

Intelligence Report

- Dorset Gardens Hotel**
- Application to increase EGMs from 97 to 105**

Regulatory Services Division

OFFICIAL: Sensitive

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Report Scope

Purpose

This intelligence report (IR) relates to venue operator DG Hotel Pty Ltd, trading as Dorset Gardens Hotel, and aims to provide the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC) with insightful information, including an assessment of qualitative and quantitative data, to assist the Commissioners in making a decision on Dorset Gardens Hotel's application to increase the number of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) to operate at the Dorset Gardens Hotel, 335 Dorset Road, Croydon VIC 3136, from 97 to 105.

Current Intelligence Report Scope

In compiling this IR, the Risk, Intelligence and Assurance team (RIA) of the Regulatory Services Division (RSD) focused on the following information:

- Net Machine Revenue (NMR) Assessment focusing on:
 - The player loss and NMR data for venues with similar attributes to Dorset Gardens Hotel.
 - A comparative analysis of player loss and NMR data for venues in City of Maroondah and for neighbouring LGAs.
 - Comparison between RIA's projected NMR and Dorset Gardens Hotel's.
- Community and Council responses regarding Dorset Gardens Hotel's proposal.
- Complaints and tip-offs against Dorset Gardens Hotel received by the Commission.
- Pre-hearing inspection outcome completed on 12 November 2025 by the Gambling Division.
- Compliance history of Dorset Gardens Hotels.
- Intelligence on Dorset Gardens Hotel and its associates, including probity checks and media scan.

The sources of information and data include:

- VGCCC data on gaming venue player losses and population demographics.
- Probity checks conducted by RIA.
- RIA tip-offs register data.
- LaGIS system data, including complaints and compliance records.
- Dorset Gardens Hotel's application for approval to increase number of EGMs at the venue (335 Dorset Road, Croydon VIC 3136).
- Council agenda notes and meeting minutes from the city of City of Maroondah.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics population data.
- Relevant Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) including World Check, mainstream media reports and open social media posts (available to the public).

Executive Summary

The applicant, Dorset Gardens Hotel, projects an increase in expenditure ranging between \$993,771 and \$1,344,514 within the first 12 months following the installation of eight additional EGMs.

Currently, Dorset Gardens Hotel has the highest NMR in the City of Maroondah (\$573 per EGM) and ranks second amongst the comparable venues. The comparability includes only hotels located in Metro areas and excludes venues with populations of more than double and less than half the size of the City of Maroondah. Post-COVID (post-pandemic) player loss has stabilised at \$20.7 million on average annually, with a decline of 1% per year.

RIA's projected NMR analysis is slightly higher compared to the applicant's NMR projections in the first 12 months of trade post installation of the additional EGMs sought in its application.

- The applicant has projected +993,771 (Low) to +1,344,514 (High) increase in expenditure.
- RIA has projected +1,370,444 (Low) to +1,984,344 (High) increase in expenditure.
- RIA has projected +1,677,344 (Middle) compared to the applicant's +1,169,143 (Middle) projection, which is a difference of approximately 500K.

RIA's projected NMR analysis assumes all eight additional EGMs will be utilised at the same capacity as the existing 97 EGMs currently installed at the venue, which results in a higher projected player loss, compared to Dorset Gardens Hotel's projected player loss.

Additionally, Dorset Gardens Hotel has been subject to ongoing regulatory oversight, with five warning letters previously issued for separate breaches from 16 inspections and four compliance monitoring activities since 2017.

The pre-hearing inspection of Dorset Gardens Hotel has confirmed venue's compliance with the technical, operational, and responsible gambling requirements, and that the venue has adequate space and capacity to install eight additional EGMs.

As of 1 December 2025, there are no recorded council or community responses to Dorset Gardens Hotel's proposal, and Dorset Gardens Hotel has no adverse probity findings, even though OSINT indicates previous adverse media coverage relating to staff conduct at the venue during 2020.

