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Crystal commission

AGENTS can enjoy a bonus 5% commission for introducing a new client to Crystal Cruises.

The promotion is valid for new bookings made by 30 Sep for travel until 31 Dec this year.

More details on [page nine](#).

ATIA double feature opens

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has opened up sales for the National Travel Industry Awards, taking place in Sydney at the ICC Sydney on Sat 26 Oct (**TD** breaking news).

Individual tickets for members cost \$260+GST and \$300+GST for non-members, while group bookings for a table of 10 will cost \$2,600+GST for members and \$3,000+GST for non-members - purchase tickets **HERE**.

The day before travel's night of nights, ATIA will also host its debut Beyond Borders event at the same venue.

To be hosted by Richard Taylor, Charlie Trevena and Roslyn Ranse, the event will focus on the continued resurgence of travel and tap into emerging trends for 2025, as well as opportunities to grow travel businesses.

Speakers confirmed for the event include FCTG's Graham 'Skroo' Turner, Luxury Escapes chief Adam Schwab, CTM's Laura Ruffles, Globus family of brands local MD Gai Tyrrell, and Royal Caribbean's Gavin Smith.

ATIA members can take

advantage of special ticket prices for Beyond Borders, starting at \$210+GST, with discounts available for group bookings.

For the public and non-members, tickets are priced at \$420, and can be bought **HERE**.

"These events are the highlights of our industry calendar, and tix always go quickly and I strongly encourage everyone to buy tickets now to avoid missing out," ATIA CEO Dean Long said. *AB*

QF lounge to double

QANTAS has signed an agreement with Hobart Airport to create a new lounge at the Tasmanian hub.

Slated to open in 2027, the new Qantas Club will have double the capacity of the existing lounge, and will also be used as a forum to showcase Tasmanian produce.

The announcement was made alongside Qantas debuting its Airbus A220 aircraft in the state, which landed in Hobart yesterday en route from Melbourne.

Qantas Group's A220s will steadily replace QantasLink's Boeing 717s as part of an ongoing domestic fleet renewal program, which will also include A220s operating on the Melbourne-Launceston route from 12 Nov.

Benefits of the aircraft include better fuel efficiency, longer range, more spacious seating, larger overhead lockers, and faster complimentary wi-fi.

Tailor-made by A&K

TRAVELLERS can enjoy 10% off Abercrombie & Kent's Tailor-Made Journeys, with departures in 2024 still available for luxury itineraries to more than 100 countries in six continents - for more information, see [page 11](#).



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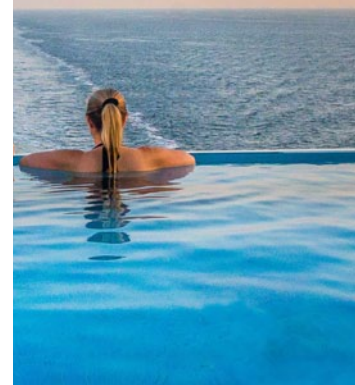
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Davies exits FCTG

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group (FCTG) is on the hunt for a new leader for its luxury Scott Dunn brand, following a move by Chief Executive Officer Sonia Davies to exit the business.

Her departure arrives less than four months after Davies took up a role on FCTG's Global Leisure executive team, where she balanced her Scott Dunn leadership duties while also reporting into Global Leisure Chief Executive, James Kavanagh.

FCTG is now recruiting for a Global MD of Scott Dunn, who will report directly to FCTG Global MD - Luxury and Independent brands, Danielle Galloway.

Student visa fees spiralling

EXCLUSIVE

A MOVE to significantly increase the price of international student visas by 225% is expected to have a severe ripple effect on the tourism, hospitality and export service sectors, leading associations have warned.

Effective yesterday, the Federal Government has raised the visa fees for international students from \$710 to \$1,600 which it says reflects the increasing value of education in Australia.

The fee increase is also part of the government's crackdown on foreign migration to Australia to help ease the housing shortage.

The government is aiming to end the practice of "visa hopping", which has allowed students and other temporary visa holders to extend their stay, in some cases indefinitely.

