

Scope

This Procedure describes the minimum requirements for the supply of approved stock identifiers under the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) and the *Stock Diseases Regulation 2009*. Best-practice or market requirements may result in higher standards being adopted by industry.

This Procedure replaces:

- *BC&MS PRO 2006/05 Stock identification – Procedures for the supply of approved identifiers*
- *Procedure BC&MS 2005/005 Stock Identification - Special Identifiers for Cattle*
- *Circular AI 2004/056 Roles of district Registrars.*

As three documents have been merged and substantially rewritten, the key changes are not highlighted. The main change is that orders for approved identifiers no longer need to be endorsed by the district registrar, and the tag manufacturer and supplier are responsible for ensuring that the order is legitimate.

Some sections start with a *summary of the key issues and requirements* in a different font, which is also included in the table of contents, to help provide a quick overview and ready reference.

This Procedure, when approved and issued as a Written Guideline by the State Management Council of Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPAs), applies to district registrars and inspectors employed by LHPAs as indicated in the text of the document. It is also relevant to other LHPA staff and Department of Industry and Investment – Primary Industries (DPI) staff who may be advising livestock producers or tag suppliers about how to obtain or supply NLIS devices and tags. The Procedure also provides good practice guidelines to manufacturers and suppliers of identifiers.

The Procedure should be reviewed within 6 months to assess whether the revised procedures are working satisfactorily for both industry and LHPAs and are providing an appropriate level of integrity.

Warnings

Users are reminded of the need to follow safe work practice when applying any techniques described in this procedure. This includes identifying, assessing and managing any occupational health and safety risks.

Safe Work Method Statements that refer to activities included in this procedure must be used in assessing and managing risks.

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1. APPROVED IDENTIFIERS

Approved identifiers are permanent identifiers and special identifiers and include NLIS devices/tags and swine brands.

Approved identifiers are (clause 13):

- permanent identifiers, for attaching to stock on the property to which the property identification code (PIC) on the identifier is assigned, and
- special identifiers, for use when the appropriate permanent identifier is not readily available and in other prescribed circumstances.

Approved identifiers include:

- electronic NLIS devices for cattle
- tattoo/slap brands for pigs
- visual NLIS tags for pigs (in accordance with standards under development)
- visual NLIS tags for sheep
- visual NLIS tags for goats
- voluntary identifiers for horses (in accordance with standards under development)
- voluntary identifiers for alpaca and llama (in accordance with standards under development)

The types, specifications and use of approved identifiers are detailed in various Orders pursuant to clauses 18, 19, 36 and 46.

Anything that is designed to be attached to stock and which contains (or purports to contain) a PIC must meet the specifications for an approved identifier and be used only in accordance with the Regulation and Orders.

1.1 Manufacture of identifiers

Manufacturers of identifiers do not have to be approved under the Regulation. However, as all approved identifiers for cattle, sheep and goats must conform with the relevant NLIS standard, which includes being printed with the NLIS logo, manufacturers of these identifiers must be licensed by NLIS Limited to use their logo.

A manufacturer of NLIS devices for cattle must upload the NLIS device and RFID numbers and date of supply to the NLIS database by the close of business on the next working day after selling or supplying the identifiers (clause 18(3)).

1.2 Orders for identifiers

Approved identifiers may only be ordered by (clauses 47, 38(4)(b)):

- the owner or occupier of the property to which the PIC is assigned;
- the owner or person in charge of stock (eg on agistment) on the property to which the PIC is assigned; or
- an inspector or a district registrar.

Although a person with agisted stock on a property is legally entitled to purchase identifiers for that property, it is preferable for the property owner/occupier to order the identifiers and then supply them to the stock owner under an agreed arrangement. This will help the supplier to verify the order and ensure that any excess identifiers remain with the property.

Orders for approved identifiers may be placed (depending on the supply chain determined by each manufacturer):

- directly with the manufacturer (being the company that makes or assembles the identifier and prints the PIC on it),
- with a supplier or distributor such as a rural merchandiser, or
- through a Livestock Health and Pest Authority who is acting as a supplier or distributor for that manufacturer.

Special identifiers with a saleyard or abattoir PIC may be ordered by the district registrar or an inspector for the LHPA for that district, or by the owner or occupier (person in charge) of the saleyard or abattoir if that person is authorised to supply special identifiers (see 1.7.4 below). Saleyard and abattoir PICs are distinguished by '99' in the 3rd and 4th character positions (eg NA994701).

Special identifiers with a district code may only be ordered by the district registrar or an inspector for the LHPA for that district. District codes are distinguished by four zeros at the end (eg NA470000).

Identifiers cannot be ordered for an agent identification code (distinguished by '00' in the 3rd and 4th character positions, eg NA004701), as this code is not approved for use on either permanent or special identifiers.