Quantitative Data Analysis

NMR Assessment

NMR represents the daily player loss per EGM generated by a venue. RIA calculated a range of NMR estimates using several methodologies, applying different business rules to determine the likely outcomes for Dorset Gardens Hotel. The following comparative factors were considered:

- Venues with similar number of EGMs (**94 to 105**)¹
- Local Government Areas (LGAs) with similar Estimated Resident Population (ERP) Size 1 (**119,354**)²
- Existing venues within the City of Maroondah (**8**)³
- Population data comparisons with the neighbouring LGAs

Venues with Similar Number of EGMs

Table 1 shows NMR data for 2024-25 financial year (2024-25) for a sample of venues with a similar number of EGMs currently installed in Dorset Gardens Hotel (97), and venues with a similar number of proposed EGMs by Dorset Gardens Hotel (105).

Comparability was ensured by:

- Only including hotels located in metro areas
- Excluding venues located in LGAs with populations more than double or less than half the size of the City of Maroondah.

The NMR across this group ranges from \$266 to \$742, with an average of \$454. Dorset Gardens Hotel generated NMR above the group's average, ranking second overall. With 97 EGMs, Dorset Gardens Hotel's NMR already exceeds that of venues operating with a similar number of EGMs to the proposed 105.

Table 1 - 2024-25 Player Loss and NMR Data for Venues with Similar Number of EGMs

Venues	LGA	No. of EGMs	2024-25 Player Loss (\$)	NMR (\$)
Seaford Taverner	City of Frankston	94	16,088,891	469
Skyways Taverner	City of Moonee Valley	96	26,026,192	742
Dorset Gardens Hotel	City of Maroondah	97	20,309,248	573
Bourke Hill's Welcome Stranger	City of Melbourne	99	16,235,761	449
Edwardes Lake Hotel	City of Darebin	100	13,919,970	381
Ivanhoe Hotel	City of Banyule	100	10,887,971	298
Zagame's Caulfield Club Hotel	City of Glen Eira	100	14,262,993	391
Rosstown Hotel	City of Glen Eira	103	19,393,865	516

¹ Detail Data 2024 – 2025, Current_gaming_expenditure_venue.xlsx

² ERP FY23-24 (ABS).xlsx Table 2

³ Detail Data 2024 – 2025, Current_gaming_expenditure_venue.xlsx

Venues	LGA	No. of EGMs	2024-25 Player Loss (\$)	NMR (\$)
Croydon Hotel	City of Maroondah	105	10,209,886	266
Taylors Lakes Family Hotel	City of Brimbank	105	17,422,788	454

Venues in City of Maroondah

The NMR within the city of Maroondah ranges from \$21 to \$573, with an average of \$247. Dorset Gardens Hotel has the highest NMR compared to all the other venues within the city.

Table 2 - Comparison of Player Loss and NMR in City of Maroondah's Venues

Venues	Venue Type	No. of EGMS	2024-25 Player Loss (\$)	NMR (\$)
Eastwood Golf Club	Club	19	147,172	21
Club Ringwood	Club	82	5,103,606	170
The Coach and Horses	Club	90	6,265,335	191
Ringwood RSL	Club	70	8,094,976	196
Club Kilsyth	Club	105	5,019,476	211
Croydon Hotel	Hotel	105	10,209,886	266
Manhattan Hotel	Hotel	72	9,051,055	344
Dorset Gardens Hotel	Hotel	97	20,309,248	573

City of Maroondah's Neighbouring LGAs: Population Comparison

Table 3 presents the overall player loss, NMR and ERP for the City of Maroondah and its surrounding LGAs, Shire of Yarra Ranges (East), City of Knox (South), City of Whitehorse (West) and City of Manningham (North).⁴

- The City of Maroondah has the lowest ERP of 119,354.
- In 2024-25, the average player loss of the City of Maroondah (\$64M) is 10% higher than the average of its surrounding LGAs (\$58M).
- City of Maroondah's higher overall player loss compared to all surrounding LGAs is attributed to a total of 640 EGMs within the city which is 21% higher than the surrounding LGAs (with an average of 529 EGMs).
- City of Maroondah's surrounding LGAs average NMR was \$304 in 2024-25. It was 11% higher than the City of Maroondah's NMR of \$275.

