

26TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT



"A CERTAIN FORCE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD"



FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

26th Marine Expeditionary Unit – Mission, Vision, Intent

"The nation's shock troops must be ready when the nation is generally least ready...to promote a balanced force in readiness for a naval campaign and, at the same time, a ground and air striking force ready to suppress or contain international disturbances short of large-scale warfare." – 82nd Congress, 1952



MISSION: Our Mission is straight forward: While we provide a forward-deployed, flexible sea-based Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response, and limited contingency operations, to include enabling the introduction of follow-on forces and designated special operations, in support of theater requirements of the Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC), fundamentally, we must be ready, relevant, and capable of aggregating forces and deploying with limited notice as a MAGTF in support of crises, expeditionary operations on land or from the sea, or other emergent rotational requirements.

VISION: The 26th MEU is recognized as an elite, combat ready, relevant, and capable expeditionary rapid response force with a culture of operational excellence, versatility, efficiency, risk management, and combat readiness.

*For more than 50 years, the 26th MEU has provided GCCs with a highly adaptive, potent, rapid response force capable of conducting missions across the full spectrum of military operations. Our performance as a premier MAGTF has marked the 26th MEU as "A Certain Force in an Uncertain World". We will maintain the legacy of being **Ready, Relevant, and Capable** by focusing on the precepts of **Leadership, Attitude, and Warfighting.***

- ✿ **Leadership:** Concerned and engaged leadership makes the difference – it directly influences esprit de corps and unit morale. I expect Marines and Sailors, at all levels of this Team of Teams, to have a bias for action and to set the example – we must be disciplined and professional in our approach to leadership to ensure we are **Ready**. Readiness is a function of leadership – everything we do counts and must contribute to our Team's combat readiness and effectiveness. This includes taking care of our Families and ensuring every Marine and Sailor is physically, mentally, and spiritually fit – **Ready** to deploy on short notice and **Capable** of accomplishing the mission.
- ✿ **Attitude:** A positive winning attitude is contagious. Be a winner – do the right thing for the right reason and always treat people with dignity and respect. We will be guided by our Corps' warrior ethos and our core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment in everything we do. We will cultivate an expeditionary mindset with an eye towards future development, professional military education, experimentation, innovation, and future operating concepts to ensure we are a learning organization that remains **Relevant**.
- ✿ **Warfighting:** Our focus is warfighting. As disciplined professionals, we must be masters of our craft – a mastery of skill creates flexibility, increases productivity, and makes mission accomplishment easier. Our focus on warfighting, including combined arms training centered on our core and assigned missions coupled with meticulous maintenance of our equipment and individual professional development, will ensure we are both **Ready and Capable**. Our warfighting focus coupled with our ability to integrate all aspects of the MEU with the Navy, Joint, and Special Forces will ensure we are **Capable** of multi-domain, distributed maritime operations – as the "Inside Force" – within the contact layer of an anti-access, area-denial threat environment or in the littorals of a more permissive environment.

The Nation demands its premier rapid response forces – the MEU – are ready, relevant, and capable because the current and anticipated future environment is plagued with complex challenges and uncertainty.

We, Marines and Sailors, take pride in being the most ready when our nation is the least ready. The MEU, as a MAGTF, is a Team of Teams that when combined with the Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), is able to exploit the asymmetric advantages the sea provides as maneuver space over our potential adversaries.

INTENT: My intent is clear: The 26th MEU is **Ready, Relevant, and Capable...ready to fight tonight and to win in any clime or place**. From raids to parades, we will honor the legacy of those who have gone before us by focusing on **Leadership, Attitude, and Warfighting** while living up to our motto of being "**A Certain Force in an Uncertain World**".

It is my absolute honor to serve as your Commanding Officer – I will work tirelessly to set the conditions and climate for your individual success and the collective success of this 26th MEU Team. Semper Fidelis!

