NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

PUBLIC TRANSPORT (PASSENGER SAFETY) ACT 2008

As in force at 1 May 2023

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NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

As in force at 1 May 2023

PUBLIC TRANSPORT (PASSENGER SAFETY) ACT 2008

An Act to provide for the safety of passengers on public transport

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Short title

This Act may be cited as the *Public Transport (Passenger Safety) Act 2008.*

2 Commencement

This Act commences on the date fixed by the Administrator by *Gazette* notice.

3 Definitions

In this Act:

banning notice means a notice issued under section 28A.

bus means a bus that carries passengers on a route service.

bus station includes a bus interchange.

bus stop means any of the following:

- (a) if there is a bus zone the area between the bus zone and the boundary of the land adjacent to the bus zone (including any paths in that area);
- (b) if there is no bus zone but there is a sign indicating a bus stop – the area between the curb, or the edge of the road, and the boundary of the land adjacent to the road that extends 15 m in either direction;

(c) if there is no bus zone and no sign indicating a bus stop – any area beside a road, when a bus stops to pick up or let off a passenger, and the boundary of the land adjacent to the road that extends 10 m from the end of the bus to 10 m from the front of the bus.

Note for definition **bus stop**, paragraph (c)

This bus stop only exists while the bus is stopped to pick up or let off a passenger along the road. **bus zone** means a length of road to which a bus zone sign applies (see *Australian Road Rules*).

code of conduct means the code of conduct for transit officers established by general order issued by the Director under section 5.

dangerous drug, see section 3(1) of the *Misuse of Drugs Act* 1990.

Director means the person holding, or acting in, the office of Director of Transport under the *Traffic Act 1987*.

disqualifying offence means an offence classified by the regulations as a disqualifying offence.

ex officio transit officer means a person who is a transit officer by virtue of the person's office or position under section 7(1).

frisk search means a search conducted by feeling clothing from the outside for objects concealed in or beneath the clothing (but not involving a search of any bodily orifice).

offence warranting arrest, see section 4.

relevant offence means the following:

- (a) an offence committed on a bus, at a bus stop, at a bus station or in a bus zone;
- (b) an offence referred to in section 4(1).

route service means the service of providing, under contract with the Territory, a bus to carry prospective passengers along a specific route at specific times.

transit safety vehicle means a vehicle marked as a transit safety vehicle and used by transit officers under this Act.

Note for section 3

The Interpretation Act 1978 contains definitions and other provisions that may be relevant to this Act.

4 Offences warranting arrest

- (1) Each of the following offences is an offence warranting arrest:
 - (a) an offence against section 47, 47AA, 47A or 50 of the *Summary Offences Act 1923* if committed on a bus, at a bus stop, at a bus station or in a bus zone;
 - (b) an offence against section 13(1) or (2), 14(1), 15(1) or (2), 16(1) or 17(2) of the *Trespass Act 2023* if committed on a bus, at a bus stop, at a bus station or in a bus zone;
 - (c) an offence against section 241 of the Criminal Code, or an attempt to commit that offence, in relation to a bus stop, a bus station, a bus or a transit safety vehicle;
 - (d) any offence against the Criminal Code involving an assault if:
 - (i) committed on a bus, at a bus stop, at a bus station or in a bus zone; or
 - (ii) committed against a person on a bus, at a bus stop, at a bus station or in a bus zone; or
 - (iii) committed in the vicinity of a bus, a bus stop, at a bus station or in a bus zone against a transit officer exercising a power under this Act.
- (2) The following offences against this Act are also **offences** *warranting arrest*:
 - (a) an offence against section 24(3) or (4), 26(4), 32 or 33;
 - (b) an offence consisting of the contravention of a rule of behaviour if committed or continued after a transit officer has warned the offender that commission or continuance of the offence may lead to arrest.

5 General orders

The Director may, by *Gazette* notice, issue general orders:

- (a) to establish proper standards of behaviour for transit officers; or
- (b) for other purposes related to the administration of this Act.

Note

The code of conduct for transit officers is to be established by general order issued under this section.

5A Application of Criminal Code

Part IIAA of the Criminal Code applies to an offence against this Act.

