

Defense Travel Dispatch

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The DoD Center for Travel Excellence

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A Message from the DTMO Director

As we move forward with simplifying and, ultimately, transforming travel, we need to hear from you! As always, we encourage you to submit your ideas for the future to nextgen@dtmo.pentagon.mil.

I'd also ask you to check out our new DoDLive blog, *Travel Talk*, and engage in discussion on relevant issues. We're learning about blogging as we go, so we have gotten off to a bit of a slow start, but will be posting more frequently. I hope you will join the conversation, and tell us what's most important to you.

— Pam Mitchell
Director, DTMO

About the Defense Travel Management Office

The Defense Travel Management Office was established to serve as the single focal point for commercial travel within the Department of Defense to establish strategic direction, set policy, and centrally manage commercial travel programs.

DTMO maintains central oversight for commercial travel management, travel policy and implementation, customer support and training, DoD travel charge card program management, functional oversight of the Defense Travel System, and allowance and entitlement program management.



GSA's City Pair Program Expands

FY 2012 City Pair Contracts Awarded

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) recently announced that it would add 435 new routes to its FY 2012 Airline City Pair Program, a 7 percent increase over last year. The program will now offer 6,157 routes; 4,374 domestic and 1,783 international city pairs, the most in City Pair Program history.

The City Pair Program offers government travelers on official travel as much as a 70 percent discount off comparable commercial airfares. By pairing sets of origins and destinations GSA leverages Federal Government buying power to price discounted one-way airline tickets. The agency estimates this year's program will save taxpayers more than \$7.4 billion in FY 2012, an increase of 1.1 billion over last year's program.

The 2012 renewed City Pairs contracts are effective October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012, and were awarded to 13 airlines.



In addition to discounted airfares, the City Pair Program provides a number of benefits to federal travelers such as the flexibility to book one-way, multi-leg

and round-trip airline flights. Additional features and benefits of this program include:

- Fares priced on one-way routes, permitting agencies to plan multiple destinations
- No advance purchase required or minimum/maximum length of stay required
- Tickets fully refundable with no charges applied for cancellation or changes
- Last seat availability
- No blackout periods
- Stable prices, enabling travel budgeting
- Dual fare availability offering the opportunity for additional cost savings
- Non-stop service—awarded in the majority of the markets where nonstop service is offered

When awarding City Pair contracts to airlines, GSA considers criteria such as availability of non-stop service, average flight time, service, flight availability throughout the day, total number of flights, available seats, penalty-free cancellations, and price. GSA works with federal agencies such as DoD to understand requirements and ensure travel needs are clearly understood.

For more information about the City Pair Program, visit the GSA website at www.gsa.gov/citypairs.

The U.S. Government Rental Car Program is open to service members and employees of the Federal Government, including the United States Postal Service, when a rental vehicle is authorized for official business travel.

Why is it necessary to rent from companies participating in the U.S. Government Rental Car Program? The program provide special rental benefits and reduced rates to all federal government employees traveling on official business, such as: free collision/damage waiver or loss/damage waiver and liability insurance coverage; no charge for drivers under the age of 25; no charge for additional drivers; and additional drivers do not need to be listed on the rental contract.

How do I show that I am qualified for the U.S. Government Rental Car Program when renting a vehicle? Travelers must show authentication that they are on official travel to be eligible for the government rate by either of the following:

- A travel authorization, orders or Government Charge Card (GTCC) is presented when on authorized official travel
- A reservation is made through the Defense Travel System (DTS)



However, the GTCC and/or travel authorization/orders do not guarantee that government travelers are covered under the terms and conditions of the Agreement, unless the government rate is booked or the Government Administrative Rate Supplement (GARS) is charged.

How do I know that I have a government rate? If you book your rental car through the DTS/ETS or go through your approved Commercial Travel Office (CTO), you will receive the government rate. Many of the participating rental car companies use the term "GOVT RATE" on their contracts; however, some do not. It remains your responsibility to ensure that you ask for and receive

Frequently Asked Questions about the U.S. Government Rental Car Program

the government rate when you pick up the vehicle.

