PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



August 31, 2022

SoCalGas Advice Letter 5949-G

Joseph Mock Director - Regulatory Affairs 555 W. Fifth Street - GT14D6 Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011

Subject: Staff Disposition of SoCalGas's Advice Letter 5949-G Southern California Gas Company's Response Regarding Establishment of Voluntary Pilot Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Program Pursuant to Decision 20-12-022

Dear Mr. Mock:

Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) submitted Advice Letter (AL) 5949-G, pursuant to Ordering Paragraph 1 of Decision (D.) D.20-12-022, which orders SoCalGas to inform the CPUC within six months of the issuance of the Decision, whether it will offer the authorized program to its customers, along with a proposed implementation schedule. SoCalGas has explained to our satisfaction that it has met the requirements set forth in D.20-12-022. SoCalGas' AL 5949-G is approved with an effective date of August 23, 2022.

Attachment A contains a detailed discussion of the AL, the response and protest, reply and staff's determination that the AL is compliant with D.20-12-022.

Please contact Love Asiedu-Akrofi of the Energy Division staff at love.asiedu-akrofi@cpuc.ca.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Leuwam Tesfai

Deputy Executive Director for Energy and Climate Policy/

Director Energy Division

Lewan Jestai

cc: Megan Somogyi

Counsel for SFE Energy

msomogyi@downeybrand.com

Gary Lenart Regulatory Tariff Manager 555 West Fifth Street – GT14D6 Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011 Facsimile: (213) 244-4957

E-mail: <u>GLenart@socalgas.com</u> E-mail: <u>Tariffs@socalgas.com</u>

Service List A.19-02-015

Service List R.13-02-008

ATTACHMENT A

Background and Disposition for SoCalGas's AL 5949-G

Background

On December 17, 2020, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) approved Decision (D.) 20-12-022, adopting the Voluntary Pilot Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Program (VRNGT). Ordering Paragraph (OP) 1(a) of that Decision states:

"Within six months from the issuance of this decision, each of the utilities shall submit and serve a Tier 1 Advice Letter (AL) advising the Commission whether or not it will implement the authorized program and, if so, stating its intended implementation schedule. If the Utilities decide to offer this program to their customers, the Utilities shall also include in the Tier 1 AL a request for authorization to establish a new, two-way balancing account (Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Balancing Account or RNGTBA) for each utility."

SoCalGas submitted Advice Letter (AL) 5949-G on March 14, 2022, in response to the above requirement. Prior to this AL filing, SoCalGas requested an extension of time to 15 days following the issuance of a final decision in Rulemaking (R.) 13-02-008, to review any potential impacts the new biomethane procurement program would have on the VRNGT offering. On June 21, 2021, Executive Director Rachel Peterson granted SoCalGas' request. On February 24, 2022, the Commission adopted a final decision, D.22-02-025, implementing SB 1440 biomethane procurement targets and adopting a Renewable Gas Standard (RGS).

SoCalGas was timely in submitting this AL in accordance with the granted extension of time and submitted this AL 5949-G to advise the CPUC that it will implement the authorized pilot program, and also requests authorization to establish a new, two-way balancing account, called the Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Balancing Account (RNGTBA).

Protest by SFE Energy California, Inc.

On April 4, 2022, SFE Energy California, Inc. (SFE) submitted a protest letter in response to SoCalGas AL 5949-G. SFE's position is that the VRNGT is incompatible with the newer and more expansive SB 1440 Biomethane Procurement Program (BPP) that was approved and adopted by the CPUC in Decision (D.) 22-02-025 on February 24, 2022. SFE raised concerns that the adopted procurement requirements appeared to be more stringent than the requirements in the VRNGT, and that given the broad scope of the BPP, the VRNGT rather appeared to conflict with the biomethane procurement program. SFE cited, among other examples, that the newly established biomethane procurement standards require all procurement to comply with Public Utilities Code section 651(b)(3) however, the VRNGT only requires that at least 50 percent of the RNG procurement for the program comply with section 651(b)(3). In light of the foregoing, SFE questions the relevance of the VRNGT as a whole.

SoCalGas' Reply to Protest Submitted by SFE Energy California, Inc.

