. Capital spending is not front of mind in the way they present themselves, albeit there has to be a commitment in that regard for the Strategic Plan to work. It is interesting that in the 3 – 4 years since this plan was formulated that most of the plans have actually been implemented or are in the course of being done.

Transport planning is not NSW's strong point and hasn't been for many years. RailCorp has a draft Corporate Plan up on their website for public comment. It is 10 pages long and is presented in a far more attractive way than its earlier Adelaide counter-part, but my quick reading suggests that it has only two issues of significance – peak hour capacity and the investment program (Clearways and Epping – Chatswood). The only reference to fares for instance is that queues will be shorter and/or faster – nothing about the range of fares or the desirability of integrated fares across the range of Sydney public transport.

Personally I am more than disappointed that there is no comment on more frequent services, faster timetables (take the trains off Valium) particularly on between key nodes (try having a working day in Newcastle with a reasonable working time in that city and you will spend in excess of 6 hours travelling and get an intimate view of just about every station north of Berowra), lack of connectivity between rail lines let along buses and ferries, increasing inter-peak patronage at a time when there are acres of spare capacity within the existing services – the list goes on. The standard of presentation of the trains is not good, but to an extent that is a function of the imminent arrival of the new 'A trains'. However where are the plans to sort out the Tangara's – give them windows that are not opaque, try after nearly 30 years of inactivity, to get the destination headboards working and to provide seats that will face forward (how symbolic that half the Tangara passengers can only see where they have been and not where they are going). Having had a bit of a snap at the draft Corporate Plan I intend to actually respond to RailCorp on the subject. You might also like to do something similar, unless of course you are entirely satisfied.

At a much more important level is the madness that passes for planning at a rather higher level. For quite some time we have had three major rail network projects on the list – Chatswood to Parramatta, the North West heavy rail and South West heavy rail. The Chatswood extension was first to get the nod, but a combination of a perpetually conservative Treasury and a Minister with little vision saw to it that the line was cut back to an Epping terminus (thus missing out on most of the claimed benefits, despite subsequent spin). At least this provided an opening for the North West line but it was only to be expected that a Minister who could only hold up a fragment of some part of a failed train and berate CityRail after a train and its passengers were stuck on the Harbour Bridge for half a shift would then find a way to try and circumvent that organisation. Enter the North West Metro, a poorly informed project that could only have emanated from a source that had very little idea about public transport other than in the darkened halls of City East. At the same time design work was proceeding surprisingly well on the South West heavy rail from Glenfield.

Hardly had the North West Metro 'plan' had time to see the light of day than it was dumped, in yet another example of Treasury inspired penury, along with the South West proposal (although the latter was subsequently classified as 'postponed'). In this case a short version of a Metro between Central and

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Rozelle via Martin Place, Barangaroo South (far south) and Pyrmont was suddenly unfurled along with a vague implication that a West Metro and an extension of the Pyrmont Metro would follow. This proposal could hardly have been well thought through let alone designed at the time it was unveiled. The pasting it received in the media on issues that were really quite sensible and able to be defended – but weren't – were legion. If the proponents didn't know enough about what they were really trying to do to defend and justify the proposal then it was inevitable it was going to be in trouble from the start.

The Federal budget on May 12th had some quite substantial goodies for rail, particularly urban rail for the first time. Melbourne scored \$3.2 billion for its Regional Rail Express line (more later), Adelaide got \$585 million for upgrading, electrification and line extension, Perth got \$236 million for a central city undergrounding project while Queensland got over \$300 million for light rail in the Gold Coast. Sydney got \$91 million for pre-construction works for the Metro. Apparently this in some degree indicates how 'shovel ready' the various projects put forward to Infrastructure Australia were. Perpetual switching between various schemes has left Sydney with a poorly planned and under designed proposal which simply didn't stack up against the other states where proper planning is a normal way of life. The irony of all this is that if NSW had put up the South West heavy rail line, at its current state of development, it more than likely would have attracted a large contribution which would have put that project (at least) back on track for a reasonably early completion.

The Victorian RRE project involves basically separating the Regional Rail trains from Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong (and beyond) from electric suburban trains right into Southern Cross (Spencer St to the ancients). It involves two additional platforms at Southern Cross, two new tracks out via North Melbourne and the high level lines to near Footscray where they will burrow through to near West Footscray, thence on the surface to Sunshine. This station is the junction of the Bendigo and Ballarat lines and currently has three platforms. The future Sunshine will have up to eight platforms (don't ask me where they will put them all – but i live in an apartment and stacking things one above the other is quite normal to me!!). Two tracks will then parallel the Ballarat line to Deer Park where they will take to a new alignment via Tarneit to Werribee South and the Geelong line beyond the end of electrification. It will all be designed for high speed running (Victorian Regional Trains really do run at 160 km/h) and the Tarneit reservation will have space for four additional tracks – two for a future electrified loop between Werribee and Sunshine, and two for a future freight corridor. Planning and design on this ambitious project all fits into other major transport plans such as the west to east underground line (sometimes referred to as a Metro) and various electrification extensions and train acquisitions. The RRE project was sufficiently advanced at the time of the Federal budget that it is anticipated that work will start before the end of 2009. This is surely a good example of transport planning and in this case has been well rewarded for being so

