

# Statistical release

## P6141.2

# Wholesale trade sales (Preliminary)

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**Results for March 2011**

**Table A – Key figures for wholesale trade sales**

Actual wholesale trade sales estimates	March 2011 (R million)	% change between March 2010 and March 2011	% change between January to March 2010 and January to March 2011
At current prices	94 054	13,7	12,1
At constant 2000 prices	47 810	7,1	6,3

Seasonally adjusted estimates	March 2011 (R million)	% change between February and March 2011	% change between October to December 2010 and January to March 2011
At current prices	91 795	4,2	4,4
At constant 2000 prices	46 472	3,5	1,1

**Wholesale trade sales in real terms**

Wholesale trade sales, at constant 2000 prices, for the first quarter of 2011 increased by 6,3% compared with the first quarter of 2010, while sales for the same period in 2010 decreased by 3,4%. Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales for the first quarter of 2011 increased by 1,1% compared with the fourth quarter of 2010.

Wholesale trade sales, at constant 2000 prices, for March 2011 increased by 7,1% compared with March 2010.

**Wholesale trade sales in nominal terms**

Wholesale trade sales, at current prices, for the first quarter of 2011 increased by 12,1% compared with the first quarter of 2010. The major contributors to this increase were dealers in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products (31,8% and contributing 6,2 percentage points) and dealers in food, beverages and tobacco (11,1% and contributing 1,8 percentage points) – see Table B on page 3.

Wholesale trade sales, at current prices, for March 2011 increased by 13,7% compared with March 2010, while sales for the corresponding period in 2010 increased by 4,3%.

**Table B – Contribution of each type of dealer to the percentage change in wholesale trade sales at current prices**

Type of wholesale dealer	Sales January to March 2010 (R million)	Weight 1/	Sales January to March 2011 (R million)	Difference in sales between January to March 2010 and January to March 2011 (R million)	% change between January to March 2010 and January to March 2011	Contribution (% points) to the % change in total sales 2/
Fee or contract basis	15 794	7,0	14 736	-1 058	-6,7	-0,5
Agricultural raw materials and livestock	11 501	5,1	12 948	1 447	12,6	0,6
Food, beverages and tobacco	37 205	16,5	41 351	4 146	11,1	1,8
Textiles, clothing and footwear	6 063	2,7	6 877	814	13,4	0,4
Other household goods except precious stones	23 403	10,4	25 758	2 355	10,1	1,1
Precious stones, jewellery and silverware	1 369	0,6	1 086	-283	-20,7	-0,1
Solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products	44 163	19,6	58 207	14 044	31,8	6,2
Metals and metal ores	8 250	3,7	9 751	1 501	18,2	0,7
Construction and building materials	10 545	4,7	12 152	1 607	15,2	0,7
Other intermediate products, waste and scrap	8 689	3,9	9 829	1 140	13,1	0,5
Machinery, equipment and supplies	35 695	15,9	37 498	1 803	5,1	0,8
Other goods	22 507	10,0	22 134	-373	-1,7	-0,2
<b>Total 3/</b>	<b>225 184</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>252 326</b>	<b>27 142</b>	<b>12,1</b>	<b>12,1</b>

1/ Weight is the percentage contribution of each type of dealer to the total wholesale trade sales for the three months up to the current month of the previous year.

2/ The contribution to the percentage change is calculated by multiplying the percentage change of each type of dealer with its corresponding weight, divided by 100.

3/ The figures have been rounded off. Therefore discrepancies may occur between the sums of the component items and the totals.