Accommodation Australia CEO, Michael Johnson, told *Travel Daily* the association will be watching carefully to see if the fee increase forces students to go elsewhere.

"At the moment we have about 725,000 international students studying in Australia, which is approximately 100,000 more than we had pre-pandemic," he said.

"I think from the government's perspective, they have indicated they're looking to see it go back to levels prior to the pandemic.

"I think the concern is if student numbers drop below that, then we will find ourselves with worker shortages again."

Johnson said that in the early months after the pandemic, some hotels were forced to close rooms due to an industry-wide shortage of housekeeping staff, with some operating at or below 60%.

"Since the pandemic, we've opened over 22,500 hotel rooms across the country, so there is that element to consider," he said.

"The number of students that we've had come back has been quite phenomenal...it has closed that gap in the workforce, particularly in our housekeeping departments and in hospitality, where students like to work.

"We have concerns and will certainly be keeping a watching brief on it," Johnson added.

Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) and the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) were unable to comment by *TD's* deadline. *ML*

SAA drives Avis deal

SOUTH African Airways passengers flying between Perth and Johannesburg can now access 10% discounts on car hire prices with Avis under a new tie-up announced this week.

The partnership will also see SAA passengers able to take advantage of exclusive specials on car rentals across all routes.

Valid until 31 Aug, the promo can be used for travel until 31 Oct and is subject to availability.

Use code 'AWD' to access.



Rail Europe



Unlock European Trains with Grant Robertson

Point-to-point vs Pass

Value for money: We often get asked if point-to-point tickets or the Eurail Pass work out more cost effective. Watch this [short video](#) to learn the determining factors involved when deciding which option is best.

Advanced booking:

Depending on the country, train tickets can be booked anywhere

between two and six months in advance. To understand the booking horizon of your train operator, click [here](#).

Expert tip: As a general rule of thumb, where there are several train journeys involved, especially international cross-border ones, the Pass is more cost effective and offers greater flexibility for any changes to the program.



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Be alert in France

AUSTRALIANS who are visiting France between now and 07 Jul are advised by Smartraveller to avoid protests & demonstrations around the election period, and be prepared for disruptions to transport and other services.

Visitors are also told to be aware of travel delays in during the Olympic and Paralympic Games between 26 Jul and 08 Sep.

Travellers should continue to exercise a high degree of caution amid a high terrorist alert.

Aqua preferred with FCTG

AQUA Expeditions has announced a new partnership with Flight Centre Travel Group (FCTG), which will see the cruise line become a preferred supplier of the agency network.

The partnership will allow guests to book Aqua's cruises through FCTG's network of travel agencies, including their flagship brand, as well as their luxury-focused brands, including Travel Associates, The Luxury Travel



Collection, and Envoyage.

Aqua will also receive priority placement and visibility across FCTG's network of consultants.

The partnership will allow the luxury line to showcase their unique small ship expeditions to a broader clientele.

"With an aim to expand our presence in the Australian luxury travel market, we are pleased to announce this partnership with Flight Centre Travel Group," Aqua founder & Chief Executive Officer Francesco Galli Zugaro said.

"We constantly strive to ease the booking process for both our existing and prospective guests, and this partnership will serve as another key step towards this goal," he added.

Aqua also recently enhanced its travel advisor portal (**TD 10** May), which now offers an automated account sign-up process and live online booking options.

The revamped portal gives users secure and easy access to a comprehensive resource library for downloading key information, including sales materials such as flyers, itineraries, rates, departure dates, and more. *MS*

ANA resumes Perth

FROM 14 Oct, travellers will be able to once again enjoy the Perth to Tokyo (Narita) service by All Nippon Airways (ANA) on a thrice weekly frequency.

Operated by a Boeing B787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, the seasonal service will run every Mon, Wed, and Sat until Mar 2025.

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Travel Daily
ON LOCATION

THE KIMBERLEY

Today's issue of TD is coming to you courtesy of Scenic, aboard Scenic Eclipse II.

CRUISING north on the intricate WA coastline, *Scenic Eclipse II* has today arrived at the spectacular Montgomery Reef, a natural formation which is part of the Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park.