Table 3 - Comparison of Average Player Loss, NMR and ERP for City of Maroondah & Adjacent LGAs

LGA	2024-25 Player Loss (\$)	Region	No. of Venues	No. of EGMS	ERP- 30 June 2024	NMR (\$)
Shire of Yarra Ranges	30,194,838	Metro	9	452	160,137	183
City of Maroondah	64,200,756	Metro	8	640	119,354	275

⁴ Metropolitan Gaming Venues Map, https://apps.vgccc.vic.gov.au/CA2570C30016EEF3/pages/map_metro?Open

LGA	2024-25 Player Loss (\$)	Region	No. of Venues	No. of EGMS	ERP- 30 June 2024	NMR (\$)
City of Knox	79,237,593	Metro	11	770	163,302	282
City of Whitehorse	62,945,798	Metro	6	431	183,462	400
City of Manningham	59,136,805	Metro	6	462	131,761	350

Table 4 shows that the NMR for LGAs with comparable ERPs to the City of Maroondah ranges between \$221 and \$318, with an average NMR of \$267. City of Maroondah's NMR (\$275) is slightly higher than the comparable LGAs with a similar ERP.

Table 4 - Comparison of NMR for City of Maroondah and LGAs with comparable ERP

LGA	ERP- 30 June 2024	2024-25 Player Loss (\$)	No. of Venues	No. of EGMS	NMR (\$)
City of Port Phillip	112,669	30,478,857	10	377	221
City of Stonnington	114,038	19,336,495	4	199	266
City of Maroondah	119,354	64,200,756	8	640	275
City of Ballarat	121,050	66,376,141	14	652	279
City of Greater Bendigo	125,805	61,223,381	11	662	253
City of Moonee Valley	129,732	86,596,862	11	746	318

Dorset Gardens Hotel's Player Loss Trend, Pre- & Post-pandemic

Table 5 presents Dorset Gardens Hotel's player loss from 2016-17 to 2024-25, highlighting the impact of COVID pandemic on the figures.

- The player loss remained relatively stable during pre-pandemic years (i.e., 2016-17 to 2018-19), increasing by an average of 1.35% annually.
- During the pandemic-impacted years (2019-20–2021-22), the player loss declined sharply to \$10.5M in 2020-21 due to venue closures, before rebounding to \$14.9M in 2021-22. This pattern mirrored trends across Victorian gaming venues during pandemic restrictions.
- Post-pandemic (2022-23 onward): Following the removal of restrictions, player loss surged by \$5.8M to \$20.7M in 2022-23, an increase of 39%.
- The player loss has since stabilised, easing from \$20.7M to \$20.3M, reflecting an annual decline of approximately 1%.
- Reciprocally, the NMR had similar fluctuations as the player loss trend throughout the same financial years.⁵

Table 5 - Dorset Gardens Hotel's Player Loss Trend, Pre & Post Pandemic (COVID)

Financial Year	COVID Status	Player Loss (\$)	Increase (%)	No. of EGMS	NMR (\$)
16/17	Pre COVID	16,320,334	-	97	461

⁵ Detail Data 2024 – 2025, Current_gaming_expenditure_venue.xlsx

Financial Year	COVID Status	Player Loss (\$)	Increase (%)	No. of EGMS	NMR (\$)
17/18	Pre COVID	16,730,698	2.51%	97	472
18/19	Pre COVID	16,765,117	0.21%	97	473
19/20	COVID Impacted	12,052,871	-28.11%	97	340
20/21	COVID Impacted	10,497,938	-12.90%	97	296
21/22	COVID Impacted	14,927,033	42.19%	97	421
22/23	Post COVID	20,739,048	38.94%	97	585
23/24	Post COVID	21,056,025	1.53%	97	594
24/25	Post COVID	20,309,248	-3.55%	97	573

Projected NMR for Additional Eight EGMS at Dorset Gardens Hotel

As shown on Table 6, Dorset Gardens Hotel's player loss and NMR projections were based on the current annual -1% player loss (post-COVID) and estimated overall increase in expenditure.

- Dorset Gardens Hotel indicated that on average, for every 1% increase in gaming machines operating in a sample venue, gross gaming expenditure would increase by approximately 0.698% at the venue.⁶
- This represents an estimated overall increase in expenditure between \$993,771 (Low) and \$1,344,514 (High) in the first 12 months of trade post installation of the additional eight EGMS.⁷
- Dorset Gardens Hotel has projected that 60% of this increase \$596,263 (Low) and \$806,708 (High)) is anticipated to be generated organically by Dorset Gardens Hotel, while the remaining 40% is expected to come from transfers from other venues within the City of Maroondah and surrounding LGAs.⁸
- Assuming Dorset Gardens Hotel's annual player loss decreases by 1% for 2025-26, the projected NMR will range between \$550 (Dorset Gardens Hotel's Low Estimate) and \$559 (Dorset Gardens Hotel's High Estimate) in the first 12 months of trade, following the increase of eight EGMS.