**Figure 1 – Wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices**



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**Statistician-General**

**Detailed results**

**Table 1 – Wholesale trade sales according to the type of dealer at current prices (R million)**

Year and month 1/	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D	Type E	Type F	Type G	Type H	Type I	Type J	Type K	Type L	Total 2/	
<b>2010</b>	<b>January</b>	4 623	3 551	12 064	1 612	6 924	194	13 945	2 500	2 897	2 543	9 980	6 497	67 331
	<b>February</b>	5 370	3 996	12 499	2 065	7 791	665	14 219	2 693	3 494	2 975	11 728	7 649	75 145
	<b>March</b>	5 801	3 954	12 642	2 386	8 688	510	15 999	3 057	4 154	3 171	13 987	8 361	82 708
	<b>April</b>	4 665	3 440	12 822	2 485	8 590	477	15 034	3 047	3 840	2 593	12 131	6 987	76 111
	<b>May</b>	5 081	3 687	13 939	2 211	8 727	588	16 518	3 156	4 050	2 737	12 398	7 238	80 331
	<b>June</b>	5 087	4 459	13 738	2 090	8 751	574	17 742	3 188	3 861	2 876	13 205	7 008	82 577
	<b>July</b>	5 711	4 970	13 816	2 230	8 615	623	17 156	2 989	4 043	2 793	12 203	7 500	82 648
	<b>August</b>	5 360	4 089	14 638	2 306	9 030	433	17 419	2 924	4 016	2 967	12 887	7 816	83 885
	<b>September</b>	5 555	4 116	14 861	2 777	9 451	418	16 269	2 951	4 275	3 232	13 333	7 809	85 047
	<b>October</b>	5 174	4 475	13 812	2 922	9 873	651	17 716	3 040	4 257	3 499	12 846	7 850	86 115
	<b>November</b>	5 560	5 140	16 424	3 319	11 012	522	17 993	3 120	4 853	4 187	14 158	8 708	94 996
	<b>December</b>	6 455	4 688	18 153	2 165	9 296	434	18 630	2 129	3 481	3 023	12 751	8 428	89 632
<b>Total</b>	<b>64 442</b>	<b>50 565</b>	<b>169 408</b>	<b>28 568</b>	<b>106 748</b>	<b>6 089</b>	<b>198 640</b>	<b>34 794</b>	<b>47 221</b>	<b>36 596</b>	<b>151 607</b>	<b>91 851</b>	<b>986 526</b>	
<b>2011</b>	<b>January</b>	4 423	4 071	13 176	1 780	7 562	186	17 787	2 701	3 545	3 040	10 607	6 642	75 519
	<b>February</b>	4 785	4 348	13 682	2 188	8 603	301	18 457	3 267	4 036	3 446	12 382	7 259	82 753
	<b>March</b>	5 528	4 529	14 493	2 909	9 593	599	21 963	3 783	4 571	3 343	14 509	8 233	94 054

1/ Figures are preliminary.

2/ The figures have been rounded off. Therefore discrepancies may occur between the sums of the component items and the totals.

**Description of type of dealer included in a specific group type as indicated in Table 1 <sup>1/</sup>**

Group type	Type of dealers included in group type	Group type	Type of dealers included in group type
Type A	Wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis	Type G	Wholesale trade in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products
Type B	Wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and livestock	Type H	Wholesale trade in metals and metal ores
Type C	Wholesale trade in food, beverages and tobacco	Type I	Wholesale trade in construction and building materials
Type D	Wholesale trade in textiles, clothing and footwear	Type J	Wholesale trade in other intermediate products, waste and scrap
Type E	Wholesale trade in other household goods except precious stones	Type K	Wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies
Type F	Wholesale trade in precious stones, jewellery and silverware	Type L	Wholesale trade in other goods

1/ See note 4 on page 9 for more detailed specifications.

**Table 2 – Total wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)**

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 <sup>1/</sup>	2011 <sup>1/</sup>
January	38 049	42 575	47 258	58 391	69 813	73 546	67 331	75 519
February	42 973	44 565	51 827	62 630	76 561	74 894	75 145	82 753
March	46 520	47 590	56 092	67 058	79 884	79 294	82 708	94 054
April	41 545	48 941	50 811	61 517	83 509	71 939	76 111	
May	50 150	50 901	58 973	69 661	86 779	72 950	80 331	
June	51 641	52 778	59 678	69 765	88 149	74 993	82 577	
July	49 471	52 629	61 630	71 304	91 466	75 723	82 648	
August	50 458	54 214	64 001	73 714	88 746	74 466	83 885	
September	51 032	56 313	64 025	72 859	89 791	75 711	85 047	
October	55 247	58 201	68 204	80 442	93 965	80 503	86 115	
November	58 872	62 369	72 646	84 120	97 566	82 729	94 996	
December	50 795	53 966	63 148	71 024	84 966	80 052	89 632	
<b>Total</b>	<b>586 753</b>	<b>625 042</b>	<b>718 293</b>	<b>842 485</b>	<b>1 031 195</b>	<b>916 800</b>	<b>986 526</b>	