Colonel D. W. Sampson, USMC

Commanding Officer, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit



TABLE OF CONTENTS

AWARDS	2
HISTORY	3
U.S. STRATEGIC CHALLENGE	4
EXPEDITIONARY ADVANCED BASE OPERATIONS	5
WHO WE ARE	6
NAVY & MARINE CORPS TEAM	8
TASK ORGANIZATION	9
FIGHTING FORCE	10
LIFE CYCLE OF A MEU	12
PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING	13
COMMUNICATING WITH PURPOSE	14
26TH MEU AXIOMS	16

AWARDS



Navy Unit Commendation Award



Meritorious Unit Commendation Award



Marine Corps Expeditionary Award



National Defense Service Award



Kosovo Campaign



Afghanistan Campaign



Iraq Campaign



Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary



Global War On Terrorism Service

HISTORY

"For more than 50 years, the 26th MEU has provided GCCs with a highly adaptive, potent, rapid response force capable of conducting missions across the full spectrum of military operations."

1975: MEUs were renamed as Marine Amphibious Units.

1985: 26th MAU became the first unit to undergo "Special Operations Capable" – earning the MEU (SOC) qualification.

1988: All MAUs were redesignated as MEUs.

1991: Supported Operation Desert Shield by providing a "Show of Force" in the Mediterranean.

1994: Supported Operation Restore Hope off the coast of Somalia and participated in continuing operations in Bosnia.

1997: Launched Operation Silver Wake, evacuating American citizens and Third Country Nationals from Albania.

1999: Provided humanitarian assistance to the people of Western Turkey after a devastating earthquake.

2001: Was among the first U.S. forces in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Marines participated in the seizure of Camp Rhino and Kandahar Airport.

2003: Supported operations in Mosul, Iraq.

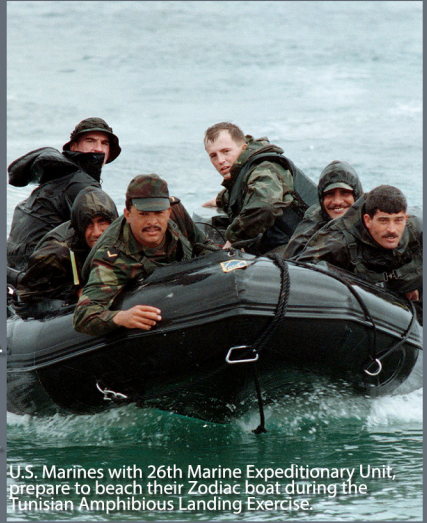
2014: Deployed in support of Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Crisis Response Africa 14.2.

2017: Supported Defense Support of Civil Authorities relief efforts in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

2019: Supported Foreign Disaster Relief efforts in the Bahamas.

2020: Supported operations in the U.S. 2nd, 5th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility.

2021: Served as Joint Interagency Task Force Pickett in support of Operation Allies Welcome



U.S. Marines with 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, prepare to beach their Zodiac boat during the Tunisian Amphibious Landing Exercise.



U.S. Marines from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, get a warm welcome with roses and singing children of a local town near the forward operating base in Kosovo.

"Our Performance as a premier MAGTF has marked the 26th MEU as 'A Certain Force in an Uncertain World'."

THE U.S. STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

The United States is increasingly challenged by the demands in the littorals – the complex interface where the great commons of the sea meet the physical geography where human, political, and economic domains function.

The Geo-Strategic Environment

- 70% of the world is covered by water
- 95% of all commercial cargo travels by sea
- 49% of the world's soil transits 6 major sea chokepoints
- 23,000 ships are underway daily
- 17 of the world's 20 largest cities have direct access to the sea
- 95% of international communication is transmitted by undersea
- 75% of the world's populace lives within 200 miles of a sea coast

Sources of Global Stress and Instability

- Increasing resource scarcity and demand
- Explosive mega-cities - especially in the littorals
- Ease of access to lethal technologies
- Networked terrorists/non-state actors
- Growing near-peer global powers
- Disruptions to global commerce
- American prosperity rests on a foundation of fair and free access to a vibrant global economy
- Freedom of action in the littorals are critical to U.S. national interests

GE IN AN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

Today, the US Marine Corps is moving forward to meet the demands of this era. Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO) seek to address challenges created by potential adversary advantages in geographic location, weapons system range, precision and capacity while creating opportunities by improving our own ability to maneuver and exploit control over key maritime terrain...by fully integrating Fleet Marine Force and Navy capabilities to enable sea denial and sea control.

Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations

EABO are a form of naval expeditionary warfare that involves the employment of mobile, low-signature, persistent, and relatively easy to maintain and sustain naval expeditionary forces from a series of austere, temporary locations ashore or inshore within a contested or potentially contested maritime area in order to conduct sea denial, support sea control, or enable fleet sustainment.

Naval Context

Naval Warfare Publication, NDP 1, explains that the "United States Navy, the United States Marine Corps, and the United States Coast Guard collectively form the nation's Naval Service.

"The Naval Service can perform four enduring functions in support of EABO:

- Ensures the safe seaborne movement of friendly commerce and military forces
- Influences events, to include projecting military power, overseas
- Prevents an adversary's seaborne movement of commerce and military forces
- Prevents an adversary from influencing events, to include projecting military power, on US or other friendly shores

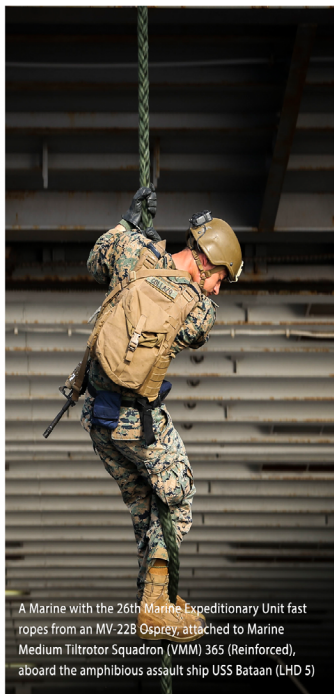
WHO WE ARE

Since World War II, in nearly every crisis, the United States Marine Corps has deployed power-projection forces, with the ability to move ashore with sufficient sustainability for prolonged operations. These forces have been organized as Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs).

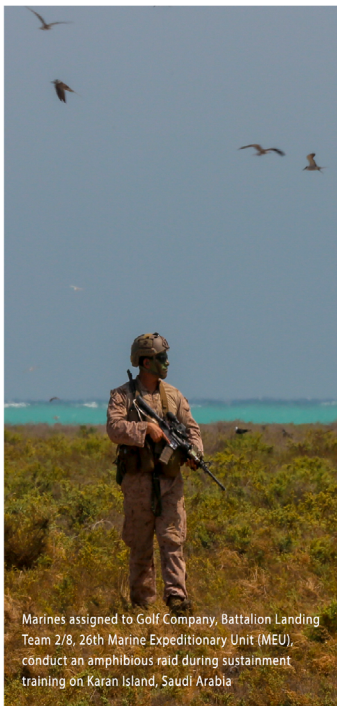
The MAGTF is the Marine Corps' principal organizational construct for conducting missions across the range of military operations. MAGTFs provide combatant commanders with scalable, versatile expeditionary forces able to assure allies, deter potential adversaries, provide persistent U.S. presence with little or no footprint ashore, and respond to a broad range of contingency, crisis, and conflict situations. They are task organized, combined-arms force packages containing ground, aviation, and logistics combat elements under a single Command Element.

Tailored to meet combatant commander's regiments, MAGTFs operate as an integrated all domain force. The Naval character of the MAGTF enhances their global mobility, lethality, and staying power and provide increased strategic and operational flexibility. More so, MAGTFs provide three critically important capabilities:

- Forward presence to support engagement & theater security cooperation
- A ready force to immediately respond to crises
- A credible and sustainable forcible entry capability, operating day or night from the sea



A Marine with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit fast ropes from an MV 22B Osprey, attached to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 365 (Reinforced), aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5)



Marines assigned to Golf Company, Battalion Landing Team 2/8, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), conduct an amphibious raid during sustainment training on Karan Island, Saudi Arabia

READY. RELEVANT. CAPABLE.

