



**Seniors Rights  
Service**

**2020 Strategic Plan**  
Legal • Advocacy • Education



## Seniors Rights Service - 2020 Strategic Plan

**WELCOME TO THE 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE.**

**THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES VISION AND A CLEAR OUTLINE OF HOW OUR ORGANISATION WILL OPERATE IN THE YEARS AHEAD. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING ALONGSIDE A RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS AS WE PROGRESS THIS PLAN.**

The *Seniors Rights Service* has operated under several names over its long history - 'The Accommodation Rights Service', 'The Aged-care Rights Service', 'Older Persons' Legal Service' and most recently 'TARS'. The organisation was established in 1986 in response to concerns regarding the abuse of older people in NSW. A coalition of community and service organisations came together around these issues. The coalition included the Social Welfare Action Group, the Combined Pensioners Association, Redfern Legal Centre, the Australian Consumers Association, Disabled Persons International, NSW Council of Social Service and NSW Ethnic Communities Council.

The coalition established a substantial body of evidence detailing extreme and systemic abuse including the neglect of residents in aged-care facilities. This was presented to the *NSW Legislative*

*Council Enquiry on Nursing Homes and Private Hospitals*. Subsequently a range of user rights and measures were incorporated into NSW and national laws. The need for an advocacy service to provide legal advice and education to the community, as well as the aged-care industry, was recognised by both NSW and Commonwealth Governments through their contribution of funding.

Our name and remit has changed several times over the years, our support of older people never has. Now in 2015, following extensive consultations with all stakeholders, the organisation has adopted the trading name of *Seniors Rights Service*. This signals our intent to meet the challenges of serving the diverse needs of a changing population. Our aim is to provide an effective, integrated and client-centred service for all older people.

This strategic plan has been developed in the context of a rapidly increasing target population. By 2050 those aged 65 and over will form a greater proportion of our population, with an estimated 7 million people over 65 years of age according to the Federal Government's Intergenerational Report. "Baby boomers" are reaching retirement with increased longevity and reasonable expectations of rights, justice and choice. Active individual assistance is being reserved for those who most need it. For the entire older population human services funding is increasingly constrained and there is increasing complexity within consumer law and aged-care.

The cultural and linguistic diversity of the seniors' population is now far more visible and recognised than in previous generations. A core challenge, which *Seniors Rights Service* will meet,

is ensuring all sectors of our target populations are aware of, and able to engage with, the *Seniors Rights Service*.

To meet this challenge, *Seniors Rights Service* will empower more seniors and their support networks to make informed and independent choices. Older people need to utilise and defend their rights in the context of increasingly risk-averse age-related services and businesses.

New technologies provide opportunities to reach far greater numbers with information about seniors' rights. Expanded training and advice to the services sector can facilitate systemic reforms that will reduce the need for individual legal advice and advocacy.

*The Seniors Rights Service - 2020 Strategic Plan* will be supported by

annual operational plans. These 'operational plans' will define concrete strategies to achieve the goals specified in our strategic plan, with clear objectives and performance indicators. Assessment of progress will be monitored and a mid-term review conducted.

## SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE PURPOSE

The purpose of the Seniors Rights Service is to foster communities where older members of society are aware of, actively exercising and defending their individual rights, in a society that respects and values older people and promotes and upholds their rights.

## SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE PRINCIPLES

In all of its endeavours, the Seniors Rights Service will:

- empower older people as rights holders and active contributors to society
- provide high quality and timely service
- provide access and equity in service to seniors, regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, marital status, disability, religion, political beliefs, sexual preference, or other characteristic
- support capacity development of staff to ensure they can deliver high quality service
- collaborate with other organisations in pursuit of common goals
- work with broader civil society to foster respect for older members of society and their individual rights.

## PRIORITY POPULATIONS

The Seniors Rights Service will prioritise engagement with older people who are:

- disadvantaged and vulnerable
- in regional, rural and remote locations
- culturally and linguistically diverse
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex.





## Seniors Rights Service goals for 2015-2020

**IN THE PERIOD FROM 2015 TO 2020, THE SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE WILL:**

- 1. FOSTER RESPECT FOR SENIORS AND THEIR RIGHTS**
- 2. PROVIDE BEST QUALITY SERVICE**
- 3. EXTEND THE ORGANISATION'S REACH**
- 4. SECURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR SERVICE GROWTH**

### **1. FOSTER RESPECT FOR SENIORS AND THEIR RIGHTS**

#### **1.1 Build strategic alliances to achieve common goals**

**1.1.1** Develop ongoing strategic alliance analysis and engagement processes, identifying the intended outcomes of each potential partnership.

