

# **MARINETTE HIGH SCHOOL**

## **ACTIVE SHOOTER/HOSTAGE**

**November 29, 2010**

### **AFTER ACTION**

## **REPORT/IMPROVEMENT PLAN**



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## SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This was an actual event that occurred at the Marinette High School, Marinette, Wisconsin on November 29, 2010. It needs to be clearly recognized by all organizations that this was an *Active Shooter* inside the Marinette High School; in which the gunman took his own life bringing resolution to the event. The operational objectives/target capabilities examined during the After Action process have been **Communications, Onsite Incident Management, Public Information and Warning, Medical Surge and Pre-Hospital Treatment, and Public Safety and Security Response capabilities.**

On Monday, November 29, 2010 at 3:48 pm a call was received at the Marinette County Communications/Dispatch Center from a Marinette High School administrator that there was an armed student holding a classroom hostage. As further information was gathered it was learned that a male student was holding a classroom of 24 students and one female teacher at gun point. The suspect was armed with handguns of unknown make and model. Police were able to make phone contact with the teacher in the classroom. The suspect did not make his motive known nor did he make any demands during the event. Below is a timeline of events:

- 1:30 pm 6<sup>th</sup> period classes start. 26 students report to the Western Civilization class taught by teacher Valerie Burd (Room A111).
- Sometime during 6<sup>th</sup> period, Sam Hengel requests to go to the restroom and returns with a duffel bag containing weapons. Holds classmates and teacher hostage.
- 2:10 pm transition to 7<sup>th</sup> period classes. Students reporting to Mrs. Burd's classroom see note on door instructing them to report to the library as previously planned.
- 3:12 pm the school day ends.
- 3:40 pm a parent who has been trying to reach his daughter to pick her up arrives at the high school office. Principal Lambie reviewed student daily attendance records to determine that the student was present at 6<sup>th</sup> period, but not 7<sup>th</sup>. The same was true for a friend of that student.
- 3:45 pm Principal Lambie went to Room A111 and found the room dark with the door locked. He unlocked the door and entered the room. Sam Hengel pointed a weapon at him and told him to leave. The student whose father had come to the school left the room also.
- 3:48 pm Principal Lambie called 9-1-1 to report the incident. The building was evacuated and Room A111 was isolated.
- 3:51 pm first law enforcement officer arrives on scene. Additional law enforcement and emergency medical continue to arrive.
- 7:40 pm Five (5) students are allowed to leave the classroom requesting to use the restroom.

- 8:03 pm gunshots were heard in the classroom and law enforcement personnel breached the door. The suspect shot himself as authorities approached. Remaining students and the teacher were safely evacuated.
- During the night, an explosive detection canine did a safety sweep of the building and investigators collected evidence.
- November 30, 2010, 15 year old Sam Hengel died of his self-inflicted gunshot injury.

Two handguns were recovered at the scene. Both weapons came from the suspect's home. They were a 9mm Luger High Point and a 22 caliber Ruger semi-automatic. Two knives were also recovered from the duffel bag: a folding knife with a 3.5" blade and a 5.5" fixed blade knife in a sheath. Ammunition recovered: 9mm bullets – 16 in duffel bag, 21 in clothing and .22 caliber bullets – 132 in duffel bag, 36 in clothing.

Responding agencies included: Marinette Police Department, Marinette County Sheriff's Department, Menominee (MI) Police Department, Menominee County (MI) Sheriff Department, WI Department of Natural Resources, WI State Patrol, Brown County Sheriff's Department, Green Bay Police Department, Peshtigo Police Department, Crivitz Police Department, Forest County Sheriff's Department, Laona Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, WI Department of Criminal Investigation, Marinette Fire Department, Emergency Rescue Squad, Bay Area Medical Center/Paramedics, Marinette County District Attorney, Marinette County Emergency Management, WI Emergency Management NE Region, Marinette County Health & Human Services Department, and the American Red Cross.