Our amphibious capability creates four strategic benefits for a nation dependent on its ability to exploit its command of the seas to project influence and power.

- *Freedom of action: Amphibious forces can use the maritime domain as a base from which to conduct operations.*
- *Deterrence: While standoff strike is sometimes an adequate response, other situations require the rapid insertion of sustainable combat forces to underscore the nations commitment to an ally or protect our National Security interests.*
- *Assured Access: Amphibious forces contribute unique and essential capabilities toward the nation's ability to take advantage of the freedom of the high seas to enter a region without regard to access constraints and impediments and to sustain sea-based operations.*
- *Uncertainty for Adversaries: A credible forcible-entry capability compels potential adversaries to invest in a broad range of systems and spread their defenses over larger areas of concern.*

The 26th MEU has and continues to integrate with Amphibious Ready Groups which cover the U.S. Fifth and Sixth Fleet's areas of responsibility.

The 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit is one of seven standing MEUs that routinely deploy in accordance with the Global Force Management Implementation Guidance. The CONUS-based MEUs are 11th, 13th, and 15th from the West Coast, 22nd, 24th, and 26th MEUs from the East Coast. The 31st MEU is forward assigned and located in Okinawa, Japan.



Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, participate in a gun shoot on the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5)



A U.S. Navy MH-60S Sea Hawk assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) delivers supplies to the amphibious dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51)

NAVY-MARINE CORPS TEAM



SUPPORTED/SUPPORTING RELATIONSHIP

**Amphibious Squadron
(PHIBRON)**

**Command Element
(MEU)**



**Ground Combat Element
(Battalion Landing Team)**



**Aviation Combat Element
(Composite Squadron)**



**Logistics Combat Element
(Combat Logistics Battalion)**

TASK ORGANIZATION

When a MEU composites, it becomes a Marine-Air Ground Task Force with three Major Subordinate Elements (MSE): a Ground Combat Element, an Aviation Combat Element, and a Logistics Combat Element.

This force is capable of supporting the full spectrum of military operations, to include designated special operations in support of theater requirements.



"A Certain Force in a"

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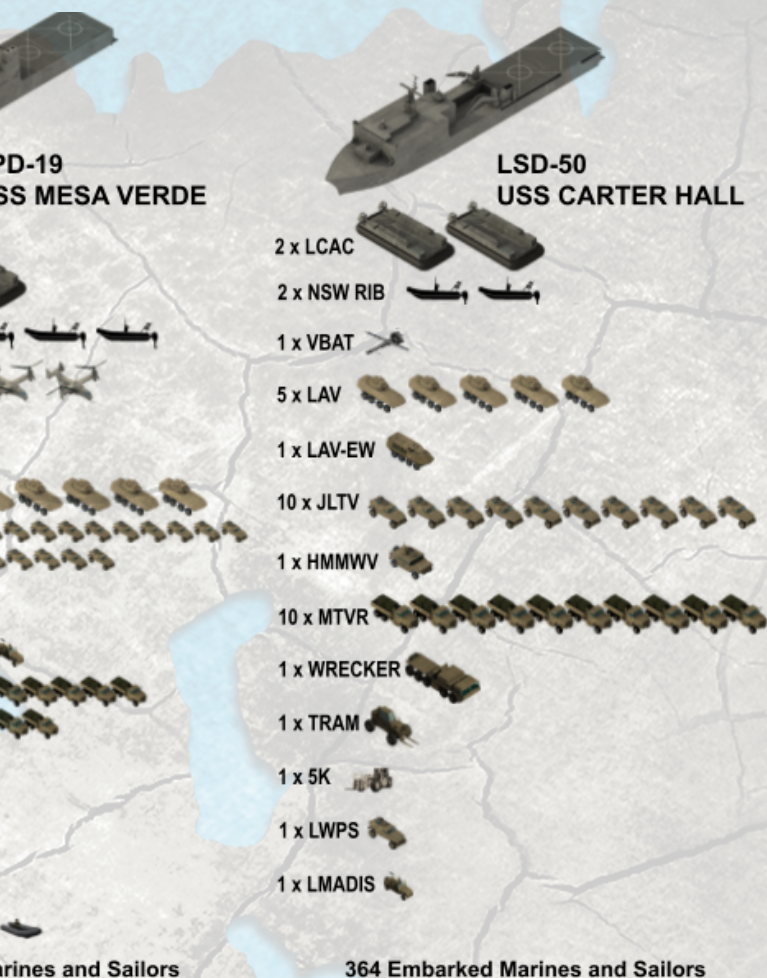