On April 11, 2022, SoCalGas filed a reply to SFE's protest of SoCalGas AL 5949-G, stating that SFE fails to show where SoCalGas may have violated any rules or requirements authorized by D.20-12-022 or D.22-02-025 but instead, attempts to relitigate D.20-12-022. SoCalGas disagrees that an AL protest is the appropriate platform to seek such relief. SoCalGas states that the CPUC already has provisions in D.20-12-022 for SoCalGas to make changes to the VRNGT if necessary, to comply with subsequent changes in state laws and regulation, by submitting a Tier 2 AL to Energy Division upon consultation with the Procurement Advisory Group (PAG). Furthermore, SoCalGas refers to D.22-02-025 as an additional authority that allows SoCalGas to offer the VRNGT to customers, in addition to any procurement targets set by SB 1440. Therefore, according to SoCalGas, the VRNGT and the Biomethane Procurement Program should be viewed as complementary to each other and not mutually exclusive.

Disposition

Energy Division Staff (Staff) has reviewed SoCalGas' AL 5949-G, SFE's protest, and SoCalGas' reply to the protest. SoCalGas has satisfactorily demonstrated that the VRNGT program does not conflict with standards set forth in D.22-02-025. Staff finds that SoCalGas has taken the appropriate steps to inform the CPUC of its intent to establish the adopted Voluntary Pilot Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Program, as directed by the CPUC in D.20-12-022. During the implementation phase of the VRNGT, SoCalGas informs the CPUC that it intends to reassess the current program design to determine whether any changes are necessary to help the program be more cost effective and better aligned with the recently adopted renewable gas standards outlined in D. 22-02-025, and SB 1383 requirements regarding RNG procurement from recovered organic waste products. Per OP 1(e) of D.20-12-022, SoCalGas shall submit any proposed modifications to the adopted program for CPUC approval by submitting a Tier 3 AL. While implementing the pilot, if SoCalGas determines the RNG Tariff program is no longer viable, SoCalGas will end the pilot, and the balance in the RNGTBA will be disposed of pursuant to the adopted preliminary statement.

Furthermore, D.22-02-025 allowed the VRNGT program to continue in parallel with the SB 1440 Biomethane Procurement Program (BPP) stating in OP 51:

"Southern California Gas Company and San Diego Gas & Electric Company are authorized to allow all customers that sign up for the Voluntary Renewable Natural Gas Tariff (VRNGT) program to contract for biomethane in addition to Senate Bill 1440 targets. Those costs shall be recovered via the terms of the VRNGT program."

Based on the above reasons, Staff concludes that SoCalGas has met the requirements set forth in D.20-12-022 and its VRNGT program does not conflict with D.22-02-025. Therefore, the protest filed by SFE is rejected, and SoCalGas AL 5949 is approved.



Joseph Mock
Director
Regulatory Affairs

555 W. Fifth Street, GT14D6 Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011 Tel: 213.244.3718 Fax: 213.244.4957 JMock @socalgas.com

March 14, 2022

Advice No. 5949 (U 904 G)

Public Utilities Commission of the State of California

<u>Subject</u>: Response Regarding Establishment of Voluntary Pilot Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Program Pursuant to Decision 20-12-022

Purpose

Pursuant to the Executive Director's letter granting Southern California Gas Company's (SoCalGas) request for an extension of time to comply with Ordering Paragraph (OP) 1(a) of Decision (D.) 20-12-022, SoCalGas submits this Advice Letter (AL) to advise the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission or CPUC) that, at this time, SoCalGas intends to continue working towards implementation of the voluntary pilot Renewable Natural Gas Tariff program (RNG Tariff) adopted in D.20-12-022. Additionally, pursuant to OP 1(a) of D.20-12-022, SoCalGas addresses the RNG Tariff implementation schedule, and requests authorization to establish the Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Balancing Account (RNGTBA).

Background

On February 28, 2019, SoCalGas and San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E, together the Utilities) filed Application (A.) 19-02-015 (Application). The Utilities requested authority to establish a voluntary RNG Tariff program for their residential as well as their small commercial and industrial customers to purchase renewable natural gas (RNG) as a portion of their regular natural gas services.

On April 13, 2020, the Utilities submitted for Commission approval a Settlement Agreement on their behalf along with the Public Advocates Office, Environmental Defense Fund, Bioenergy Association of California, The Renewable Natural Gas Coalition, Agricultural Energy Consumers Association, and SFE Energy California.

On December 17, 2020, the Commission adopted D.20-12-022, establishing a three-year voluntary pilot RNG Tariff program for the Utilities. The decision was largely based on the framework and elements of the settlement agreement, with some modifications. Within six months from the issuance of D.20-12-022 (December 22, 2020), the Utilities were directed to submit an AL advising the Commission whether it will implement the authorized program, among other requirements.