The purpose of this report is to analyze event results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

## Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this event are as follows:

- Clearly the Marinette School District has well trained and dedicated staff. It is evident that the school system learned from the Active Shooter/Hostage exercise cycle conducted in 2009.
- As has been noted the City of Marinette and Marinette County have a number of resources that they can call upon in a disaster/emergency and that was on display during this event in the form of personnel and equipment.
- Clearly the Police, Fire, EMS, Communications, and Emergency Management Departments are well trained in their respective responsibilities, jurisdictions, and tactical response.

- It is evident that Marinette County has a highly trained and qualified Public Information Officer who fully understands the importance of reporting timely and accurate information.
- The Incident Command Structure was built from the initial incident response and was tailored to the unique tactical and strategic needs needed to meet the operational objectives.

## Primary Areas for Improvement

Throughout the event, several opportunities for improvement in the City of Marinette, Marinette County, Hospital, and Schools ability to respond to the incident were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- Continued training on ICS is essential to get all participants on the same level for understanding terminology and roles in a large scale event.
- There was a perception that the hospital/EMS should have had a larger role in the Incident Command Post and concerns were expressed at the lack of EMS representation. However at onset of event there were no on scene operational objectives for EMS until the suspect shot himself. Emergency Management and the hospital should identify and utilize a hospital liaison position in their respective EOC.
- Further understanding and training with available Communication Systems (ASTRO and 800 MHz). Agency administrators expressed during the After Action process their commitment to improving communications given fiscal restraints and review and improving policies and procedures.
- Comprehensive risk and needs assessment completed by the school district to identify areas of security weakness.

## SECTION 2: EVENT OVERVIEW

### Event Details

**Event Name**

Marinette High School Active Shooter/Hostage

**Objectives:**

**Objective 1:** Onsite Incident Management

**Objective 2:** Communications

**Objective 3:** Emergency Public Information and Warning

**Objective 4:** Medical Surge

**Objective 5:** Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment

**Objective 6:** Public Safety and Security Response

**Objective 7:** School Response and Recovery Operations

**Hazard:**

Natural (P or S)    Technological    (P or S)    Security/Terrorism (P or S)

Tornado		Dam Failure		Biological	
Drought		Hazardous Materials – Fixed Facility		Chemical	
Flood		Hazardous Materials – Transportation		Civil Disorder	
Winter Storm		Power Failure		Cyber	
Wild Fire		Radiological – Fixed Facility		Law Enforcement Response to Active Shooter	P
Landslide		Radiological – Transportation		Hostage	S
Subsidence		Structural Fires		Nuclear/Radiological	
		Transportation Accidents (Air/Rail/Highway/Water)			

**Event Focus (Check one or more):**

Preparedness  Mitigation  Response  Recovery

**Participating Organizations:**

Marinette School District, Marinette Police Department, Marinette County Sheriff’s Department, Menominee (MI) Police Department, Menominee County (MI) Sheriff Department, WI Department of Natural Resources, WI State Patrol, Brown County Sheriff’s Department, Green Bay Police Department, Peshtigo Police Department, Crivitz Police Department, Forest County Sheriff’s Department, Laona Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, WI Department of Criminal Investigation, Marinette Fire Department, Emergency Rescue Squad, Bay Area Medical Center/Paramedics, Marinette County District Attorney, Marinette County Emergency Management, WI Emergency Management NE Region, Marinette County Health & Human Services Department, and the American Red Cross.

**Indicate Number of Participants in each Category:**

	Number		Number		Number
Elected/Appointed Officials		Federal		Utilities	
Civil Air Patrol		Law Enforcement	70	Volunteer Agencies	8
Communications	5	Search & Rescue		Federal	
Emergency Management	10	Private Industry		State: WEM	1
				DCI	12
				Patrol	6
Finance		Public Information	4	Military	
Fire	16	Public Participants		Other	
Health & Medical	30	Public Works	2		
Human Services	8	Radiological			
School Personnel	10	LEPC		<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>



## Event Objectives

Based upon the identified event objectives below, Agencies demonstrated the following capabilities from the Target Capabilities List during this event:

### Onsite Incident Management

#### **Objectives:**

- Direct, coordinate, and control emergency response activities during the shooting incident at Marinette High School through operations of an Incident Command System (ICS).
- Activate mutual aid plans and coordinate activities between jurisdictions and organizations responding to the Active Shooter emergency at Marinette HS.