It is interesting that two recent but separate feature articles on transport have made claims that go right to the heart of Sydney's lack of attention to good planning – one stated quite up front that Brisbane (for which i assume they mean Noosa to Coolangatta as a contiguous strip) will get to 5 million population before Sydney does, while a couple of days later another quite independent item commented that Melbourne would reach 5 million by a date which was ahead of Sydney again (Melbourne was bigger and far richer than Sydney in the 19th century, but lost the mantle somewhere in the early 1900's).

In dealing with the 1890s financial crisis in Australia, whose epicentre was the then financial capital of Melbourne, the Bulletin of November 1893 noted that *"the policy of the continent at large should be to declare Victoria an infected province until its moral character has been renovated and its reputation restored"*. In both the financial context and for other reasons one would substitute 'New South Wales' for 'Victoria' in a contemporary 21st century re-statement of this lovely piece of Victorian era writing.

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ASIA METRO STORE

The Asia Metro Store Tour is now fully booked with a number on the waiting list. Final payments for those who have booked and been accepted are due by the end of May, and should be sent to the RTSA Coordinator in Canberra (Pearl Ansley) on the appropriate form (contact Pearl or Andrew Honan if you have any problems in this regard). Once the bookings are all confirmed the process for getting visas and other travel matters will be advised to all starters.

Members will be kept up to date with developments for the STORE tour with regular reports in the Newsletter, while participants will of course get quite a bit more in the way of communication as the tour gets closer.

THE MAY MEETING: reporter Malcolm Cluett

Paul O'Sullivan from the Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) talking on the topic of Rail Accident Investigation.

What is OTSI ?

- Independent statutory agency that conducts "Just Culture" investigations into rail, bus and ferry accidents in NSW
- Investigates accident causation and contributory factors
- Makes recommendations to prevent a recurrence
- Purpose is to improve public transport safety

OTSI – was set up in 2004 (Recommendation of the McInerney reports from Glenbrook and Waterfall railway accidents). OTSI needs to be able to demonstrate independence. (Not part of the NSW Department of Transport). NSW Legislation is specific – OTSI must find the primary cause and contributory factors of accidents.

OTSI was created in a two stage process, viz 1/1/04 (when it was formed) and 1/7/05 (when it separated from ITSRR and had its own reporting structure to the direct to the Minister).

OTSI operates under the following NSW legislative framework:

- Transport Administration Act 1988
- Rail Safety Act 2008
- Passenger Transport Act 1990
- Marine Safety Act 1998

OTSI can make recommendations on the Transport Regulators (Rail, Bus or Ferry) if these bodies are not performing adequately.

Transport Regulators in NSW are as follows.

- RAIL - Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator
- BUS - Ministry of Transport
- FERRY - NSW Maritime Authority

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Regulators or Police have powers of prosecution. There are a surprising number of accredited transport operators in NSW, viz.

- Rail 75
- Ferries 31
- Bus 1773 (Route Service Operator)
- Bus 2231 (Long Distance Tourism and Charter)

OTSI has a small number of support staff. (an organisational chart was displayed). OTSI's current staff includes a Maritime investigator (ex Water Police), a Senior Inspector from Workcover, and an ex RTA Traffic Engineer. All have been cross-trained for multi-mode safety analysis. OTSI is prepared to respond 24/7, and staff are on-call.

The speaker would like to have a Safety Analyst on staff too – but this needs additional funding, which is being sought at present. The Safety Analyst would increase the ability of OTSI to undertake trend-analysis of accident statistics, and such things. The speaker wants OTSI to be pro-active in promoting safety, and not just to react after an accident.

The speaker recently visited NZ. There the safety agency is a similar size to OTSI, and covers also covers air travel, but the staff are not trained for multi-mode investigations. (The Federal Australian Transport Safety Board – has investigators for the smaller states. It is not subject to Ministerial Control.)

What is a “Just Culture” investigation ?

- Focus is on why the accident happened and what to do to prevent recurrence
- Identifies human error where it occurs, but does not attribute blame or apportion liability
- Does not name individuals in investigation reports
- Refers deliberate breaches and malicious acts to the appropriate enforcement agency
- Evidence provided to OTSI by involved parties cannot be used in any subsequent civil or criminal action

OTSI provides a Confidential Safety Information Reporting Scheme, reviews reports prepared by other agencies, and prepares a monthly report for the Minister. OTSI reports are tabled in both houses of the NSW Parliament within seven days of issue.