What is GARS? GARS is a daily fee (currently \$5 or foreign currency equivalent) and is intended to address those costs incurred by the rental company that are peculiar to doing business with the government. If you see GARS on a rental contract, you are covered under the terms and conditions of the program unless you operate the vehicle in a manner that would apply exceptions.

Can I be reimbursed if I accept the optional Global Positioning System (GPS) on a rental car while on TDY? According to the Joint Federal

Travel Regulations/Joint Travel Regulations (JFTR/JTR), Appendix G, a GPS rental is reimbursable "when the Authorizing Official determines it is necessary for official use."

If I rent a vehicle under the program, am I always covered for accidents or damage? Normally, yes. There

are exceptions listed on the U.S. Government Rental Car Agreement where your actions will exclude you from the coverage provided under the terms and conditions of the Agreement. You may find the U.S. Government Rental Car Agreement at www.defensetravel.dod.mil.

Is training available that explains the U.S. Government Rental Car Program? The course "Rental Car Program" provides an overview of the program. It covers rules and tips for renting cars when traveling for DoD. It is recommended for all DoD travelers who intend to rent a vehicle. Travel training resources including this course, are available through TraX.

Guidelines for Foreign Nationals as DTS Administrators



DTMO receives recurring inquiries on the subject of foreign national personnel, and to what extent these personnel may be authorized to use the DTS. Like many aspects of travel, the answer is often “it depends,” in this case it is based on the Status of Forces and other local agreements between the host nation and the U.S. Government. The following information provides a synopsis of the varying categories of foreign national personnel, and in what role they may be permitted to use DTS.

Governing Rules for Foreign National Personnel

The provisions of a treaty, or other formal agreement normally govern the establishment or use of military bases and facilities in the territory of another nation. As referenced in DoDI 1400.25, such a treaty or agreement usually addresses the subject of employment of foreign nationals and satisfies three basic principles:

1. Prevailing practices, local laws, and customs shall be followed in the employment and administration of foreign nationals when the practices, laws, and customs are not in conflict with U.S. law, applicable treaties, international agreements, or other higher level agreements, and are compatible with the basic management needs of the U.S. Forces.
2. Foreign nationals shall be employed as extensively as possible by U.S. Forces.
3. Provisions of the foreign national employment system in a foreign country shall apply uniformly to all elements of the U.S. Forces.

Aside from these three guiding principles, Status of

Forces Agreements (SOFAs) and other governing agreements differ from country to country. Thus, the business rules for usage of DTS by foreign nationals may vary from location to location depending on the host country and the governing SOFA. Therefore, in conjunction with developing business rules for OCONUS sites, it is imperative to review all agreements and to contact the official or agency of the host government designated as the point of contact for labor matters.

Foreign National Personnel Performing Administrative (Defense Travel Administrator (DTA)) Functions

Foreign national personnel, under the immediate supervision of a U.S. citizen and with the equivalent of National Agency Check with Local Agency and Credit Check (NACLC), *may* act as an administrator with no Information Assurance (IA) administrative privileges in accordance with the provisions of DoDI 8500.2.

Foreign Nationals Acting as Approving Officials

Foreign national personnel *may* be eligible for appointment as a certifying officer or departmental accountable official. The local SOFAs or treaties provide that the employment of local foreign nationals is subject to the law of the host country, rather than to United States (U.S.) law. As per Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)-Comptroller memorandum dated August 22, 2006, subject: DoD Accountable Officials – Local Foreign Nationals Abroad and Contractor or Contractor Support Personnel; local foreign nationals, both direct and indirect hires,

[\(Continued on page 5\)](#)

Rate Change

As of October 1, 2011, the OCONUS 'On-Base' Incidental Expense rate will increase to \$5.00 per day.

Service Members See Change in Overseas COLA

This summer over 66,000 Service members stationed in Guam, Italy, and Hawaii saw an adjustment in Overseas Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). Other overseas locations with relatively small Service member populations have also seen an adjustment in COLA.

An increase in COLA indicates that price differences have increased from being that much more expensive in comparison to average prices in the Continental United States (CONUS). A decrease in this allowance indicates that the prices of goods and services have declined in comparison. Overseas COLA is not a fixed amount and adjustments based on data are either immediate or made incrementally, depending on whether the payment will increase or decrease. Increases in COLA are made immediately, whereas COLA reductions are phased in over time to help minimize the impact of the adjustment.