**1.1.2** Form and maintain strategic alliances and formal partnerships with government, community, ageing and advocacy organisations to stimulate greater respect for older people.

**1.1.3** Foster the development of a formal national alliance of state and territory organisations involved in promoting or defending the rights of older people.

**1.1.4** Develop an ongoing university research and education alliance analysis and engagement process, including expected scope of engagement such as student intern placements, joint research and joint grant applications.

**1.1.5** Utilise consumer level data and operational experience to inform systemic advocacy on behalf of older people through alliance partners.

**1.1.6** Collaborate with partners to develop a Respect for Seniors module to be used in human rights and ethics education for children.

**1.1.7** Collaborate with Local Government Councils and other partners in awards to individuals, services and organisations to acknowledge excellence in promoting the rights of seniors.

**1.1.8** Collaborate with community organisations that represent older people to develop an enhanced peer advocate program focused on consumer choice and empowerment in relation to health, aged care and social services.

#### **1.2 Provide intellectual leadership on key issues facing older people**

**1.2.1** Monitor relevant population, professional and research publications.

**1.2.2** Disseminate important research findings and policy initiatives for the sector.

**1.2.3** Collaborate with researchers and other partners in relevant research.

**1.2.4** Identify, through consumer and carer consultation, key issues for older people in choices related to ageing, aged-care, consumer-directed care and their rights.

**1.2.5** Prepare and distribute discussion papers, articles for publication and press releases about seniors' rights issues.

**1.2.6** Provide representatives to contribute to government, industry and inter-sectoral policy discussions.

#### **1.3 Become the preferred provider of training and advice to services concerning the rights of seniors**

**1.3.1** Identify the information and education needs of the expanding range of Community Aged Care, Commonwealth Home Support Program, Residential Aged Care providers and legal service providers, within the current reform environment.

**1.3.2** Introduce an accredited on-line training course for aged care workers.

**1.3.3** Develop Seniors Rights Service accreditation for services with compliant policies and procedures and SRS trained staff members.

**1.3.4** Partner with NSW TAFE, universities and other relevant organisations to provide education sessions to students undertaking courses focused on, or with a component of, aged-care, ageing or elder law.

**1.3.5** Continue to provide best quality advice on the rights of older people to aged care service providers.

## Seniors Rights Service goals for 2015-2020

### 2. PROVIDE BEST QUALITY SERVICE

#### 2.1 Provide integrated, holistic, client-centred service

2.1.1 Facilitate client utilisation of all relevant Seniors Rights Service services.

2.1.2 Improve the interface with other social services, including emergency accommodation and mental health services, to facilitate fast and effective referrals.

2.1.3 Develop an assessment tool to ensure that clients are appropriately referred to services that can address concurrent needs beyond the scope of Seniors Rights Service.

2.1.4 Adapt services to suit changing client population and changing environment.

2.1.5 Set clear targets for the numbers of clients to be assisted by each type of service.

#### 2.2 Enhance human resources capacity development to meet the changing needs of older people

2.2.1 Identify core competencies in providing advocacy, support and education to older people regarding their rights and provide in-house training in these core competencies.

2.2.2 Encourage long-term career planning and professional development opportunities for staff including external and in-house training and secondment opportunities.

2.2.3 Introduce management succession planning, with acting up and secondment opportunities.

2.2.4 Explore interchange programs with relevant non-government and other organisations.

2.2.5 Meet the ongoing costs of legal staff in obtaining Annual Practising Certificates and in complying with

continuing professional development requirements, as appropriate.

#### 2.3 Promote timely delivery of services

2.3.1 Set clear limits on time between incoming calls and call back, and monitor against targets.

2.3.2 Set clear time targets for resolution of presenting problems, and monitor against targets.

2.3.3 Set targets for frequency of visits to aged care facilities, Community Aged Care and Commonwealth Home Support Program providers in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas.