Mission Ess

- Amphibious Assault
- Enabling Operations
- Airfield and port seizure
- Expeditionary Strike
- Intergrate and Operate with Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational
- Amphibious Raid
- Conduct Noncombatant Evacuation
- Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel
- Embassy Reinforcement

an Uncertain World"

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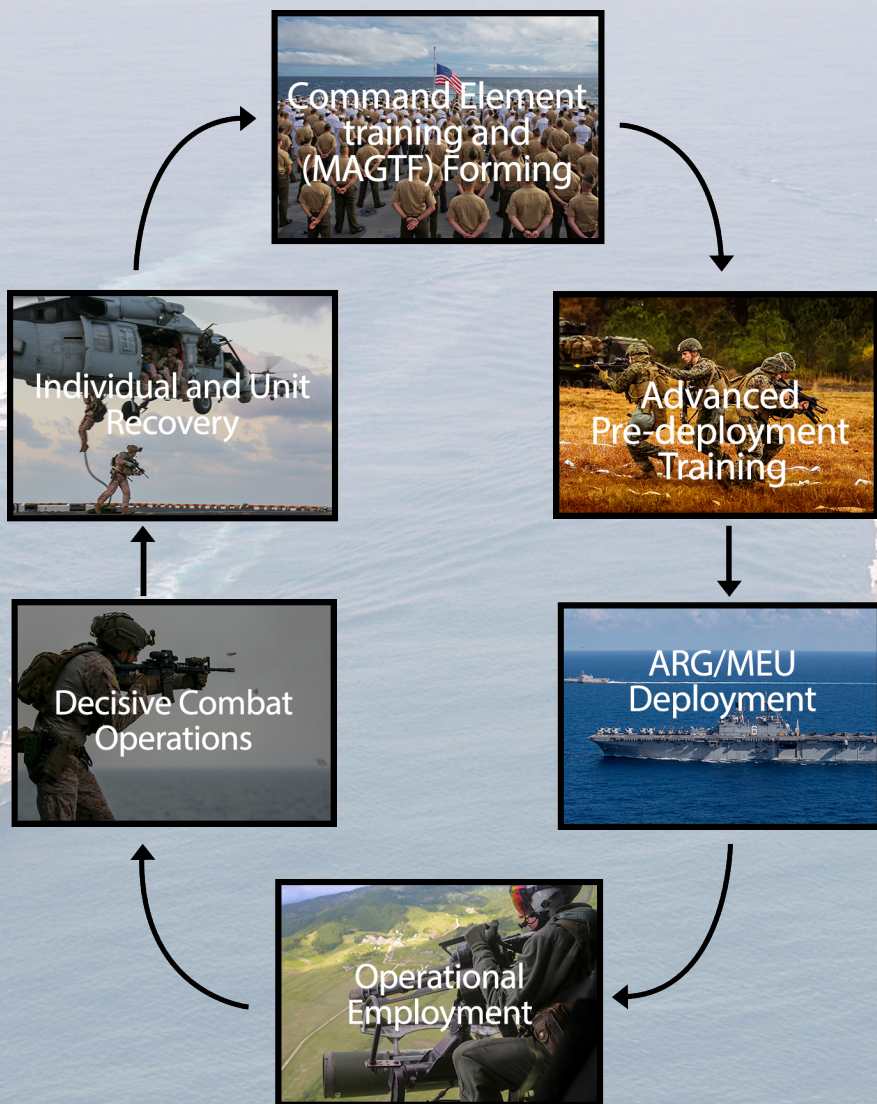
Essential Task List