### Communications

#### **Objective:**

- Establish and maintain communications essential to support response to the incident at the Marinette High School.

### Emergency Public Information

#### **Objective:**

- Activate the emergency public information system to provide official information and instruction to diverse organizations and populations in order to facilitate timely and appropriate public information surrounding the response to the incident at Marinette High School.

### Medical Surge and Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment

#### **Objective:**

- Stage and prepare local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies to use response procedures and specialty equipment to triage, treat, and transport victims of a mass casualty incident at the Marinette High School.

### Public Safety and Security Response

#### **Objectives:**

- Alert, mobilize, and activate the personnel, facilities, and systems required for the emergency response, to the active shooter incident at Marinette High School.



- Establish perimeters and scene security.
- Establish Investigative/Intelligence branch
- Establish off-site staging area for family of students/teacher held in classroom.
- Establish/maintain patrol for day to day complaint traffic.
- Activate tactical team protocols and procedures to include negotiations.

### School Response and Recovery Operations

#### **Objectives:**

- Alert, mobilize, and activate school personnel, facilities, and systems required for the emergency response and recovery to the active shooter incident at Marinette High School.
- Activate School Crisis management protocols and procedures.
- Coordinate and participate with Public Information.

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## SECTION 3: ANALYSIS OF OBJECTIVES

### Onsite Incident Management

#### Target Capability Summary:

Onsite incident management is the capability to effectively direct and control incident management activities by using the Incident Command System (ICS) consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The incident is managed safely, effectively and efficiently through the integration of facilities, resources (personnel, equipment, supplies, and communications) and procedures using a common organizational structure that is ICS.

#### Observation:

- Incident Command was established early into the event. It was reported during the After Action Review that the Command Post was used for different functions and became overwhelmed with reporting mutual aid resources checking in and there was a need for a separate staging area away from the ICP.
- It was reported during the After Action Review that Hospital/EMS was not represented in the ICP. At the onset of the incident there were no on scene operational objectives for EMS.
- Updates and intelligence were delayed to Hospital/EMS.
- IC periodically asked for updates from entry team.
- Incident Commander told HS (High School) Command to stay with him at all times.
- The incident did not transition into unified command as the operational objectives were law enforcement based. EMS and Fire were branched from the Operations Section.
- There seemed to be adequate staff for the established ICS functions.

#### Recommendations:

- ❑ **The Incident Command Post is the field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions is performed. The Incident Command Post needs to be located outside the “hot zone” in an area where command can get a visual operating picture of the incident. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **The Emergency Operations Center is the physical location at which the coordination of information, intelligence, and resources to support incident management activities takes place. Liaisons from jurisdictions (Police, Fire, and EMS) should be represented. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**

- ❑ **The Incident Command Structure is built from the initial incident response and may be tailored to the unique tactical and strategic needs needed to meet the operational objectives. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **Further Incident Management/Unified Command Training for department personnel, supervisors, and managers. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**

## Communications

### Target Capability Summary

A continuous flow of critical information is maintained as needed among multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary emergency responders, command posts, agencies and government officials for the duration of the emergency response operation in compliance with National Incident Management System (NIMS). In response to an incident alert, notify and provide personnel and communication management until the Incident Command (IC), Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and Emergency Management Agency (EMA) are activated.

Communication difficulties are not unique to events such as this; most communication troubles highlighted in recent events throughout the state and country have been associated with interpersonal communications and not the result of technology. During this event it was a combination of the interpersonal, training/policy, and technology that caused interoperable communication breakdown.