#### 2.4 Provide infrastructure that supports efficiency and effectiveness in work

2.4.1 Ensure the telephone system is adequate to facilitate efficient client intake, support and referral.

2.4.2 Ensure the client service database is adequate to meet staff information needs and facilitate co-ordination of services, as well as reporting to funders.

2.4.3 Ensure website design and capacity supports independent access to information, order of print resources, booking of services and delivery of webinars and podcasts.

2.4.4 Facilitate enhanced internal electronic communications.

#### 2.5 Ensure that policies and procedures support best practice

2.5.1 Regularly review and update client, organisational and governance level policies and procedures.

2.5.2 Implement a risk matrix and then adjust policies and procedures to address identified risks.

#### 2.6 Meet diverse and changing cultural and intergenerational needs

2.6.1 Provide, for all staff, training in cultural sensitivity and use of interpreters with clients who use non-English languages including Auslan.

2.6.2 Ensure representation of priority populations on the Board and utilise their knowledge and experiences.

2.6.3 Provide information and advice to children of seniors concerning the rights of older people in relation to choice, access to services, and legal constraints.

2.6.4 Recognise and allow for broad generational and cultural differences.

2.6.5 Set clear targets for promotion of the organisation to members of priority populations and awareness outcomes.

2.6.6 Set clear targets for utilisation of services by members of priority populations.

#### 2.7 Involve older people and their families in the development and monitoring of Seniors Rights Service projects and programs

2.7.1 Convene a Consumer and Carer Advisory Group as a subcommittee of the Seniors Rights Service Board.

2.7.2 Conduct regular consumer and client needs assessments, both general and related to specific initiatives.

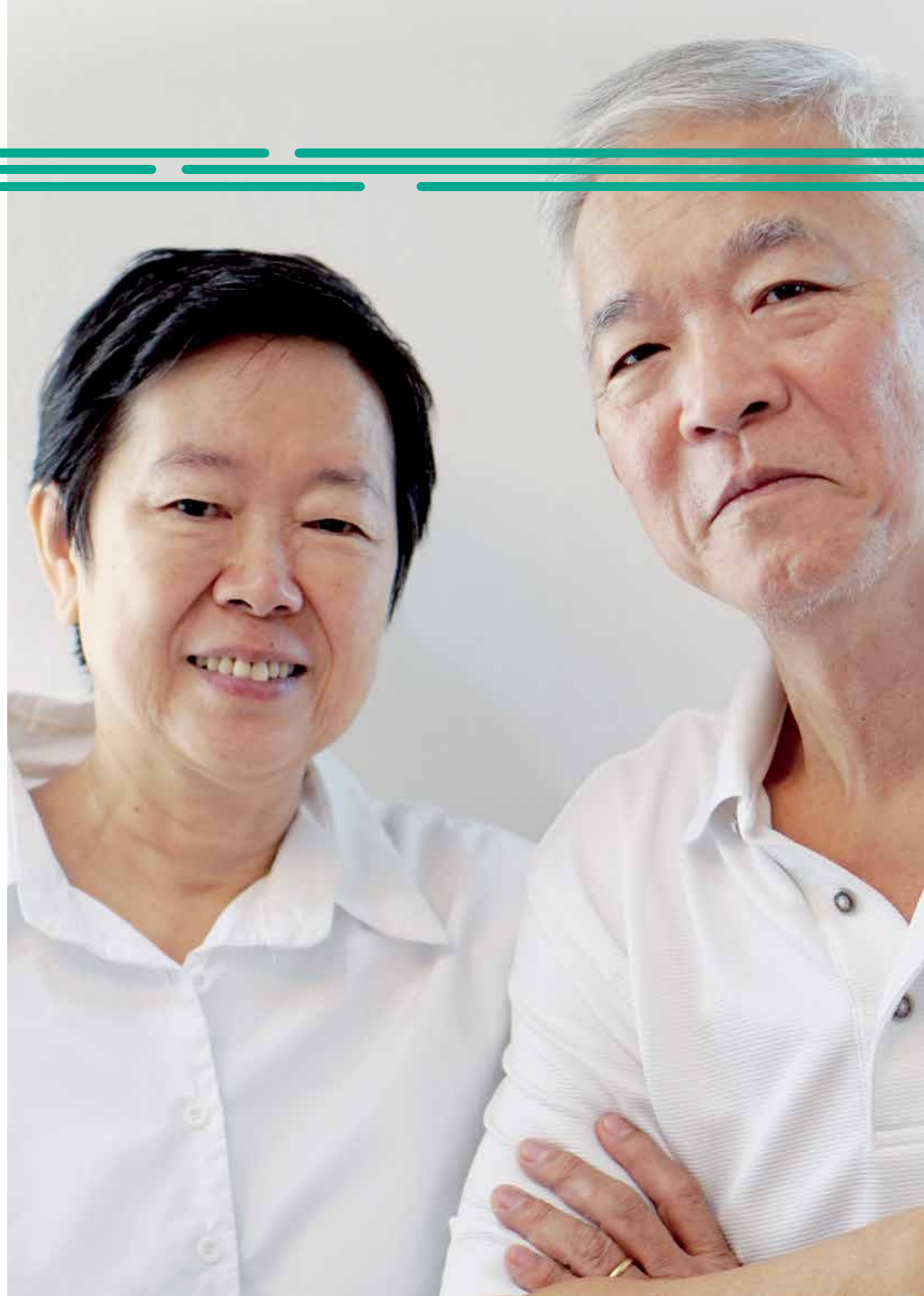
2.7.3 Ensure that Seniors Rights Service materials and communications are informed by and tested with relevant older people and, where appropriate, their carers and families.

