

The Journal

Fall
Winter
2025

BOARD MEMBERS

Doug Hendrickson, PE
Chair
Richland
Term Expires 7/2027

Mike Harney, PE,
P.Eng, ENV SP
Vice Chair
Seattle
Term Expires 7/2028

Marjorie Lund, PE, SE
Chair
Seattle
Term Expires 7/2026

David Peden, PE, SE
Spokane
Term Expires 7/2030

Maureen Jackson, PE
Lynnwood
Term Expires 7/2029

Matt Rasmussen, PE,
PLS
Kennewick
Term Expires 7/2029

Jon Warren, PLS
Woodinville
Term Expires 7/2030

[Board Site](#)

Ken Fuller, PE
Director

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From the Chair

OPINION: Doug Hendrickson, PE, Board Chair

Thank you for your continued support of the Board.

We appreciate all of your involvement and the confidence you've demonstrated in Board operations. Personally, I wish to thank you for that support and for the confidence of my fellow Board members exhibited by selecting me for this, my second term, as Chair of the Board. We hope to continue to demonstrate our commitment through outreach, support, and legislative and regulatory changes, with which we strive to aid the professions, while assuring the protection of the public welfare.

Today I want to give you an inside view of legislative proposals the Board is pursuing to more clearly, cleanly and simply conduct the business of the Board in protecting the public health, safety and welfare. An agency, like BRPELS does not have any ability to actually change law (Revised Code of Washington, RCW) as that authority rests with the Legislature and it takes legislative support to move through those halls. Between changes we proposed in the last legislative session and some prepared for the upcoming session, we recently held three virtual public meetings on July 23 and 24 and August 13, 2025. At each

meeting the overall changes proposed were available and reviewed for the public. We have all of this, albeit more dryly, on our webpage at [BRPELS Legislative Activity](http://brpels.wa.gov/current-laws-and-rules/legislation) (brpels.wa.gov/current-laws-and-rules/legislation).

In the 2025 legislative session, BRPELS proposed an agency request bill to the Governor's Office for consideration. That bill, in large part, was simple cleanup removing obsolete dates [e.g. RCW 18.43.30 removal of "The terms of board members in office on June 11, 1986, shall not be affected."] and updating language to reflect current processes of the agency, such as examination processes and gender pronoun

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Engineering & Surveying Workforce Development

Ryan Avery, PhD, PE, WA Transportation Center (TRAC), University of Washington

Washington state's ability to deliver infrastructure

programs is being constrained by a widening shortage of civil engineers and land surveyors. This study quantified current and future workforce gaps, diagnosed their root causes, and proposed education-centered solutions.

This study, commissioned by the Washing-

ton State Legislature's Joint Transportation Committee and prepared by the Washington State Transportation Center (TRAC) at the University of Washington, provided a comprehensive analysis of civil engineering workforce gaps, their underlying causes, and actionable solutions to rebuild and future-proof the state's civil engineering and land surveying talent pipeline.

The researchers surveyed 47 employers and 917 practitioners to capture the durations of engineering job vacancies, upcoming retirement horizons, skill shortages, and reasons for attrition. They analyzed responses by using text-mining to categorize open-ended comments into dominant themes. They also conducted an audit of every educational pathway within Washington that feeds the talent pipeline.

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From The Chair

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uniformity. The largest formative change we advanced was to recognize that on-site wastewater (OSW) licensure under RCW 18.210 has been in BRPELS scope of responsibilities for over 20 years, but RCW 18.43 does not yet recognize their representation on the Board. Our request included change of RCW 18.43.033 to change the number of pro-tem appointments from two to three, in absolute parallel with RCW 18.235 which is a “higher hierarchy” provision of law which controls all Boards. At BRPELS, pro-tems are substantially employed in complaint management and investigation. This change was requested in concert with a proposal that OSW designers, be qualified to be a BRPELS pro-tem. Our objective would have availed the Board the experience of an OSW licensee to review OSW complaints and investigations without changing the number of Board Members or qualification of Board Members, as we believed changes to these would draw more ad hoc changes from the legislature.

Legislative members supplemented our 2025 proposed RCW changes with change of conditions for Board Membership. Current RCW requires that individuals eligible to be appointed to the Board shall have been actively engaged in the practice of engineering or land surveying for at least ten years subsequent to registration, with five immediately prior to their appointment to the Board. The code also requires that each shall be a citizen of the United States and shall have been a resident of the state for at least five years immediately before his or her appointment. Our legislative members proposed a change to those conditions by deleting the requirement to be a citizen of the United States. The Board is not planning to object to this constraint removal because we believe the objectives of the Board membership are to protect the citizens of Washington and because the requirements of ten years of licensed practice, with the immediate past five years in this state provide that basis in professional practice which we believe is appropriate in service to Washington.

In the end, our 2025 Legislative request was not acted upon, but is being supported into 2026. We’re supplementing proposals by proposing some specific changes in definitions and terms which we feel will be beneficial in understanding our professions and licensees by removal of the definitions of “engineer” and “land surveyor” which have been present since inception as they each express the terms as “means Professional.” Our proposal simply uses the terms “Professional Engineer” and “Professional Land Surveyor” throughout the law to represent the individual licensees.

We’re also requesting amending some language which would allow our regulations to separate examination and experience requirements for licensure. At present, RCW 18.43.040(1)(b)(ii) and (d)(ii), controls when a candidate may undertake examination with the constraint that “At any time after the completion of the required eight years of [engineering/land surveying] experience... the applicant may take the second stage of the examination.” Most states now allow candidates to undertake their Principles and Practices examination any time after passing their Fundamentals examination and then proceed to accrue experience before requesting licensure. This practice is a decoupling of experience and examination.

We now have many licensure candidates request licensure without ever being licensed anywhere else, but who have undertaken their examinations in the auspices of other States and have accrued appropriate experience. The language changes we are requesting do not mandate decoupling but would allow future changes in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) which could affect decoupling and would clarify the implicit decoupling allowed in current language. All WAC changes are subject to your review, comment, and input. We want to hear from you and receive your input on legislation and rules.

