

SUCCESS STORY

SPOTLIGHT ON: Luke AFB - JULY 2000

Spotlight On: **Luke Air Force Base**

Introduction

Luke Air Force Base (AFB), located approximately 20 miles northwest of Phoenix, Arizona, is home to the largest fighter pilot training base in the world. With its mission of training F-16 fighter pilots for the United States Air Force and its allies, the 56th Fighter Wing provides technical, medical, field, and flight training to personnel supporting over 210 F-16 aircraft. Approximately 1,000 students receive training at Luke AFB annually, with between 150 and 200 sorties being flown each day.

The installation is named after the first aviator to receive the Medal of Honor, Second Lieutenant Frank Luke Jr., known as the "Arizona Balloon Buster." 2Lt Luke scored 18 aerial victories (14 of which were German observation balloons) during World War (WW) I in the skies over France before being killed on 29 September 1918. In 1941, the city of Phoenix purchased 1,440 acres of land, which was then leased to the federal government for \$1 a year. In March of that year, excavation for the first building began at what was then known as the Litchfield Park Air Base. In June of 1941, the small base was re-named Luke Field. During WW II, Luke Field was the largest fighter training base in the Army Air Corps, graduating over 12,000 fighter pilots from advanced and operational courses, and earning the nickname, "Home of the Fighter Pilot."

Today, Luke AFB is listed as one of the fifteen top employers in the State of Arizona, averaging 5,700 military; 2,000 civilian employees; and 1,100 reservists. Including families and retirees, Luke AFB serves almost 80,000 people and provides housing for 875 families. With an annual payroll of \$228 million, Luke AFB contributes approximately \$1.97 billion annually to the local economy and secures nearly 25,000 jobs for local residents.

The "TEAM LUKE" Environmental Program is responsible for the installation, two auxiliary airfields and a training range. The installation encompasses 4,200 acres of land including 2,000 acres of easements.

Luke AFB Success Stories

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Additional facilities include the 1,866 acre Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field (AFAF); Auxiliary Field No. 1 consisting of 1,105 acres; and the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR) with an operational footprint of about 2.7 million acres, of which approximately one million acres is managed by "TEAM LUKE."

The mission of the "TEAM LUKE" Environmental Program is to enhance the 56th Fighter Wing's mission by:

- Providing safe and healthy workplaces and living spaces;
- Acting as good stewards for the environment;
- Meeting regulatory requirements; and
- Protecting the future of the installation by planning and working with local, State, and federal agencies to ensure Luke's operations and facilities are balanced with its mission and the plans and requirements of the surrounding community.

The challenge for "TEAM LUKE" is to execute an integrated, effective environmental program, which enhances, rather than simply supports, the mission of the 56th Fighter Wing. Characterized by dedication to the mission, innovation, integrity, and leadership, the



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efforts of the **"TEAM LUKE"** environmental protection programs have forever changed the way the installation "does business." This dedication, and the successes that have resulted from it, were instrumental in Luke AFB being awarded the **Secretary of Defense Environmental Quality Award** for Non-Industrial Installations for 1998.

This Compliance Assurance and Pollution Prevention Success Story highlights some of the outstanding accomplishments made by **"TEAM LUKE"** including several innovative techniques they have employed to meet, and exceed, environmental requirements and regulations.

Trip Reduction Program

The Phoenix, AZ metropolitan area (which includes Luke AFB) has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a non-attainment area, which means that this area routinely exceeds the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulate matter. Passenger cars, trucks, and motorcycles account for more than 80 percent of the air pollution generated within the Phoenix metropolitan area. On average, gasoline vehicles release approximately 770 tons of carbon monoxide and 3,000 tons of particulate matter each day, which produces a "brown cloud" effect over the area.

In 1988, the Arizona legislature passed an Air Quality bill that mandated the Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program. This legislation required Luke AFB to reduce Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips or miles by 5 percent each year until a 40 percent SOV reduction is achieved from a 1990 baseline. Traffic reduction and air pollution concerns have gained new importance as the installation has continued to grow. Both the military and civilian workforces at Luke AFB commute over 21,800 SOV trips per week. The problem has been compounded since the EPA downgraded Maricopa County to a "serious" category in the three pollution categories of ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter.