OTSI can't compel people to give evidence at an enquiry. OTSI reports do not include names – (to assist in gaining uninhibited information, particularly with at-fault parties). This compares with witness statements to Police, for example. The Coroner may refer to an OTSI report in his findings.

An OTSI investigation can be terminated (if it is thought that another agency can issue a suitable report). There are always parallel investigations after an accident. Police are usually the first on site at an accident site. There were many recommendations that came out of the McInerney Inquiries – (Glenbrook and Waterfall). This has led to the “Just Culture” investigation. OTSI reports do not include findings on Liability.

Questions from the floor:

Q Question on Jurisdictions. When does the ATSB get involved ?

A ATSB has primary jurisdiction on the interstate railway network. It is funded differently to OTSI, having no budgetary constraints. ITSRR will also get involved to review accreditation, etc.

Q – Collection of evidence ?

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A – sites are quarantined. The first on site is usually a Police Officer. Next, a representative of ARTC, RailCorp, Pacific National, etc. One important task of the first people on the site, apart from first aid, is to ensure that there is no evidence of site contamination or tampering.

DEPUTY MEETING REPORTER:

Malcolm has loyally reported meetings now for a couple of years, even when he has been under a bit of pressure in other quarters. Which raises another issue – we need a back up reporter to record each meeting for the Newsletter. The work is not onerous – you get free entry to the meeting, a front row seat and generally a copy of the power-point presentation for your trouble, in return for which you write up the meeting in an informative but reasonably concise way for publication in the next Newsletter. As the understudy to Malcolm it may be you even get a meeting or three free of scribing from time to time!! Can we have a volunteer please? (**The world will end tomorrow** – that's better, pay attention: now please read this paragraph again)

RTSA DINNER

We felt it was about time that we expanded from our regular technical events to something more sociable. In furtherance of the end we have booked the Royal Automobile Club (down near Circular Quay) for 6th August, starting at 6-30 for 7-00 pm. We will have a speaker, Dale Budd, who currently Project Manager of the Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail Study, and a past director of ARTC. The title of his presentation will be 'The Digital Railway'. The cost for the evening has yet to be finalised, but is expected to be quite affordable. Full details will be provided in the next Newsletter, but in the mean time mark your diaries for 6th August.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

*Letters to the editor are very welcome. In general **letters should be relatively concise (no more than half a page)** and should relate to either past material in the Newsletter, events or activities of interest, reminiscences or future watching of the rail industry as a whole. If in doubt write anyway – the editor is quite pleasant to deal with after that first cup of coffee in the morning.*

Tony Woodland writes: Reading through the April newsletter, I note Frank Hussey in his letter brings to light how the railways have not moved to keep in front of how it happens (Maybe except for SCT).

Writing about Shepparton and Mooroopna it appears that use of pallets has been taken on by the road transport industry so they basically have a monopoly on most of the movement of goods from the two canned fruit processing plants.

If rail could get two trains of say about 12 wagons each and run up to two return trips per day and make these wagons curtain sided for ease of loading and unloading and have use of sidings made fit for purpose at each end then maybe they could capture this existing market.

These trains could depart Shepparton (or Mooroopna) at 9.00am and midday each day and one return for a pm trip if required to Melbourne taking the equivalent of 12 semi loads each trip.

To get wagon load sizes trains may have to run more frequently for some items. We seem, as Basil Hancock points out in his letter, to have become preoccupied with 1500 or 1800 metre trains and inter-modal traffic between Capital Cities. To service major towns and producing places we need to think smaller and more often. For the politicians and the railway this could lead to more jobs and more revenue.

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[Editorial Comment: - Most rail traffic from the Goulburn Valley is export traffic in containers. There is virtually no local traffic apart from some bulk grain (if ever the southern drought ends!). Melbourne local traffic is a hard ask for rail, competing with a two hour road journey on an increasingly freeway standard highway. Local traffic to other capitals would be an option – except for the basic obstruction of gauge. Shepparton is on the residual broad gauge network while the rest of Australia is on standard gauge. Two quite large trains ran daily between Tocumwal, Shepparton and Melbourne a few years ago. Drought has since cut into the traffic, and more recently the attitude of the incumbent operator has resulted in further weakness of rail on this corridor. This latter is probably the most threatening issue for freight rail survival, particularly away from the inter-capital routes. Anyone who is versed in events in Victoria or Tasmania (or read the March Newsletter) will be aware of the dire situation facing regional traffic in those states]

BOOK COLLECTION FOR SALE

P. J. 'Pat' Hannaberry, one time Commissioner of the Commonwealth Railways had a collection of books, numbering approximately 65 which is being offered for sale by tender. Dale Budd is acting on behalf of the family in this sale.

