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**SUPPORTING THE PLAN WITH A PLAN FOR SUPPORT:  
CREATING A TACTICAL SECOND-LINE SUSTAINMENT PLAN  
FOR THE EFP BATTLE GROUP IN LATVIA**

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# **SUPPORTING THE PLAN WITH A PLAN FOR SUPPORT: CREATING A TACTICAL SECOND-LINE SUSTAINMENT PLAN FOR THE EFP BATTLE GROUP IN LATVIA**

## **AIM**

1. The aim of this service paper is to analyze the current tactical second line sustainment plan for the Canadian led Enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group (eFP BG) in the event that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Article 5 is declared.<sup>1</sup> This analysis will identify weaknesses within the current logistic plan based off personal operational experience as the eFP BG Officer Commanding (OC) Combat Service Support Company (CSS Coy), from July 2019 to January 2020.
2. The intent is to provide recommendations to leaders and planners within Task Force Latvia (TFL) and the Canadian National Support Element (NSE) regarding the tactical employment of the various Sending Nation (SN), or allied, NSEs in the event Article 5 is declared. Enclosed are recommendations regarding integrated planning and the creation of a multinational integrated logistics unit (MILU), to provide second line sustainment to the eFP BG in an operational environment.<sup>2</sup> Existing NSE command structures and NATO declaration statuses will be discussed in this paper. However, the processes of altering formal command authorities and declarations will not be explored, but might serve as an appropriate subject for a future service paper.

## **INTRODUCTION**

3. NATO's concern regarding national security and sovereignty challenges in the Baltic region increased after Russia's 2008 invasion of Georgia and its illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014.<sup>3</sup> The surprise and shock of these events were enough to cause NATO to reassess its priorities. Years of focusing on expeditionary crisis management resulted in the reduction of NATO's focus on collective defence and deterrence measures.<sup>4</sup> This reevaluation led to the enhancement of the NATO Response Force (NRF) with the development of a robust Readiness Action Plan (RAP),<sup>5</sup> that included the creation of a spearhead force called the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF).<sup>6</sup> The VJTF is comprised of 20,000 NATO military personnel that are deployable within a matter of days.<sup>7</sup> Following this, in 2016, NATO then

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<sup>1</sup> "...an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all..." North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "The North Atlantic Treaty," last modified 10 April 2019, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm).

<sup>2</sup> "Second line support. Support capabilities that are organic or allocated to a formation." Department of National Defence, B-GL-005-400/FP001, *Canadian Forces Joint Publication 4-0 Support, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2016), 23.

<sup>3</sup> Atlantic Council, "US must remain committed to NATO and the Baltic States," last modified 8 September 2020, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/us-must-remain-committed-to-nato-and-the-baltic-states/>.

<sup>4</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Air Power: Learning from the Past – Looking to the Future," last modified 12 December 2013, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_105917.htm?selectedLocale=en](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_105917.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>5</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Readiness Action Plan," last modified 23 March 2020, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_119353.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_119353.htm).

<sup>6</sup> Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "NATO RESPONSE FORCE," last modified April 2018, <https://shape.nato.int/nato-response-force--very-high-readiness-joint-task-force>.

<sup>7</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO's Readiness Action Plan," last modified July 2016, [https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_07/20160627\\_1607-factsheet-rap-en.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_07/20160627_1607-factsheet-rap-en.pdf).

further strengthened its RAP with an enhanced forward presence in the form of four multinational eFP BGs positioned in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.<sup>8</sup> These BGs are tangible displays of commitment from and to NATO allies, and serve as a strong reminder of NATO's fifth article, that an attack on one is an attack on all. The four BGs fall under Multinational Division Northeast Headquarters (MND-NE HQ), are integrated with the host nations' (HN) armed forces, and are prepared to support the HN with national defence efforts if NATO Article 5 is declared. Following the activation of NATO Article 5, the VJTF would deploy to the affected region. Following the VJTF, would be the deployment of further NATO follow-on forces, and then if required, NATO would pull further forces from various allies from the Response Forces Pool (RFP).<sup>9</sup>