Van and Carpooling

Luke AFB's Trip Reduction Program (TRP) encourages SOV employees to vanpool by offering vans at a "50% savings" through the Phoenix-area Valley Metro and a local van leasing company. Additionally, the TRP offers riders a monthly incentive in the form of a \$35.00 credit. Mr. Gary Ewing, Luke AFB TRP Manager, maintains a "Rideshare Matching" database,

which matches potential riders with existing or new carpools and vanpools. The TRP also provides a "guaranteed emergency ride" to assist personnel in the event of a personal emergency and works closely with the 56th Civil Engineer Squadron on the base parking plan to develop additional reserved parking spaces for carpool and vanpool riders.

"Luke Link"

Mr. Ewing has worked extensively with the local transit department to provide bus service to Luke AFB. Originally, the "Luke Link" was offered to Luke AFB personnel only; however, the service has now been expanded to include active duty and reserve personnel along with their dependents, civilian personnel, retired personnel and persons performing volunteer work at the installation. The "Link" picks up personnel at regular bus stops off-base in the morning, and transports them to the base. During the remainder of the day it operates on base, making routine stops at the hospital and base housing. In the evening, the bus returns commuters to regular stops off-base. The TRP pays a 100 percent subsidy for over 1200 Luke AFB employee commute-riders.

Additional TRP Initiatives

In addition to the van/carpooling and "Luke Link" initiatives, the TRP also plans to further reduce SOV trips by purchasing four electric trams to operate an on-base shuttle service. The tram service should help in the reduction of SOV trips by providing transportation to over 3,500 SOV drivers that need transportation on base during lunch time.

Several other initiatives are also being implemented including the use of compressed work schedules that allow employees to work ten-hour workdays and receive every other Friday off, and telecommuting for both military and civilian personnel stationed at Luke AFB. An important part of this initiative is base participation in a program called "Project Adopt." This project involves donating personal computers to local colleges where they are used to teach computer repair classes. The computers are then loaned to base personnel to use in telecommuting activities. After one year, the computers are given to telecommuting personnel. The use of bicycles is also a big part of the installation's efforts to reduce SOV trips. Special "bike lanes" have been constructed for riders who can register their bikes (the same as automobiles) so they do not have to stop at the gate. The TRP also provides several "24-hour lockers" and shower facilities for bike commuters, and over 126 bike racks have been distributed

and installed around the base. Installation-wide "Bike to Work Days," "Bike Rides," and special events such as the "Loop de Luke" bike rides are all designed to provide community awareness of the area's air pollution problems, as well as ways to actively participate in pollution prevention activities.

Electric Powered Vehicles

Gas-powered vehicles emit 85 percent of their pollution during "cold starts." To reduce the amount of "cold start" pollution generated by Luke AFB, the installation has purchased over 270 electric carts, 12 neighborhood electric vehicles, and 18 solar carts (the first ever used in Air Education and Training Command). It is estimated that using of these "zero emission" vehicles prevents over 15 tons of pollution from being released into the atmosphere each year. The electric carts are used on a daily basis for base business travel in lieu of gasoline or diesel powered vehicles, and account for 75 percent of the total transportation activity accomplished at Luke AFB.

Electric powered vehicles are used by Base Fire Department, Civil Engineering, Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) Pharmacy, and Munitions personnel at Luke AFB for a variety of missions and on-base duties. Vehicles can be designed with flat beds for hauling, multi-passenger riding or for other duties. Even some Squadron Command-

ers have taken to using these vehicles to complete their official on-base travel.

The key to the success of the electric vehicle program is "in the numbers." The fuel cost for each electric vehicle is 0.009 cents per mile, whereas each general-purpose gas and diesel fueled vehicle costs 0.086 per mile. When considering the 324,000 miles that the electric vehicle fleet logs in each year, this lower fuel cost equates to direct savings of approximately \$86,000. In addition to the fuel savings, electric vehicles are on average less expensive to maintain than gas and diesel fueled vehicles and are, of course, more "environmentally friendly." Luke AFB environmental managers estimate that using electric vehicles prevents the generation and release of 6.5 tons of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxides per year.