Note for section 5A

Part IIAA of the Criminal Code states the general principles of criminal responsibility, establishes general defences, and deals with burden of proof. It also defines, or elaborates on, certain concepts commonly used in the creation of offences.

Part 2 Transit officers

6 Appointment of transit officers

- (1) The Director may appoint transit officers.
- (2) A person is not eligible for appointment as a transit officer unless the person:
 - (a) has been suitably trained to exercise the powers of a transit officer under this Act; or
 - (b) is appointed on condition that the person will, until successfully completing his or her training as a transit officer, only exercise powers as a transit officer while in the company, and under the direct supervision, of a transit officer who has successfully completed training as such.
- (3) A person is not eligible for appointment as a transit officer if the person has a previous conviction for a disqualifying offence.
- (4) A transit officer appointed under this section is an employee for the purposes of, and holds office subject to, the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993.*
- (5) Despite the *Criminal Records (Spent Convictions) Act* 1992 and the *Anti-Discrimination Act* 1992:
 - (a) an applicant for appointment as a transit officer must authorise the Director to obtain from the Commissioner of Police a criminal history including spent convictions; and
 - (b) the Director may take the criminal history (including the spent convictions) into account in deciding the application; and
 - (c) if the application is successful, the Director may retain the criminal history for as long as the successful applicant holds an appointment as a transit officer.

7 Ex officio transit officers

- (1) Each of the following is a transit officer by virtue of his or her office or position:
 - (a) a member of the Police Force;
 - (b) a security officer who:
 - (i) holds a licence or provisional licence as a security officer under the *Private Security Act 1995*; and
 - (ii) is engaged by a security firm that is licensed under that Act and engaged by the Territory to carry out the functions of a security officer on buses, at bus stops, at bus stations or in bus zones;
 - (c) a bus driver.
- (2) However:
 - (a) a security officer or bus driver is not authorised to exercise a transit officer's power of arrest, power of search, or power to use force against another; and
 - (b) a person is not authorised to exercise powers as an ex officio transit officer while those powers are under suspension; and
 - (c) an ex officio transit officer who is found guilty of a disqualifying offence ceases to hold office as a transit officer.

8 Identity cards

- (1) The Director must issue an identity card to each transit officer (other than an ex officio transit officer).
- (2) The identity card must contain:
 - (a) a photograph of the officer; and
 - (b) the name of the officer; and
 - (c) a statement that the person whose name and photograph appear on the card is a transit officer; and
 - (d) the officer's identity number; and
 - (e) a statement that the card is issued under the Director's authority.

(3) A person to whom an identity card was issued under this section must, within 14 days after ceasing to be a transit officer, return the identity card to the Director.

Fault element: This is an offence of strict liability.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

9 Obligations with regard to identity card

- (1) A transit officer (other than an ex officio transit officer) must not exercise a power under this Act unless the transit officer holds an identity card issued under this Act.
- (2) Before exercising a power under this Act against a person, such a transit officer must, wherever practicable, produce the identity card for the inspection of that person (but the card need only be produced once even though 2 or more powers are exercised against the person).
- (3) Non-compliance by a transit officer with subsection (2) is a defence to a charge based on non-compliance by the person to whom the identity card should have been produced with a requirement or request made by the transit officer under this Act.

10 Disqualifying offences

- (1) If a transit officer is charged with, or found guilty of, a disqualifying offence, the transit officer must report that fact to the Director as soon as practicable.
- (2) The Director may suspend any transit officer who is charged with a disqualifying offence while the charge is being dealt with by a court.
- (3) The Director must revoke the appointment of a transit officer, other than an ex officio transit officer, who is found guilty of a disqualifying offence.
- (4) A transit officer commits an offence if the officer fails to comply with subsection (1).

Maximum penalty: 100 penalty units.

(5) An offence against subsection (4) is an offence of strict liability.

11 Code of conduct

(1) A transit officer, other than an ex officio transit officer who is a member of the Police Force, must not contravene the code of conduct.

- (2) If a transit officer, other than an ex officio transit officer, appointed under this Act contravenes the code of conduct, the matter may be dealt with as a breach of discipline under the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* 1993.
- (3) If an ex officio transit officer, other than a member of the Police Force, contravenes the code of conduct, the Director may disqualify the person from exercising powers as a transit officer.