States Weigh Changes to Civil Engineers’ Licenses

Advocates Holding Firm

The American Society of Civil Engineers magazine, “Source,” recently published an article we thought you may appreciate:

[States weigh changes to civil engineers’ licenses; advocates hold firm | ASCE](#)

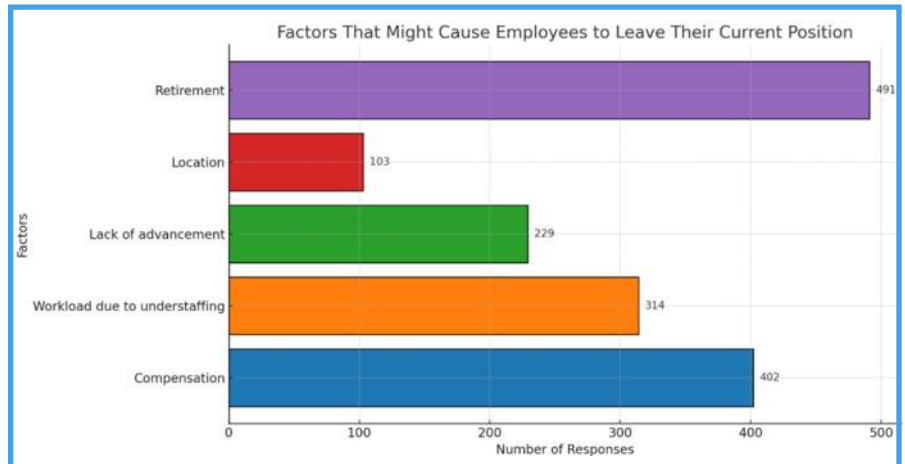


Workforce Development

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Descriptive statistics show that for 59 percent of employers, vacancy periods for civil engineering positions exceed six months. They also reveal an urgent need for employers to hire additional staff within five years. Nearly one-third of the existing workforce will become eligible for retirement by 2035, threatening the continuity of project delivery. The most acute deficits are at the mid- and senior-career levels, where hybrid competencies in design, project management, and regulatory compliance intersect.

Analysis of respondents’ narrative answers pointed to three systemic pressures on the civil engineering workforce: the high cost of living and uncompetitive salaries; misalignment between academic preparation and job-ready skills (especially with hands-on field training, advanced digital tools, and interdisciplinary project management); and weak succession planning that fails to transfer institutional knowledge. Land surveying faces an even steeper demographic cliff, with few academic programs and high licensure barriers contributing to declining interest.



The audit of every educational pathway in Washington that feeds the talent pipeline covered four-year university degrees, two-year community/technical college programs, certificates, apprenticeships, and even online learning options. These programs annually produce roughly 300 to 400 civil engineering BS degrees, 100+ civil engineering MS degrees, 20 to 30 surveying/geomatics AAS degrees, and a few dozen engineering technology or related AAS degrees.

The report translated the findings into a three-part action plan:

- Goal 1:** Close immediate skill gaps by increasing the availability of short-courses for skill expansion, of offering more micro-credentials, and increasing continuing education funding.
- Goal 2:** Expand and modernize civil engineering and land surveying degree capacity by targeting state appropriations, hiring more faculty, and reforming curricula, including emphasizing digital tools.
- Goal 3:** Strengthen pipeline diversity and field readiness by increasing paid internships, apprenticeships, and K-12 outreach, with priority on under-represented communities.

Together, these pathways offer a pragmatic roadmap for legislators, educators, and industry leaders to rebuild, diversify, and future-proof Washington’s civil engineering and land-surveying workforce.

Stay Connected

BRPELS & You

2026

Besides *The Journal*, there are 3 great ways to stay connected with BRPELS throughout the next year!

- Join over 400 other BRPELS followers on [LinkedIn](#)
- Check the News section of the BRPELS [website](#)
- And if you’re not already, sign up to our [email list](#)





Licensing Update

Kevin Ballard, Internal Controls Manager

We've made some big improvements over the past few months here at BRPELS, all focused on making your experience smoother and more efficient.

One of our most impactful changes is the launch of the "Online Law Review." This new self-guided platform allows applicants to complete the state's law and ethics requirement at their own pace. It provides instant feedback and a downloadable certificate. No need to wait for staff review. This saves time for both applicants and our licensing team.

We've also rolled out a new contact form system on our website. Instead of sending emails, customers now fill out a short form based on their specific needs; whether they're applying as an individual or a business. This helps us sort requests more effectively, respond faster, and reduce the chance of things getting misplaced in our workflow. In addition to our Customer Contact Form, our Agency continues to improve our customer experience by providing online form submissions for application documents including work experience, experience verification, PDH Logs, and more.

The Board is putting more focus on customer feedback. Our updated forms and online tools now include optional surveys so you can tell us how we are doing. This feedback gives us real data to improve our processes and better serve you. We are listening and using your input to make meaningful, lasting changes.

Finally, keep a look out for a new customer service experience replacing Secure Access Washington (SAW). The State of Washington is evolving for a more user friendly, one-stop-shop for all state services coming online in the summer of 2026.



Website 1 Year Anniversary Staff Report

BRPELS is celebrating the first year of our new website. During that time, we've had over one million total interactions or "event counts." Visitors used the website most in early May and July, with the least amount of interactions at the end of December and October.

Information is updated frequently in Licensing, Laws & Rules, Complaints, The Board, News, About Us, our new Customer Service Portal and our public service campaign, "Don't Cut Corners."

Active users by Country

COUNTRY	ACTIVE USERS
United States	19K
Canada	698
China	525
Saudi Arabia	94
Japan	60
India	50
Germany	41



Who's Visiting?

Majority are from the United States, followed by Canada and close behind by China.

They're followed by Saudi Arabia, Japan, India and Germany.

Finally, the current total number of PE's; 29,966, PLS's 1,059, On-Site Designers 216, On-Site Inspectors 117 and Corp/LLC at 1,701.