To meet the maintenance needs of the large electric vehicle fleet, the Services Squadron has hired a full time mechanic who is certified to perform all warranty maintenance tasks on the vehicles. To further support the fleet, Luke AFB is the first base in the Department of Defense (DoD) to install a "quick charge" system. This charging system allows the batteries on the electric vehicles to completely charge in approximately 25 minutes, a significant advantage over conventional charging systems, which require overnight hookups. The "quick charge" system provides great flexibility to the electric vehicle program by allowing the vehicles to be "turned around" quickly to meet the demands of multiple users in a single day.





Mr. Richard Eaton is the Services point of contact for electric vehicle repair and maintenance activities. With a fleet of 270 vehicles, Mr. Eaton's work directly contributes to the success of the TRP.

For additional information about the Luke AFB Trip Reduction Program, contact Mr. Gary Ewing, 56 CES/CEV, DSN 896-3815.

Water Quality Programs

Water is an invaluable resource in the desert environment in and around Luke AFB. This fact, along with the eleven drinking water wells, wastewater treatment plant, and twelve stormwater outfalls on the base, makes the Water Quality Program at Luke AFB a very important part of the installation's environmental program. Two areas in which Luke has achieved considerable success are wastewater reclamation and water conservation.

Wastewater Reclamation

For the past three years, Luke AFB has maintained a reclaimed wastewater reuse permit. This permit has allowed the installation to reuse over 500,000 gallons of effluent per day for irrigating the installation's golf course, parks, and athletic fields. During the summer months, Luke reclaims 100% of its wastewater – an average of 17.5 million gallons per month – making it a "zero discharge" facility. During the winter months, when water demand is lower, excess wastewater is discharged to the Agua Fria River.

Water Conservation

Luke AFB maintains one of the most effective water conservation programs in the Air Force. Through installation regulations and progressive base resident education, the installation has achieved an annual water consumption reduction rate of over 66 million gallons. The key to this program has been communication between operational units and tenants, as well as base housing residents. A base regulation was written that restricts lawn irrigation to before 0900 hours and after 1800 hours, twice weekly. Ms. Corrina Meloche, Water Programs Manager, also began making daily inspections around the installation in June of 1999, and discovered that since the commencement of this new program, water use has dropped an average of 30 percent as compared to the same time in 1998. In fact, during the peak springtime water conservation months, water usage in the installation's housing areas has dropped by more than 10 million gallons per month in comparison to 1998 levels.

At the center of Luke AFB's water conservation program is an effort to lessen the installation's dependence on water for landscape irrigation. Luke AFB's climate is ideal for a method of landscaping called "Xeriscaping;" a technique for using plants and grasses native to the area that require less water to sustain growth. With the addition of stricter water conservation measures, Luke AFB had agreed to convert the front lawns of 219 base homes into desert "Xeriscaped" yards by 2001; however, the installation decided to accelerate the conversion and completed the project by the end to 1999.

For additional information about the Water Quality Programs at Luke AFB, contact Ms. Corrina Meloche, 56th CES/CEV, DSN 896-3815.

An example of "Xeriscaping"



Air Quality Programs

Since Maricopa County does not meet the NAAQS for ozone, particulates, and carbon monoxide, Luke AFB is required to maintain a Title V permit under the Clean Air Act. The "TEAM LUKE" Air Quality Management group completes an average of four major permit modifications and performs up to eight in-house emissions inventories each year. Yet, in spite of this workload, which saves the government approximately \$25,000 per emission inventory, the installation has never received a notice of violation (NOV) for permit noncompliance.

One of the best tools used to examine the emissions inventory requirements has been the Air Force Environmental Management Information System (AF-EMIS). All information related to hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) and VOC-containing hazardous materials is entered into AF-EMIS. The 56th CES/CEV worked closely with the AF-EMIS software developer to produce a report that provides HAP and VOC information for each hazardous material purchased at Luke AFB. This activity has been "institutionalized" by incorporating this requirement into Luke AFB Instruction 32-7003, "Air Quality Compliance Instruction." To date, more than 1,200 products and their associated chemical data have been loaded into AF-EMIS. In the future, Luke AFB Instruction 32-7003 will be amended to include spray coating procedures, solvent tank and paint gun cleaning, stationary sources, bead blasters and sanding operations, generator use, fire fighting training and earthmoving.