On June 14, 2021, the Utilities requested an extension of time to comply with OP 1(a) of D.20-12-022. As stated in the request, the Commission had provided guidance¹ that the Utilities should consider long-term contracts for the voluntary RNG pilot program in conjunction with any RNG procurement authorized in Senate Bill (SB) 1440. As such, the Utilities requested an extension of time to comply with OP 1(a) to 15 days following the issuance of a final decision in Rulemaking (R.) 13-02-008 to assess any potential impacts to the RNG Tariff offering. On June 21, 2021, Executive Director Peterson granted the Utilities' request.

On February 24, 2022, the Commission adopted a final decision, D.22-02-025, implementing SB 1440 and adopting a Renewable Gas Standard (RGS).

Response

The Utilities brought the Application to expand the renewable energy options available to customers and to begin decarbonizing the gas supply of those customers who wanted to voluntarily participate. While the final program adopted in D.20-12-022 differs from the Utilities' original proposal, as well as the subsequent Settlement Agreement, SoCalGas believes there is still great value in providing decarbonization options to our customers.

To that end, SoCalGas hereby informs the Commission of its intent to continue working towards implementation of the RNG Tariff.

During the course of implementation, SoCalGas intends to review the current program design to assess if any discreet changes would help the program better complement and align with the recent RGS decision, D.22-02-025 and the SB 1383 requirement for jurisdictions to procure recovered organic waste products, including RNG.² For example, a program focused on customers with SB 1383 compliance obligations and/or hard-to-electrify non-residential customers, as opposed to residential customers who will be served by the RGS, may be a better approach for a more targeted program that decreases overall program administrative costs. Pursuant to OP 1(e) of D.20-12-022, any proposed modifications to the adopted program will be submitted for Commission approval via a Tier 3 AL. If, during the course of implementation, SoCalGas determines the RNG Tariff program is no longer

¹ D.20-12-022 at 25-26, 46-47, and 50 (FOF 15).

² See 14 CCR § 18993.1.

viable, SoCalGas will end the program, and the balance in the RNGTBA will be disposed of pursuant to the adopted preliminary statement.

OP 1(b) requires SoCalGas to submit various RNG Tariff program ALs within twelve months from this AL, or, by March 14, 2023. In compliance with the requirement in OP 1(a) to state an intended implementation schedule, SoCalGas affirms that, at this time, the program is intended to be implemented within one year. If program changes are submitted for approval via a Tier 3 AL and/or approval of other implementation requirements is delayed, program implementation could extend beyond one year. SoCalGas will continue to apprise the Commission of progress towards implementation.

In compliance with OP 1(a) or D.20-12-022, included as Attachment A is SoCalGas' proposed preliminary statement, the Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Balancing Account, or RNGTBA.

Protests

Anyone may protest this AL to the Commission. The protest must state the grounds upon which it is based, including such items as financial and service impact, and should be submitted expeditiously. The protest must be submitted electronically and must be received within 20 days after the date of this AL, which is April 3, 2022. Protests should be submitted to the attention of the Energy Division Tariff Unit at:

E-mail: EDTariffUnit@cpuc.ca.gov

In addition, protests and all other correspondence regarding this AL should also be sent electronically to the attention of:

Attn: Gary Lenart

Regulatory Tariff Manager

E-mail: <u>GLenart@socalgas.com</u> E-mail: <u>Tariffs@socalgas.com</u>

Effective Date

SoCalGas believes this AL is subject to Energy Division disposition and should be classified as Tier 1 (effective pending disposition) pursuant to OP 1(a) of D.20-12-022. Therefore, SoCalGas respectfully requests that it be made effective on March 14, 2022, which is the date submitted.

Notice

A copy of this AL is being sent to SoCalGas' General Order (GO) 96-B service list and the Commission's service lists in A.19-02-015 and R.13-02-008. Address change requests to the GO 96-B service list should be directed via e-mail to

<u>Tariffs@socalgas.com</u> or call 213-244-2837. For changes to all other service lists, please contact the Commission's Process Office at 415-703-2021 or via e-mail at <u>Process Office@cpuc.ca.gov</u>.

