

Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association Incorporated By-Laws

ARTICLE 1

THE ASSOCIATION AND IT'S PURPOSE

Section 1. Name

This organization shall be known as the Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association, Incorporated, hereafter referred to in these By-laws as the Association.

Section 2. Purpose

- A. To make available and coordinate the personnel, resources and equipment of all independent fire department and Dive Rescue Units so as to bring to the scene of any emergency the most appropriate type of assistance with the greatest possible efficiency in action.
- B. To assure that all active members of the Association shall maintain such equipment and training standards as well as to assure that the active membership is knowledgeable in the standard operating guidelines when called to the scene of any emergency.
- C. To promote the passage (by Incorporated Town, the County and State) of such laws, ordinances, and codes as may be needed to protect the citizens and properties in Charles County against hazards to life, property and the environment.

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2 **Section 3. Composition of the Association**
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- 4 A. The active and voting membership of the Association shall be limited to
5 such Independent Incorporated Volunteer Fire Companies and the
6 Charles County Dive Team, Inc. as are approved by a majority vote
7 taken by secret ballot of such member Companies as represented at a
8 regular or special meeting of the Association.
9
10 B. The membership of a Company in this Association shall be in
11 accordance with standards set up and approved by this Association
12
13 C. Membership of a Company shall continue in force so long as it
14 continues to meet the standards in Article I, Section 3B, does it's part in
15 fulfilling the purposes of the Association as set forth in Article I,
16 Section 2, and meets the requirements of Article I, Section 5.
17

18 **Section 4. Fiscal Year**
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20 The fiscal year of this Association shall be July 1 to June 30.
21

22 **Section 5. Dues**
23

- 24 A. Dues of \$100 per year shall be paid on or before January 31st of each
25 year.
26
27 B. Failure to pay dues by February 28th will cause membership to
28 be dropped from this association.
29

30 **Section 6. Standards**
31

- 32 A. When properly notified (Article III, Section 11) it shall be the obligation
33 of all member companies of this Association to have their equipment,
34 and equipment records available for inspection and testing.
35
36 B. Failure of any Company to show up for inspection and testing, without
37 good reason, or continued delay or refusal to have equipment inspected
38 and tested can result in the withholding of tax monies at the
39 recommendation of the Association.
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1 **ARTICLE II**
2 **OFFICERS**

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4 **Section 1. Administrative Officers**

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6 The Administrative Officers of this Association shall consist of a President, a Vice
7 President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Chaplain, A Charles County Communications
8 Board Member and an Executive Committee Chairman.
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10 **Section 2. Service Officers**

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12 The Service Officers of this Association shall consist of a County Fire Chief, Deputy Fire
13 Chief, Special Operations Chief, and the Deputy Special Operations Chief.
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15 **Section 3. Fire Prevention Officer**

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17 The fire prevention activities of this Association shall be entrusted to the Fire Prevention
18 Officer.
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20 **Section 4. Selection of Officers and Period of Service**

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22 A. Administrative Officers: shall be elected by secret ballot for a one year
23 term. Elections are to be held at the last regular meeting of the year. All
24 officers shall assume their official duties on the first day of January of
25 the year of their term.
26

27 B. Service and Public Protection Officers: The County Fire, the Special
28 Operations Chief and the Fire Prevention Officer shall be elected by
29 secret ballot at the last regular meeting of each year. The County Fire
30 Chief and the Special Operations Chief shall appoint his/her own
31 Deputy. All officers shall assume their official duties on the first day of
32 January of their term.
33

34 1. The County Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief must have served
35 a minimum of two (2) years as a Chief officer within a member
36 department of this Association. They also must meet the minimum
37 training standards for Chief officers.
38

39 2. The Special Operations Chief candidate shall be a nomination
40 endorsed by the County Chiefs, and the nomination shall be
41 Initiated by the Technical Rescue Committee (committee
42 appointed by the County Fire Chief). In addition to meeting the
43 County Chief Officer Qualifications, the individual shall be
44 certified to the technician level in the following disciplines:
45 Structural and Trench Collapse Rescue, Confined Space Rescue,
46 Rope Rescue and Surface Water Rescue.
47