On "High Pollution Day" alerts, Luke AFB is required to reduce travel to, from, and on Luke AFB by 10 percent. Working with the TRP Manager, the Air Quality Manager provides information concerning pollution prevention measures such as limits on fire-place/wood stove use, designated hours to refuel vehicles, and additional information to support the base Air Quality Plan. This is communicated to the base population through the gate marquee message board, electronic messages (E-mail), and the Commander's TV channel.

Luke AFB's air program is highly visible and thoroughly compliant with regional air quality planning and protection programs. The installation has an appointed member serving on the Maricopa County Air Quality Regional Task Force, and is an active participant in the county rulemaking process, as well as in the periodic meetings and workshops held

in the regional area. For additional information about the Air Quality Program at Luke AFB, contact Mr. Jeff Schone, 56th CES/CEV, DSN 896-8488.

Toxics Program

Luke AFB's Toxic Substance Program is inspected yearly by EPA Region IX and Maricopa County, and to date, has not received any NOV's. All facilities built prior to 1991 have been surveyed for asbestos in accordance with Air Force policy and the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Additionally, detailed lead-based paint (LBP) surveys of high-risk facilities such as the base childcare center, hospital, commissary and base-exchange, as well as representative surveys in base housing, have been completed.

The results of these surveys have been entered into an Asbestos/LBP database, which is available to maintenance workers via the base computer network. The database allows for "real time" tracking of facilities that have asbestos containing material (ACM) and LBP prior to conducting maintenance activities. The database also provides faster coordination of activities by the Environmental Management Flight with maintenance personnel, and facilitates long-range planning for remediation projects.

Luke AFB is currently in the process of re-validating previous asbestos inspection data. Thus far, results of the re-validation process indicate that over 45 percent of buildings previously surveyed did not actually contain ACM. The previous surveys contained false positive results because assumptions were made as to which materials might contain ACM. The new surveys entail inspecting all suspect material, rather than making assumptions, and provide a more accurate indication of the amount of ACM on the installation.

Luke AFB has completed asbestos abatement activities for over 230,000 square feet of facilities, along with a complex LBP remediation project for a water tower located in base housing, and several smaller LBP abatement projects. The base also completed a Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) Transformer Management Plan for all transformers located on the installation. Electrical transformers at the Gila Bend AFAP were inspected and sampled for PCBs. Those found to contain PCBs were replaced with transformers containing mineral oil.

For more information about Luke AFB's Toxic Substance Program, contact Nick Durlinger, 56th CES/CEV, DSN 896-3626.

Solid Waste Management

The Solid Waste Management Program at Luke AFB is built on an innovative and multi-faceted disposal and recovery program. The goals of senior leadership are aimed at maximizing recycling opportunities and reducing the generation of solid waste. The result of this effort is a successful, cost effective program for those assigned to Luke AFB and the Air Force.

Recycling of municipal solid waste has dramatically increased from 225 tons in 1995, to more than 2,050 tons in 1999 – a full 60 percent of the total solid waste generated at Luke AFB. An additional 4,500 tons of scrap metal was recovered from the Barry S. Goldwater Range. The solid waste diversion rate at Luke AFB was measured at 42 percent in 1999; however, the diversion rate has been as high as 54 percent in previous years. According to the Solid Waste Manager, the 1999 diversion rate is lower due to reductions in solid waste generation through the incorporation of affirmative procurement and waste minimization practices. The success of Luke AFB's recycling program has saved the Air Force between \$250,000 and \$300,000 per year in cost avoidance.