New Board Member Staff Report

BRPELS announces a new Board member, Jon P. Warren, Professional Land Surveyor (PLS), has been appointed by Governor Bob Ferguson to a 5-year term. He has 35 years of experience in public and private sector projects, department management and personnel administration. The governor has also reappointed Board member Dave Peden, PE, SE of Spokane, to a second 5-year term.

Jon was most recently the Land Survey Division Manager for the City of Bellevue. Before that, he was the Puget Sound Region Survey Manager for David Evans and Associates of Bellevue. Jon also was a Survey Manager for WHPacific in Bothell and the surveyor for Snohomish County Public Works in Everett.

He served as President for the National Society for Professional Surveyors (NSPS) and held all officer positions of the Land Surveyors Association of Washington (LSAW). Jon also is a BRPELS Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the PLS exam knowledge base.



Jon replaces Aaron Blaisdell, PLS, who retires from the Board, after serving two 5-year terms. The Board has seven members and three pro-tem, who are a variety of experienced Professional Engineers (PE) and PLS's. The Board's Mission is to safeguard life, health, property, and promote the public welfare, regarding engineering, land surveying and on-site wastewater system designs.



Do you know someone who would make a good Board member?

**With a retirement next year, the Board is
looking for a Professional Engineer**

- Must be actively engaged in the practice at least 10 years following registration, five years just before appointment
- Must be a resident of Washington State for at least the last five years
- Must be a US citizen

The Governor's office accepts applications throughout the year and considers all eligible candidates for upcoming vacancies. The application and instructions are on the Governor's website [here](#).

The Governor's office typically reviews applications in May, with a decision in June or July. Board members and agency staff do not directly screen applicants. However, they may suggest what experience is needed to keep the Board as diverse as possible. For questions, please contact Ken Fuller, PE, Director, at Ken.Fuller@brpels.wa.gov or Kristina Horton, PLS, Deputy Director at Kristina.Horton@brpels.wa.gov.





Your QUESTIONS Expert ANSWERS From Leadership at BRPELS

Answers are from Board Staff, not the Board, unless otherwise noted

- Q:** Is a “Survey Project Manager” a reserved title to be used only by those duly licensed in WA as a land surveyor?
Q: Would the Board consider the use of such title as misleading to the general public by giving the impression that the individual using such title is a licensed surveyor?

Is managing the business and technical aspects of land surveying projects (including but not limited to directing field staff, determining methods used and the adequacy of research and field work for boundary, topographic, subdivision and construction surveys) considered the practice of land surveying to be performed by a licensee?

A: It depends. If the job description includes duties/tasks that fall under the definition of the practice of land surveying, per RCW 18.43.020, the position would require a PLS. Or the work must be done under the direct supervision of a PLS in responsible charge (as defined in WAC 196-25-002). Example: If the work done by the “Survey Project Manager” is overseen and directed by a supervising position such as a “Survey Manager” who is a PLS then the “Survey Project Manager” might not need to be a PLS – again depending on the position description. If it is not, then a PLS would be required for that position if the practice of land surveying is part of the duties/tasks.

Best practice is to make sure that the public/clients are clearly aware if the holder of the position is a PLS, or not, and who the PLS in responsible charge is (see answer above).

Again, must be done by or under the direct supervision of a PLS.



- Q:** Which entities in Washington can prepare an easement for recording (in particular for ingress, egress and utilities)? Are engineers authorized to prepare a document based on a recorded survey and legal boundaries? Or is a surveyor required to prepare an express easement?

A: WAC 196-27A-020(2)(e) states: Registrants must be qualified by education or experience in the technical field of engineering or land surveying applicable to services performed.
 Further, sections (1)(f), (h), (i) state:

(f) Registrants shall offer their services in a truthful, objective, professional manner that effects integrity and fosters public trust in the engineering and land surveying professions.

continued next page

Q & A continued

(h) Registrants shall accurately represent their academic credentials, professional qualifications, and experience.

(i) Registrants may advertise professional services only in ways that are representative of their qualifications, experience, and capabilities.

Further WAC 196-27A-030(5) states, as an Explicit act of misconduct: Failing to comply with the provisions of the Survey Recording Act, chapter 58.09 RCW and the survey standards, chapter 332-130 WAC. In this instance, especially WAC 332-130-040 Land Description Guidelines.

Generally, a Professional Engineer does not have the required experience to properly write a boundary or easement legal description for a conveyance/recorded document. If the PE does, then they should be prepared to present that information to the client in order to meet the requirements of the above noted laws/rules.



Q: To what extent may a licensed civil engineer, NOT also licensed as a land surveyor, perform and provide topographic surveying?

A: A Professional Engineer (PE) may conduct limited topographic survey work for their own internal design project, such as differences in elevation for a slope area using assumed elevations (BUT! Tying into known benchmarks and setting a temporary benchmark falls under land surveying). All topographic work done for their own project must stay in-house and be used only for their own project design. They cannot perform full topographic surveys, as that falls under the definition of Land Surveying. I certainly would not expect to see a full topographic survey performed by/under direct supervision of and stamped/signed by a PE.

Also, [WAC 196-27A-020 Fundamental canons and guidelines for professional conduct and practice](#) addresses the Registrant's (licensee's) obligations to the public. This includes only providing services that are representative of their qualifications, experience, and capabilities.

Have a question you want answered? Visit us at our [Customer Service Portal](#).

Ethics & Licensing BRPELS Guest Lecture



BRPELS Board Member Mike Harney, PE, spoke to about 60 engineering students in two classes, at Washington State University, Pullman, on Wednesday, October 15, 2025. Mike explained the importance of professional licensing, the licensing process and ethical obligations as a PE. He also reviewed the NSPE and ASCE codes of Ethics.

Finally, Mike walked the students through a real-world ethical situation, where an engineering company made a mistake, the decision to admit to it, and how to correct it.



Do You Need A COA?

