

Comments on the EFB turbulence closure theory: turbulent fluxes of buoyant and passive scalars

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1. Introduction

Until present we considered the density stratification in the EFB turbulence closure (Zilitinkevich et al., 2012) in terms of the buoyancy flux F_b , which was taken proportional to the potential temperature flux $F_z^{(\theta)}$. In the wet air, F_b depends also on the vertical turbulent flux of specific humidity F_q , so that $F_b \equiv \langle bw \rangle = F_z^{(\theta)} \beta + 0.61 g F_q$, where g is the acceleration of gravity, $\beta = g/T_0$ is the buoyancy parameter, T_0 is reference value of absolute temperature (T_0^{-1} is the thermal expansion coefficient for ideal gas), w , θ , q and $b = \beta\theta + 0.61gq$ are fluctuations of vertical velocity, potential temperature, specific humidity (the mass of the water vapour per unit mass of fluid) and buoyancy, respectively, and angle brackets denote averaging. Furthermore, condensation of the water vapour or evaporation of droplets of liquid water suspended in the air affect the air temperature and vice versa. To determine separately $F_z^{(\theta)}$, F_q and the turbulent flux of water droplets, we generalize the EFB closure accounting for essential interdependence of the temperature, humidity and liquid-water content.

We denote the actual values of the above listed meteorological parameters by the upright capital letters: W , Θ , Q and B , and the mean values by the same letters in *Italic*: W , Θ , Q and B (so that $W = \overline{W} + w$, etc.). Similarly we denote the actual, mean and fluctuation values of the specific content of liquid water by A , A and a . The mean potential temperature Θ is defined as $\Theta = T(P_0/P)^{1-1/\gamma}$, where T is the absolute temperature, P is the pressure, P_0 is its reference value, and $\gamma = c_p/c_v = 1.41$ is the specific heats ratio.

The fluxes $F_z^{(\theta)}$, F_q and F_a appear in the Reynolds-averaged equations for the mean-flow potential temperature Θ , specific humidity Q and liquid water content A :

$$\frac{D\Theta}{Dt} = -\frac{\partial F_z^{(\theta)}}{\partial z} + J + \frac{\lambda}{c_p} m, \quad (2.1)$$

$$\frac{DQ}{Dt} = -\frac{\partial F_q}{\partial z} - m, \quad (2.2a)$$

$$\frac{DA}{Dt} = -\frac{\partial F_a}{\partial z} + m, \quad (2.2b)$$

where J is the rate of heating/cooling due to the radiation heat transfer, λ is the latent heat of condensation, c_p is the specific heat, and m is the rate of change of specific humidity due to evaporation/condensation. Clearly, $m \neq 0$ only in the presence of droplets of liquid water.

In the conditions of the thermodynamic equilibrium, Q is maintained at the saturation value: $Q = Q_m \equiv (R/R_w)e(T)/P$, where R and R_w are the gas constants of the dry air and

the water vapour, and $e(T)$ is the partial pressure of the saturated water vapour at the temperature T , determined by the Clausius-Clapeyron equation: $de/e = (\lambda/R)dT/T^2$. Then Q depends only on Θ and P .

In the wet atmosphere the momentum equation becomes:

$$\frac{D\mathbf{V}}{Dt} = -\frac{\nabla P}{\rho} + \nu \Delta \mathbf{V} + \beta \Theta_v \mathbf{e}, \quad (2.3)$$

and the thermodynamic equations for the potential temperature, the specific humidity and the specific liquid water content become:

$$\frac{D\Theta}{Dt} = \kappa \Delta \Theta + \frac{\lambda}{c_p} m(\Theta, Q), \quad (2.4)$$