The massive tidal changes which characterise this part of the ocean make the coral reef appear to literally emerge from the ocean.

This morning, guests also explored a local beach via a Zodiac landing, along with an optional guided hike to nearby rock formations.

EK stopover promo

AUSSIÉS flying with Emirates and stopping in Dubai for more than 24 hours can access free nights at the 5-star luxury hotel JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai.

First and business class pax will be eligible for two free nights, while economy guests can enjoy a complimentary one-night stay.

The offer is available until 21 Jul for travel dates between 04 Jul and 15 Sep 2024.

Unlike a recent Etihad stopover promotion (TD 09 May), the Emirates deal applies to bookings taken by travel agents.

JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai is centrally located beside the Dubai Water Canal, with some of Dubai's most impressive attractions less than a 10-minute drive away, such as The Burj Khalifa, Dubai Mall, The Dubai Fountain and Dubai Opera.

The hotel offers guests a choice of 12 award-winning restaurants, bars and lounges, as well as wellness facility with a traditional hammam Turkish bath, and 17 treatment rooms.

Hyatt Regency pulled from Perth



AFTER 36 years of operation, Hyatt Regency Perth will disappear from the city's skyline from 31 Aug to make way for a strategic rebranding.

Owners of the well-known hotel, Singapore-based Tuan Sing Holdings, yesterday opted to terminate the management agreement with Hyatt of Australia Limited to make way for a new brand direction.

Few details are known about the future management of the property at this stage, but Tuan Sing has been bullish in its acquisition of hotels in Australia and the wider APAC region, only recently buying Fraser Residences River Promenade in Singapore.

It's also not known if the decision to tear up the agreement with Hyatt in Perth will have any implications for its other Australian-based property, the Grand Hyatt Melbourne.

"It is with much regret that Hyatt Regency Perth will cease to operate, but we are grateful to have had the privilege to serve and care for all who have come through its doors," General Manager of Hyatt Regency Perth, Thiva Kesavan, said.

Before becoming a Hyatt Regency Perth in 1988, the property existed for four years

as The Merlin Hotel, and was designed by Aussie architect John Andrews and built by Multiplex.

Amenities currently on offer for guests at the 367-room hotel include four restaurants, tennis courts, a heated swimming pool, business centre with meeting spaces, & 24-hour fitness centre.

The hotel is now in the process of contacting customers with affected bookings. AB

Improved refunds

CONSOLIDATED Travel has streamlined the way customers can obtain refunds, enabling the recoup of funds directly at any time via a preferred GDS.

Quiktravel calculates refund estimates, including any penalties and fees, across 13 airlines including Qantas and Virgin.

Qantas Classic sale

QANTAS has launched a sale for loyalty members for Classic Plus reward seats to destinations such as Fiji, Bali, Hawaii, Samoa, Vanuatu, Tonga, Solomon Islands, and Norfolk Island.

More than 30,000 reward seats are on sale, including over the busy Dec and Jan period.

Doubletree Hobart

DOUBLETREE by Hilton, together with Fragrance Group, has confirmed DoubleTree by Hilton Hobart is in advanced construction status and is set to open in the second half of 2024.

The property will boast 206 rooms, a restaurant and bar, and two versatile meeting rooms.

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SINGAPORE

Today's issue of TD is coming to you from ILTM, which kicks off in Singapore today.

THE first press conferences, including one from Tourism Australia, and networking meetings kick off today at ILTM in steamy Singapore.

Media have already been treated to dinner at Edition in Singapore, where they enjoyed Fysh at Edition, a menu including seafood in every course - think Valrhona chocolate tart made in part from Murray Cod fat caramel as well as some polarising yellowfin tuna ice cream.

Boeing facing fraud

THE US Justice Department will criminally charge Boeing with fraud following two crashes involving 737 MAX jets, killing 346 people, reported Reuters.

If Boeing refuses to plead guilty, the case will be taken to trial.

The Department plans to offer a plea agreement to Boeing, which includes a financial penalty and imposition of an independent monitor to audit the company's safety and compliance practices for three years.