4. The Canadian national command element (NCE)<sup>10</sup> in Latvia is TFL HQ, which the Canadian BG component, NSE, and Communications and Information Services (CIS) Squadron report to. TFL also coordinates all of Canada's operational support in and out of Latvia. At the tactical level, the BG is composed of elements from nine different countries that are supported by the seven NSEs located in Camp Adazi.<sup>11</sup> While in garrison,<sup>12</sup> each nation provides its own sustainment through their respective NSEs. However, while operating outside of garrison, the BG's sustainment is coordinated and executed by the BG's CSS Coy.<sup>13</sup> The SN NSEs also double as NCEs, and NSE Commanders are regularly that nation's Senior National Representative (SNR) as well. Canada is the exception to this as its SNR is Commander TFL. Additionally, the Canadian NSE is the only NSE declared to NATO, therefore the other six NSEs have no official mandate to continue sustainment operations if Article 5 is declared. However, being undeclared is not the main concern regarding the NSEs. The concern is the NSEs' inability to deliver second line support to the BG, if there were the need to evacuate Camp Adazi, in an Article 5 situation. The NSEs have not planned or trained to conduct second line sustainment operations outside the base and would be without the means to replenish the BG once its integral supplies are depleted. The shortfalls in the current BG and NSE tactical second line sustainment plan will be examined and recommendations to mitigate them will be provided.

## DISCUSSION

5. The majority of the Canadian NSE's commitments revolve around providing real life support (RLS) in garrison by facilitating HN base services to the Canadian component of the BG.<sup>14</sup> Also in garrison, the Canadian NSE owns the role of lead nation amongst the seven NSEs

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<sup>8</sup> Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, "PRESENT STRUCTURE," last accessed 31 January 2021, <https://shape.nato.int/efp/efp/present-structure>.

<sup>9</sup> SHAPE, "NATO RESPONSE FORCE," . . . .

<sup>10</sup> Department of National Defence, *Joint Doctrine Note 02-2014, Command & Control of Joint Operations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2014), 22.

<sup>11</sup> Montenegro and Albanian forces receive support through the Canadian NSE.

<sup>12</sup> Camp Adazi will be referred to as "garrison" throughout this paper.

<sup>13</sup> Through a process outlined later in this paper.

<sup>14</sup> The Guard, "Operation REASSURANCE: The Role of the Canadian National Support Element within NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Latvia," last accessed 31 January 2021, <https://infog.ca/operation-reassurance-the-role-of-the-canadian-national-support-element-within-natos-enhanced-forward-presence-efp-latvia/>.

in a combined lead nation/parallel command structure.<sup>15</sup> Although, the Canadian NSE does not hold formal authority over the other six NSEs,<sup>16</sup> it is able to focus and coordinate certain efforts and support through mutual understanding and informal agreements. For instance, when the BG conducts tactical training the Canadian NSE Operations Cell establishes and facilitates a multinational logistics coordination center (MNLCC).<sup>17</sup> The MNLCC receives the daily consolidated supply requests from the BG, and this information is forwarded to the other SN NSEs for action. Under regular circumstances, the second line unit, or the NSEs, would then transport the supplies forward to a delivery point (DP) coordinated with CSS Coy. However, due to various equipment and personnel limitations within the NSEs, CSS Coy is required to collect the BG's supplies by returning to garrison. Therefore, when the BG conducts field training it is required to conduct its own first and second line sustainment operations; this also applies to vehicle repair and recovery operations outside of Camp Adazi.

6. The reason behind the NSEs not being able to conduct tactical sustainment operations is the allocation of personnel and vehicles between the NSEs and the BG. The Canadian NSE, for instance, is not allocated military pattern vehicles nor is it appropriately scaled with personnel and equipment to conduct tactical training. The remainder of the NSEs, including their logistic vehicles, are undeclared which means Canadian leaders have little say in the allocation of their assets. Therefore, during the BG's field training, the SN NSEs detach the majority of their vehicles to the BG, leaving insufficient lift in garrison to push supplies forward to CSS Coy. This has resulted in the NSEs remaining static and garrison-bound without sufficient means to conduct their own combined tactical training. Without dedicated vehicles and crews, the NSEs are unable to fully practice second line sustainment operations inside, or outside, of garrison.

7. Although details cannot be divulged in this paper, plans for the eFP BG's first line/tactical sustainment exist and are extremely robust. An accurate timeline regarding the VJTF's arrival into Latvia was provided by MND-NE HQ, which enabled the production of the BG's first line sustainment plan. Should Article 5 ever be declared, the BG would deploy with sufficient supplies to last until a number of days past the VJTF's estimated time of arrival.<sup>18</sup> However, should the arrival of the VJTF be delayed, for any number of reasons, the BG runs the risk of depleting their resources before they can be replenished through follow-on NATO forces.