A person placing an order for approved identifiers is free to choose their preferred brand and supplier. LHPA staff may convey, if they wish, information provided by manufacturers and suppliers about availability, price, timeliness, delivery service and other relevant facts to help the person make their choice, but should not recommend a particular manufacturer or supplier.

1.3 Order forms

Order forms may be designed and supplied by manufacturers or suppliers to best meet their requirements. Order forms should include sufficient information to confirm the validity of the order, including the property identification code (PIC), the name and address of the property, and the name and address of the person who is placing the order.

A privacy statement should also be included to the effect that *"The information provided on this form may be shared with Livestock Health and Pest Authorities, NSW Department of Industry and Investment, NLIS Ltd and other persons for the purposes of the Stock Diseases Act 1923"* (this is to protect the supplier).

1.4 Checking orders

Identifiers must only be supplied for an active PIC and to a person who is entitled to order those identifiers. Manufacturers and suppliers must check and confirm that each order meets these requirements. Orders no longer need to be routinely checked and endorsed by the LHPA district registrar.

Orders for approved identifiers must be checked to ensure that each order is legitimate. A 'legitimate' order has:

- a valid PIC which passes the algorithm (ie has not been mistyped or made up),
- an active PIC (not one which is inactive, cancelled/disbanded or blocked), and
- been placed by a person who is entitled to order those identifiers as listed in 1.2 above.

Under the previous (2004) Regulation, all orders for approved identifiers had to be checked and endorsed by the District Registrar. This is no longer required under the current (2009) Regulation, with the responsibility for confirming the integrity of the order resting more with industry. Manufacturers accredited with NLIS Limited as well as the main stock agency and rural merchandising groups have been advised of these changes. However, there may need to be a transitional period of a few months for suppliers to become fully aware of the revised requirements and to adjust their ordering, supply and quality assurance systems accordingly.

1.4.1 Manufacturers and suppliers

Manufacturers and suppliers should check and confirm that the PIC is valid and active and that the person placing the order is entitled to do so. It is an offence to supply approved identifiers to a person who is not entitled to have ordered them, or if the PIC is not active (see 1.8 below).

The best way of doing this is by using the 'Search the PIC register' function on the NLIS database through either an 'Agent', 'Tag manufacturer' or 'Third-party' NLIS database account.

- This report displays the property name and address, which might be abbreviated and different to the delivery or contact address provided on an order form.

- If the PIC is registered in multiple names (eg A & B Smith), then one party (eg A Smith) may order tags. However, if C Smith places the order, then further confirmation is required.

If the PIC is inactive or can't be found on the NLIS database, or is assigned to a different property or person to that specified in the order, the supplier must confirm the correct information before processing the order. This may be done by:

- obtaining a written statement from the owner or occupier of the property in whose name the PIC is registered that the person placing the order is authorised by them to do so;
- confirming that the person placing the order has a lawful interest in the property from agency account records, copy of lease agreement, or other verifiable sources;
- suggesting that the order be placed by the owner or occupier of the property, who then supplies the tags to the stock owner;
- obtaining a statutory declaration that the person placing the order has stock on that property or is otherwise a lawful occupier of that property; or
- referring the order to the relevant LHPA for confirmation (this must always be done if the PIC is not active).

A copy of an LHPA rates notice or a plastic PIC card does not provide sufficient confirmation as the property might have changed ownership or occupancy since they were issued.

It is the interests of both the manufacturer and the supplier to carry out and keep written records of these checks in order to provide evidence, if required, that they have taken appropriate steps to avoid supplying identifiers incorrectly. These records should be kept for at least 2 years.

Manufacturers and suppliers are not expected to confirm that the number and type of identifiers being ordered is appropriate. However, a supplier who is familiar with their client should, in the interests of customer service and helping their client avoid any breach of the Regulation, advise their client if they are aware of any anomaly. For example, as a stock agent the supplier may be aware that the client only purchases small numbers of cattle for a small property, and so should clarify with the client any order for larger numbers of tags or any breeder tags for that property.

1.4.2 Livestock Health and Pest Authorities

Producers may order identifiers through an LHPA if the LHPA is acting as a supplier for a manufacturer. Such orders must be checked in the same way as those placed with any other supplier or directly with the manufacturer (see 1.4.1 above).

An order may be referred by a manufacturer or supplier to an LHPA for checking if the information on the order does not match that recorded on the NLIS database PIC register or the PIC is not active according to that database. There may be a number of reasons for this:

- The person placing the order is not recorded in FARMS (and hence the NLIS database) as the PIC manager but does have a lawful association with the property (eg joint owner or occupier, manager, agistee).
- The information recorded on the NLIS database for that PIC is out of date or otherwise incorrect. For example, the PIC may be in the name of a previous owner or be inactive.
- There is an error in the order.