Jill Short, Investigations & Compliance Manager

WA State laws and rules require corporations and limited liability corporations to file with the Board an application for a certificate of authorization (COA) to offer the practice of engineering and/or land surveying services in the State of Washington. [RCW 18.43.130\(8\) & \(10\)](#) and [WAC 196-25-005](#)



Corporations and limited liability companies must be registered with the [Secretary of State](#) (SOC) and the [Department of Revenue](#) (DOR) and have a unified business identifier (UBI) number prior to applying for a COA. If the licenses with SOC and DOR are not current, then the COA with BRPELS is invalid and the company is not authorized to offer engineering and/or land surveying services in the State of Washington.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER – the company’s COA **MUST** be renewed on a yearly basis. If you don’t have a valid COA, you are not authorized to provide engineering or land surveying services, which is unlicensed practice.

It’s the responsibility of the company to remember to renew and to let us know if the Designated Engineer or Land Surveyor changes. Be sure that your new staff members are aware of this so that the COA renewal doesn’t lapse. Don’t rely on renewal reminder emails.

Please visit our website at brpels.wa.gov for instructions on how to apply for your COA. Don’t forget to include the affidavit form naming the Designated Engineer and/or Land Surveyor for the corporation. *Remember: Professional service corporations and professional limited liability companies, sole proprietorships, and partnerships are exempt from applying for the COA.*

Comparing Notes

Staff Report

Staff at BRPELS and the Oregon State Board of Examiners for Engineering & Land Surveying (OSBEELS) had an idea to help improve both agencies. How about a mid-day workshop to compare business best practices, for licensing, compliance and regulation? Subjects discussed included licensing trends, interstate license mobility, electronic records, exams, and outreach and communication.



“This was a fantastic opportunity to compare notes and examine ways both agencies could learn from each other,” said Kris Horton, PLS, BRPELS Deputy Director. The two groups met at Clark College in Vancouver on Wednesday, July 30, 2025.

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Forged Signatures and Stamps

Forged professional licenses are on the rise. To keep your PE & PLS license from getting stolen:

- ✓ carefully protect your physical and digital seal
- ✓ when you can, avoid sharing your license information publicly
- ✓ monitor online *freelance* platforms for misuse of your credentials

For digitally signed documents, use a secure app with identity validation and audit trails. For physical documents, be aware of forgery techniques like using a deceased engineer's credentials.



Encouraging Young Engineers

Greg Schieferstein, Communication & Outreach Manager

BRPELS Board member Dave Peden, PE, SE, spoke to about 40 members of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Seattle, Younger Member's Forum (YMF) at the University of Washington campus, on Wednesday, October 22, 2025.



Dave talked with the YMF group about helping to promote STEM, the importance and process of professional licensing, and ethical obligations as a PE. Dave also gave an example of an ethical decision, after an engineering mistake was discovered, mid project.

If you would like to request a speaker for your group, please click our [Customer Service Portal](#).



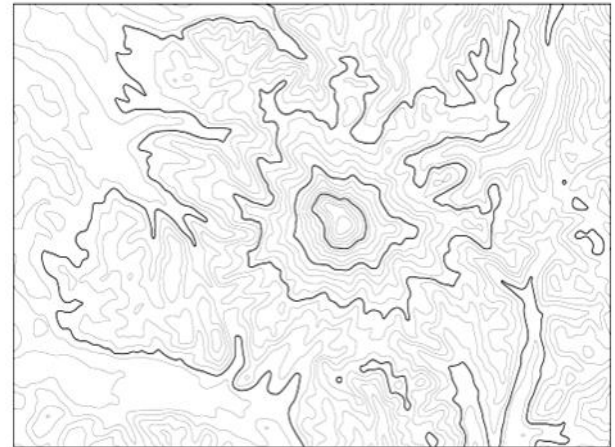
Measure Twice, Test Once; A Field Guide to WA Exams

Kevin Ballard, Internal Controls Manager

Preparing for your Washington State exam doesn't have to feel like surveying Mount Rainier with a yardstick; a little planning goes a long way. Both the Professional Land Surveyor (PLS) and On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems Designer & Inspector exams are open book, 4-hour, and currently offered twice a year in both Western (Tumwater) and Eastern (Spokane) Washington. That means your success depends less on memorizing and more on how well you know and have organized your materials. Bring only bound references (3-ring binders are fine), loose paper isn't allowed. *Don't forget your calculator*, but it must follow the NCEES Calculator Policy, so think about simple, scientific models like the Casio fx-115, or TI-36X. Not your phone or anything that could retain data.

MOUNT RAINIER

46°51'11"N 121°45'36"W



In preparation for the exam, review the [Washington State Land Surveyor Exam Blueprint](#) or [Washington State On-Site Exam Blueprint](#) to understand what subject matters are covered. Many candidates find it helpful to tab their reference materials by topic, practice time-management with same problems, and test their calculator functions ahead of time (nothing is worse than discovering the "mode" button mystery mid-exam). Also, don't forget extra batteries for your calculator! And remember: a good meal, rest, and a clear head beat last-minute cramming every time. Preparation isn't just about what you know, it's about setting yourself up for a calm, confident day in the exam seat.



Built for the Future: Licensing, Internships & Careers

Greg Schieferstein, Communication & Outreach Manager

BRPELS joined with Washington State University's ASCE Student Chapter, to host a "Meet & Greet," for engineering students, local engineering leaders, WSU professors and BRPELS Board members and staff. About 60 students attended the event, learning about possible internships, jobs and earning an EIT certificate and eventual PE license. The gathering was held in Pullman, Wednesday evening, October 15, 2025.



"This was a chance for students to get direct answers to their questions and perhaps build a relationship with a mentor or future employer," said BRPELS Director, Ken Fuller. "This is also a perfect opportunity to encourage them to get started in the PE licensing process," he added.



BRPELS coordinates these events at local colleges and universities as part of its outreach and education. The agency has already held similar engineering events at Gonzaga University in Spokane, St. Martin's University in Lacey and another planned in February at the University of Washington, Tacoma.