12 Protection from liability

- A person is not civilly or criminally liable for an act done or omitted to be done by the person in good faith in the exercise of a power or performance of a function as a transit officer.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not affect any liability that the following persons or entities would, apart from that subsection, have for the act or omission:
 - (a) in the case of a transit officer, other than an ex officio transit officer – the Territory;
 - (b) in the case of an ex officio transit officer who is a member of the Police Force – the Territory;
 - (c) in the case of an ex officio transit officer who is a security officer the employer of the security officer;
 - (d) in the case of an ex officio transit officer who is a bus driver the employer of the bus driver.
- (3) This section is subject to Part VIIA of the *Police Administration Act 1978* to the extent that it relates to the civil liability of an ex officio transit officer who is or was a member of the Police Force at the time of the act or omission.
- (4) In this section:

exercise of a power includes the purported exercise of the power.

performance of a function includes the purported performance of the function.

Part 3 Rules of behaviour

13 Animals

(1) A person must not bring an animal onto a bus.

(2) However, a person who has impaired sight or hearing, and requires the assistance of a guide-dog or a hearing-dog, may bring such a dog onto a bus.

14 Smoking

A person must not smoke:

- (a) on a bus; or
- (b) in any part of a bus station, or any part of bus stop that is not part of a footpath, unless it is within an area designated as an area where smoking is permitted.

15 Liquor and drugs

A person must not consume alcoholic liquor or a dangerous drug while on a bus, at a bus stop or at a bus station.

16 Consumption of food

A person must not consume food while on a bus.

17 Damage or interference

- (1) A person must not, without proper authority, damage or interfere with:
 - (a) a bus; or
 - (b) a bus station; or
 - (c) a bus stop; or
 - (d) a sign or equipment on a bus, at a bus station or at a bus stop.
- (2) In this section, damage includes the soiling of, or the painting or marking of graffiti on, a bus, bus stop, bus station, sign or equipment.

18 Nuisance or inconvenience

A person must not cause a nuisance or inconvenience to others on a bus, at a bus stop or at a bus station.

19 Offensive language

A person must not use offensive language while on a bus, at a bus stop or at a bus station.

20 Passenger management

- (1) A person who is asked by a transit officer to move or keep away from a part of the bus not intended for the conveyance of passengers must immediately comply with the request.
- (2) A person who is reasonably asked by a transit officer to vacate a particular seat must comply with the request as soon as reasonably practicable.
- (3) A person who causes any part of his or her body, or an object, to project from a bus and who is asked by a transit officer to cease doing so must immediately comply with the request.
- (4) A person must comply with a reasonable direction given by a transit officer, about how (and by which door) the person is to board or get off the bus.

21 Passenger to hold valid ticket

- (1) A person must not travel as a passenger on a bus without a valid ticket for the carriage of the passenger for the whole of the journey.
- (2) A ticket will not be regarded as a valid ticket if it has been defaced so that it is no longer legible.
- (3) A passenger travelling on a bus on a route service must, if required to do so by a transit officer, produce the passenger's ticket for inspection.

22 Offence to contravene rule of behaviour

A person who contravenes a rule of behaviour is guilty of an offence.

Fault element: This is an offence of strict liability.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

Part 4 Powers of transit officers

23 Geographical extent of transit officer's powers

The powers of a transit officer are exercisable:

- (a) on, or in the vicinity of, a bus; or
- (b) at, or in the vicinity of, a bus station, bus stop or bus zone.

24 Power to require statement of name, address and date of birth

- (1) A transit officer may require a person to state the person's name, address and date of birth if the transit officer believes on reasonable grounds that the person:
 - (a) has committed, is committing, or is about to commit, a relevant offence; or
 - (b) may be in a position to assist in the investigation of a relevant offence.
- (2) A transit officer may require a person who has been required to give details under subsection (1) to provide specified evidence of identity.
- (3) A person must not refuse or fail to comply with a requirement under this section.

Fault element: This is an offence of strict liability.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

(4) A person must not provide misleading information, or misleading evidence, in response to a requirement under this section.

Fault element:	An intention to mislead.
Maximum penalty:	100 penalty units or imprisonment for 6 months.