$$\frac{DQ}{Dt} = \kappa_Q \Delta Q - m(\Theta, Q), \quad (2.5a)$$

$$\frac{DA}{Dt} = \kappa_A \Delta A + m(\Theta, Q), \quad (2.5b)$$

where $\mathbf{V} = \mathbf{U} + \mathbf{u}$ is the actual velocity [consisted of the mean $\mathbf{U} = (U_1, U_2, U_3) = (U, V, W)$ and the fluctuation $\mathbf{u} = (u_1, u_2, u_3) = (u, v, w)$ velocities], $D/Dt = \partial/\partial t + \mathbf{V}_i \partial/\partial x_i$, $\Theta_v = \Theta + (\mu_d/\mu_w - 1)T_0$, $Q = \Theta + 0.61 T_0$ is the virtual temperature, μ_d and μ_w are the molar masses of the dry air and the water vapour, ν is kinematic viscosity, κ is heat conductivity, κ_Q and κ_A are diffusivities for the water vapour and water droplets, respectively. We take into account that the condensation/evaporation rate m depends on temperature and humidity. Typical atmospheric flows are characterised by very low Mach numbers. Therefore, analysing turbulent statistics associated with the temperature, humidity and liquid-water content, the dependence of m on the atmospheric pressure can be neglected.

Equations (2.4) and (2.5) can be rewritten in terms of Θ_v and the equivalent temperatures $\Theta_{e1} = \Theta + \lambda Q/c_p$ and $\Theta_{e2} = \Theta - \lambda A/c_p$:

$$\frac{D\Theta_v}{Dt} = \kappa \Delta \Theta_v + m_v(\Theta_v, \Theta_{e1}), \quad (2.6)$$

$$\frac{D\Theta_{e1}}{Dt} = \kappa \Delta \Theta_{e1}, \quad (2.7a)$$

$$\frac{D\Theta_{e2}}{Dt} = \kappa \Delta \Theta_{e2}, \quad (2.7b)$$

where

$$m_v(\Theta_v, \Theta_{ei}) \equiv \left[\frac{\lambda}{c_p} - \left(\frac{\mu_d}{\mu_w} - 1 \right) T_0 \right] m(\Theta, q). \quad (2.8)$$

For simplicity we took $\kappa_Q \approx \kappa_A \approx \kappa$. Subtracting the averaged version of Eqs. (2.6), (2.7) from the original equations yields the following equations for the fluctuations θ_v , θ_{e1} and θ_{e2} :

$$\frac{D\theta_v}{Dt} = \kappa \Delta \theta_v - w \frac{N^2}{\beta} + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_v} \theta_v + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} \theta_{ei} - (\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla) \theta_v + \langle (\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla) \theta_v \rangle, \quad (2.9)$$

$$\frac{D\theta_{ei}}{Dt} = \kappa \Delta \theta_{ei} - w \frac{N_{ei}^2}{\beta} - (\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla) \theta_{ei} + \langle (\mathbf{u} \cdot \nabla) \theta_{ei} \rangle, \quad (2.10)$$

where $i=1,2$, and

$$N^2 = \beta \frac{\partial \Theta_v}{\partial z}, \quad N_{ei}^2 = \beta \frac{\partial \Theta_{ei}}{\partial z} \quad (2.11)$$

are the Brunt-Väisälä frequencies based on the virtual and the equivalent temperatures.

It follows from the definition of the virtual and the equivalent temperatures that

$$Q = \left(\frac{\lambda}{c_p} - \frac{\mu_d - \mu_w}{\mu_w} \right)^{-1} (\Theta_{e1} - \Theta_v), \quad (2.12)$$

$$\Theta = \Theta_{e1} - \frac{\lambda}{c_p} Q, \quad (2.13)$$

$$A = \frac{c_p}{\lambda} (\Theta - \Theta_{e2}). \quad (2.14)$$

In the next section we employ Eqs. (2.9) and (2.10) to revise the basic equations of the EFB closure.