The cost of Luke AFB's solid waste program has been reduced by over \$1 million over the last two years through profits generated by selling recyclable materials, and through cost avoidance resulting from alternatives to landfill disposal. The base has expanded its recycling program for glass, used motor oil, aircraft tires, and plastics. The glass recycling program, the first of its kind in the DoD, has been very successful. Glass generated at Luke AFB is removed by a contractor, who in-turn, grinds the glass into a material that is used as substitute sand on golf courses, filter material in swimming pools, or for landscaping materials on roadways. The base has also been successful in finding markets for used aircraft tires. Over 880 tons of used tires have been sold to a local contractor for approximately \$2 per tire. The used tires are recycled and used as materials for roadbeds and cement kilns.

Luke AFB also has a very successful curbside recycling program. The key to this program's success is its ease of use – no separation of materials is required by installation personnel. Rather, the contractor collects the recyclable material twice weekly and performs the separation process at their location. Because of the success of the program, the installation estimates it has saved over \$750,000 in cost avoidance over the contract's five-year period.

For more information on Luke AFB's Solid Waste Management Program, please contact Mr. Virgil Martinez, 56th CES/CEV, DSN 896-4166.

Range Management Office

The mission of the “**TEAM LUKE**” Range Management Office (RMO) is to protect and conserve the natural and cultural resources of the Barry M. Goldwater Range (BMGR). The RMO consists of the operational elements of airspace management, range scheduling, range maintenance and natural and cultural resource management. Through single point operation, environmental considerations become part of the day-to-day routine mission planning.

Approximately 1.6 million acres of the Goldwater Range are considered Class III “Special Interest Areas,” which contain valuable natural and cultural resources. This land is managed foremost to preserve and protect their value, with recreational use as a secondary consideration. Special interest categories include archaeological, botanical, ecological, geological, historical, natural resource areas, scenic, and zoological.

Through various initiatives, the RMO's Environmental Science Management Section continues to significantly add to the State's Sonoran Desert scientific database, and supports an integrated approach to natural and cultural resources management. Continuous flow of information from scientific studies yields important data about the impacts of military activities on resources.

Natural Resources

Since the range was established in 1941, diverse populations of native wildlife have generally benefited from the remote location of the range and the near exclusion of potentially competitive land uses such as livestock grazing, mining, and agriculture. Additionally, military use of the BMGR has significantly limited public access, eliminating some of the environmental damage associated with public use such as indiscriminate off-road driving. Collectively, these factors provide special opportunities to maintain native wildlife species within a productive habitat of sufficient dimensions to support viable populations.

At least 62 species of mammals reside in the BMGR, many of which are active only at dusk, night,

or dawn because of the desert environment and high daytime temperatures. Over 200 species of birds have been recorded in the BMGR and adjacent lands, including a year-round resident avian population of approximately 30 species. The range lies along a migratory route for many of the birds flying around the northern end of the Gulf of California. Reptiles, especially the numerous species of diurnal lizards, are among the most populous and frequently seen wildlife on the range. Five species of toads and 37 species of reptiles are known to inhabit the BMGR.

The BMGR natural resources program focuses on more than 20 proposed or listed threatened or endangered plant and animal species. Through a series of cooperative agreements between Luke AFB,

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the federally listed endangered Sonoran pronghorn antelope (a resident of the BMGR), has been monitored and studied for more than 14 years. Biologists at Luke AFB make sure that aircraft conducting operations in this area use reasonable and prudent measures during operations. These measures include checking high explosives bombing target areas pronghorn may be attracted to each day prior to using live munitions. A multi-year study of the effect of aircraft overflights is near completion, indicating that pronghorn generally do not react to aircraft activity. Other studies include analyzing the use of existing pronghorn habitat as well as an experimental enhancement of selected plots to improve fawn survival.



Cultural Resources

The BMGR is filled with reminders of more than 10,000 years of civilization, including pottery shards, prehistoric settlements, ancient roads and trails, abandoned mining operations, and historic and prehistoric gravesites. The BMGR restricted airspace overlies a historically significant road, the Camino del Diablo, listed in 1978 on the National Register of Historic Places. This rough, unpaved road crosses the southern portion of the range and dips into Mexico. Human settlements have been on the range since 9500 B.C. Prehistoric pottery, not uncommon on the range, is found in fragments scattered along prehistoric trails,

near watering places, along playa edges, and in mountain passes, while pictographs adorn flat rocks in many places.