25 Power of direction

- (1) If a transit officer believes on reasonable grounds that a person has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a contravention of a rule of behaviour, the transit officer:
 - (a) may direct the person to comply with the rules of behaviour in relevant respects; and
 - (b) may give incidental directions that may be appropriate in the circumstances.
- (2) A person must comply with a direction under subsection (1).

Fault element: This is an offence of strict liability.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

26 Power to require a person to get off bus and, on non-compliance, to remove forcibly

- (1) If a person contravenes a transit officer's direction or banning notice while on a bus, at a bus stop or at a bus station, a transit officer:
 - (a) may direct the person (as the case requires):
 - (i) to get off the bus; or
 - (ii) to go away, and keep away, from the bus stop or the bus station; and
 - (b) may give the person incidental directions that may be appropriate in the circumstances.

Example

The transit officer might direct the person under subsection (1)(b) not to board the same or another bus, or not to return to the bus stop or the bus station, for a specified period (not exceeding 24 hours).

- (2) A direction under subsection (1) must, if practicable, be given in writing but, if it is not practicable to give a written direction, it may be given orally.
- (3) If a bus is in motion when a direction to get off the bus is given under subsection (1), the direction requires the person to get off the bus when the bus next stops.
- (4) A person must comply with a direction under subsection (1).

Fault element: This is an offence of strict liability.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

(5) If a person does not comply with a direction under subsection (1), the transit officer may use such force as is reasonably necessary to remove the person from the bus, the bus stop or the bus station (as the case requires).

27 Arrest and detention

(1) If a transit officer believes on reasonable grounds that a person has committed an offence warranting arrest, the officer may (without warrant) arrest and detain the person.

(2) A person arrested and detained under this section must (unless released beforehand) be delivered as soon as practicable into the custody of a member of the Police Force to be dealt with according to law.

Note

The transit officer will take the arrested person to a police station to be delivered into the custody of a member of the Police Force or arrange with the Police for the person to be collected by a member of the Police Force at the place of arrest or some other convenient place.

28 Search and seizure of dangerous articles

- (1) A person arrested and detained under this Part may be subjected to a frisk search.
- (2) The search may be carried out:
 - (a) by the transit officer if the transit officer is of the same sex as the person under arrest; or
 - (b) if not, by a person, acting at the direction of the transit officer, of the same sex as the person under arrest.
- (3) The person who carries out the frisk search may also search anything apparently in the possession of the person subjected to the search.
- (4) The person who carries out the search may seize anything that could cause harm to the person under arrest or anyone else (a *dangerous article*).
- (5) The person who carries out the search may use such force as is reasonably necessary for the search or the seizure of dangerous articles.
- (6) A person who carries out a search at the direction of a transit officer has the same immunities from civil and criminal liability as the transit officer.
- (7) The transit officer must hand over any dangerous article seized in the course of a search to the member of the Police Force who takes custody of the person arrested and detained under this Part.

28A Power to issue banning notice

(1) The Director may, in writing, authorise a transit officer, other than an ex officio transit officer, to exercise the power to issue banning notices.

- (2) A transit officer, authorised by the Director, may issue a banning notice to a person if the officer believes on reasonable grounds that the person:
 - (a) engaged in offensive, threatening, violent or disorderly conduct on a bus, at a bus stop, in a bus zone or at or in the vicinity of a bus station; or
 - (b) damaged a bus, a transit safety vehicle, a bus stop or a bus station; or
 - (c) damaged property on a bus, in a transit safety vehicle, at a bus stop or at a bus station.
- (3) A banning notice must be served personally on the person.

28B Requirements before giving banning notice

- (1) If a transit officer intends to issue a banning notice to a person, the officer must inform the person of the officer's intention of issuing the notice.
- (2) A contravention of subsection (1) by a transit officer does not constitute an offence.

28C Contents of banning notice

A banning notice must include the following:

- (a) the name of the banned person;
- (b) a description of the conduct for which the person is being issued the notice and the grounds for the transit officer's belief that the person engaged in that conduct;
- (c) the name of the transit officer issuing the notice;
- (d) a description of the places to which the ban applies;
- (e) the date and time when the notice is served on the person and the period of the ban;
- (f) a statement that it is an offence to contravene the notice;
- (g) an explanation of how the ban can be varied or revoked.