Table 6 – Dorset Gardens Hotel's Projected NMR for Additional Eight EGMS

Financial Year	Applicant Projected Expenditure (\$)	No. of EGMS	NMR (\$)
25/26	-	97	568
26/27	Low Projection (+993,771)	105 (+8)	550
26/27	Medium Projection (+1,169,143)	105 (+8)	555
26/27	High Projection (+1,344,514)	105 (+8)	559

RIA's projected player loss was based on eight additional EGMS, provided the NMR stays within the range of 560 and 576, as shown by Table 7.⁹ Furthermore, RIA's NMR analysis assumes all eight additional EGMS will be utilised at the same capacity as the existing 97 EGMS currently installed at the venue, which results in a higher projected player loss, compared to Dorset Gardens Hotel's projected player loss.

⁶ 3) Expenditure Analysis prepared by Tim Stilwell - ShineWing.pdf 9.17. (Page 16)

⁷ 3) Expenditure Analysis prepared by Tim Stilwell - ShineWing.pdf 9.22. (Page 17)

⁸ 3) Expenditure Analysis prepared by Tim Stilwell - ShineWing.pdf 10.9. (Page 20)

⁹ Detail Data 2024 – 2025, Current_gaming_expenditure_venue.xlsx

Table 7 - RIA Projected Player Loss for additional 8 EGMs at Dorset Gardens Hotel

Financial Year	RIA Projected Expenditure (\$)	RIA Projected Annual Player Loss (%)	RIA Projected Annual Player Loss (\$)	No. of EGMs	NMR (\$)
2025-26	-	-1%	20,106,155	97	568
2026-27	Low Projection (+1,370,444)	-1%	21,476,600	105 (+8)	560
2026-27	Medium Projection (+1,677,344)	-1%	21,783,500	105 (+8)	568
2026-27	High Projection (+1,984,344)	-1%	22,090,500	105 (+8)	576

Conclusion of NMR Assessment

- Dorset Gardens Hotel has the highest NMR of all venues located within the City of Maroondah and the second highest NMR when compared to venues with a similar number of EGMs.
- Dorset Gardens Hotel's player loss remained stable post-pandemic with a reduction of \$0.4M between 2022-23 to 2024-25 or approximately declining by 1% annually.
- RIA's player loss projection is higher than Dorset Gardens Hotel's. When comparing the medium projected figures by RIA and Dorset Gardens Hotel, installing an additional eight EGMs is projected to result in an increase in player loss of approximately \$1.17M to \$1.68M within the first 12 months of trade.

Additional Intelligence Analysis and Checks

Community and council response to proposal

As of 1 December 2025, there are no recorded council or community responses to Dorset Gardens Hotel's proposal.

Gambling-related complaints and tip-offs against Dorset Gardens Hotel

Complaints

There are three complaints against Dorset Gardens Hotel which were submitted by three unidentified members of the public (Complainant).¹⁰

- On 14 December 2021, the Complainant reported that after winning a ball feature on an EGM, they accidentally pressed the gambling button. Upon reaching the gamble screen, no further action was taken; however, the machine automatically selected 'Red Hearts,' resulting in a loss of credit.
 - Outcome: This complaint was unsubstantiated on this occasion.
- On 29 December 2021, the Complainant reported that an employee had been working in the gaming room without holding a valid gaming licence for multiple weeks. The Complainant stated that the employee appeared unfamiliar with gaming operations and should not have been performing duties without a licence.
 - Outcome: This complaint was unsubstantiated on this occasion.

¹⁰ Complaints Register accessed on 21 November 2025.