- 1 C. Executive Committee: Each member company may submit a list of up to
2 five (5) delegates and up to five (5) alternates listing one member as the
3 Chair of the delegation. This list shall serve as the representatives of the
4 respective company for business that comes before the Executive
5 Committee. These representatives shall be entitled to make motion's or
6 second's but there shall only be one vote per company. This
7 Committee shall serve as the Directors of the Association.
8
9 D. A resignation must be considered as having been requested and accepted
10 whenever a two-thirds (2/3) majority indicates, by a secret ballot at a
11 regular or special meeting, that a change of personnel is desired because
12 of repeated or continued from this County, physical incapability, or other
13 condition that would prevent the carrying out of their responsibilities.
14
15 E. Elected officers should attend all Association meetings, regular or
16 special. Officers that are absent from three consecutive regular
17 Association meeting without good reason, could result in the termination
18 of their office by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by secret ballot.
19
20 F. Vacancies shall be filled at the next regular or special meetings by
21 majority ballot vote.
22
23

24 **ARTICLE III**

25 **RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS**

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27 **Section 1. The President**

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- 29 A. The President shall see that the Secretary gives proper notice of all
30 regular and special meetings.
31
32 B. The President shall call meetings to order and see that they are
33 conducted according to standard rules and the special rules of
34 procedures as set forth in these By-Laws, under Article VI.
35
36 C. The President shall appoint such committees as may, from time to time,
37 be required to handle Association affairs. The President shall be an ex-
38 office member of all committees, by virtue of his/her office.
39
40 D. The President shall do all in his/power to bring about a spirit of fraternal
41 cooperation among the members of the Association, and hold the
42 Association to its purpose as set forth in Article I, Section 2.
43
44 E. The President shall assume the duties of the Executive Committee
45 Chairman in the absence of the Chairman.
46

1 **Section 2. The Vice President**

- 2
- 3 A. The Vice President shall, whenever requested by the President, or in the
- 4 absence or incapacity of the President, be responsible for carrying out
- 5 the functions of the President.
- 6
- 7 B. The Vice President shall serve as Secretary to the Executive Committee.
- 8 He/she shall keep a record of all business transacted and submit a
- 9 written copy of those minutes at the next regular meeting.

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11 **Section 3. The Secretary**

- 12
- 13 A. The Secretary shall keep a record of all business transacted at regular
- 14 and special meetings. He/she shall also record the business of any other
- 15 meetings called, when requested.
- 16
- 17 B. The Secretary shall send out notices of all meetings, and handle the
- 18 Association's correspondence.
- 19
- 20 C. The Secretary shall send out notices of dues when so requested by the
- 21 Treasurer.
- 22
- 23 D. At each regular or special meeting, the Secretary shall read the minutes
- 24 of the previous meeting, or meetings, and be prepared to report on any
- 25 special correspondence of the Association.
- 26
- 27 E. The Secretary may appoint someone to assist him/her in recording the
- 28 business of any meetings in his/her absence.

29

30 **Section 4. The Treasurer**

- 31
- 32 A. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the safe keeping and disposition
- 33 of, according to the direction of the Association, any and all Association
- 34 funds.
- 35
- 36 B. The Treasurer shall keep detailed records of all expenses and monies
- 37 collected.
- 38
- 39 C. The Treasurer shall be responsible for notifying all Companies, through
- 40 the Secretary, of annual dues to this Association.
- 41
- 42 D. The Treasurer shall submit a written report at each regular meeting of
- 43 monies collected, expenses, etc.
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Section 5. The County Fire Chief and The Special Operations Chief

A. County Fire Chief

1. Prepare/Present reports at the monthly chiefs meetings and bi-monthly Association meetings.
2. Attend, when available, monthly County Chiefs Meetings, monthly Association Executive Committee meetings, monthly DES/Volunteer Leadership meetings, monthly Board of Fire/Rescue meetings, and bi-monthly Association meetings
3. Participate in MWCOC meetings (in person or teleconference)
4. Make available and coordinate the resources and equipment of all county fire resources so as to bring to the scene of any type of emergency the most appropriate type and amount of help with the least possible delay in arrival and the greatest possible efficiency in action. This is to include appropriate transfers are in place.
5. Promote the passage of such laws, ordinances, and codes as may be needed to protect the lives and properties in Charles County against hazards.
6. Manage Day-to-Day Operations as needed
7. Respond on all major events within in the county to assist Incident Commanders, when available
8. Establish and maintain Memorandums of Understanding, Mutual Aide Agreements, Standard Operating Guidelines, and Running Assignments pertaining to Charles County.
9. Fill the Charles County Emergency Operations Center/ESF seat. If not available then have it filled with qualified personnel.
10. Operate within the scope of the Charles County Emergency Operations Plan.
11. Oversee Workgroups/Committees that have operational concern.