28D Effect of banning notice

- (1) A banning notice, according to its terms, bans the person from entering or remaining:
 - (a) in or on a bus; or
 - (b) in or at bus stop or bus station.
- (2) A banning notice has no effect in relation to a public footpath that is part of a bus stop.
- (3) The notice may ban a person for a period not exceeding the following:
 - (a) if the person was not previously issued a banning notice 90 days;
 - (b) if the person was previously issued a banning notice 180 days.
- (4) The ban starts from the time the banning notice is served on the person.
- (5) To enforce a banning notice, a transit officer may give a copy of the notice and a photograph of the banned person to:
 - (a) the Director and other transit officers; and
 - (b) bus operators and their employees.

28E Variation or revocation of banning notice

- (1) A person who is the subject of a banning notice may apply to the Director for it to be varied or revoked.
- (2) The application must be in writing and state the reasons for the variation or revocation.
- (3) The Director may, on application or on the Director's own initiative, vary or revoke a banning notice at any time by written notice given to the banned person stating the variation or revocation.
- (4) A variation may include adding, varying or removing the terms or conditions of a banning notice.

Example for subsection (4)

The variation could add or remove places to which the banning notice applies.

(5) A banning notice cannot be varied to extend the period for which the notice applies.

(6) The Director may delegate any of the Director's powers and functions under this section to a person, other than the transit officer who issued the banning notice.

28F Offence to contravene banning notice

- (1) A person commits an offence if:
 - (a) the person is served with a banning notice; and
 - (b) the person attempts to enter, enters or remains in, on or at a place contrary to the banning notice.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

- (2) An offence against subsection (1) is an offence of strict liability.
- (3) It is a defence to a prosecution for an offence against subsection (1) if the defendant has a reasonable excuse.

Note for subsection (3)

The defendant has an evidential burden in relation to this defence (see section 43BU of the Criminal Code).

Part 5 Miscellaneous

29 Internal review

- (1) The Director must establish a system of administrative review for the purposes of dealing effectively with complaints about the conduct of transit officers.
- (2) The procedures for making a complaint, and the procedures on review, must be published on the Agency's website.

30 No entitlement to refund of fare

If a person is directed to get off a bus, or is forcibly removed from a bus, under this Act, no entitlement to a refund of fare arises.

32 Obstruction of transit officer

A person must not:

(a) obstruct or hinder a transit officer who is carrying out official functions; or

(b) incite or encourage another to obstruct or hinder a transit officer who is carrying out official functions.

Fault element: Intention.

Maximum penalty: 100 penalty units or imprisonment for 6 months.

33 Security cameras or surveillance devices

A person must not, without proper authority, damage or interfere with a security camera or a surveillance device on a bus, at a bus stop or at a bus station.

Fault element: This is an offence of strict liability.

Maximum penalty: 100 penalty units or imprisonment for 6 months.

34 **Prosecutions**

- (1) Proceedings for an offence against this Act may be commenced by:
 - (a) a member of the Police Force; or
 - (b) a transit officer; or
 - (c) a person authorised by the Director.
- (2) In a proceeding for an offence against this Act, a certificate signed by the Director certifying any of the following matters is evidence of the matter:
 - (a) that a person named in the certificate was, on a particular day or for a particular period, a transit officer or a person authorised to commence proceedings for an offence against this Act;
 - (b) that a person named in the certificate was authorised to issue banning notices;
 - (c) that a person named in the certificate was served with a banning notice and the details of the banning notice.

35 Infringement notice offences

(1) An authorised officer may serve an infringement notice on a person if the officer believes that the person has committed an infringement notice offence.