- On 20 October 2024, the Complainant reported that a group of approximately ten people visited Dorset Gardens Hotel late at night or early morning for drinks. During their visit, the Gaming Supervisor allegedly stated that patrons could not remain in the smoking area for more than ten minutes and were required to play on gaming machines to stay in the venue, claiming it was against Responsible Service of Gaming (RSG) requirements to visit without playing. The complainant noted the group was actively purchasing drinks, with at least one person always playing games and some were playing Keno.
 - Outcome: Subsequently, the complainant withdrew the complaint.

Tip-offs

There are three separate tip-offs which were submitted by three unidentified members of the public.¹¹

- The tip-offs were related to Fawkner Bingo Croydon (Dorset Gardens Hotel, 335a Dorset Rd, Croydon VIC 3136), which is located next to Dorset Gardens Hotel (335 Dorset Rd, Croydon VIC 3136).
- The three tip-offs were submitted between January 2024 to August 2025, all relating to Bingo operations and rules at Fawkner Bingo Croydon, with no breaches detected.

Key Findings: Pre-hearing Inspection of Dorset Gardens Hotel

No issues and offences were identified during a pre-hearing inspection on 12 November 2025.¹²

- The gaming venue layout adhered to the technical and physical requirements, including approved Gaming Machine Area (GMA), security of monitoring and cashier equipment, electrical safety, signage, lighting, and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) standards.
- The gaming venue's overt audit confirmed that Dorset Gardens Hotel was compliant with the intoxicated and underage gambling, mandated signage and responsible gambling information, cash transaction limits, credit and EFT restrictions, and verification of venue operator governance details.
- The code of conduct adhered with the Ministerial Directions, including presence of a Responsible Gambling Officer, availability of the venue's Responsible Gambling Code of Conduct, procedures for responding to signs of gambling harm, and adherence to requirements discouraging inducements, prolonged play, and simultaneous use of multiple EGMs.
- The mandatory carded play was compliant with the pre-commitment requirements under the Gambling Regulation Act 2003 (GRA 2003) and Ministerial Directions, including YourPlay kiosk functionality, staff assistance, availability of cards and brochures, signage, system connectivity, and player service point equipment.
- Dorset Gardens Hotel was compliant with the self-exclusion program requirements, including provision of information to patrons, secure photo record management, staff training and breach reporting, loyalty program exclusions, database access, complaints handling, and procedures for managing self-excluded patrons.
- No issues were identified during the risk assessment audit of the Dorset Gardens Hotel's layout and operational practices, including visibility and access to the gaming machine area, presence of children's facilities, availability of break areas, staffing adequacy and training, management of self-excluded patrons, responsible gambling awareness, and observations of patron behaviour.
- Additionally, Dorset Gardens Hotel is equipped with a high-quality CCTV system comprising of eight Digital Video Recorder (DVR) units, providing comprehensive coverage of all areas.
- According to the Inspector's observations, Dorset Gardens Hotel has sufficient space to accommodate additional eight EGM.

¹¹ Tip-Off Register accessed on 21 November 2025.

¹² Compass Case 00243399

Compliance History of Dorset Gardens Hotel

Dorset Gardens Hotel had 16 separate inspections between 9 February 2017 and 12 April 2025 relating to multiple types of checks including code of conduct, financial and self-excluded audits, overt inspections, Your Play and TAB Outlet (inspection for Wagering and Betting Licence on 12 April 2018) at the venue.¹³

Similarly, four separate compliance monitoring activities was completed between 10 August 2017 and 7 June 2024 relating to three separate overt inspections, an internal observation and advertising.¹⁴

Further to these inspections, Dorset Gardens Hotel was issued multiple warning letters on five separate occasions under the Gambling Regulation Act 2003.¹⁵