The collection is wide-ranging, including technical reference books (some 80 to 90 years old), books on railways in countries other than Australia and books on topics other than railways. It includes books inscribed to Pat Hannaberry by their authors. There are some very interesting books in the collection, quite a few of which would be valuable additions to a technical or railway archive.

An e-mail was sent by Pearl Ansley (IE and RTSA Canberra Office) to all RTSA members with the catalogue and tender forms attached. Anyone who needs to know more should contact Dale at:

Mr Dale Budd, PO Box 7104, Yarralumla ACT 2600, or by email at dale.budd@dbas.com.au

GRAFTON CONVENTION – 12th to 14th JUNE 2009

IE Newcastle Division, in conjunction with RTSA and IE National Committee on Transport is holding a Convention in Grafton from Friday 12th June to Sunday 14th June this year. The topic is **Transport and Communication: Australia's Backbone – Past, Present and Future** and is in Grafton as part of the 150th anniversary of the founding of that city as well as the 75th anniversary of opening of the double deck rail and road bridge which completed the standard gauge rail link between Sydney and Brisbane.

It will not have passed readers attention that the timing looks to have been impeccable – if it had been on the second last weekend of May the conference would have very nearly had its feet in among the crocodiles in a manner of speaking (the venue was only a few feet above the Clarence River in flood, which itself was only a 0.4 of a metre from disaster). Which inspires confidence that all will be well on the day – that won't happen twice in a month!!

And now for the latest news in relation to the conference: - there will be a dinner for RTSA members and their partners on the Friday night, one day registration is available for those who are have time problems and there will be a free place for an RTSA young engineer attending the conference. Contact Chris Venn-Brown on rpes@bigpond.net.au or Andrew Honan on ahonan@pacific.net.au or the Newcastle EA organiser on HLink@engineersaustralia.org.au

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DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC	LOCATION	TIME
3 June 2009	Ivan Rail	The Proposed Sydney Metro Lines.	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
16 June 2009 (Note: Tuesday not Wednesday))	Dr Janis Vitins Director Locomotive Marketing and Product Planning Bombardier Transportation	Bombardier Electric Locomotives (TRAXX and Heavy Haul)	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
1 July 2009	Kevin Warrell CEO Metro Transport Sydney	Sydney Light Rail and Monorail Systems	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
5 August 2009	Stephen Walsh General Manager, Hardface Technologys	Rebuilding Rail Track In Situ	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
2 September 2009	David Wynd Projects & Engineering Manager, Faiveley Transport Australia	Electronically Controlled Braking	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
7 October 2009	Peter Moore Executive Director, UITP Australia	Presentation on the UITP	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
4 November 2009	Yes! – it might just be just be patient.	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
2 December 2009	Alan Gardner Manager Infrastructure and Engineering RISSB	Restoration of NSWGR Beyer-Garratt Steam Locomotive 6029	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00

BLACK TEXT: indicates meeting is confirmed

BLUE TEXT: indicates request has been made to speaker

RED TEXT: indicates a suggested topic only at this stage

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Andrew Mackay	Treasurer		
Tomas Magyla	Committee	Coen Stoltz	Committee
John Watsford	Committee	Paul Harris	Committee
Chris Venn-Brown	Committee	Katharina Gerstmann	Committee
Malcolm Cluett	Committee		
Candice Ng	Committee		

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SYDNEY NEWSLETTER

Part of the function of RTSA is to keep members in touch with what is going on in the industry and with each other and to that end we are only too happy to publish items of interest. Articles, letters or editorial comment for Newsletter are very welcome. We have several hundred members locally, of whom around half a dozen have actually put pen to paper, so I am expecting a couple of hundred more correspondents of the next how-ever-long. Items for publication should be in electronic (Word) format – the editor is a total klutz when it comes to typing and would be very grateful for not having to retype articles if at all possible.

Contact details are –

The Editor, Max Michell,

- e-mail to samrom@bigpond.com,
- phone 02 9331 5662 or
- post to P.O.Box 279, Potts Point, NSW, 1335.

For all other matters relating to RTSA Sydney Chapter contact Andrew Honan (Chair) or Bill Laidlaw (Secretary) as above.

CPD CREDITS

Engineers Aust members who attend RTSA meetings and events will qualify for CPD credits as per the Engineers Australia criteria. Members are responsible for recording their own CPD for audit.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS RECEIVING RTSA NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

If you receive this Newsletter by post you will have missed out or been given late advice of events in several instances lately. This Newsletter may be one of them given the unexpected delay in production. E-mail is far quicker and more reliable, so let Canberra know if you are able to change from post to e-mail (address in the page header). E-mail saves time for you and costs for RTSA, which in the end can only mean better service to our members.

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