<u>/s/ Joseph Mock</u> Joseph Mock Director – Regulatory Affairs

Attachments





California Public Utilities Commission

ADVICE LETTER UMMARY



LIVEROTOTIETT				
MUST BE COMPLETED BY UT	ILITY (Attach additional pages as needed)			
Company name/CPUC Utility No.:				
Utility type: ELC GAS WATER PLC HEAT	Contact Person: Phone #: E-mail: E-mail Disposition Notice to:			
EXPLANATION OF UTILITY TYPE ELC = Electric GAS = Gas WATER = Water PLC = Pipeline HEAT = Heat WATER = Water	(Date Submitted / Received Stamp by CPUC)			
Advice Letter (AL) #:	Tier Designation:			
Subject of AL:				
Keywords (choose from CPUC listing):				
AL Type: Monthly Quarterly Annu-				
ii At submined in compliance with a Commissi	on order, indicate relevant Decision/Resolution #:			
Does AL replace a withdrawn or rejected AL? If so, identify the prior AL:				
Summarize differences between the AL and the prior withdrawn or rejected AL:				
Confidential treatment requested? Yes No				
If yes, specification of confidential information: Confidential information will be made available to appropriate parties who execute a nondisclosure agreement. Name and contact information to request nondisclosure agreement/ access to confidential information:				
Resolution required? Yes No				
Requested effective date:	No. of tariff sheets:			
Estimated system annual revenue effect (%):				
Estimated system average rate effect (%):				
When rates are affected by AL, include attachment in AL showing average rate effects on customer classes (residential, small commercial, large C/I, agricultural, lighting).				
Tariff schedules affected:				
Service affected and changes proposed ^{1:}				
Pending advice letters that revise the same tariff sheets:				

Protests and all other correspondence regarding this AL are due no later than 20 days after the date of this submittal, unless otherwise authorized by the Commission, and shall be sent to:

CPUC, Energy Division
Attention: Tariff Unit
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Email: EDTariffUnit@cpuc.ca.gov

Name: Title:

Utility Name: Address: City:

State: Zip:

Telephone (xxx) xxx-xxxx: Facsimile (xxx) xxx-xxxx:

Email:

Name:

Title:

Utility Name: Address: City:

State: Zip:

Telephone (xxx) xxx-xxxx: Facsimile (xxx) xxx-xxxx:

Email:

ATTACHMENT A Advice No. 5949

Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.	Title of Sheet	Cancelling Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.
Revised 59667-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS, DESCRIPTION AND LISTING OF BALANCING ACCOUNTS, Sheet 2	Revised 57870-G
Original 59668-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS, RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS TARIFF BALANCING ACCOUNT (RNGTBA), Sheet 1	
Original 59669-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS, RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS TARIFF BALANCING ACCOUNT (RNGTBA), Sheet 2	
Revised 59670-G Revised 59671-G	TABLE OF CONTENTS TABLE OF CONTENTS	Revised 59666-G Revised 59637-G

Revised LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA CANCELING

Revised

CAL. P.U.C. SHEET NO. CAL. P.U.C. SHEET NO.

59667-G 57870-G

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS DESCRIPTION AND LISTING OF BALANCING ACCOUNTS

Sheet 2

(Continued)

B. LISTING OF BALANCING ACCOUNTS (Continued)

Distributed Energy Resources Services Balancing Account (DERSBA)

Storage Integrity Management Program Balancing Account (SIMPBA)

Natural Gas Leak Abatement Program Balancing Account (NGLAPBA)

Statewide Energy Efficiency Balancing Account (SWEEBA)

Dairy Biomethane Project Memorandum Account (DBPBA)

San Joaquin Valley Disadvantaged Communities Balancing Account (SJVDACBA)

Safety Enhancement Expense Balancing Account – Phase 2 (SEEBA-P2)

Safety Enhancement Capital Cost Balancing Account – Phase 2 (SECCBA-P2)

Liability Insurance Premium Balancing Account (LIPBA)

Residential Uncollectible Balancing Account (RUBA)

Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Balancing Account (RNGTBA)

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(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY) 5949 ADVICE LETTER NO. DECISION NO. 20-12-022

ISSUED BY Dan Skopec Vice President Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC) Mar 14, 2022 DATE FILED Aug 23, 2022 **EFFECTIVE** RESOLUTION NO.

2H7

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA CANCELING

59668-G

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS TARIFF BALANCING ACCOUNT (RNGTBA)

Sheet 1

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1. <u>Purpose</u>

The RNGTBA is an interest-bearing, two-way balancing account recorded on SoCalGas' financial statements. Pursuant to Decision (D.) 20-12-022, the Commission adopted a 3-year voluntary pilot Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) Tariff program and authorized SoCalGas to offer this program to its respective eligible core customers. In addition, D.20-12-022 authorized SoCalGas to establish the RNGTBA which will record the difference between: 1) the RNG premium/program costs and 2) the revenues recorded that are intended to recover these costs. The RNG premium cost is defined as the difference in the monthly weighted average cost of RNG purchases (including the cost of any renewable attributes or credits that are bundled with the purchased RNG supply) and the monthly weighted average cost of traditional natural gas purchases. The RNGTBA consists of two subaccounts:

- i. <u>RNG Commodity Charge Subaccount</u> The purpose of the RNG Commodity Charge Subaccount is to record: 1) the RNG premium commodity cost that opt-in core customers will pay for to serve their voluntary Subscription Level and 2) the corresponding revenues from the sale of RNG.
- ii. <u>Program Charge Subaccount</u> The purpose of the Program Charge Subaccount is to record the difference between: 1) incremental RNG Tariff program implementation, administrative, and marketing program costs and 2) the corresponding program fees charged in rates to SoCalGas customers participating in the RNG Tariff program.