#### Observation:

- There were some issues with identifying a common single radio frequency defining responsibilities day to day patrol and on scene management, Marinette PD or Marinette County ASTRO (encrypted)
- ICP access to encrypted tactical channels without Tact team commander being present in ICP.
- Green Bay SWAT team did not have access to Marinette County ASTRO (encrypted).
- Need for encrypted tactical frequencies for different functions (perimeter security, inner security, etc.)
- 800 MHz equipment provided by the State of Michigan worked well as used. The use of STATEWIDE 8 talk group has been recommended for future events.
- Need for communications equipment on the Marinette County Mobile Command unit.
- Access to encrypted frequencies regarding medical response.
- Cell phones did not work properly as the cell system network became overwhelmed.

- GETS card requires continuous activation for multiple calls.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Incident Commander must establish and facilitate the use of a common communications plan and the communication processes. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- The Incident Commander may delegate communication operations to the Marinette County Communication/Dispatch Department. The on-scene communication facilities can be located in the ICP and operated by county dispatch. Marinette County has the technological capabilities to establish wireless access to the CAD system. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- Develop digital encrypted communication capabilities in the Marinette County ACU 1000 system. Program ACU 1000 digital encrypted radios with mutual aid partners and regional “Specialty team” encrypted frequencies. (Training, Policy/Procedure, Equipment)**
- Develop monthly testing procedures for the Michigan 800 MHz communication equipment. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- Separate Marinette County ASTRO (encrypted) frequency from Marinette County VHF versus a shared frequency. (Licensing)**

## **Emergency Public Information and Warning**

### **Target Capability Summary:**

Develop, coordinate, and disseminate accurate alerts and emergency information to the media and the public prior to an impending emergency and activate warning systems to notify those most at-risk in the event of an emergency. By refining its ability to disseminate accurate, consistent, timely, and easy-to understand information about emergency response and recovery processes, a jurisdiction can contribute to the well-being of the community during and after an emergency. Government agencies and public and private sectors receive and transmit coordinated, prompt, useful and reliable information regarding threats to their health, safety, and property, through clear, consistent information delivery systems. This information is updated regularly and outlines protective measures that can be taken by individuals and their communities.

## Observation:

- Early on rumor control was difficult to address. Facebook and Twitter indicate that the number one news event posted on their sights for 11/29/2010 was the active shooter incident at Marinette High School.
- The Joint Information Center could not present information at the same speed to which Facebook and Twitter was reporting information. Media agencies were asking for further details on new information before the official release of such information.
- The scheduling of the first press briefing was within 90 minutes of the time of call and briefing were scheduled every hour and conducted earlier when new information became available.
- The Marinette Police Department and Marinette High School did provide personnel for briefings and interviews.
- County PIO was instrumental in the development of a media plan and it was supported with other county personnel to facilitate the needs of the police department and school district.
- County PIO became overwhelmed with request as the week went on. There is a lack of trained PIO personnel within local organizations to support a extended event duration.
- The Media Plan addressed the need for perimeter security; all news briefings, interviews, and information was delivered from a secure sight away from the school. Media outlets were informed that no information regarding the events would be obtained at/near the school.
- The Media plan also addressed the need for privacy at the County Courthouse where family members of the students were located. All new information received was released to family area first and then to news agencies.
- Six additional phone lines were established for media information to relieve media pressure from the Communications and Dispatch Center.
- In all there were over 100 news agencies throughout the state, nation, and world that were present or called for information and interviews during the incident and through the week.
- There was a lack of Public Information coordination between Marinette County public information activities and those of the designated lead agency at the state level.