2. Budget equations for second moments accounting for condensation/evaporation

The budget equations for the turbulent kinetic energy (TKE) $E_k = \frac{1}{2} \langle \mathbf{u}^2 \rangle$; the “energy” of the virtual-temperature fluctuations $E_\theta = \frac{1}{2} \langle \theta_v^2 \rangle$; the virtual-temperature flux $\mathbf{F}^{(v)} = \langle \mathbf{u} \theta_v \rangle$;

and the second moments representing the “energy” of the equivalent-temperature fluctuations $E_{e1} = \frac{1}{2} \langle \theta_{e1}^2 \rangle$ and $E_{e2} = \frac{1}{2} \langle \theta_{e2}^2 \rangle$; the equivalent-temperature fluxes $\mathbf{F}^{(e1)} = \langle \mathbf{u} \theta_{e1} \rangle$ and $\mathbf{F}^{(e2)} = \langle \mathbf{u} \theta_{e2} \rangle$; and the cross-correlations of the virtual and equivalent temperature fluctuations $E_{c1} = \langle \theta_v \theta_{e1} \rangle$ and $E_{c2} = \langle \theta_v \theta_{e2} \rangle$ read:

$$\frac{DE_K}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \Phi_K = -\tau_{i3} \frac{\partial U_i}{\partial z} + \beta F_z^{(v)} - \varepsilon_K, \quad (3.1)$$

$$\frac{DE_\theta}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \Phi_\theta = -F_z^{(v)} \frac{N^2}{\beta} + 2 \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_v} E_\theta + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} E_{ci} - \varepsilon_\theta, \quad (3.2)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{DF_z^{(v)}}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \Phi_z^{(F)} = & -2E_z \frac{N^2}{\beta} + 2\beta E_\theta - \frac{1}{\rho_0} \left\langle \theta_v \frac{\partial p}{\partial z} \right\rangle + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_v} F_z^{(v)} \\ & + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} F_z^{(ei)} - \varepsilon_F, \end{aligned} \quad (3.3)$$

$$\frac{DE_{ei}}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \Phi_{ei} = -F_z^{(ei)} \frac{N_{ei}^2}{\beta} - \varepsilon_{ei}, \quad (3.4)$$

$$\frac{DF_z^{(ei)}}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \Phi_z^{(ei)} = -2E_z \frac{N_{ei}^2}{\beta} + \beta E_{ci} - \frac{1}{\rho_0} \left\langle \theta_{ei} \frac{\partial p}{\partial z} \right\rangle - \varepsilon_F^{(ei)}, \quad (3.5)$$

$$\frac{DE_{ci}}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \Phi_{ci} = -\left(F_z^{(ei)} N^2 + F_z^{(v)} N_{ei}^2\right) \frac{1}{\beta} + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_v} E_{ci} + 2 \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} E_{ei} - \varepsilon_{ci}, \quad (3.6)$$

In Eqs. (3.4)-(3.6) $i=1,2$. Here, $\tau_{ij} = \langle u_i u_j \rangle$ is the Reynolds stress, Φ_K , Φ_θ and $\Phi_z^{(F)}$ are the third-order moments representing the turbulent transports of the TKE, of the “energy” of the virtual temperature fluctuations and of the virtual-temperature flux:

$$\Phi_K = \frac{1}{\rho_0} \langle p w \rangle + \frac{1}{2} \langle u^2 w \rangle, \quad (3.7a)$$

$$\Phi_\theta = \frac{1}{2} \langle \theta_v^2 w \rangle, \quad (3.7b)$$

$$\Phi_z^{(F)} = \frac{1}{2\rho_0} \langle p \theta_v \rangle + \langle w^2 \theta_v \rangle, \quad (3.7c)$$

and ρ_0 is the reference value of the air density.

The third-order moments:

$$\Phi_{ei} = \frac{1}{2} \langle \theta_{ei}^2 w \rangle, \quad (3.8a)$$

$$\Phi_z^{(ei)} = \frac{1}{2\rho_0} \langle p \theta_{ei} \rangle + \langle w^2 \theta_{ei} \rangle, \quad (3.8b)$$

$$\Phi_{ci} = \langle \theta_v \theta_{ei} w \rangle \quad (3.8c)$$

express turbulent transports of the “energy” of the equivalent-temperature fluctuations, the equivalent-temperature fluxes, and the cross-correlation between fluctuations of the virtual and equivalent temperatures.