Service members can calculate their COLA rate at: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/colaCalc.cfm>. The calculation tool is updated with the current COLA amounts each pay-period. All indexes are subject to change due to currency fluctuations. Current monthly adjustments can be found at www.defensetravel.dod.mil.

(Continued from page 4)

appointed as certifying officers and departmental accountable official[s] *may* not be subject to pecuniary liability under U.S. law. As a result, whether the U.S. can hold a foreign national acting as an accountable official pecuniary liable will vary from country to country depending on the applicable treaties and subsidiary agreements.

Foreign National Personnel as DTS Users

Foreign national personnel fall into several categories. The rules for whether they can be authorized to use DTS to travel, and under what type of authorization, vary as described below:

Foreign national personnel serving as members of the U.S. military and authorized applicable travel allowances under the JFTR, may travel using DTS.

Foreign national civilian personnel employed by the U.S. Government and authorized travel allowances under the JTR *may* travel using DTS in accordance with the provisions of their governing SOFA or other applicable agreements with the host government. These personnel travel using a standard authorization (DD 1610).

Foreign national civilian personnel not employed by the U.S. Government *may* be authorized to travel using DTS in accordance with the provisions of their governing SOFA or other applicable agreements with the host government. These personnel travel using an Invitational Travel Authorization (ITA).

Foreign military personnel (personnel serving in a military organization of a foreign nation) are only authorized travel under the JFTR per Chapter 7, Parts Z1 or Z2. DTS is not certified to process those types of travel scenarios; as such, foreign military personnel may **not** use DTS as travelers or have their travel prepared using DTS. In addition, foreign military personnel are **not** authorized travel under an ITA.

Foreign national personnel *may*, based on the provisions of their governing SOFA or other applicable agreements, use DTS to create travel documents on behalf of other authorized users, to include the creation and signing of travel vouchers when authorized as Non-DTS Entry Agent (NDEA). Please refer to the DoD DTS Best Practices document at: http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Docs/DoD_DTS_Best_Practices.pdf and your component local DTS business rules for additional guidelines.



A Fiscal Year Crossover Toolkit For DTAs

The end of the fiscal year can be a very busy time for Defense Travel Administrators. To help you navigate the FY Crossover process, we have pulled together a list of several resources.

Tips

- 1 **Review chapter 8, section 8.3.4.**
Before rolling over lines of accounting, review the DTA Manual chapter 8, section 8.3.4 on using the Rollover LOA feature.
- 2 **Check for Additional Changes.**
Before rolling over LOA, verify with finance and budget personnel that no elements (other than fiscal year elements) will change for the next fiscal year.
- 3 **Check Schedule.**
Service/Agency business rules determine when authorizations for the next fiscal year may be generated and approved. Be sure to check the schedule first.

FY Crossover Training

Geared toward local finance and budget DTAs, the FY Crossover course provides an overview of the fiscal year process including a review of lines of accounting (LOA) roll-over/copy functions, as well as the process for setting up associated budgets for the new fiscal year. The course is offered as on-demand web-based training or as a Distance Learning course with a “live” instructor. To access the training, visit the Training section in TraX.

Upcoming Distance Learning classes: August 25 and September 15 & 27

FY Crossover Guides

DTMO publishes several guides to help you establish budgets and LOA, process authorizations, and prepare for the new fiscal year. [\(Click title to open\)](#)

- [DTS Guide for Establishing Lines of Accounting and Budgets for the New Fiscal Year](#)
- [DTS Guide for Processing Authorizations for the New Fiscal Year](#)

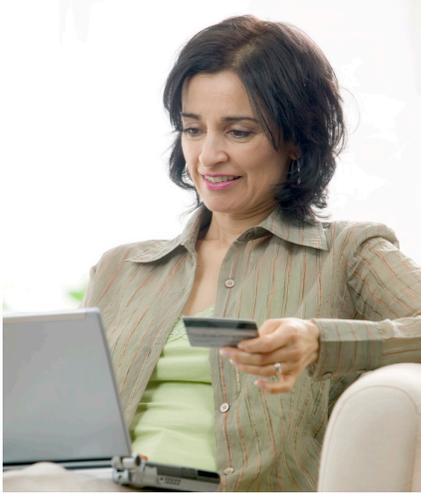
** Other useful resources include the [DTA Manual](#) (see Chapter 8, Section 8.3.4) and the [DTS Financial Field Procedures Guide](#)*