1/ Preliminary

**Table 3 – Percentage change in total wholesale trade sales at current prices 1/**

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
January	4,7	11,9	11,0	23,6	19,6	5,3	-8,5	12,2
February	3,4	3,7	16,3	20,8	22,2	-2,2	0,3	10,1
March	8,8	2,3	17,9	19,6	19,1	-0,7	4,3	13,7
April	4,8	17,8	3,8	21,1	35,7	-13,9	5,8	
May	19,7	1,5	15,9	18,1	24,6	-15,9	10,1	
June	19,3	2,2	13,1	16,9	26,4	-14,9	10,1	
July	12,1	6,4	17,1	15,7	28,3	-17,2	9,1	
August	19,1	7,4	18,1	15,2	20,4	-16,1	12,6	
September	17,9	10,3	13,7	13,8	23,2	-15,7	12,3	
October	21,2	5,3	17,2	17,9	16,8	-14,3	7,0	
November	26,6	5,9	16,5	15,8	16,0	-15,2	14,8	
December	27,7	6,2	17,0	12,5	19,6	-5,8	12,0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,7</b>	<b>6,5</b>	<b>14,9</b>	<b>17,3</b>	<b>22,4</b>	<b>-11,1</b>	<b>7,6</b>	

1/ The percentage change is the difference between wholesale trade sales of the relevant month of the current year and the corresponding month of the previous year expressed as a percentage.

**Table 4 – Seasonally adjusted total wholesale trade sales at current prices (R million)**

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
January	43 380	48 931	54 413	67 035	79 832	83 852	76 748	86 162
February	44 852	46 958	54 995	66 759	81 697	79 766	79 983	88 092
March	46 427	47 587	56 151	66 931	79 251	78 021	80 911	91 795
April	44 428	52 569	54 664	66 123	89 588	77 122	81 499	
May	49 864	50 578	58 762	69 650	87 201	73 648	81 353	
June	50 865	52 033	58 953	69 169	87 608	74 660	82 223	
July	49 552	52 338	60 895	70 200	89 844	74 409	81 207	
August	50 042	53 386	62 786	72 313	87 253	73 493	83 052	
September	49 922	55 097	62 654	71 419	88 186	74 497	83 689	
October	51 101	53 842	63 185	74 583	87 101	74 645	79 886	
November	52 549	55 336	64 440	74 786	87 107	74 027	85 094	
December	51 405	54 776	64 054	71 927	85 757	80 526	89 967	

**Table 5 – Total wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices (R million)**

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 <sup>1/</sup>	2011 <sup>1/</sup>
January	30 164	32 846	34 667	38 625	41 780	40 684	36 614	39 405
February	33 837	34 255	37 996	41 177	45 165	41 618	40 744	42 498
March	36 636	36 381	40 879	43 404	46 077	44 015	44 655	47 810
April	32 430	37 128	36 705	39 198	47 292	39 992	40 639	
May	39 038	38 433	42 032	43 799	46 695	41 032	42 882	
June	40 111	39 795	41 925	43 442	47 049	42 549	43 820	
July	38 529	39 302	42 630	44 131	48 261	42 710	44 055	
August	39 146	40 357	43 304	45 438	46 596	41 933	44 575	
September	39 277	41 622	43 082	44 806	47 882	42 816	45 380	
October	42 227	42 915	45 431	48 917	50 226	45 211	45 939	
November	45 010	45 752	47 989	50 963	52 898	46 039	50 319	
December	38 998	39 560	41 829	42 899	46 665	44 188	47 334	
<b>Total</b>	<b>455 403</b>	<b>468 346</b>	<b>498 469</b>	<b>526 799</b>	<b>566 586</b>	<b>512 787</b>	<b>526 956</b>	

1/ Preliminary

**Table 6 – Percentage change in total wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices 1/**

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
January	4,6	8,9	5,5	11,4	8,2	-2,6	-10,0	7,6
February	2,9	1,2	10,9	8,4	9,7	-7,9	-2,1	4,3
March	8,4	-0,7	12,4	6,2	6,2	-4,5	1,5	7,1
April	3,3	14,5	-1,1	6,8	20,6	-15,4	1,6	
May	16,7	-1,5	9,4	4,2	6,6	-12,1	4,5	
June	15,9	-0,8	5,4	3,6	8,3	-9,6	3,0	
July	9,9	2,0	8,5	3,5	9,4	-11,5	3,1	
August	15,9	3,1	7,3	4,9	2,5	-10,0	6,3	
September	14,0	6,0	3,5	4,0	6,9	-10,6	6,0	
October	16,6	1,6	5,9	7,7	2,7	-10,0	1,6	
November	21,2	1,6	4,9	6,2	3,8	-13,0	9,3	
December	23,3	1,4	5,7	2,6	8,8	-5,3	7,1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,9</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>6,4</b>	<b>5,7</b>	<b>7,6</b>	<b>-9,5</b>	<b>2,8</b>	

1/ The percentage change is the difference between wholesale trade of the relevant month of the current year and the corresponding month of the previous year expressed as a percentage.