On receipt of such a request, the district registrar must check the PIC, holding and customer details in FARMS.

- If the details on the order match those recorded in FARMS:
 - the supplier is advised that the PIC and applicant details are correct, and
 - the PIC card details on FARMS are refreshed to trigger an update to the NLIS database (see *Work Instruction RES 2009/18 Updating Property Identification Codes* at http://extranet.dpi.nsw.gov.au/lhpa/animal_resources/nlis/nlis_database_instructions/Work-Instruction-RES-2009-18---Updating-Property-Identification-Codes.pdf).

- If any of the details on the order do not match those recorded in FARMS:
 - the supplier is advised which details are incorrect and how the problem may be resolved. For example, if the property has recently changed ownership or occupancy, the applicant may provide written confirmation to the LHPA to allow the PIC details to be updated; or, if the PIC is inactive due to late payment of a PIC renewal fee, payment of this fee will allow the PIC to be reactivated.

These checks and confirmation should be carried out in a timely manner.

This process has other benefits for all parties, providing a level of ongoing contact between tag manufacturers and suppliers with LHPAs, and an opportunity to update if necessary the details recorded in the district PIC register and hence on the central register and NLIS database.

During a transitional period, orders for identifiers may continue to be routinely sent to LHPAs for endorsement. Each LHPA may choose whether they wish to continue to provide this service for a limited period, or to send the orders back (other than those specifically referred for checking as above). In the process, advice should be provided to local suppliers about their obligations and the checks they should be carrying out themselves.

Previously, district registrars were also required to check whether the number of identifiers being ordered appeared to be excessive, and whether the correct type of identifiers were being ordered. If any anomalies were evident, further checks were undertaken to verify that the identifiers would be used appropriately or otherwise the order was limited to a reasonable quantity or rejected. These checks no longer need to be carried out. If the number or type of identifiers being ordered obviously appears, based on records held in FARMS, to be excessive or incorrect, the district registrar may advise the applicant or supplier of this information, clarify how they intend to use the identifiers, and provide advice on the correct use of identifiers, but cannot delay or refuse to process an otherwise legitimate order.

Records of orders that have been processed by an LHPA (either as a direct order or confirmed on behalf of a manufacturer or supplier) should be kept by that LHPA for at least 2 years.

1.5 Advising on and monitoring the supply of identifiers

LHPAs are encouraged to provide advice to suppliers in their district about how to check tag orders and ensure the integrity of use of tags. Appendix 1 provides an example of a flyer or poster that could be used for this purpose.

SDA (full) NLIS database account holders can access a report ‘Devices issued to a State’ for any specified week. The report can be analysed and summarised in a spreadsheet. An example is shown below:

LHPA	PIC	Type	Total
XYZ	NA471234	Breeder	200
		Post-breeder	100
	NB472345	Breeder	250
	NC473456	Post-breeder	20
	ND474567	Breeder	400
	NE475678	Breeder	3
	NF476789	Breeder	150
XYZ Total			1123

This report may be useful for monitoring the number and type of cattle devices issued within a Livestock Health and Pest District. However, the report is not currently available to SDA Medium or SDA Light accounts and the supply of sheep and goat tags is not recorded on the NLIS database. For further information, contact the Biosecurity Database Clerk (<http://extranet.dpi.nsw.gov.au/lhpa/biosecurity-contacts/dpi-animal-biosecurity-program-contacts-alphabetically>).

1.6 Reuse and recycling of approved identifiers

Approved identifiers cannot be recycled or reused unless approved by the Director-General (clauses 50 and 51). Identifiers that were previously attached to slaughtered stock must be disposed in an approved manner, which generally requires their destruction (*Order Pursuant to Clause 52 Manner of Dealing with Approved Identifiers Attached to Slaughtered Stock*). However, RFIDs may be reused if approved by the NLIS Standards Committee and in accordance with the national standard (*Order*

pursuant to Clauses 50 and 51 Reuse of Approved Identifiers).

At the time of issue of this Procedure, Leader Products are approved to recycle cattle RFIDs other than for the purposes of NLIS Cattle (eg they may be used in sheep electronic tags or for sale overseas) (DPI reference INW08/13558).

1.7 Special identifiers

Special identifiers ('emergency tags') may be used to identify stock if a permanent identifier is not readily available or in other specified circumstances. Records are essential for traceability but may be kept in the form of an application for special identifiers or movement document.

Stock that are not or cannot be identified as required with a permanent identifier may be identified in certain circumstances with a special identifier to allow their lawful movement, sale, or slaughter. Special identifiers are also known as special or emergency tags.