Travel Assistance Center Outreach Calls

Over the next few months, the Travel Assistance Center (TAC) will be covering the topic of FY Crossover in its bi-weekly Outreach Calls. Learn tips and get your most pressing FY Crossover questions answered. Calls are conducted every other Tuesday at 8:00 am and 1:00 pm. For the upcoming schedule of topics or for information on how to participate, visit the “Announcements” section in TraX.

DTS Partner System Downtime Schedule

Due to the Fiscal Year Crossover and its impact on accounting activities, each accounting system has a period of unavailability. A schedule of system downtimes, as well as the next fiscal year transaction release date is available at: <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/fycross.cfm>.



Pay DTS Debts Online Through Pay.Gov

In an effort to improve the DTS debt collection process, DFAS has added a DTS Debt Payment form to the Pay.Gov website. DTS users who are in debt to the government can now make payments online using a personal credit card, debit card, or bank account through the site. To make a payment:

1. Go to www.pay.gov
2. Search for “DTS Debt Notification Payment Form”
3. Enter the information found on the DTS debt letter and method of payment

For more information review the [Guide to Managing Travel Incurred Debt DTS User Guide](#) or visit www.pay.gov.

Coming to A Smart Phone Near You . . .

TraX Touch DoD Travel Explorer Mobile



Available on iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch, Android, Android Tablets, Blackberry 6 and up, Blackberry Playbook, Windows Mobile

Have you ever wanted to quickly find mileage to complete a travel document? If so, you soon will be able to use the *TraX Touch* app, our mobile version of Travel Explorer (TraX). With TraX Touch, users will be able to access some of the same information available in the full version of TraX right from any mobile device including iPhone, Android, Blackberry 6+, Windows Mobile 7, iPod Touch, or tablet (iPad, Android, or Playbook). Just like TraX, users can find information on airline City Pairs, view current per diem rates, location reports, mileage, and search for information using the Knowledge Center. We've also added a few new features such as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) delays and alerts, flight status, and DTS/EWTS status.

TraX Touch will launch early this Fall. When it is launched, additional information on the app's features and instructions on how to access it will be posted on the DTMO website and in the “Announcements” section in [TraX](#).

Question: When Should I Contact a Commercial Travel Office?

CTOs are contracted to support travel arrangements made both within the DTS and outside the system. The questions and answers below will assist travelers in determining when it may be necessary to call a CTO directly.

Using DTS affords DoD cost reductions in terms of CTO transaction fees and voucher processing costs. When a CTO intervenes to complete a reservation for a traveler, a transaction fee may be incurred. The request assistance button in DTS offers the ability to request assistance with booking flights, hotels, and rental cars by entering travel information in the DTS record that is sent directly to the CTO. The CTO should then respond to the traveler's request within 24 hours.

When Should You Call a CTO?

Emergency travel plans – When travel plans must be finalized immediately, call a CTO to make reservations. Provide the CTO with a copy of your travel authorization for ticket issuance.

En route assistance – Travelers who have begun travel and need to make a change should contact a CTO via the 24-hour toll-free number (listed on the CTO provided itinerary/invoice).

Unused tickets – The traveler must notify a CTO of any unused or partially unused tickets as soon as possible. Unused tickets must be returned in the manner they were received. If you received a paper ticket from the CTO, the ticket must be returned to the CTO to process a refund.

Complex multiple stop itineraries and/or remote OCONUS travel – DTS supports most multiple stop, CONUS and OCONUS travel. However, there may be times when special arrangements to remote locations are required or travel is very complex in nature. In those instances, you may contact a CTO directly or request CTO assistance through DTS.

DTMO Mailbox



Leisure in conjunction with official travel (LICWO) – Only official travel arrangements should be made in DTS. After making official reservations you may contact a CTO directly or request assistance in DTS. If using DTS, send the CTO a comment with your leisure travel destination, date(s) of travel, and your email address so the CTO can respond to your request.