In historic times, the range was used for three principal purposes: travel, mining, and ranching. The range contains historic and prehistoric roads and trails, abandoned mining operations, ancient gravesites, and other reminders of the past.

To protect the range's remnants of the past, care has been taken to avoid disturbing or destroying signifi-

cant cultural resources during ground activities, and special protection is provided for archaeologically significant sites and surrounding areas. Since there is great potential to encounter culturally significant objects on the range, surveys are performed by qualified archaeologists in the areas where ground activities occur or are planned. If the survey results in significant findings, an alternative location is selected for the planned activity. Additional inventories are being conducted on the BMGR, with the resulting data entered into a geographic information system. This system is used to map these sites and other significant features, and allows environmental professionals and military planners to better manage resources and military training on the range.

Only a fraction of the range has been surveyed for cultural resources; however, many sites contain evidence of extensive human presence. Over 1,200 archaeological sites have been identified, and many are likely to qualify for listing in the National Regis-

ter of Historic Places under the criterion that they “have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory.” Monitoring and protecting these sites is an intensely laborious task. As a means of leveraging resources, the RMO has developed a volunteer project called “*Partners in Preservation*.” This project uses volunteers from the base and surrounding communities to frequently visit sites to monitor whether they are being affected by recreational visitors, natural erosion, or military activities. These volunteers are trained to record very precise details concerning their findings, and report individuals who may be illegally removing artifacts from the range. This project currently uses 30-45 personnel who travel to the BMGR once a week.

For more information about the BMGR and the natural and cultural resources initiatives that are performed by the RMO, contact Mr. Bob Barry or Ms. Adrienne Rankin, 56th CES/CEV, DSN 896-3823.

Examples of a pictograph (left) and prehistoric pottery (right) at the BMGR



Installation Restoration Program (IRP)

In 1990, the EPA identified 32 areas dating back to World War II that had been affected by past waste management practices which were considered standard for the industry in earlier times, but unacceptable today. These areas placed the base on the National Priorities List. After a preliminary study, eight petroleum contamination sites were easily investigated and cleaned, and a determination was made that no further action was required. Studies ruled out 16 additional sites from further action because the air, groundwater and soil conditions were at safe levels. The installation's environmental restoration team, with input from the community Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) and other interested citizens, selected cleanup alternatives for the eight remaining sites. The selection process included two main objectives: to prevent human exposure to soil where chemical concentrations exceed risk levels, and to keep chemicals from seeping into the groundwater.

The RAB is made up of members from Luke AFB's neighboring communities, State and federal environmental regulatory agencies, and the 56th Fighter Wing Commander. The group met regularly from 1994 to 1999 to review investigation results, cleanup plans and progress, and to determine the best way to address potential community concerns. The RAB continues to meet annually to ensure the effectiveness of the cleanup and institutional controls. EPA's Region IX administrator, Ms. Felicia Marcus recently honored the RAB with the EPA Region IX Earth Day Award. The RAB was one of seven Arizona environmental leaders acknowledged for demonstrated commitment and significant contribution to the environment during Valley Forwards Earthfest 2000 Celebration.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), and Luke AFB leaders met recently to discuss the next steps necessary to remove the base from the National Priorities List (NPL) and make Luke the first active duty Air Force installation to implement all final cleanup actions required for NPL removal. The EPA and ADEQ have concurred with Luke AFB that all remedial actions are in place, and the agencies will proceed with the legal steps required to publish a Notice of Intent to delete the Luke AFB IRP from the Federal Register. This notice will be followed by a 30-day public comment period and then publication of the final Notice of Deletion.

The EPA has begun the final review process to ensure that all steps in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) clean up process have been completed correctly. The Air Force, USEPA, and ADEQ anticipate that the CERCLA cleanup process will be completed and the site will be delisted later this fiscal year. According to Dr. Belle Matthews, Chief of Compliance, this is a significant environmental achievement, and demonstrates the cooperative efforts between the Air Force, the RAB, and the regulators. For more information on Luke AFB's petition to delist, and its IRP, contact Dr. Belle Matthews, 56th CES/CEV, DSN 896-8490.

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