Digital Signatures

Protecting Yourself and Others

Matt Rasmussen, PE, PLS, Board Member

In the Spring/Summer 2024 Journal we provided some tips for protecting digital signatures for licensees. In this article let's look at how reviewing agencies and other consultants who work with licensees can do to help protect digital signatures and still ensure that digital review and signature processes are maintained.

Most of us can agree that the advent of digital signatures is a time saver. With some recording offices now offering or considering an entirely digital process for submitting maps for recording it behooves us all to think about the processes we put in place for accepting, and protecting, digitally signed documents.

From an agency perspective here are a few tips to employ to help submitters feel assured that their digital stamps and signatures are safe:

- Develop a written policy on what types of digital signatures will be accepted. The policy should require the use of software that locks the document after all parties have signed. The policy should also outline steps that staff will take to protect signatures and penalties for misuse.
- Require that draft, or initial submittals not be signed but rather marked "Preliminary" and that signatures only appear on final documents. This allows for mark-ups and editing. Don't feel bad about rejecting submittals that are for review but already locked.
- For final documents, ask that the licensee clearly identify what the official document is so that there is a record of what was intended to be submitted and less confusion if it is later discovered changes have been made.
- If you are requesting CAD files require that the submitter remove any digital versions of their stamp, seal or signature from the file before it is submitted. Remember that programs like AutoCAD will retain a copy of the seal/signature if it is a block, so ask that those files be purged for unused blocks or other deleted items before being turned over.
- Work with your local licensees to find out what their concerns or limitations are on using digital signatures. Be willing to adjust your policies or practices based on the feedback you receive. Also consider providing training to licensees on how your processes work.
- Consider being the initiator for digital signatures, that is, the agency sends out the file for everyone to sign rather than making it the responsibility of the submitter. Most programs have the ability for anyone to sign for free and without downloading anything.
- Think about that last time you received a set of plans to review that was on paper. Nearly all of our reviews, both internally and externally, are done with some type of software program. Most of our work product these days is never printed. If you or your agency isn't fully digital yet it's probably coming..

Getting ahead of the digital signature push by having clear policies and expectations will help with a smooth transition and provide a level of comfort and protection to both you and the licensees.



Exam Results

Computer-Based Testing (CBT) Results*

FE Exam CBT	Total	Pass	% Pass
May 1, 2025 - October 15, 2025	540	334	61.85%
FS Exam CBT	Total	Pass	% Pass
May 1, 2025 - October 15, 2025	16	12	75.00%
PS Exam CBT	Total	Pass	% Pass
May 1, 2025 - October 15, 2025	10	5	50.00%
PE Exam			
May 1, 2025 - October 15, 2025			
Architectural	Total	Pass	% Pass
	1	1	100.00%
Chemical	Total	Pass	% Pass
	4	2	50.00%
Civil	Total	Pass	% Pass
	149	98	65.77%
Electrical	Total	Pass	% Pass
	37	23	62.16%
Environmental	Total	Pass	% Pass
	12	7	58.33%
Industrial	Total	Pass	% Pass
	1	1	100.00%
Mechanical	Total	Pass	% Pass
	44	33	75.00%
Mining and Mineral Processing	Total	Pass	% Pass
	1	1	100.00%
Naval Architecture and Marine	Total	Pass	% Pass
	3	2	75.00%
On-Site Inspector			
September 2025	Total	Pass	% Pass
	12	2	16.67%
On-Site Designer			
September 2025	Total	Pass	% Pass
	4	0	0.00%
WA St Specific 4hr Land Surveyor			
September 2025	Total	Pass	% Pass
	26	11	42.31%

* Regarding the structural engineering (PE Structural) exam, we contacted NCEES and received the following: "NCEES doesn't plan to provide individual structural exam results in parts as people pass them. The reporting of individual parts of the exam being passed has caused confusion for boards. In the past, boards have mistakenly made assumptions about what a passing part means, versus passing the entire structural exam."

Investigations and Enforcement

Complaint Summary By Profession

May - October 2025 Complaints	Filed	Closed
Professional Engineers	10	5
Professional Land Surveyors	16	6
On-Site Designers	2	2
Unlicensed Engineers	1	0
Unlicensed Land Surveyors	1	0
Unlicensed On-Site Designers	0	0

Investigations and Enforcement

Formal Actions - May to October 2025

Professional Land Surveying

Thomas N. Woldendorp, PLS

2024-08-1939-00LSV

An investigation was opened, and charges were issued, based on a complaint alleging the Respondent, Thomas Woldendorp, performed a topographic survey which did not meet the provisions of Chapter 332-130 WAC. The Respondent also violated the Rules of Professional Conduct by not communicating with the Complainant as provided in Chapter 196-27A WAC.

The Board and the Respondent agreed to the following terms:

Effective August 7, 2025, the Respondent’s license was suspended for one year. The suspension is stayed contingent on the Respondent paying a \$2500 fine within 90 days.

See [link](#) for full details.

Richard Douglas Ross

2024-01-0051-00LSV/2024-08-2064-00LSV/2025-03-1105-00LSV/

2025-04-1111-00LSV/ 2025-04-1122-00LSV

On September 23, 2025, a Default Order was issued against the Respondent, Richard Ross, suspended his license for 10 years and assessed a fine in the amount of \$30K, payable within 90 days.

Mr. Ross violated the Rule of Professional Conduct by taking client’s money, not completing the work, and not providing information requested by the Board.

See [link](#) for full details.

continued next page



Investigations and Enforcement - continued

Formal Actions - May to October 2025

Land Surveying

James D. Cronos

2023-03-0339-00LSV/2024-08-2233-00LSV

An investigation was opened and charges were issued based on the Respondent, James Cronos, for violating Chapter 196-25, Chapter 196-27A WAC, and Chapter 18.43 RCW in that he was operating a land surveying business without a Certificate of Authorization with the Board.

The Board and the Respondent agreed the Respondent will permanently retire his land surveyor license and will no longer offer surveying services.

See [link](#) for full details.

CASE CLOSURES - May to October 2025

Engineering

2024-09-2373-00ENG

A complaint was filed alleging that the respondent was unresponsive and unreachable when the complainant asked for responses to follow-up comments from the city on the engineer's drawings.