B. County Special Operations Chief

1. Prepare/Present progress reports for the Division at the monthly chiefs meetings and bi-monthly Association meetings.
2. Attend monthly County Chiefs Meetings, monthly Association Executive Committee meetings, monthly DES/Volunteer Leadership meetings, monthly Board of Fire/Rescue meetings, and bi-monthly Association meetings.
3. Participate in MWCOC meetings (in person or teleconference)
4. Prepare/Present Budget to include categories for emergency reserve, operational, training to the Executive Committee at the Annual Budget meeting.

5. Make available and coordinate the resources and equipment of all county Special Operations Division companies so as to bring to the scene of any type of emergency the most appropriate type and amount of help with the least possible delay in arrival and the greatest possible efficiency in action.
6. Assure that all active members of the Division shall maintain such equipment and training standards as will enable them to cooperate with other units called to the scene of an emergency
7. Promote the passage of such laws, ordinances, and codes as may be needed to protect the lives and properties in Charles County against hazards.
8. Manage Day-to-Day Operations
9. Respond on all Special Operations Incidents, when available
10. Establish and maintain Memorandums of Understanding, Mutual Aide Agreements, Standard Operating Guidelines, and Running Assignments pertaining to Special Operations.
11. Fill the Charles County Emergency Operations Center/ESF seat, when available.
12. Operate within the scope of the Charles County Emergency Operations Plan.
13. Assess target hazards within Charles County.
14. The following member companies will cover the respective disciplines:
 - a. Co. 1: Structural and Trench Collapse Rescue
 - b. Co. 3: Rope Rescue
 - c. Co. 5: Swift Water Rescue
 - d. Co. 7: Confined Space Rescue
 - e. Co. 8: Swift Water Rescue
 - f. Co. 12: Rope Rescue
 - g. Co. 13: Swift Water Rescue

Section 6. The Deputy County Fire Chief and Special Operations Deputy Chief

The Deputy County Fire Chief and the Special Operations Deputy Chief shall assume such responsibilities as are required by their respective Chiefs.

1 **Section 7. The County Fire Prevention Officer**
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- 3 A. The County Fire Prevention Officer shall be responsible for submitting a
4 operating budget to the Association at the first regular meeting of the year,
5 for it's adoption.
6 B. It shall be his/her duty to lend assistance to Fire Prevention Officers/Fire
7 Prevention Committees of member Companies when so requested, in
8 order to further fire prevention activities in Charles County.
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10 **Section 8. The Chaplain**
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12 The Chaplain shall add a religious harmony to the meetings by giving the Invocation and
13 Benediction at each meeting held.
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15 **Section 9. Charles County Communications Board Representative**
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- 17 A. The Communications Board Representative shall serve on a committee,
18 composed of representatives from the Charles County Volunteer Firemen's
19 Association, Inc, the Charles County Association of Emergency Medical
20 Services, Inc., and the Charles County Sheriff's Department, which shall be
21 known as the Charles County Communications Board.
22 B. The Communications Board Representative shall attend all meetings of the
23 Charles County Communications Board as this Association's representative
24 and shall:
25 1. Have full authority to make any necessary decisions concerning
26 operational procedures of the Communications Boards as this
27 Association's representative.
28 2. Present to the Communications Board all requests of this Association in
29 writing and with copies being forwarded to the Secretary of this
30 Association and to strive for their acceptance.
31 3. Present a full written report at each regular membership meeting of this
32 Association of the Communication's Board activities for the previous
33 period.
34 4. The Communications Board member shall attend, or have another
35 representative from the Communications Board, attend all County
36 Chiefs' meetings so as to make any operational procedures decisions as
37 to questions or problems that the County Fire Chiefs may bring to their
38 meetings.
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1 **Section 10. Executive Committee Chairman**
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- 3 A. The Executive Committee Chairman shall serve as the Chairman to the
4 Executive Committee (Executive Board of Directors), of this Association
5 and shall be the Association's representative to the Charles County Board of
6 Fire and Rescue Commissioners.
7
8 B. The Chairman shall call and preside over monthly meetings of the Executive
9 Committee and present written reports of the Committees previous activities
10 at each of the regular business meetings of the Association.
11 C. The Chairman shall assure that the Executive Committee shall be provided
12 annually, the updated Fire Tax Assessment of the County as determined by
13 the County Tax Assessor's office.
14
15 D. The Chairman shall, with the assistance of the Executive Committee
16 members, annually provide the necessary reporting forms and updated
17 guidelines, accept and analyze the annual financial statements of the
18 member organizations, and transmit them to the Board of Fire and Rescue
19 Commissioners.
20
21 E. The Chairman shall, with the assistance of the Executive Committee,
22 analyze and update previous year's budgets and make recommendations
23 concerning future budgets.
24