The terms ε_K , ε_θ and ε_F are essentially positive operators representing the dissipation rates for E_K , E_θ , $F_z^{(v)}$, E_{ei} , $F_z^{(ei)}$ and E_{ci} , respectively. Following Kolmogorov (1941), they are taken proportional to the ratios of the dissipating moments to the dissipation time scale, t_T :

$$\varepsilon_K = \nu \left\langle \frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_k} \frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_k} \right\rangle = \frac{E_K}{t_T}, \quad (3.9a)$$

$$\varepsilon_\theta = -\kappa \langle \theta_v \Delta \theta_v \rangle = \frac{E_\theta}{C_P t_T}, \quad (3.9b)$$

$$\varepsilon_F = -\kappa \left(\langle w \Delta \theta_v \rangle + \text{Pr} \langle \theta_v \Delta w \rangle \right) = \frac{F_z^{(v)}}{C_F t_T}, \quad (3.9c)$$

$$\varepsilon_{ei} = -\kappa \langle \theta_{ei} \Delta \theta_{ei} \rangle = \frac{E_{ei}}{C_P^{(ei)} t_T}, \quad (3.10a)$$

$$\varepsilon_F^{(ei)} = -\kappa \left(\langle w \Delta \theta_{ei} \rangle + \text{Pr} \langle \theta_{ei} \Delta w \rangle \right) = \frac{F_z^{(ei)}}{C_F^{(ei)} t_T}, \quad (3.10b)$$

$$\varepsilon_{ci} = -\kappa \left(\langle \theta_v \Delta \theta_{ei} \rangle + \langle \theta_{ei} \Delta \theta_v \rangle \right) = \frac{E_{ci}}{C_{ci} t_T}, \quad (3.10c)$$

where κ is the temperature conductivity, $\text{Pr} = \nu/\kappa$ is the Prandtl number, C_K , C_P , C_F , $C_P^{(ei)}$, $C_F^{(ei)}$ and C_{ci} are dimensionless constants.

As demonstrated by Zilitinkevich et al. (2007), the term $-\rho_0^{-1} \langle \theta \partial p / \partial z \rangle$ in the budget equation for F_z is essentially negative and scales as $\beta \langle \theta^2 \rangle$, so that the pair of term

$\beta\langle\theta^2\rangle - \rho_0^{-1}\langle\theta\partial p/\partial z\rangle$ is expressed as $C_\theta\beta\langle\theta^2\rangle$, where $C_\theta < 1$ is empirical dimensionless constant. We apply the same parameterization to the analogous terms in Eqs. (3.3) and (3.5):

$$\langle\theta_v(\beta\theta_v - \rho_0^{-1}\partial p/\partial z)\rangle = C_\theta\beta\langle\theta_v^2\rangle, \quad (3.11a)$$

$$\langle\theta_{ei}(\beta\theta_v - \rho_0^{-1}\partial p/\partial z)\rangle = C_\theta^{(ei)}\beta E_{ci}, \quad (3.11b)$$

which yields the simplified versions of these equations:

$$\frac{DF_z}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z}\Phi_z^{(F)} = -2(E_z - C_\theta E_p)\frac{N^2}{\beta} + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial\Theta_v}F_z^{(v)} + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial\Theta_{ei}}F_z^{(ei)} - \varepsilon_F, \quad (3.12)$$

$$\frac{DF_z^{(ei)}}{Dt} + \frac{\partial}{\partial z}\Phi_z^{(ei)} = -2E_z\frac{N_{ei}^2}{\beta} + C_\theta^{(ei)}\beta E_{ci} - \varepsilon_F^{(ei)}, \quad (3.13)$$

where $E_p = (\beta/N)^2 E_\theta$ is the turbulent potential energy, and $C_\theta^{(ei)} < 1$ is empirical dimensionless constant.