A guilty plea may impact Boeing's ability to enter into govt contracts, which make up a large portion of its revenue.

Classic fuels points

SINCE Qantas' Frequent Flyer program Classic Plus went live in Apr (TD 08 Apr), 10.7 billion points have been redeemed so far by passengers - a third more than before the popular program was launched.

Over 80,000 Qantas customers have started flying out of Australia on Classic Plus flights, with Tokyo, London, Singapore, Queenstown and Bali among the most popular destinations.

Qantas Loyalty CEO, Andrew Glance, enthused that "our members are booking nine reward seats every minute".

"Classic Plus has been a game-changer, making it even easier for them to use their points for what matters most - which we know is travel," Glance added.

The airline also revealed that a third of Classic Plus pax will also be travelling in first, business and premium economy cabins.

Baswal leaves Ovolo

OVOLO Hotels has announced the resignation of its CEO Dave Baswal, effective from 30 Sep.

Following Baswal's departure, Girish Jhunjnuwala will resume the role of CEO in addition to his responsibilities as Executive Chairman of the hotel group.

Baswal was thanked for his dedication in maintaining Ovolo as a "leader and disrupter" in the hospitality sector.

Jhunjnuwala added the focus of the hotel group is now expanding its presence in SE Asia.

ATIA UPDATE

from Dean Long, CEO



IF YOU can indulge me for a few minutes, this column is going to take a personal tone. Yesterday, my wife and I received our son Henry's,

first passport.

For someone in travel, I feel I have set my child up for success (maybe a slight overstatement).

He can now explore a world of potential experiences.

This passport marks the beginning of what I hope, is a lifelong love of travel.

A life that can be enriched through exposure to different people and cultures.

I have spoken and written at length that in my view, travel allows those with different points of view to come together and maybe find some common ground on an issue.

The opening of one's perspective is paramount to bridging cultural differences and for many, travelling internationally is the first time this happens.

While those experiences for Henry will be some time away, we will be taking him on his first international holiday to visit his uncle in LA later this year.

Our aim for this trip is a little lower than finding one's purpose.

For my wife and I, we hope he sleeps for as much as the flight as possible and I am sure that's exactly what people on our flights will think too.

What did occur to me, was that it was only around two years ago that the Australian Passport Office was on the front page for massive delays in processing passport applications. While you should always allow six weeks for the APO to process any application, my son's (from lodgement to delivery of the passport) took 10 days.

For many in the APO, they are the same people who copped the abuse of reopening.

Two years on, they can turn around more passports each month than any previous month prior to COVID - providing visa free travel to over 189 countries.

How things change and well done to all involved.

VA pilots vote no

TRANSPORT Workers Union pilots are seeking to continue discussions with Virgin Australia after an overwhelming vote against a proposed enterprise agreement, which included significant pay rises and improved conditions, but failed to address rostering fatigue.

The pilots have been vocal with Virgin and Bain about the need for days off to compensate for a new rostering system being abandoned by the airline.

Cebu massive order

A RUMOURED initial deal between Airbus and Cebu Air is in the works, according to people familiar with the matter.

It is believed that Airbus may provide the budget airline with dozens of narrow-body jets, with one source suggesting they will be mostly A321neo models.

Both have declined to comment.

However, Cebu Pacific has already said that it will double its fleet by 2035 to service demand across Southeast Asia.



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TO CELEBRATE this exciting 65 million Qantas Points milestone, for a limited time, new TravelPay members can earn 20,000 bonus Qantas Points when processing over \$75,000 in card payments by 31 Jul 2024.

"Since joining TravelPay, our business has experienced seamless, hassle-free payment processing, and the ability to earn Qantas Points on every transaction has been a fantastic bonus," said Francesca Labbozzetta from Marconi Travel.

"The integration was smooth with no set-up costs, and the variety of payment options such as pay later and use your American Express Membership Reward points with us has significantly enhanced our customer experience.

"TravelPay stands out as a reliable and innovative partner, and we enjoy doing business with them," she added.