When Should You NOT Call a CTO?

Do not call a CTO to make reservations after you already made a reservation in DTS. DTS has processed the original booking based on your reservation. If a CTO is called to make reservations, it may result in duplicate reservations and possible duplicate charges on your government travel charge card. Any time you call a CTO directly, let them know if you have already made reservations in DTS.

Do not call a CTO to ask questions about how DTS works. While CTOs receive and return your travel requests through DTS, they do not have access to DTS. For assistance with questions about DTS, call your local help desk or the Travel Assistance Center (TAC) at 1-888-Help-1-Go. The TAC is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including federal holidays. Staffed by a team of trained analysts, the TAC offers assistance on a range of travel related topics.

Do not call a CTO to cancel or make changes to travel plans before departure. DTS can accommodate your initial travel request, as well as process cancellations and changes to existing reservations made prior to travel. When travel has not yet been initiated, follow the procedures for creating a DTS amendment to your authorization and then change/cancel your flight, hotel, and/or rental car arrangements, and expenses not incurred.



Training Resources: Spotlight on Information Papers

In addition to a variety of training courses, DTMO offers a vast library of information resources. Resources are available in several formats; from short questions and answers (Q&As) to comprehensive manuals. When you need more information than what a Q&A provides and you do not have the time to wade through a manual, try using an *information paper*.

Quick Access to Printable, Portable, and Practical Information. DTMO publishes a variety of information papers on a number of topics ranging from how to access web-based training courses to instructions on what to do about specific DTS error codes. Some papers extract individual topics from manuals and hone them into brief guides that are focused and easy to use, while others provide facts that are not so elaborate that they require a manual, but do need a more detailed explanation than what can be provided in a Q&A. Information papers are typically only a few pages in length and often contain screen shots and diagrams.

Find the Right Information Paper. Access information papers through the DTMO website or through TraX using the methods below.



DTMO Website: Training Resources Lookup Tool

1. Go to the [Training Resources Lookup Tool](#).
2. Select Type > **Reference Materials**; Subtype > **Information Papers**.
3. Refine your search by role, topic, or series, and select **Submit** or select **Submit** and scan the titles and descriptions.

OPTIONAL: Use the *Find* feature (press **Ctrl** and **F** on your keyboard) and type in a search term. This will highlight all instances of the search term in the titles and descriptions to help you identify the resource that you need.



Travel Explorer: Knowledge Center

1. Log in to [TraX](#).
2. Click on Knowledge Center icon.
3. Select category > **DTS Reference Materials**.
4. Select subcategory > **Information Papers**.
5. Enter a search term to filter the results and click **Search**.
To see all results, leave the field blank and click **Search**.

Popular Information Papers

(Click title to open)

- ❖ [Budget and Audit Pass Issues](#)
- ❖ [Commercial Travel Office Fee](#)
- ❖ [Global Group Membership Rules](#)
- ❖ [Cross Organization Funding](#)
- ❖ [DFAS Check Trace Process](#)
- ❖ [Dual Profiles in DTS](#)
- ❖ [How to View Your Itinerary](#)
- ❖ [Manual Abandon Stamp](#)
- ❖ [Import/Export Multiple LOA](#)
- ❖ [How to Correct EFT Returns](#)
- ❖ [Report Scheduler](#)

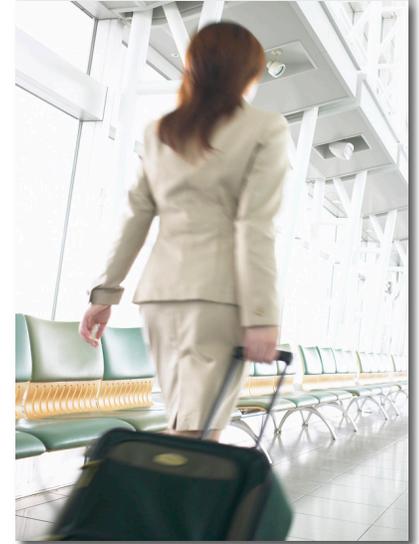
Baggage policies for airlines are in a continuous state of change as airlines deal with controlling costs and managing capacity. Each airline has its own policy regarding baggage allowances and fees for government travelers and Service members. Bags that exceed the baggage allowance, both in number and size or weight, may be subject to excess baggage fees. If baggage exceeds weight and size allowances, travelers may be required to check bags through the cargo counter.