- On 25 April 2017, Dorset Gardens Hotel was issued a warning letter under section 3.5.23, for failing to enforce rules made by the Commission and applicable to operator. Dorset Gardens Hotel breached the gaming rule for Anzac Day trading Restrictions.¹⁶
- On 12 April 2022, Dorset Gardens Hotel was issued a warning letter under section 3.8A.12(1), for failing to ensure that the player account equipment installed in the approved venue is functioning in the way it is designed and programmed to function. Dorset Gardens Hotel was unable to encode a casual Yourplay card at the time of inspection.¹⁷
- On 30 March 2018, Dorset Gardens Hotel was issued a warning letter for failing to enforce rules made by the Commission under Section 3.5.23 and applicable to operator. Dorset Gardens Hotel breached the gaming rule for Good Friday Trading.¹⁸
- On 24 August 2022, Dorset Gardens Hotel was issued a warning letter for failing to comply with a standard made by the Commission under section 10.1.5B in respect of the conduct of gaming; or an operational requirement determined by the Commission under section 10.1.5C. Dorset Gardens Hotel breached section 3.4.1(b) as the CCTV system failed to retain recorded images of the gaming machine area for a minimum of 28 days.¹⁹
- On 1 November 2024, Dorset Gardens Hotel was issued a warning letter under section 3.5.34AA(1), for publishing, or causing to be published, any gaming machine advertising outside the gaming machine area of an approved venue.²⁰

Probity Checks

The RIA conducted general probity checks for Rebecca Poloso, Joseph Peter Scherri, Dorset Gardens Hotel Pty Ltd, Alias Dorset Gardens Hotel, all had no matches in World Check.

- Rebecca Poloso and Joseph Peter Scherri have no VGCCC intelligence holdings.²¹
- Dorset Gardens Hotel has demonstrated compliance with AML/CTF obligations by reporting 5 Suspicious Matter Reports (SMRs) between 2010 and 2023.²² The SMRs relate to known criminals, credit buying and counterfeit notes which was detected by Dorset Gardens Hotel. Subsequently, Dorset Gardens Hotel took the following actions,
 - contacted Victoria Police regarding the counterfeit notes.
 - advised patrons that credit buying is not allowed at the venue.
 - barred patrons from the venue after identifying them as known criminals.

¹³ Compass database was accessed on 21 November 2025

¹⁴ Compass database was accessed on 21 November 2025

¹⁵ Compass database was accessed on 21 November 2025

¹⁶ Enforcement code WAR-1009

¹⁷ Enforcement code WAR-9001

¹⁸ Enforcement code WAR-5899

¹⁹ Enforcement code WAR-9406

²⁰ Enforcement code WAR-11780

²¹ Accessed on 25 November 2025

²² AUSTRAC, Analyst Work Bench, accessed on 09 December

- Additionally, Dorset Gardens Hotel Pty Ltd Alias Dorset Gardens Hotel has the following VGCCC intelligence holdings.²³
 - Information Report, IR 2019-625 indicates that staff at Dorset Gardens Hotel were not practicing Responsible Service of Gambling (RSG) obligations on 18 April 2019.
 - Information Report, IR 2025-5 specifies Dorset Gardens Hotel as Venue of Interest (VOI) was inspected during a field operation on 7 June 2024. No suspicious activity was observed at the VOI.
 - Information Report, IR Oth 2021-43, relating to the Seven News story on 25 November 2020, teen dragged out of the premises unconscious by security.
- Furthermore, Dorset Gardens Hotel has multiple adverse OSINT reports relating to the alleged staff misconduct at the venue during November 2020.
 - [Two injured in alleged machete attack in pub carpark attack](#): On 8 April 2022, a man and his friend were allegedly set upon by a group of up to 10 people and attacked with a machete in a Croydon pub carpark. Victoria Police said investigations were ongoing and officers were trying to obtain CCTV footage of the incident and working to identify members of the group who fled the scene.²⁴
 - [Man thrown out of Melbourne pub passes out from apparent chokehold](#): On 14 November 2020, an unidentified man was removed from Dorset Gardens Hotel after a security officer applied a chokehold when the man attempted to serve himself drinks behind the bar. The incident, which rendered the man unconscious, was under investigation by Victoria Police at the time of OSINT reporting.
 - [Patron filmed unconscious, held around neck as guard evicts him from hotel](#): On 14 November 2020, a security guard at Dorset Gardens Hotel was filmed placing a patron in a chokehold causing him to pass out before forcibly dragging his limp body out of the venue. Subsequently, Victoria Police investigated the reported assault at Dorset Gardens Hotel.²⁵

²³ VGCCC Intelligence holdings, accessed on 25 November 2025

²⁴ Herald Sun - Man hospitalised after alleged pub carpark attack.PDF

²⁵ 9News - Video shows limp body of man hauled out of Melbourne pub.pdf

Document Information

Document Details

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Document approval

This document requires the following approval:

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