## Recommendations:

- Development of Facebook and Twitter accounts. Develop plans, policy, procedures for the release of official information to Facebook and Twitter that coincides with general release practices. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
  - Further Public Information Officer training for department personnel, supervisors, and managers. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
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- ❑ **Update Annex J: Public Information and Warning to include Social Media. (Training, Policy/Procedure, Equipment)**
- ❑ **Agencies within the state when designated as “lead agencies” to an event should develop methods and policies that will coordinate public information efforts between the local agency and state agencies. (Training, Policy/Procedure).**

## **Medical Surge AND Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment**

### **Capability Summary**

Medical Surge is the capability to rapidly expand the capacity of the existing healthcare system (long-term care facilities, community health agencies, acute care facilities, alternate care facilities and public health departments) in order to provide triage and subsequent medical care. This includes providing definitive care to individuals at the appropriate clinical level of care, within sufficient time to achieve recovery and minimize medical complications. The capability applies to an event resulting in a number or type of patients that overwhelm the day-to-day acute-care medical capacity. Medical Surge is defined as the rapid expansion of the capacity of the existing healthcare system in response to an event that results in increased need of personnel (clinical and non-clinical), support functions (laboratories and radiological), physical space (beds, alternate care facilities) and logistical support (clinical and non-clinical equipment and supplies). Triage and Pre-Hospital Treatment is the capability to appropriately dispatch emergency medical services (EMS) resources; to provide feasible, suitable, and medically acceptable pre-hospital triage and treatment of patients; to provide transport as well as medical care en-route to an appropriate receiving facility; and to track patients to a treatment facility.

### **Observation:**

- Hospital/EMS expressed that they were not represented in the ICP.
- Updates and intelligence were delayed to Hospital/EMS.
- Hospital/EMS expressed lack of intelligence passed to paramedics about other potential threats or personal safety while treating suspect on scene.
- Hospital deployed multiple ALS units and doctor to staging area near High School.
- Hospital activated EMS Mass Casualty plan and requested other county BLS to stage near High School.
- Hospital/ER activated their Medical Surge/Triage plans once number of potential casualties was confirmed.
- Hospital expressed concerns to the lack of law enforcement presence while suspect was being treated at the ER and during transport to Green Bay hospital.
- Hospital expressed concerns about the lack communication interoperability on-scene as law enforcement utilized encrypted frequencies.

## Recommendations:

- ❑ **The Incident Command Post is the field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions is performed. The Incident Command Post needs to be located outside the “hot zone” in an area where command can get a visual operating picture of the incident. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **The Emergency Operations Center is the physical location at which the coordination of information, intelligence, and resources to support incident management activities takes place. Liaisons from jurisdictions (Police, Fire, and EMS) should be represented. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **County Emergency Management could assist the hospital in setting up future drills and exercises with agencies/departments that could address issues that the hospital deems essential in the area of incident management and policy development. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **Further Incident Management/Unified Command Training for department personnel, supervisors, and managers. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**

## Public Safety and Security Response

### Capability Summary:

Public Safety and Security Response is the capability to reduce the impact and consequences of an incident or major event by securing the affected area, including crime/incident scene preservation issues as appropriate, safely diverting the public from hazards, providing security support to other response operations and properties, and sustaining operations from response through recovery. Public Safety and Security Response requires coordination among officials from law enforcement (LE), fire, and emergency medical services (EMS).

### Observation:

- Mutual Aid partners were coordinated and organized and operational objectives were implemented smoothly.
- Staging area with check in/check out was established.
- Some departments checked in at staging but failed to check out.
- Establish and secured perimeters quickly outer, inner, and hot zone.
- School Liaison Officer utilized as liaison between law enforcement and school district.
- Established off-site facility for parents and family of victims.
- There was not an incident action plan developed due to the short length of duration.