TravelPay Money is here

TRAVELPAY has partnered with Australian foreign-currency-card company, Pelikin, to launch **TravelPay Money**.

Offering a digital-focused alternative to travel cards, TravelPay Money promises to unlock a range of benefits for Australian travel agents and their clients.

Users will enjoy easy and free sign-up and best-in-market 22-currency wallet functionality as well as instant transferring funds to other users, no matter where in the world they are.

Meanwhile, travel agents will enjoy long-term commission-earning potential, flexible marketing options, regular

tracking and reporting, and high-level support.

"TravelPay Money, powered by Pelikin, sets a new standard of excellence in travel finance solutions," said Peter Egglestone, Chief Executive of TravelPay's parent company, Zenith Payments.

"This strategic partnership with Pelikin aligns perfectly with our commitment to delivering innovative financial solutions tailored to the evolving needs of the travel industry."

TravelPay Money marks the fourth product offering in the TravelPay suite of products behind TravelPay, TravelPay B2B, and TravelPay Later.



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Air's SAF moves

AIR New Zealand has received a 500,000-litre delivery of sustainable aviation fuel into Wellington - its first conveyance of SAF to the nation's capital city.

The fuel has been manufactured by EcoCeres from 100% used cooking oil, and was supplied and blended by ExxonMobil.

The delivery is equivalent to 165 flights on an Airbus A320 aircraft between Auckland and Wellington, and represents life-cycle carbon emissions savings of at least 80% compared with fossil jet fuel.

Chief Sustainability & Corporate Affairs Officer, Kiri Hannifin, said moving away from purely using fossil fuels for Air New Zealand's operations is "critical".

MEANWHILE, the Government of Spain should adopt recommendations made by the country's Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge Commission for SAF production, IATA has said.

The Commission's proposal would see Spain promote the production of SAF by providing incentives for its production, funding R&D, establishing a public-private partnership for SAF, and developing strategies for access to bio-materials.

WARMING AFFECTING HIMALAYA TRAILS

WORLD Expeditions has announced key changes ahead of next year's departures on the Great Himalaya Trails (pictured), which will see its itineraries delayed by two weeks due to climate change.

Global warming has led to snowfall at higher levels of the Himalayas in the last few years, occurring later in the season.

The higher temperatures means the snow does not freeze, posing greater challenges for trekkers, including a higher avalanche risk, in addition to heavy snow.

World Expeditions has also sent additional climbing sherpas and support team members to assist in breaking in trails and supporting this year's trekkers.

The epic trail, which will depart from Mar next year, takes five



months to complete, and runs for almost 2,500 kilometres.

World Expeditions is the only operator to offer the Full Nepal Traverse of "trekking's holy grail".

"Under the advice of our Nepali experts, who have first-hand experience with conditions, we have chosen to delay the start of the trip by two weeks in 2025, to give trekkers the best chance at a successful and safe journey along the Great Himalaya Trail," Chief

Executive, Sue Badyari, said.

"The changing conditions also affect Nepal's far west and, based on recent years, we expect that the Rara Lake section, at the end of the Great Himalaya Trail, should be reasonably stable.

"Mountain weather can change at any time and preparation, appropriate equipment and a can-do attitude are all key to navigating any challenges that may arise on this epic trail." MS

Martin plants more seeds at Reforest

G ADVENTURES Managing Director ANZ, Sean Martin (pictured), has taken up a board position contract with custom tree-planting program Reforest.

Martin's appointment follows G Adventures making a significant financial investment in the Brisbane-based start-up in 2022 (TD 23 Nov 2022), with one of the primary missions of the organisation to minimise the carbon footprint of companies through tree planting initiatives.

G also said that its stake in



Reforest would be accompanied by efforts to improve the green platform's tech and expand its awareness within the global travel industry.

In addition to leading G in the local market, Martin also sits on the board of CATO, a role he has held since Jun 2022.

HX plugs more in

CRUISE line Hx has connected to shore power in Reykjavik Harbour in Iceland, with its ship *Fridtjof Nansen*, becoming the first to do so.

The newly online connection at Midtbakki Terminal will see *Fridtjof Nansen* utilise renewable electricity from Iceland.