Upon receiving the complaint, the owner of the company was notified. After two months, the respondent was contacted, and he explained that he had closed his business in 2023.

The respondent was counseled that he should reach out to the complainant to provide the necessary services or refund their money. He was also reminded that it is his responsibility to keep his contact information current with BRPELS.

Remedial counseling with the respondent was conducted and investigation was closed.

2024-12-3465-00ENG

The complaint alleges the respondent failed to respond to numerous phone calls, emails, and text messages regarding progress on engineering services related to approval of a Boundary Line Adjustment.

An interview was conducted with the respondent regarding the requirement to seal and sign documents in compliance with Chapter WAC 196-23-020 (1) & (2). The respondent was unaware of the requirement. The respondent was also advised the need for a more formal agreement with his clients to avoid potential misunderstanding in the scope of services being performed and a reminder to only perform work within his area of expertise (preparing property descriptions).

All paperwork was submitted to and accepted by the county although it is unknown if the final documents were filed to finalize the Boundary Line Adjustment. This case appears to be based on a dispute in the services to be performed. Based on the Case Manager's findings the investigation was closed with no further action.

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Investigations and Enforcement - continued

CASE CLOSURES – May to October 2025

Engineering

2025-02-0602-00ENG

A complaint was filed alleging the respondent breached a contract and accuses them of fraud.

In September 2023, the complainant hired the PE to prepare structural plans for a small remodel of the roof and upper floor of their residence. The complainant signed a contract prepared by the engineering firm for \$2,500. The architect preparing the architectural documents used for the fee proposal and contract did not indicate that a stair between the lower and upper floors was to be relocated. This, and other walls being removed, would require modified structural framing.

The direction from the architect was specifically to address the added dormer. When the PE received plans that showed more details in October 2023, he noticed changes to the stair and lower floor plan. He offered to do the engineering work as an additional service, per the contract. Included in the additional service request was a site visit that would be necessary to confirm existing conditions. The owner refused to consider additional fees and subsequently halted the project.

They filed a claim in small claims court in November 2023 for the return of the \$2,500 fee that had been paid. The judge ruled that the engineer should refund the fees. The complainant states that they have not received the monies although the PE claims to have mailed the check in March or April 2024.

Based on the information provided, the case manager does not find the respondent in violation of RCW and WAC for his performance on the project. Concerning the legal matter and refund, BRPELS is not the authority for enforcing small claims court decisions and leaves that to the proper authorities. Based on the case manager's findings the investigation was closed with no further action.

2024-05-1640-00ENG

The complaint alleges that respondent improperly designed a shear resisting system for a residential property under roughly-decade long construction and that Respondent failed to meet contracted services.

Respondent was contracted to prepare assessments of framing, roofing, and internal shear design and installation. Respondent prepared roughly five years ago pending verification of construction installation activities. When requested to close out and seal products and prepare a certification statement to the county, respondent noted in said certification statement that restraint systems and inter-floor restraints were not observable to verify fabrication to design as all were within finished walls and surfaces and that shear address was completed with additional nailed plywood sheeting rather than the shear design submitted by the Respondent.

Multiple communications regarding the objectives of complainant, as observed by the respondent, were intended to constitute plan stamping by having the respondent seal work not completed by himself nor under his supervision.

Respondent delivered a product certification letter bearing a seal with residual "expires" box removed by the Board more than 15 years ago and did so with signature only and no date upon the seal or product certification statement.

Based on the case manager's findings, remedial counseling was conducted with respondent, and the investigation was closed with no further action.

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Investigations and Enforcement - continued

Engineering

2025-05-1641-00ENG

A complaint was received regarding the creation of a strip of land when a property, neighboring the one represented by the complainant, was subdivided in a way that resulted in a strip of land between the subdivision and the complainant's parcel. The complainant claims that the strip was created intentionally and that the respondent failed to disclose the existence of the strip to them when the adjoining property was subdivided and the plat recorded. The complainant also alleges fraudulent misrepresentation to a public agency (county) by the respondent. The complaint also alleges a lack of transparency, a conflict of interest and unethical/unprofessional conduct by the respondent in how the matter of the strip was resolved.

The respondent is a licensed professional engineer in Washington. The respondent was the owner of properties on the south and east boundaries of the complainant's property. Due to economic considerations the respondent sold both properties to an investor in 2010 but retained a contract to develop both parcels through his firm. The respondent completed a subdivision of the south property in 2010 on behalf of the investor.

In 2014 the respondent, on behalf of the investor, completed the subdivision of the eastern property ("east subdivision"). The subdivision map was prepared by contracted surveyor and recorded with the County. The boundary of the subdivision does not match the legal description resulting in a 3 feet wide strip of land that separated the two properties, and the strip was not shown on the subdivision map. The surveyor and the respondent stated that they used the field fence as the boundary rather than the boundary per deed. The respondent and the surveyor both claimed that they were attempting to work with the complainant's father who was the owner of the complainant's parcel at the time, on a subdivision of his property that was intended to be done simultaneously or in close succession which may have addressed the discrepancy between the fence line and the deeded lot line.

In 2016 the complainants father filed a lawsuit over a dispute on the actual location of his property compared to the existing fence lines. The lawsuit involved only the south boundary line, where the complainant's fence was outside their property roughly 2 feet. The respondent and the investor were both involved in the lawsuit as the previous owner and developers of the property. Through communications on the law suit the respondent eventually pointed out that the complainants eastern fence line was outside of their property boundary by 3 feet. The lawsuit was settled on the advice of the claimant's attorney by all parties agreeing to relocate the fences to their legal property lines. The issue with the east boundary went unaddressed.

The discrepancy with the plat boundary appears to go unnoticed until a 2017 survey by another surveyor was requested by the complainant's father. The survey is recorded with the county. This survey identifies the existence of a 3 feet gap between the properties. The respondent's surveyor prepared a legal description and quit claim deed for the strip for the respondent when they became aware of the 2017 survey, but nothing was done with it. The recording of the survey brought the gaps existence to the attention the county, which added it to their parcel map system and assigned it a parcel number, leaving ownership under the investor. Despite this nothing was done to remedy the gap.