- Intelligence on suspect and hostages was obtained quickly.
- Established contact with classroom early into event.
- Utilized Fire Department for outer perimeter security.
- It was expressed during the After Action that off duty officers called in were not informed of the nature, need or scope of the incident.
- Local law enforcement resources were exhausted quickly leaving day to day patrol short until mutual aid partners arrived.
- Utilized mutual aid partners to cover day to day patrol operations.
- Tactical team members include several investigators this slowed the gathering of intelligence and establishing an investigative branch.
- Accountability and duty assignments were not always clear. Some mutual aid officers were assigned day to day patrol and were reassigned to perimeter security.
- Tactical commanders and school officials designated to ICP did not stay with or in contact with IC/ICP.
- Coordination and communication with Department of Criminal Investigation and Federal Bureau of Investigation was excellent.
- Need to maintain incident management system through entire event not closing after tactical operations conclude.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The ultimate responsibility for the safe conduct of all incident management operations lies with the Incident Commander or the Unified Command. Staging areas need to be identified and all personnel who are not directly involved with operations need to report to the staging area(s). The staging areas become safety zones for scene personnel and the deployment of additional resources is controlled and coordinated to the operational zone. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- Staging will also eliminate vehicle, equipment, and personnel congestion in the command post and inner perimeter. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- Further Incident Management/Unified Command Training for department personnel, supervisors, and managers. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- Tactical response training/procedures to be determined internally by the individual agency or jurisdiction. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**



## School Safety and Recovery Operations

### Capability Summary:

School Safety and Recovery Operations is the capability to reduce the impact and consequences of an incident or major event in the school by securing the affected area, including crime/incident scene preservation issues as appropriate, safely diverting the public from hazards, and sustaining school operations from response through recovery. School Safety and Recovery requires coordination with officials from law enforcement (LE), fire, and emergency medical services (EMS).

### Observation:

- Teacher and students in classroom demonstrated exceptional behavior which controlled the suspect's behavior and demeanor.
- Initial contact with suspect by principal was handled exceptionally. Action by principal controlled suspect's behavior and demeanor.
- Initial call to 911 was made calmly.
- Evacuation of building was done quickly.
- Transportation of evacuated students was coordinated and was timely.
- Plan for release of evacuated students to guardian was developed quickly.
- Critical Incident Response Guide was used and followed.
- Accountability procedures and systems were examined during the after action process.
- An Incident Command structure was established early into the event and was coordinated and unified with the law enforcement incident management structure.
- School District was active in the public information process.
- It was expressed during the after action that the communication systems within the school need to be updated as not all phones work in the classrooms.
- The process for crisis notification was expressed during the after action process.
- Crisis response to the needs of staff and students was recognized quickly and plans were developed.

### Recommendations:

- Further Incident Management/Unified Command Training for school personnel. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- School safety and security response training/procedures to be determined internally by the individual jurisdiction. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**

- ❑ **School District should conduct a comprehensive non-biased risk and needs analysis that focuses on safety and security measures. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **County Emergency Management could assist the school in setting up future drills and exercises with agencies/departments that could address issues that the school deems essential in the area of incident management and policy development. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**
- ❑ **Further Public Information Officer training for school personnel. (Training, Policy/Procedure)**

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## SECTION 4: CONCLUSION

The After Action process cannot answer the questions why. The process takes a logical approach to analyze the incident, in which a gunman armed with two semi-automatic weapons and two hundred rounds of ammunition held a classroom at gunpoint. The Marinette Police Department, Marinette School District and many other agencies were presented a very stressful and high intensity situation and while they encountered minor problems; they had the ability within the organization to adapt, adjust, improvise and they overcame the situations presented to succeed. It's clear that organizations involved in this event are very good and professional in their approach to their jobs.

The goal of an After Action Report is for each of the organizations involved to look within themselves to determine what polices or plans need to be reviewed or changed and what areas of training, additional skills or equipment need to be attained. The long term objective for those who participated in the After Action process is to answer the question how can we get better at what we do. It is apparent that as a nation, state, and local government a reasonably good job in securing and hardening the government buildings, courthouses, medical care facilities, and ports to violent acts or acts of terrorism has been accomplished. The school systems across the region, state, and nation have become soft targets to violent attack. In the wake of this event there have been two other nationally followed active shooter events in the school setting (Panama City, Florida and Omaha, Nebraska). The lessons learned during this incident need to be used, developed, and refined, not simply filed away. There needs to be follow up, policy reviews, need assessments, and possible training planned. The Marinette School District, City of Marinette, and Marinette County will recover from this event and establish a new normal

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