#### 2.8 Provide clear outcome expectations, monitoring and evaluation processes

2.8.1 Ensure yearly operational plans include clear performance goals and measurable performance indicators.

2.8.2 Conduct internal process evaluation and annual performance monitoring.

2.8.3 Conduct regular independent evaluation and program review, involving input from all stakeholders.





## Seniors Rights Service - 2020 Strategic Plan

### 3. EXTEND THE ORGANISATION'S REACH

#### 3.1 Extend reach through new technology communications

**3.1.1** Provide information about the rights of senior citizens in downloadable print form and video presentations on the website.

**3.1.2** Provide an online question and answer service via the website.

**3.1.3** Develop and trial innovative methods to reach out to aged-care facilities, Community Aged Care and Commonwealth Home Support Program providers using new technologies.

**3.1.4** Provide live session webinars and podcasts addressing Elder Law and related issues.

#### 3.2 Build mutually beneficial partnerships to extend reach

#### 3.2.1 Build partnerships with:

- services that work with disadvantaged and vulnerable seniors, including those with low income, no permanent home, disabilities and physical or mental health issues.
- regional, rural and remote legal and social services that work with seniors.
- Ethnic Communities Council of NSW and service organisations that work with culturally and linguistically diverse seniors.
- Aboriginal health, legal and other services that work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander seniors.
- Community organisations and services that work with LGBTI seniors.

#### 3.3 Develop a demographically segmented marketing plan

**3.3.1** Identify key population segments to be addressed and prioritised.

**3.3.2** Utilise knowledge of Board members and partner organisations to develop a targeted marketing plan.

#### 3.4 Increase visibility, word of mouth promotion and partner referral

**3.4.1** Undertake a stakeholder consultation and feasibility study to identify ways the Seniors Rights Service can become more visible and accessible.

**3.4.2** Ensure Seniors Rights Service is an embedded referral pathway in websites and marketing material of alliance partners that regularly connect with older people e.g. Seniors Card, My Aged Care, COTA NSW, Local Government Councils.

**3.4.3** Introduce a peer ambassador and Seniors Rights Service referral program, supported by referral cards, posters and other promotional materials to be used by peer advocates/ambassadors and outside services.

### 4. SECURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR SERVICE GROWTH

#### 4.1 Identify and secure additional funding sources

**4.1.1** Identify grant and funding opportunities available through a wide range of Commonwealth and NSW Government departments and agencies, philanthropic organisations and the private sector.

**4.1.2** Identify and build evidence of unmet need.

**4.1.3** Build evidence to demonstrate capacity and value provided.

**4.1.4** Investigate the benefits and costs, including potential for conflicts of interest, involved in charging for some services.

#### 4.2 Expand use of pro bono work and joint research projects

**4.2.1** Make greater use of pro bono solicitor and other professional time in areas such as submission writing, design of on-line learning and information technology requirements.

**4.2.2** Develop discrete projects that can be undertaken by student interns and other volunteers.

**4.2.3** Become a desirable workplace for volunteers.

**4.2.4** Collaborate with academics on joint projects or provide expert input or recruitment of research participants.



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