8. Additionally, if NATO Article 5 were declared, the eFP BG would become attached to the Latvian 1<sup>st</sup> Mechanized Infantry Brigade (1MIBde) and assist in the defence of Latvia. The 1MIBde does not have the capacity currently to sustain the eFP BG. The 1MIBde logistic battalion is not yet at full operating capacity (FOC), and is still dealing with challenges to sustain Latvian Forces, let alone an additional 1,100 NATO soldiers. Based on personal interactions and mutual planning sessions with Commander (Comd) 1MIBde and his staff, it is assumed that the

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<sup>15</sup> "Combination lead nation/parallel command structure. The lead nation and parallel command structures can exist simultaneously within a coalition. This occurs when two or more nations serve as controlling elements for amix of international forces...." DND, *Canadian Forces Joint Publication 4-0 Support* . . ., 120.

<sup>16</sup> As the other NSEs are undeclared to NATO.

<sup>17</sup> "Another means of increasing MNF [Multinational Force] coordination is the use of a multinational coordination center (MNCC). US commanders should routinely advocate creation of such a center in the early stages of any multinational effort, especially one that is operating under a parallel command structure." Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-16, *Multinational Operations* (Washington D.C.: DOD USA, 1 March 2019), 47.

<sup>18</sup> Due to restrictions, supply figures and official estimated timelines cannot be provided.

Latvians would do all they could to support the eFP BG if needed; however, a plan must be developed that does not place additional strain on the HN forces. Regardless of the various factors that could affect it, the BG has a first line sustainment plan which is intended to see it through until the arrival of the VJTF. The NSEs on the other hand are in a different situation.

9. Despite the Canadian NSE being the lead nation, within the NSE parallel command structure, it has experienced greater challenges than the BG when it comes to multinational planning for an Article 5 situation. Each NSE has developed its own plan should Article 5 be declared; however, they are not integrated and would cause coordination frictions for CSS Coy on the battlefield. Since the Canadian NSE is not scaled for tactical operations, and the other six NSEs push the majority of their logistics assets to the BG, the development of an integrated plan for second line sustainment in an Article 5 situation has not been developed. Furthermore, with the majority of logistics resources detached to the BG during tactical training, the NSEs are left with limited resources to conduct combined training of their own. Therefore, without the development of an integrated plan for second line sustainment, Article 5 would be declared, the BG would mobilize, and deploy with 1MIBde; leaving the NSEs with limited resources to carry out their individual plans. If the NSEs' plans involve continued support to the BG, that support would be extremely limited and there is no guarantee that Camp Adazi would remain secure to operate from. The eFP BG's motto is *Strength in Unity*, and should be embodied throughout all of its elements. Despite each NSE's limitations, if amalgamated and their vehicles realigned, they could Force Generate an effective second line support unit.

10. In November of 2019, an analysis was conducted by the BG's CSS Coy leadership, which included the SNs' S4s.<sup>19</sup> The team examined the assets and capabilities of each NSE, a holistic re-organization of them, and produced a model depicting what kind of CSS unit could realistically be formed from the various NSEs. Annex A contains the potential order of battle (ORBAT) and list of capabilities for a MN CSS unit created from the seven NSEs.

11. The development of second line CSS units in multinational environments is uncommon, but is codified within Canadian doctrine. There are two models outlined in *Canadian Forces Joint Publication 4-0 Support* regarding MN CSS organizations:

- a. Multinational support with centralized command. Within this type of multinational support, one or more nations formally undertake to serve all or part of the multinational force by forming a multinational integrated logistic unit (MILU) or a multinational integrated medical unit (MIMU). MILUs are utilized to reduce the logistic structure and, where possible, capitalize on economies of scale. They are designed to provide specific logistic support that is unavailable to national forces or could be better utilized to support the NATO commander's overall plan. One nation will typically provide the MILU command structure, CIS, and CSS, and will be augmented by the resources of other nations. MILUs/MIMUs are normally integrated into the NATO chain of command, for example being under OPCON of the NATO commander.

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<sup>19</sup> Each SN provides an S4 officer to the BG. They are OPCON to CSS Coy, and are the direct link between the BG and a SN's NSE.

- b. Multinational support with decentralized command. Within this model, one or more nations undertake to serve all or part of the multinational force by forming a multinational logistic unit (MLU) or multinational medical unit (MMU). The tasking authority will be the NATO joint force commander but the support or services provided remains under national command. MLU/MMUs are designed to provide specific support that is unavailable to national forces or could be better utilized to support the commander's overall support plan. They can fulfil the need of a flexible mode of multinational support and should be utilized to reduce the support structure and, where possible, capitalize on economies of scale. A major difference between an MILU and an MLU are that an MLU normally remains under national control, whereas an MILU will typically be under OPCON to the NATO joint force commander.<sup>20</sup>

12. The NSEs currently follow the second model, MN support with decentralized command, with the Canadian NSE as the lead nation. However, this model presents challenges with C2 and the delineation of authorities. Continuing to practice the second, or the multinational logistics unit (MLU), model in garrison is satisfactory. However, adaptation of the first model and conforming to a MILU structure for a post Article 5 situation is ideal. Centralized command amongst the NSEs will better serve second line sustainment efforts for the BG, and mitigate confusion in the event of an evacuation of Camp Adazi.