"This is an important component of HX's strategy to make our expedition voyages climate-neutral by 2050," Managing Director, Damian Perry, said.

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MONEY

WELCOME to Money, TD's Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.666

THE Australian dollar continues to leverage its momentum against a dipping Japanese yen, achieving a decade-high on the currency over the last week.

Although it has fallen slightly against the euro, the Aussie is performing relatively well compared to most majors.

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.666
UK	£0.526
NZ	\$1.097
Euro	€0.620
Japan	¥107.4
Thailand	฿24.44
China	¥4.838
South Africa	12.23
Canada	\$0.914
Crude oil	US\$86.39

Love on the Sun

A NEW dining experience has opened on board Princess Cruises' *Sun Princess*, with art icon Romero Britto partnering with chef Rudi Sodamin to introduce Love by Britto.

Decked out in Britto's signature designs featuring vivid colours and bold patterns, the 68-seat venue offers a seven-course, fixed-price menu with dishes like tail of lobster thermidor and a heart-shaped chocolate lava cake.

Guests can also enjoy seven new love-themed cocktails, including Strawberry Love Potion and Espresso My Love, along with an extensive wine list.

Halekulani heats up in Aus



THE Leading Hotels of the World (LHW) recently joined forces with its member, Hawaii's luxury Halekulani Hotel, to host events in Sydney and Melbourne. Travel advisors heard updates from LHW's Director - Travel Trade

New SWISS chief

SWISS International Air Lines (SWISS) has announced Jens Fehlinger (pictured) as its new CEO, effective 01 Oct.

Currently MD of Lufthansa's newest airline, Lufthansa City Airlines, Fehlinger has worked at the German group since 2006.

He will replace SWISS' outgoing CEO, Dieter Vranckx, who became a member of the Lufthansa Group Executive Board yesterday.

Heike Birtenbach, SWISS Chief Commercial Officer, will act as interim CEO until Jens Fehlinger commences his new role.



APAC (excl. China) Tim Chatfield and Senior Manager - Sales, Renee Fowler, as well as Halekulani's GM David Barnes, COO Peter Shaindlin, and Director of Sales & Marketing, Lisa Matsuda.

The hotel's management team used the forum to unveil the Waikiki oceanfront property's new state-of-the-art spa and brand-new suites. *JM*

Pictured: Attendees at the Hotel Centennial in Sydney.

Restore at Dorsett

DORSETT Melbourne has announced a new winter package which offers a 25% discount on bookings made directly through the property's website before 31 Aug for stays until 31 Dec.

The 'Explore & Restore' package also includes a complimentary glass of hot buttered rum on arrival from Jin Bar; discounted valet parking; early check-in and late check-out; as well as access to the hotel's wellness facilities, including an indoor heated pool, jacuzzi and sauna.

Dorsett Your Rewards members will also enjoy an extra 12% discount - for more information on the promotion, [CLICK HERE](#).

Window Seat

A NEW - and surprisingly positive - TikTok trend has taken off, with air travellers choosing to forgo smart devices and in-flight entertainment in favour of a 'dopamine detox'.

The trend sees passengers staring off into space, or watching the GPS plane move across the screen, instead of watching a movie, reading a book, scrolling social media, or listening to music.

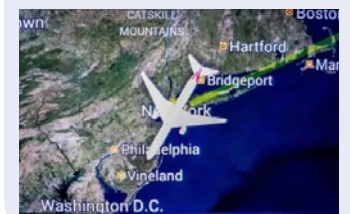
The 'raw dogging' challenge is particularly popular among males, with Californian therapist Michael Ceely telling CNN it's a "socially acceptable" way for men to embrace meditation and mindfulness.

"I think it might be more of a male psyche kind of thing: I like a challenge, let me see if I can get through this.

"It's an acetic practice, but branding it with bro-speak."

The trend has inspired TikTok users to one-up each other for who has gone the longest period of time in the air with the fewest amenities.

In a not-so-mindful twist, some are even making the challenge more extreme by skipping on-board food and drink and foregoing trips to the bathroom.



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