25 **Section 11. Standards Committee Chairman**
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- 27 A. The Standards Committee Chairman shall assure that the Standards
28 Committee annually reviews the Association Standards, making
29 recommendations for minimum standards for equipment and Companies.
30 This report shall be submitted in writing at the September meeting each year
31 to the Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association.
32
33 B. The Chairman shall assure that the committee annually inspects all
34 equipment and equipment records to insure compliance with the Association
35 Standards.
36
37 C. The Chairman shall notify the member companies, in writing, of date, time
38 and location of inspection and testing of apparatus and equipment.
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40 D. The Chairman shall provide a written certification of member Companies
41 that have met Association Standards by October 1 of each year to the
42 Executive Committee Chairman with a copy to the Association President.
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1 **ARTICLE IV**

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3 **Section 1. Standing Committees**

- 4
- 5 A. The Standing Committees of this Association shall be the Executive
- 6 Committee, the Standards Committee and the By-Laws Committee.
- 7
- 8 1. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be as prescribed by this
- 9 Association and applicable County Code.
- 10
- 11 2. The duties of the Standards Committee shall be prescribed by Article III,
- 12 Section 11 of these by-laws and applicable County Code.
- 13
- 14 3. The duties of the By-Laws Committee shall be to review the By-Laws
- 15 and proposed changes needed to support the purpose of this Association.
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18 **ARTICLE V**

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20 **FORMATION OF A NEW VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT**

21 **OR THE ADDITION OF A NEW STATION BY AN EXISTING**

22 **CCVFA MEMBER COMPANY**

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24 **Section 1. General**

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26 Pursuant to the Laws of Charles County and the State of Maryland, new Volunteer Fire

27 Departments or the addition of new stations by existing CCVFA Member Companies

28 must be approved by this Association in order to assure eligibility for Charles County

29 Fire Tax Funds or other public monies. Therefore, when a group wishes to form a new

30 volunteer fire department or an existing member company wishes to add an additional

31 station, the following procedures must be followed.

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33 **Section 2. Procedure**

- 34
- 35 A. Representatives of the proposed new unit or the existing member company
- 36 must make a formal written request to the body of the Association. The
- 37 formal written request must consist of at least:
- 38
- 39 1. The tentative or approximate location of the proposed building which
- 40 will house the company or station.
- 41 2. The number of prospective members (containing some type of formal
- 42 commitment from those prospective members)
- 43 3. Type of facilities and the amount of equipment the proposed company
- 44 initially plans to place in service or the equipment proposed by the
- 45 existing company for the new station.

1 B. Upon receipt of the request for new membership or change in the number of
2 stations, the President shall direct the County Chief and the Executive
3 Committee Chairman to report on the following at a minimum.
4

5 1. The County Chief shall report on:

- 6 a. Detailed running assignments for the proposed new company or
7 station.
- 8 b. Expected degree of need for the new company or station in its
9 proposed location.
- 10 c. Estimated number of annual calls for the proposed new company or
11 station.
- 12 d. Estimated effect on calls of existing units protecting the area.
- 13 e. After a detailed study of the area protected by the new company or
14 station, estimate the number of members that may be expected to
15 join the unit or station once it becomes operational.
16

17 2. The Executive Committee shall report on:

- 18 a. The budgetary impact (both County or State funding) of the
19 proposed new company or station.
- 20 b. Proposed new Company's or station's planned method of financial
21 support for the first two years of operation.
22

23 3. All reports are to filled in writing by the third regular business meeting
24 after the presentation of the request with sufficient copies for the
25 President, Secretary, and all member units.