- (2) An infringement notice must contain the following particulars:
 - (a) the name and address of the alleged offender, if known;
 - (b) the date of the infringement notice and date, time and place of the alleged offence;
 - (c) the nature of the offence, the amount of the infringement notice penalty for the offence and a statement that the offence may be expiated by payment of the infringement notice penalty to a person whose name and address are stated in the notice within 28 days of the date of the notice;
 - (d) a statement that the alleged offender may elect to be charged with, and dealt with by a court for, the alleged offence by completing and returning the relevant part of the notice to a person whose name and address are stated in the notice within 28 days of the date of the notice.
- (3) If the infringement notice penalty for an alleged offence is paid under this section, the alleged offender is not liable to any further proceedings for the alleged offence unless the infringement notice is withdrawn under subsection (4).
- (4) An authorised officer may withdraw the infringement notice by serving a written notice of withdrawal (accompanied, if the infringement notice penalty has been paid, by the amount of the penalty) within 28 days of the date of the infringement notice.
- (5) Service of an infringement notice, or a notice of withdrawal of an infringement notice, is effected:
 - (a) by serving it personally on the alleged offender; or
 - (b) by posting it to the alleged offender at his or her last known address; or
 - (c) by leaving it for the alleged offender at his or her last known place of residence or business with a person who appears to be at least 16 years of age and to be resident or employed there.
- (6) Payment under this section does not imply any admission of civil liability, nor does it affect or prejudice any civil claim, action or proceeding arising out of the same occurrence.
- (7) The *Fines and Penalties (Recovery) Act 2001* applies to an infringement notice issued under this section if the amount payable under the infringement notice is not paid within the time specified in the notice.

(8) In this section:

authorised officer means:

- (a) a transit officer; or
- (b) some other person authorised in writing by the Director to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under this section.

infringement notice offence means:

- (a) an offence against this Act; or
- (b) an offence against the regulations prescribed as an infringement notice offence.

infringement notice penalty means:

- (a) for an offence against this Act an amount equivalent to 3% of the maximum monetary penalty prescribed for the offence;
- (b) for an offence against the regulations an amount fixed by the regulations as the infringement notice penalty for the offence.

paid – if a cheque is given in purported payment of an infringement notice penalty, the penalty is not paid unless and until the cheque is honoured.

36 Interaction between this Act and the Youth Justice Act 2005

A transit officer who is doing, or is about to do, anything to which the *Youth Justice Act 2005* would apply if it were to be by a member of the Police Force must comply with the obligations imposed by that Act on a member of the Police Force.

37 Regulations

The Administrator may make regulations under this Act.

1

ENDNOTES

KEY

Key to abbreviations

amd = amended app = appendix bl = by-law ch = Chapter cl = clause div = Division exp = expires/expired f = forms Gaz = Gazette hdg = heading ins = inserted lt = long title nc = not commenced od = order om = omitted pt = Part r = regulation/rule rem = remainder renum = renumbered rep = repealed s = section sch = Schedule sdiv = Subdivision SL = Subordinate Legislation sub = substituted

2 LIST OF LEGISLATION

Public Transport (Passenger Safety) Act 2008 (Act No. 15, 2008)			
Assent date	18 June 2008		
Commenced	18 July 2008 (<i>Gaz</i> S35, 18 July 2008)		

Statute Law Revision Act 2017 (Act No. 4, 2017)			
Assent date	10 March 2017		
Commenced	12 April 2017 (<i>Gaz</i> G15, 12 April 2017, p 3)		

Statute Law Revision Act 2018 (Act No. 10, 2018)			
Assent date	23 May 2018		
Commenced	20 June 2018 (Gaz S41, 20 June 2018)		

Transport Legislation Amendment Act 2022 (Act No. 1, 2022)

Assent date 1 March 2022 Commenced 4 May 2022 (*Gaz* S20, 29 April 2022)

Trespass Act 2023 (Act No. 7, 2023)

 Assent date
 6 April 2023

 Commenced
 1 May 2023 (Gaz G9, 27 April 2023, p 1)

3

GENERAL AMENDMENTS

General amendments of a formal nature (which are not referred to in the table of amendments to this reprint) are made by the *Interpretation Legislation Amendment Act 2018* (Act No. 22, 2018) to: ss 1, 3, 4, 6, 11, 35 and 36.

4 LIST OF AMENDMENTS

- s 3 amd No. 4, 2017, s 26; No. 1, 2022, s 24
- s 4 amd No. 10, 2018, s 4; No. 1, 2022, s 25; No. 7, 2023, s 34
- s 5A ins No. 4, 2017, s 27

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