Evacuation Operations
and Personnel

International Organizations

- Maritime Interception Operations
- Foreign Humanitarian Assistance
- Theater Security Cooperation activities
- Aviation operations from expeditionary shore-based sites

THE LIFE CYCLE OF A MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT



READY, RELEVANT

ARG/MEU PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING

Standardized, Phased, Pre-Deployment Training in CONUS

INITIAL TRAINING PHASE

- ARG/MEU staff planning
- Individual/special skills training



INTERMEDIATE TRAINING PHASE

- Realistic Urban Training
- PHIBRON/MEU integration training
- Composite Training Unit Exercise



FINAL TRAINING PHASE

- Supporting arms coordination
- MEU Certification Exercise
- Pre-overseas movement

ANT, CAPABLE

COMMUNICATING WITH PURPOSE

OUR MISSION DEPENDS ON IT

You are a part of the mission. You will operate here by building a shared understanding of the security, political, and information domains which allow you to adapt to conditions which change daily. You will be the needed difference for our mission by communicating with purpose and efficacy to enable understanding and action tied to our objectives.

INFORMATION IS MOTIVATION. UNDERSTANDING IS INFLUENCE.

Be connected and engaged. When you know and understand the needs and concerns of every part of the broader enterprise, you'll know how to enable ourselves and others. Insight and innovation come from collaboration: harness the expertise of your teammates and the resources available to us as an ARG/MEU team.

Leadership: Concerned and engaged leadership makes the difference - it directly influences esprit de corps and unit morale. I expect Marines and Sailors, at all levels of this Team of Teams, to have a bias for action and to set the example - we must be disciplined and professional in our approach to leadership to ensure we are **Ready**. Readiness is a function of leadership - everything we do counts and must contribute to our Team's combat readiness and effectiveness. This includes taking care of our Families and ensuring every Marine and Sailor is physically, mentally, and spiritually fit - **Ready** to deploy on short notice and capable of accomplishing the mission.

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THE 5 C'S OF COMMUNICATION

CONNECT

Never let info become stale - connect & update in real time. We have a network. When face-to-face conversations aren't an option, pick up the phone and exchange information in real time with the relevant nuances. Share information widely across the MAGTF and communicate with clarity, purpose, and precision.

CONNECT MORE

Constantly think, 'What Do I Know? Who Needs To Know? Have I Told Them Yet?' Share information widely to enable action.

CONNECT PRECISELY

E-mail is the last resort. It has its time and place. Specifically, when you're communicating up and outside the command.

CONNECT FOR EFFECT

PowerPoint is not always effective, but too often we default to it. Sometimes it is the answer. More likely, you need a white board session or discussion around a table guided by two or three subject matter experts.

- Working Groups
- Operational Planning Teams
- Marine Corps Planning Process
- Rapid Response Planning Process (R2P2)

Connect in Person-Walk the Talk

A face-to-face conversation is always best. Make talking in person your default first choice.

Time is always of the essence

Feel an urgency in what you are doing and reporting

26TH MEU AXIOMS

Characteristics expected of every member of the 26th MEU

We have a bias for action - **Don't waste time**

We are disciplined warriors - **Don't cut corners**

We embody our core values - **Don't Lie, Cheat, or Steal**

We are professionals - **Don't discriminate, Harass, Haze, or Assault**


We are elite warriors... ready to fight - **Don't do drugs**

We are elite warriors... ready to fight - **Don't abuse alcohol**

We honor our warrior bloodline - **Don't discredit the Patch**

We never give up... maintain a warrior's spirit - **Don't quit**

Winning is a habit – Success breeds Success!
Keep Winning!



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READY, RELEVANT, CAPABLE



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