- 26 a. The member units will vote on the admittance of the new company
27 or the additional station at the next regular business meeting
28 following the receipt of the committee reports.
- 29 b. After the vote the Secretary shall send a letter to the Executive
30 Committee Chairman and the County Chief concerning the status of
31 the proposed new company or station.
- 32 c. When the new Company or Station receives a majority favorable
33 vote;
 - 34 1. The Executive Committee Chairman shall call for a meeting of
35 the Board of Fire and Rescue Commissioners to gain recognition
36 of the new company or station by the Board.
 - 37 2. Once recognized by the Board of Fire and Rescue
38 Commissioners, the Executive Committee shall include the new
39 company or station into the budgetary process.
 - 40 3. The Communications Board member shall inform
41 Communications Headquarters so the appropriate Company
42 number and running assignment can be implemented.
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**ARTICLE VI
MEETINGS**

Section 1. When Valid

- A. Regular meetings shall be called to order at 1900 hours on the second Monday of every other month, beginning with January, March, May, July, September and November.
- B. The Secretary will send notices to the President and the Chief of each member Company, and all executive officers of this Association, reminding them of the time and place of the meetings. Notices to be mailed at least one (1) week and not more than two (2) weeks before each meeting.
- C. Six (6) Companies shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business.
- D. Special meetings shall be called whenever the President or the Chief of three (3) member companies notify the Secretary of their desire for such a meeting, or whenever a special meeting is so ordered at a regular meeting.
- E. Except in the case of a special meeting having been ordered at a regular meeting, the Secretary must receive notice of the meeting at least two (2) weeks before the date on which the meeting is to be held. He/she will then advise, by mail, the Presidents and Chiefs of all member Companies of the matter or matters to be taken up at the special meeting, indicating the time and place. Notices must be in the mail at least one (1) week prior to the date of the meeting.
 - 1. At the discretion of the President, in cases requiring emergency action, the President may waive the above requirements and call a special meeting with forty-eight (48) hours, providing the representative of each member Company have been notified.
- F. Business transacted at a special meeting will be valid only as it affect matter or matters indicated in meeting notifications.
- G. Roberts Rules of Order shall govern all meetings of this Association on nay point not covered by these By-Laws.
- H. The Annual Election Meeting shall be held on the last regular (November) meeting of the year.

Section 2. Company Representation

- A. Each member Company may send five (5) delegates to a regular or special meeting, and is entitled to five (5) votes.
- B. Measures will be considered approved on majority of the votes cast. Whenever two (2) or more Companies request it, voting shall be by secret ballot. The President shall appoint two (2) tellers to collect the ballots and deliver them to the President and Secretary for counting.
- C. In case of a tie vote which may result when the voting Companies are equal in number, the subject shall be reopened for discussion and another vote taken. If the tie continues, the President shall cast the deciding vote.

1 **Section 3. Order of Business**

- 2
- 3 A. Call to Order by President
- 4 B. Invocation- Chaplain
- 5 C. Roll Call
- 6 Recognition of guests present
- 7 D. Reading of minutes
- 8 Regular meeting
- 9 Special meeting
- 10 Other Meetings
- 11 E. Treasurer's Report.
- 12 F. County Fire Chief's Report.
- 13 G. Charles County Communication Board Report.
- 14 H. County Fire Prevention Officers Report
- 15 I. Standards Committee Report
- 16 J. Communications Headquarters Report
- 17 K. Executive Committee Report
- 18 L. Reading of Communications
- 19 M. Old Business
- 20 Committee Reports
- 21 N. Election of Officer's
- 22 O. New Business
- 23 Appointment of Committee
- 24 P. President's Comments
- 25 Q. Benediction-Chaplain
- 26 R. Adjournment
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**ARTICLE VII
BY-LAWS**

Section 1. Amendments and Changes

- A. These By-Laws and Association Standards may be amended or changed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting at a meeting of the Association, providing the following requirements have been met:
1. The proposed amendment(s) or change(s) to these By-Laws or Association Standards shall be submitted to the President of the Association and to the delegates of the member Companies in writing by the member Company offering the proposal, the Chairman of any Standing Committee of the Association (Standing Committee as mentioned In Article IV of the By-Laws) or by the County Fire Chief with the concurrence of a majority of the Chiefs of the member Companies present and voting at a regularly scheduled Chiefs meeting.
 2. The proposed amendment(s) or change(s) shall have been presented to the delegates of the member companies at least sixty (60) days prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.
 3. Any member unit sponsoring such amendment(s) or change(s) shall have them submitted to the membership on Company stationery and certified by a Company officer.

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