2. Applicability

The RNGTBA shall apply to gas customers participating in the RNG Tariff program.

3. Rates

See Disposition Section.

4. RNG Commodity Charge Subaccount - Accounting Procedures

SoCalGas maintains this account by making monthly entries, net of applicable FF&U, as follows:

a) A debit entry for the recorded RNG premium commodity cost that opt-in core customers will pay for to serve their voluntary Subscription Level;

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 $\begin{array}{ll} \text{(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)} \\ \text{ADVICE LETTER NO.} & 5949 \\ \text{DECISION NO.} & 20\text{-}12\text{-}022 \\ \end{array}$

ISSUED BY **Dan Skopec**Vice President

Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)

DATE FILED Mar 14, 2022

EFFECTIVE Aug 23, 2022

RESOLUTION NO.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA CANCELING

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT - PART V - BALANCING ACCOUNTS RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS TARIFF BALANCING ACCOUNT (RNGTBA)

Sheet 2

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(Continued)

4. RNG Commodity Charge Subaccount - Accounting Procedures (Continued)

b) A credit entry equal to the recorded RNG revenues, net of SoCalGas Rate Schedule No. G-CP, "Core Procurement Service" cost components including: 1) reservation charges associated with interstate pipeline capacity contracts entered into by the Utility pursuant to D.04-09-022 and D.02-06-023; 2) carrying cost of storage inventory pursuant to D.07-12-019; 3) backbone transportation service charges as described in D.11-04-032; and 4) authorized core brokerage fee;

- c) An entry to amortize the RNG Commodity Charge Subaccount; and
- d) An entry equal to interest on the average of the balance in the account during the month, calculated in the manner described in Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.
- 5. <u>Program Charge Subaccount Accounting Procedures</u>

SoCalGas maintains this account by making monthly entries, net of applicable FF&U, as follows:

- a) A debit entry to record the incremental implementation (excluding IT capital costs), administrative, and marketing costs associated with the RNG Tariff program;
- b) A credit entry equal to recorded revenues for RNG Program Charges for SoCalGas participants in the RNG Tariff program;
- c) An entry to amortize the Program Charge Subaccount; and
- d) An entry equal to interest on the average of the balance in the account during the month, calculated in the manner described in Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.
- 6. <u>Disposition</u>

The RNGTBA - RNG Commodity Charge Subaccount balance will be incorporated in rates as necessary in connection with SoCalGas' Tier 1 advice letter submittals to establish the monthly RNG Rate. The RNGTBA - Program Charge Subaccount balance will be incorporated in the update of the RNG Program Charge rate in the Tier 1 advice letter submittal to establish the monthly RNG Rate effective January 1 of the following year. Any remaining balance in the RNGTBA after the end of the program will be treated as required by D.20-12-022.

(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY)
ADVICE LETTER NO. 5949
DECISION NO. 20-12-022

ISSUED BY

Dan Skopec

Vice President

Regulatory Affairs

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)} \\ \text{DATE FILED} \quad \underline{Mar\ 14,\ 2022} \end{array}$

EFFECTIVE Aug 23, 2022 RESOLUTION NO.

2C10

Revised

CAL. P.U.C. SHEET NO. CAL. P.U.C. SHEET NO.

59670-G 59666-G

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Demand Side Management Balancing Account (DSMBA)	
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ISSUED BY

Dan Skopec

Vice President

Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)

DATE FILED Mar 14, 2022

EFFECTIVE Aug 23, 2022

RESOLUTION NO.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA CANCELING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(Continued)

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT (Continued)

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Residential Uncollectible Balancing Account (RUBA)
Renewable Natural Gas Tariff Balancing Account (RNGTBA)59668-G,59669-G

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(TO BE INSERTED BY UTILITY) 5949 ADVICE LETTER NO. 20-12-022 DECISION NO.

2H7

ISSUED BY **Dan Skopec** Vice President Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC) Mar 14, 2022 DATE FILED Aug 23, 2022 EFFECTIVE RESOLUTION NO.

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