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Investigations and Enforcement - continued

Engineering

In 2021 the complainant hired a realtor to sell the property. The realtor identified the existence of the strip and attempted to contact the investor. The respondent contacted the realtor and informed them he will represent the investor on the matter involving the strip. Respondent assured the complainant that he can secure the strip from the investor and will work with the County to resolve it through the complainant's subdivision process but also offered to resolve the strip issue if the claimant will enter a development contract with him for the claimant's property for a fee of \$375,000 (\$25,000 per lot at 15 lots). The respondent, with a partner, also offered to buy the property once the land use approvals he obtained under his proposed contract are in place.

Later in 2021 the complainant hired a different civil engineering firm to subdivide their property, hoping the platting process will resolve the strip issue. Through the development review process the county pointed out the existence of the gap and indicated it needed to be resolved before the property can be served with roads and utilities. The firm contacted the respondent who offered to sell the strip as part of a development package which would include his preliminary plans, surveys, soil tests etc. for a lump sum of \$60,000. The strip was deeded from the investor to the respondent in July 2021.

Back and forth negotiations took place (no documentation in the complaint or response) and in April of 2022 the strip was deeded from the respondent to the complainant at apparently no charge.

March 7, 2024, the complainant property, including the strip of land at issue, was subdivided and recorded with the county by another surveyor. The property boundary of the new subdivision appeared to include the strip, but it is not clearly identified on the plat.

The case manager's recommended the respondent receive a letter of education outlining the concerns the Board has, how he handled the matter leading up to the creation of the strip. Specifically, the issue should have been resolved more timely, when it was discovered in 2017. He should not perform work for people under assumptions and without a direct written agreement. He was reminded he is not a licensed land surveyor nor a licensed attorney and that should reserve his professional judgment for areas in which he is licensed and qualified. He must avoid both actual and perceived conflicts of interest. A separate investigation on the respondent's surveyor was opened to determine if violations occurred.

Land Surveying

2024-05-1038-00LSV

A complaint was received alleging the respondent is in violation of unprofessional conduct pursuant to chapter 18.43 RCW and Chapter 196-27A WAC. Failure to record a survey map pursuant to Chapter 58.09 RCW. Failure to provide a map that meets Chapter 332-130 WAC.

The complainant contacted the respondent soon after becoming aware of a survey being conducted that adjoins public lands of the state and is managed by DNR. The respondent performed a preliminary survey in 2022 for marking a line. At that time, the respondent set markers and referenced other government corners that were found while conducting his survey.

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Investigations and Enforcement - continued

The respondent was contacted by Board staff and responded that the survey was performed at the request of the client. The client had specifically stated that no survey needed to be recorded and that historically the surveys were used as Exhibit Maps and titled as such. The client has extensive records and often requests temporary markers be placed as a matter of managing their property.

Following interviews with the Board Investigator the respondent determined a survey should be filed and agreed to provide a preliminary record of survey (ROS) for review by the case manager that was consistent with Chapter 58.09 RCW and Chapter 332-130 WAC. The ROS was recorded and based on these findings, the case was closed with no further action.

2025-05-1641-00ENG

A complaint was received regarding the creation of a strip of land when a property, neighboring the one represented by the complainant, was subdivided in a way that resulted in a strip of land between the subdivision and the complainant's parcel. The complainant claims that the strip was created intentionally and that the respondent failed to disclose the existence of the strip to them when the adjoining property was subdivided and the plat recorded. The complainant also alleges fraudulent misrepresentation to a public agency (county) by the respondent. The complaint also alleges a lack of transparency, a conflict of interest and unethical/unprofessional conduct by the respondent in how the matter of the strip was resolved.

The respondent is a licensed professional engineer in the State of Washington. The respondent was the owner of properties on the south and east boundaries of the complainant's property. Due to economic considerations the respondent sold both properties to an investor in 2010 but retained a contract to develop both parcels through his firm. The respondent completed a subdivision of the south property in 2010 on behalf of the investor.

Back and forth negotiations seemingly ensue (no documentation in the complaint or response) and in April of 2022 the strip is deeded from the respondent to the complainant at apparently no charge.

March 7, 2024, the complainant property, including the strip of land at issue, is subdivided and recorded with the County by another surveyor. The property boundary of the new subdivision appears to include the strip, but it is not clearly identified on the plat.

The case manager's recommended the respondent receive a letter of education outlining the concerns the Board has with how he handled the matter leading up to the creation of the strip. Specifically that the issue should have been more timely resolved when it was discovered in 2017, that he should not perform work for people under assumptions and without a direct written agreement, reminding him that he is not a licensed land surveyor nor a licensed attorney and that he should reserve his professional judgement for areas in which he is duly licensed and qualified and that he must avoid not only direct conflicts of interest could be perceived. A separate investigation on the respondent's surveyor was opened to determine if violations occurred.

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Investigations and Enforcement - continued

2024-01-0146-00LSV

A complaint was received alleging the respondent conducted a survey marking corners without the permission of the estate or person residing there. There was an obvious trespass since some of the stakes were found within the fenced back yard.

The respondent surveyed the property to be purchased based on instructions from his client (the purchaser) and produced a preliminary survey for recording showing the proposed new boundary following a fence where new monuments were set. The dimensions of the north and south lines do not conform to the original agreement but instead follow a fence about 8 feet east of said line. When the respondent tried to acquire signatures for the "forms" he was informed that the estate of the decedent had filed a lawsuit regarding the property in question and he had to wait until it was settled to obtain the signatures.

The complainant stated the purchaser sued the estate to quiet title. The complainant believes the respondent did not do his due diligence in notifying the occupants they would be on the property, nor did he do proper research when drafting the BLA. The complainant hired another survey firm to survey the subject property which was recorded on 2-15-2024 showing details of the encroachments onto the sellers property which was the subject of the purchase and sale agreement.