**Table 7 – Seasonally adjusted total wholesale trade sales at constant 2000 prices (R million)**

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
January	34 199	37 457	39 489	43 818	47 210	45 902	41 349	44 593
February	35 157	35 800	39 857	43 324	47 583	43 830	42 981	44 908
March	36 430	36 148	40 632	43 012	45 430	43 069	43 483	46 472
April	35 022	40 358	40 029	42 709	51 368	43 313	43 899	
May	38 771	38 152	41 925	43 934	47 186	41 717	43 777	
June	39 410	39 200	41 463	43 213	47 007	42 642	43 937	
July	38 563	39 149	42 292	43 708	47 742	42 285	43 622	
August	38 907	39 931	42 755	44 923	46 162	41 702	44 459	
September	38 548	40 886	42 297	43 990	46 993	42 041	44 524	
October	39 197	39 873	42 251	45 460	46 588	41 900	42 556	
November	40 223	40 607	42 534	45 215	47 069	40 986	44 794	
December	39 478	40 045	42 206	43 137	46 767	44 128	47 164	



**Table 8 – Quarterly estimates and percentage changes**

Actual wholesale trade sales estimates	January to March 2010 (R million)	January to March 2011 (R million)	% change between January to March 2010 and January to March 2011
<b>At current prices</b>	225 184	252 326	12,1
<b>At constant 2000 prices</b>	122 013	129 713	6,3

**Table 9 – Seasonally adjusted monthly and quarterly estimates and percentage changes**

Seasonally adjusted wholesale trade sales estimates	February 2011 (R million)	March 2011 (R million)	% change between February and March 2011	October to December 2010 (R million)	January to March 2011 (R million)	% change between October to December 2010 and January to March 2011
<b>At current prices</b>	88 092	91 795	4,2	254 947	266 049	4,4
<b>At constant 2000 prices</b>	44 908	46 472	3,5	134 514	135 973	1,1

## Explanatory notes

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>	Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly survey of the wholesale trade industry, covering wholesale enterprises (see 4 below). This survey is based on a sample drawn from the 2010 Business Sampling Frame (BSF) that contains businesses registered for value added tax (VAT).
	<b>2</b>	As is usual, information for the latest month had to be estimated for respondents who have not reported by the cut-off date for production of results. These estimates will be revised in future statistical releases when their reported information becomes available. Published wholesale trade sales estimates exclude VAT.
<b>Purpose of the survey</b>	<b>3</b>	The results of the monthly wholesale trade sales survey are used to compile estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) and its components, which are used in monitoring the state of the economy and formulation of economic policy. These statistics are also used in the analysis of comparative business and industry performance.
<b>Scope of the survey</b>	<b>4</b>	<p>This survey covers wholesale enterprises according to the following types of dealer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis</li> <li>• Sales by commission agents, commodity brokers, auctioneers and other wholesale trade on a fee or contract basis;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in agricultural raw materials and livestock;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in food, beverages and tobacco;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in textiles, clothing and footwear;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in other household goods except precious stones</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in household furniture, requisites and appliances, wholesale trade in books and stationery, wholesale trade in pharmaceuticals and toiletries and wholesale trade in other household goods not elsewhere classified;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in precious stones, jewellery and silverware;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and related products;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in metals and metal ores;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in construction and building materials</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in construction materials, hardware, plumbing and heating equipment and supplies;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in machinery, equipment and supplies;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in other intermediate products, waste and scrap;</li> <li>• Wholesale trade in other goods; and</li> <li>• General wholesale trade and other wholesale trade not classified elsewhere.</li> </ul>
<b>Classification</b>	<b>5</b>	The 1993 edition of the <i>Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (SIC)</i> , Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02, was used to classify the statistical units in the survey. The SIC is based on the 1990 <i>International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC)</i> with suitable adaptations for local conditions. Each enterprise is classified to the industry which reflects its predominant activity. Statistics in this publication are presented at SIC group (four digit) level.
<b>Response rate</b>	<b>6</b>	The preliminary response rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for March 2011 was 80,1%. The improved response rate for the survey on wholesale trade sales for February 2011 was 92,9%.
<b>Statistical unit</b>	<b>7</b>	The statistical unit for which information is compiled and published is the enterprise, defined as a legal unit or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales activities.
<b>Survey methodology and design</b>	<b>8</b>	The survey is conducted monthly. Questionnaires are sent to a sample of about 1 000 enterprises from a population of about 20 000 enterprises. Completed questionnaires are required to be returned to Stats SA within 10 days after the end of the reference month. Fax and telephone reminders are used to follow up non-respondents.