3. Steady-state regime of turbulence

In the steady-state, the left hand sides (l.h.s.) of the above budget equations turn into zero, and the equations become algebraic. Then Eqs. (3.4), (3.6) and (3.13) yield:

$$F_z^{(ei)} = -2\Psi_F^{(ei)} A_z E_K t_T \frac{N_{ei}^2}{\beta} \left(1 + C_\theta^{(ei)} \Psi_{ci} \frac{\beta F_z^{(v)} t_T}{2A_z E_K} \right), \quad (4.1)$$

$$E_{ei} = -C_p^{(ei)} t_T F_z^{(ei)} \frac{N_{ei}^2}{\beta}, \quad (4.2)$$

$$E_{ci} = -\Psi_{ci} t_T \frac{N_e^2}{\beta} \left[F_z^{(v)} + F_z^{(ei)} \left(\frac{N^2}{N_{ei}^2} + 2C_p^{(ei)} t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial\Theta_{ei}} \right) \right], \quad (4.3)$$

where Ψ_{ci} , $\Psi_F^{(ei)}$ are combinations introduced to make shorter further relations:

$$\Psi_{ci} = \left(C_{ci}^{-1} - t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial\Theta_v} \right)^{-1}, \quad (4.4a)$$

$$\Psi_F^{(ei)} = \left[C_{ci}^{-1} + C_\theta^{(ei)} \Psi_{ci} t_T^2 N^2 \left(1 + 2t_T C_p^{(ei)} \frac{N_{ei}^2}{N^2} \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} \right) \right]^{-1}, \quad (4.4b)$$

and $A_z = E_z/E_K$ is the share of the “vertical energy”.

In the turbulent kinetic energy (TKE) budget Equation (3.1), the first term on the r.h.s. is the rate of the TKE production: $-\tau_{i3} \partial U_i / \partial z = \tau S$, where τ and S are absolute values of the vectors $\boldsymbol{\tau}$ and $\partial \mathbf{U} / \partial z$, and the second term $\beta F_z^{(v)}$ is the rate of conversion of the TKE into the turbulent potential energy (TPE) $E_p = (\beta/N)^2 E_\theta$. The ratio of these terms is called flux Richardson number

$$Ri_f \equiv \frac{-\beta F_z^{(v)}}{\tau S}. \quad (4.5)$$

Using these notations, Eq. (4.1) becomes

$$F_z^{(ei)} = -K_M \frac{\Psi_F^{(ei)}}{C_\tau \beta} \left(1 - C_\theta^{(ei)} \Psi_{ci} \frac{Ri_f}{2A_z(1-Ri_f)} \right) N_{ei}^2, \quad (4.6)$$

where the eddy viscosity K_M , as well as A_z , are precisely the same as in the dry atmosphere:

$$K_M = 2C_\tau A_z E_K t_T, \quad (4.7)$$

$$A_z = \frac{C_r(1-2C_0 Ri_f/R_\infty)(1-Ri_f) - 3Ri_f}{(1-Ri_f)\{3+C_r[3-2(1+C_0)Ri_f/R_\infty]\}}. \quad (4.8)$$

The dimensionless empirical constants C_τ , C_r , C_0 , C_τ , R_∞ have been already estimated by Zilitinkevich et al., (2012).

The steady-state versions of Eqs. (3.2) and (3.12) yield:

$$E_\theta = -\Psi_p t_T \left(F_z^{(v)} \frac{N^2}{\beta} - \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} E_{ci} \right), \quad (4.9)$$

$$F_z^{(v)} = -\Psi_F t_T \left(2(E_z - C_\theta E_p) \frac{N^2}{\beta} - \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} F_z^{(ei)} \right), \quad (4.10)$$

where Ψ_p and Ψ_F are combination:

$$\Psi_P = \left(C_P^{-1} - 2t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_v} \right)^{-1}, \quad (4.11)$$

$$\Psi_F = \left(C_F^{-1} - t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_v} \right)^{-1}. \quad (4.12)$$