Service members are often extended many exceptions to fees charged; however, they should adhere to size and weight allowances.

According to the JTR (para. C2302) and the JTFR (para. U3015), baggage fees are reimbursable when authorized and incurred on official business. Excess baggage fees are reimbursable if the Service/Agency determines the expenses are necessary and in the government's interest.

It is recommended that travelers check an airline's website for specific policies regarding baggage fees. If traveling on a City Pair flight, find detailed information on baggage fees on GSA's website, www.gsa.gov.

Baggage Allowances



New Distance Learning Course Launched

Did you know DTMO offers 27 “live instructor” distance learning classes specifically designed to support DoD travelers and travel managers? The newest distance learning course, *T-100 DTS Self-Registration and Profile*, was launched in early July. This is the fourth class in the Basic Traveler series, which was created to support novice DTS users and travel managers. The 30-minute class reviews DTS account activation and personal profiles.

Register for this, and other courses, through [TraX](#). Just login and select the “Training” icon. Then, select the “**View All**” radio button to see all class descriptions and dates and times. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email that contains a URL link, which will link directly to the Defense Connect Online (DCO) classroom on the scheduled day/time of the class. So that you don't forget to attend, the confirmation email also has a link to add the class to an Outlook calendar. Participants can also download certificates for any completed distance learning course through TraX.

Basic Traveler Series Distance Learning Courses
 T-101: Document Processing – Authorization
 T-102: Document Processing – Vouchers
 T-106: Travel Assistance Center and TraX
NEW! T-100: DTS Self-Registration and Profile

Distance learning courses are available through Defense Connect Online (DCO), DoD's virtual collaboration tool. DCO provides an audio capability for the presenter and participants which, when coupled with the ability to display presentation material real-time, provides a “live” atmosphere. Participants do not need to have a DCO account; just enter the session as a *guest*. As a reminder, audio is handled via computers using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), which requires the use of external speakers or headphones to hear instructors.

Keep Your DTS Profile Up-To-Date

It is important for travelers to keep traveler profiles up-to-date in DTS. If this information is not accurate, travel reimbursements may be affected.

When Should I Update My Profile?

- New Common Access Card (CAC) is issued with a new expiration date
- Government Travel Charge Card (GTCC) expires or is reissued. For reissued centrally billed account (CBA), Defense Travel Administrators (DTA), should work with their local Agency Program Coordinator (APC) or CBA account manager to coordinate with their CBA-DTA to ensure that the account expiration dates are updated in the DTS CBA Module.
- Change in bank account number used for electronic funds transfers (EFT)
- New home address, phone number or emergency contact
- Promotion or new job or change in organization location

Steps to Update Your DTS Profile

1. From you DTS homepage (after login), mouseover to *Traveler Setup* on the top menu bar and select *Update Personal Profile*.
2. On the My Profile screen, click on each section (My Profile, My additional Information, My Preferences, My Account Information) to update information.
3. To save changes, select the Update Personal Information button

New Justification Required for Travel



A Secretary of Defense memorandum, “Track Four Initiatives Decisions,” dated March 14, 2011, mandates that “all DoD travel requests must include justifications that alternate means such as Secure Video Teleconference (SVTC) or other web-based communication, are not sufficiently able to accomplish

travel objectives.” In response, the JFTR and JTR have been updated to comply with this mandate.

JFTR, para. U4000-3b, JTR, para. C4405-b3 and Appendix I-Travel Orders, and the JFTR/JTR, Appendix E-Invitational Travel Orders, now require all DD 1610 forms and other travel order formats to include a statement justifying that alternate methods are not sufficient to accomplish travel objectives.

At this time, DTS will not be configured to automatically note that an alternate method was considered. However, travelers can manually add this justification to travel authorizations based on their Service/Agency-specific guidance.

About the Defense Travel Dispatch

The Defense Travel Dispatch is a quarterly publication issued by the Defense Travel Management Office, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness).

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