- 9** The value of sales is obtained monthly from the sample of about 1 000 enterprises (which was drawn in April 2010 at the SIC four-digit level) from a population of about 20 000 wholesale enterprises. The wholesale industry is divided into four size groups. All large enterprises (size group one) are completely enumerated. Simple random sampling is applied to the remaining size groups (medium, small and very small size enterprises). The total value of sales of the large enterprises (size group one) is added to the weighted totals of size groups two, three and four to reflect the total value of sales.
- Weighting methodology** **10** For those strata not completely enumerated, the weights to produce estimates are the inverse ratio of the sampling fraction, modified to take account of non-response in the survey. Stratum estimates are calculated and then aggregated with the completely enumerated stratum to form group estimates. These procedures, which are in line with international best practice, are described in more detail on the Stats SA website at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/publicationsearch.asp>.
- Constant prices** **11** Stats SA compiles its monthly estimates of wholesale trade sales at current prices from a survey of wholesalers in the formal sector. To arrive at estimates of wholesale trade sales at constant prices, sales at current prices are deflated using the all groups producer price index (PPI) excluding 'Electricity, gas, steam and water'.
- Seasonal adjustment** **12** Seasonally adjusted estimates are generated each month, using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the US Bureau of the Census, 1968. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove irregular or non-seasonal influences, which may be present in any particular month. Influences that are volatile or unsystematic can still make it difficult to interpret the movement of the series even after adjustment for seasonal variations. Therefore the month-to-month movements of seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour.
- Trend cycle** **13** The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimates of the underlying trend cycle.
- Reliability of estimates** **14** Data presented in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample and are, therefore, subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the data had been obtained from all enterprises in the wholesale industry in South Africa. Estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling errors.
- 15** Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by enterprises and errors made in the collection and processing of the data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Every effort is made to minimise non-sampling errors by careful design of questionnaires, testing them in pilot studies, editing reported data and implementing efficient operating procedures. Fluctuations may occur in consecutive months as a result of seasonal and economic factors.
- Revised figures** **16** Revised figures are due to respondents reporting revisions or corrections to their figures and late submission of their data to Stats SA. Preliminary figures are indicated in the relevant tables. Data are edited at the enterprise level.
- Related publications** **17** Users may also wish to refer to the following publications available from Stats SA:
- *Bulletin of Statistics* issued quarterly
  - *SA Statistics* issued annually
- Rounding-off of figures** **18** Where figures have been rounded off discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and the totals.

**Pre-release policy**      **19**      Stats SA's pre-release policy may be inspected at its website, [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za).

**Symbols and abbreviations**      **20**

BR	Business Register
BSF	Business Sampling Frame
GDP	Gross domestic product
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
SIC	Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities
SARS	South African Revenue Service
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
VAT	Value added tax
*	Revised
-	Figures not available

**Technical note**

**Neyman optimal allocation**

A stratified random sample was drawn from the population of enterprises on Stats SA’s Business Sampling Frame (BSF). Strata were formed using a combination of Standard Industrial Classification and the measure of size classes for enterprises. The Neyman optimal allocation formula given below was used to allocate samples to each stratum.

$$n_h = \frac{N_h S_h}{\sum N_h S_h}$$

$N_h$  and  $S_h$  are the stratum population size and the stratum variance respectively.

Neyman allocation formula not only allocates sample sizes to each stratum but also calculates the relative precision for each stratum as well as the relative precision for all strata. The relative precision for these strata did not exceed 5,6%.

**Class limits**

Enterprise size	Size group	Lower limits	Upper limits
Very small	4	0	24 000 000
Small	3	24 000 001	128 000 000
Medium	2	128 000 001	256 000 000
Large	1	256 000 001	

**Glossary**

- Enterprise** The enterprise is a legal entity or a combination of legal units that includes and directly controls all functions necessary to carry out its sales activities.
- Industry** An industry is made up of enterprises engaged in the same or similar kinds of economic activity. Industries are defined in the *System of National Accounts (SNA)* in the same way as in the *Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities, Fifth Edition, Report No. 09-90-02 of January 1993 (SIC)*.
- Statistical unit** A statistical unit is a unit about which statistics are tabulated, compiled or published. The statistical units are derived from and linked to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) administrative data.
- Wholesale trade** Wholesale trade includes the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods and products to other wholesalers, retailers, agricultural, industrial, commercial, institutional and professional users either directly or through agents on a fee or contract basis.
- Wholesaler** A wholesaler is an enterprise deriving 50% or more of its turnover from sales of goods to other businesses and institutions.

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