Equations (4.9)-(4.10) in combinations with Eq. (4.3) yield:

$$\frac{E_P}{E_K} = \frac{\Psi_P Ri_f}{1 - Ri_f} \left\{ 1 + \Psi_{ci} t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} \frac{N_{ei}^2}{N^2} \left[1 + 2A_z t_T^2 N^2 \Psi_F \Psi \left(\frac{1 - Ri_f}{Ri_f} - \frac{C_\theta^{(ei)} \Psi_{ci}}{2A_z} \right) \right] \right\}, \quad (4.13)$$

$$\begin{aligned} F_z^{(v)} &= -K_M \frac{N^2 \Psi_F}{\beta C_\tau} \left[1 - \frac{C_\theta E_P}{A_z E_K} + \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} \frac{\Psi_F^{(ei)} t_T}{N^2} \left(1 - \frac{C_\theta^{(ei)} \Psi_c Ri_f}{2A_z (1 - Ri_f)} \right) N_{ei}^2 \right] \\ &\equiv -K_H \frac{N^2}{\beta}, \end{aligned} \quad (4.14)$$

where K_H is (by definition) the eddy conductivity, and Ψ is one more combination:

$$\Psi = 1 + 2C_P^{(ei)} t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} \frac{N_{ei}^2}{N^2}. \quad (4.15)$$

Equations (4.7) and (4.10) yield the relation:

$$t_T^2 N^2 = \frac{Ri}{2C_\tau A_z (1 - Ri_f)}, \quad (4.16)$$

where $Ri = N^2/S^2$ is the gradient Richardson number. Substituting Eq. (4.16) in (4.14) yields the expression linking the turbulent Prandtl number Pr_T , the flux Richardson number Ri_f , and the gradient Richardson number Ri :

$$Pr_T \equiv \frac{K_M}{K_H} \equiv \frac{Ri}{Ri_f} = \frac{C_\tau}{\Psi_F} \left[1 - \frac{C_\theta E_P}{A_z E_K} + \Psi_F^{(ei)} t_T \frac{\partial m_v}{\partial \Theta_{ei}} \frac{N_{ei}^2}{N^2} \left(1 - \frac{C_\theta^{(ei)} \Psi_{ci} Ri_f}{2A_z (1 - Ri_f)} \right) \right]^{-1}. \quad (4.17)$$

It follows that the dependencies of Ri_f or Pr_T on Ri , playing the key role in the EFB closure, are generally affected by the processes of condensation/evaporation. With this remark, the dependencies of the dimensionless turbulent fluxes of momentum and heat on Ri_f have precisely the same form as in dry air.

Using Eqs. (2.12)-(2.14) we find link between the fluxes $F_z^{(\theta)}$, F_q , F_a and the fluxes of the virtual and the equivalent temperatures:

$$F_q = \left(\frac{\mu_d - \mu_w}{\mu_w} T_0 - \frac{\lambda}{c_p} \right)^{-1} (F_z^{(v)} - F_z^{(e1)}), \quad (4.18)$$

$$F_z^{(\theta)} = F_z^{(e1)} - \frac{\lambda}{c_p} F_q, \quad (4.19)$$

$$F_a = \frac{c_p}{\lambda} (F_z^{(\theta)} - F_z^{(e2)}). \quad (4.20)$$

Taking partial derivatives of m equal to zero yields the fluxes of the equivalent $F_z^{(ei)}$ and virtual $F_z^{(v)}$ temperature fluctuations:

$$F_z^{(ei)} = -K_M \frac{C_{ci} N_{ei}^2}{C_\tau \beta} \left(1 - \frac{C_\theta^{(ei)} C_{ci} Ri_f}{2 A_z (1 - Ri_f)} \right) \left(1 + \frac{C_\theta^{(ei)} C_{ci}^2 Ri}{2 A_z C_\tau (1 - Ri_f)} \right)^{-1}, \quad (4.21)$$

$$F_z^{(v)} = -K_M \frac{N^2 C_F}{\beta C_\tau} \left[1 - \frac{C_\theta C_P Ri_f}{A_z (1 - Ri_f)} \right], \quad (4.22)$$

where $i=1,2$. Substituting Eqs. (4.21)-(4.22) into Eqs. (4.18)-(4.20) allows us to determine the fluxes $F_z^{(\theta)}$, F_q and F_a .

Conclusions

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