## CONCLUSION

13. The issues surrounding the NSEs providing the eFP BG with second line sustainment in a NATO Article 5 situation are as follows:

- a. The Canadian NSE is not equipped with military vehicles or appropriately scaled in terms of personnel and equipment;
- b. The other six NSEs detach the majority of their logistics vehicles to the BG during tactical training;
- c. The NSEs have yet to conduct MN/combined training outside of garrison and are not prepared to mobilize and provide second line support from an alternate location if Camp Adazi is evacuated; and
- d. The NSE sustainment plans for a post Article 5 situation are currently not integrated and would provide extremely limited support to the BG.

14. Regardless of whether declared or undeclared to NATO, the eFP BG and its support elements must be prepared to fulfil its mission to defend Latvia if necessary. Therefore, it behooves TFL, BG, and leadership from the NSEs to mitigate the above challenges at their level. The Canadian NSE may not be outfitted for tactical sustainment operations, but the other six are. Most of the SN NSE logistics vehicles are detached to the BG during operations, but this can be mitigated through coordination and a realignment of assets. The NSEs' plans are not integrated

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<sup>20</sup> DND, *Canadian Forces Joint Publication 4-0 Support ...*, 119.



and they have yet to train together, but this can be resolved through combined planning and table-top-exercises prior to any practical training.

15. The C2 structure already exists as the NSEs essentially follow the MLU model while in garrison. Planning now needs to occur regarding how the NSEs can transition to a MILU concept for an Article 5 situation, and operate as a functional second line sustainment unit from, or outside of, Camp Adazi.

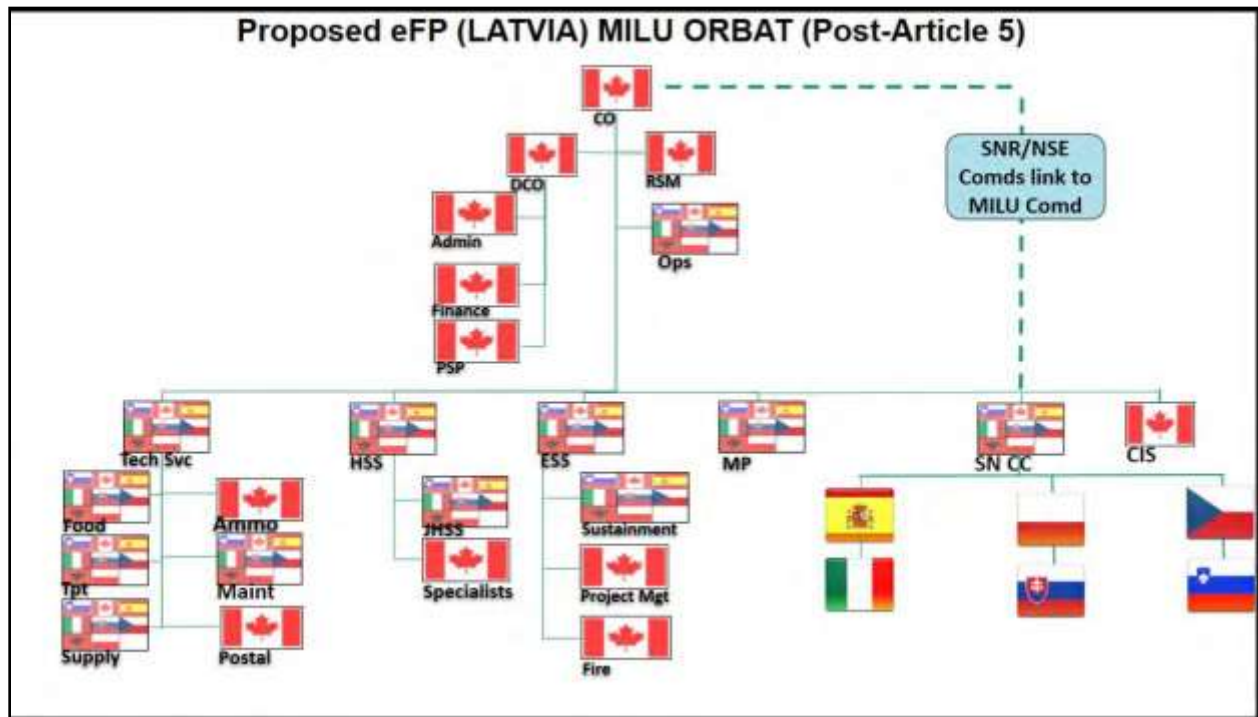
## **RECOMMENDATION**

16. In order to safeguard the SENSE, SHIELD, and ACT functions of the eFP BG, the SUSTAIN function must be enhanced to ensure the delivery of second line sustainment to the BG within a post Article 5 environment. The following are recommendations based on the above information and discussion:

- a. C2 and structure. Annex A provides a recommended ORBAT for an eFP (LATVIA) MILU and outlines the main capabilities of each NSE. It is recommended that in an Article 5 situation, the NSEs amalgamate and transition to a MILU command structure. The SN NSEs would become OPCON to the Canadian NSE Commander. The development of official C2 authorities is not essential at this stage, and may be problematic, as the majority of NSEs are undeclared;
- b. Planning and preparation. Using this as a start state, the Canadian NSE Commander can communicate the idea of an eFP (LATVIA) MILU to the various SN SNRs, or NSE commanders. Once consensus is gained from the SN leaders, planning framework can be laid out in order to focus and guide the MN planning process. SN NSEs will need to arrive to the initial planning conference (IPC) with a list of all assets they can contribute (e.g. personnel, vehicles, etc), their shortfalls (e.g. require lift for 20 personnel), and transportation planning figures (e.g., how many seacans/trucks of equipment/supplies they need to deploy with). BG input is also important and, at a minimum, the SN S4s should be included in the planning process;
- c. Training. As the NSEs have not practiced deploying from Camp Adazi, rehearsals will be essential for the soldiers and NSE Commanders. Practicing the mobilization and relocation of the NSEs will also draw out frictions and shortfalls in the plan, enabling adjustments where required. Practicing this process while still maintaining RLS in garrison will be extremely challenging; and
- d. Communication. Communication between the SN NSEs and their national chains of command can occur at any time to ensure transparency with higher headquarters. However, once the eFP (LATVIA) MILU integrated plan, and its rehearsal, are complete coordination with 1MIBde will need to occur. This will ensure transparency with 1MIBde, maximize mutual support opportunities, and assist with the development of coordination measures.

### **Annex: A. eFP MILU (LATVIA) ORBAT and Capabilities**

## ANNEX A: PROPOSED EFP (LATVIA) MILU ORBAT AND CAPABILITIES



Proposed eFP (LATVIA) MILU Potential Capabilities (Post-Article 5)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HQ: C2 element, Orderly Room, Postal, Contracting, BG RQ</li> <li>- Role 2 Medical Treatment Facility (Potentially Role 3)</li> <li>- Construction Engineers</li> <li>- Mobile Kitchens</li> <li>- 2<sup>nd</sup> Line Maint Crew and Mat Techs</li> <li>- CIS Sqn</li> </ul>	<p><b>Capabilities Summary (approx.):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Manning</u>: Approx 380x pers</li> <li>- <u>Vehicle Lift</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Cargo</u>: 30 x Cargo trucks</li> <li>- <u>Pers</u>: Approx 600 (20pers/truck and civilian pattern)</li> <li>- <u>PLS</u>: 24x PLS Trucks</li> <li>- <u>HETs</u>: 7</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <u>POL</u>: 41,500L</li> <li>- <u>Water</u>: 40,000L</li> <li>- <u>Comms</u>: Secure voice and data through CAN CIS Sqn and ESP NSE HQ</li> </ul> <p><small>*All personnel and vehicles numbers are based on total numbers of NSE holdings, they do not reflect detachments to the BG.</small></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HQ: C2 element, clerks, contracting</li> <li>- Maint PI (1x crane, 17x M240 Caro, 2x 2K Forklift)</li> <li>- Supply PI (5x Cargo, 2x Water POD, 2x M-548, 3x Forklift)</li> <li>- Tn PI (1x HET, 1x minibus, 7x PLS, 2x M-250 Cargo)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maint and Recovery PI (2x HET, 1x HIAB, 1x Med Forklift, 1x Bridge)</li> <li>- Tn PI (4x Med Cargo, 1x 26000L FAR, 1x Water POD, 6x PLS, 1x Minibus)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maint PI (1x HET, 1x HIAB, 4x MRT, 1x Battery truck)</li> <li>- Supply PI: (1x 4500L FAR, 1x HIAB, 1x Water POD, 1x forklift)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HQ: C2</li> <li>- CS PI (4x PLS, 1x MRT, 2x Forklift, 1x 11000L Fuel trailer)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tn PI (7x PLS, 2x Cargo)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tn PI: 2x Dump trucks, 2x Flatbed trailers</li> </ul>	

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