The respondent recorded a survey showing the line per the original agreement with the fence and the original monuments being set approximately 8 feet east of the line cited in the purchase and sale agreement. Said survey gives the appearance and contains verbiage indicating that a Boundary Line Adjustment was performed, but the survey does not contain any signatures or references to any documents necessary to convey the property.

Based on the information provided it appears that the respondent performed a survey of a proposed Boundary Line Adjustment survey based on a signed purchase and sale agreement.

He recorded the survey showing the placement of the monuments based on a signed purchase and sale agreement even though there does not appear to be any conveyances or final court judgments that actually moved the property lines. The surveys lacked a narrative explaining the rationale behind the decision regarding the boundaries. In addition the survey lacked other information required by WAC 332-130.

The Case Manager believed the narrative on the recorded amended Record of Survey is minimally adequate to meet the definition of "intelligent interpretation" per WAC 332-130-020 (11). Other elements of the survey of WAC 332-130 were adequately addressed on the amended Record of Survey. The Case Manager found no violations of trespass as alleged by the complainant based on the signed Intent to Purchase/Sale "agreement with deposit" signed by the deceased person and closed this case with no further action.

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Investigations and Enforcement - continued

2024-05-1005-00LSV

A Board generated complaint was opened based on an email received regarding a company and an individual advertising land surveying services. The respondent does not have a Professional Land Surveyor (PLS) license. On January 13, 2022, the respondent applied to sit for the Land Surveyor in Training (LSIT) exam. The LSIT application was reviewed, and additional documentation was requested on March 15, 2022, to verify experience. No additional documentation was received from the respondent and the LSIT exam date was not approved. The respondent is a licensed professional engineer and was directly supervising the project even though he was not the point of contact.

The investigator found no evidence of an actual survey being performed or filed by the respondent, only advertising on a website and Facebook page. Pursuant to WAC 196-09-050(2)(d) a Brief Adjudicative Proceedings (BAP) was offered to the respondent regarding the false advertisement.

The respondent was served with a Temporary Cease & Desist and Notice of Violation letter. The respondent took down the company website page and the Facebook page. Since the respondent complied and removed all advertising of performing land surveyor services, the Cease and Desist was withdrawn, and case manager is recommending the investigation be closed with no further action.

2024-09-2424-00LSV

A complaint was filed alleging the respondent has patently false information on his survey that was skewed to benefit his client. The complaint involves a dispute over the location of an upland parcel and the interpretation and validity of a deed as it relates to the location of a river.

It appears that the river has moved significantly in a westward direction from the location originally mapped (meandered) by the General Land Office in 1859.

The respondent recorded two surveys indicating the boundaries were fixed in their original location due to an avulsion. The second survey appears to be an amendment to the first survey, but is not identified as such thereon. Both surveys lacked a narrative explaining the rationale behind the decision regarding the boundaries of the river. In addition the survey lacked other information required by WAC 332-130. The respondent understood the need for a narrative and decided to revise the survey and add additional information to bring the survey into compliance with WAC 332-130.

The Case Manager found no evidence that the respondent provided information on his survey that was skewed to benefit his client and this case was closed with no further action.

The respondent was contacted by Board staff and responded that the survey was performed at the request of the client. The client had specifically stated that no survey needed to be recorded and that historically the surveys were used as Exhibit Maps and titled as such. The client has extensive records and often requests temporary markers be placed as a matter of managing their property.

Following interviews with the Board Investigator the respondent determined a survey should be filed and agreed to provide a preliminary record of survey (ROS) for review by the case manager that was consistent with Chapter 58.09 RCW and Chapter 332-130 WAC. The ROS was recorded and based on these findings, the case was closed with no further action.

BRPELS

BOARD OF REGISTRATION
FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS
& LAND SURVEYORS

Board Staff

[Visit our Staff webpage here](#)

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Agency Director and Chief Executive Officer for Board operations. Manages overall staff and program budget. Oversees liaison activities between the Board, other state agencies and stakeholders. Provides guidance on application of statute, rules and policies on engineering, land surveying and On-Site practice.

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Provides support to the Director related to staff management, guidance on application of statute, rules and policies on engineering, land surveying and On-Site practice. Provides guidance to staff regarding exams and investigations. Supports the Board's Survey Committee.

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Executive Assistant to the Board. Coordinates all board meetings, minutes and schedules. Office coordinator and planner.

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Supports the Practice Committee and manages investigations and board enforcement. Conducts engineering, land surveying and On-Site designer investigations. Tracks Board Order compliance.

Vonna Cramer

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Supports the work of the Exam Qualification Committee of the Board. Provides guidance on statute, rules and policies, as it relates to the licensing process.

Nghiem Pham

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Processes exam applications for PE exams, PE initial licenses, SE exams, PLS and On.Site. Handles exams, renewals, license verifications and general licensing questions.

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Processes PE comity, SE comity applications, EIT/LSIT exam and certifications and Corp/LLC applications, renewals, license verifications and general licensing questions.

Bryce Dickison

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Schedule and facilitate board meetings, events and resources. Assist licensing and answer general questions by phone and email.

The Engineer's Creed

I pledge to participate in none but honest enterprise, to place service before profit, the honor and standing of my profession before personal advantage and the public welfare above all other considerations.





Contact

Board Office Access

Board Mailing Address (documents without payments):

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PO Box 9025
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Board Mailing Address (applications or renewals with payments):

Board of Registration for Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors
Department of Licensing
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Our office is in a secure building and public access is not available without an appointment. If you have a scheduled meeting in our building, please call the number posted at the two main entrances. Someone will bring you to your meeting.



2025 Events Calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	DEC
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9 SAME Presentation - Dupont
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	10 & 11 BRPELS Board Meeting - Olympia
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31				

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	JAN
			1	2	3		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	23-24 WOSSA Septic Con, Tacoma

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	FEB
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	5-6 Formal Adjudicative Hearing, WebEx
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	11-12 Committee & Board Mtgs, Tacoma
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	25-27 LSAW Conference, Spokane



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