Traceability is provided by the records kept. A special identifier, at best, indicates the Livestock Health and Pest District, saleyard or abattoir in which the animal was identified, but not the property of origin of the stock, so proper record-keeping is essential.

The use of special identifiers allows stock to be lawfully moved, sold or slaughtered but does not negate any breach of the Regulation that may have already been committed. Special identifiers must not be used for expediency.

1.7.1 Circumstances when special identifiers may be used

A special identifier can only be used (clause 46(3) if a permanent identifier:

- is not readily available,
- cannot be safely attached to the stock,
- if already attached to the stock – is unreadable or has ceased to work, or
- if previously attached to the stock – has been lost,

Situations where these conditions might arise include:

- the property from which the stock are consigned does not have a PIC;
- an identifier has been lost in transit or while at a saleyard or abattoir;
- an NLIS device has been damaged and cannot be read electronically;
- the property does not have suitable facilities (yards, race, crush) to handle the stock and safely attach identifiers and the stock are approved to be moved elsewhere for the purposes of identification;
- the owner or person in charge of the stock is not readily able to obtain approved identifiers from the property owner or occupier;
- the stock have to be moved or sold quickly (flood, fire) and before sufficient identifiers can be obtained and attached; or
- the stock owner has ordered but has not received sufficient identifiers in time.

Special identifiers may be used in saleyards, in abattoirs, in transit centres, at shows, on stock routes or any other property.

1.7.2 Types of special identifiers

Details about the type and use of special identifiers are provided in the NLIS Procedures for each species, and are summarised in the following table:

	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep and goats
Type	Orange post-breeder device	'Crown' brand	Pink post-breeder tag
Identification code options	District code, eg NA470000 Saleyard PIC, eg NB994701 Abattoir PIC, eg NC994711	Four character code – see <i>NLIS Procedures for pigs</i> (PRO 2007/03/2) for details	District code Saleyard PIC Abattoir PIC

Special identifiers with the district code may be used in saleyards, abattoirs and on properties. Special identifiers with a saleyard or abattoir PIC must only be used in that saleyard or abattoir.

Preferably, special identifiers for saleyards and abattoirs should have the applicable saleyard or abattoir PIC. However, the district code may be used for all purposes for simplicity.

If the district code is used for special identifiers for cattle, ideally the devices should be transferred on the NLIS database to the saleyard, abattoir or property on which they are to be used (see Procedures, Instruments and Guidelines – Tag transfer (TAGTRAN) at http://extranet.dpi.nsw.gov.au/lhpa/animal_resources/nlis/nlis-database) in order to maintain a complete tracing history and avoid system transfers and associated automated email messages. In practice, traceability is not compromised as life-time traceable (LT) status is already lost by the use of a special identifier (post-breeder device) and the history of the device is self-evident.

1.7.3 Supply of special identifiers

Special identifiers may be ordered by:

- the district registrar,
- an inspector,
- the owner or person in charge of a saleyard or abattoir if authorised by the district registrar to supply special identifiers (with that saleyard's or abattoir's PIC only).

Special identifiers may be supplied by the district registrar, an inspector, or a person authorised by the district registrar (see 1.7.4).

The person to whom the special identifier is supplied is responsible for ensuring that it is attached without delay to the correct stock and in accordance with any directions given (clause 46(4)). The person attaching the identifier may be the owner or person in charge of the stock, a stock agent, or an employee or contractor of the saleyard, agent or abattoir. If the stock are cattle for imminent slaughter, the identifier need not be physically attached but its NLIS or RFID number must be linked to the carcass and uploaded to the NLIS database with all other prescribed information.

Each LHPA must ensure that they have arrangements in place for the supply of special identifiers. This should be done by authorising other persons (see 1.7.4) rather than assigning an inspector to every sale and (if requested) abattoir.

A reasonable fee for supplying special identifiers may be charged by an LHPA under section 57 of the Rural Lands Protection Act 1998 and in accordance with State Council guidelines. A saleyard or abattoir operator may impose an additional fee to cover the cost of attaching the special identifier.

1.7.4 Authorised persons

The District Registrar may authorise saleyard operators, stock agents, abattoir operators or their employees or contractors to supply special identifiers (clause 46(5)). A form of application and authorisation is available on the LHPA/I&I Extranet > Animal resources > Livestock traceability > NLIS forms, database instructions and other resources > Legal forms and templates.

District registrars are encouraged to authorise at least one person at each saleyard so inspection activities can be redirected from issuing tags to compliance checks on their correct use. A person should also be authorised on request at each abattoir as LHPAs are not expected to have inspectors on site.

Before authorising a person, the District Registrar must be confident that the correct procedures will be adhered to. Application and authorisation must be in writing using the form available on the LHPA/DPI Extranet which must be signed by the person being authorised to confirm that they understand the conditions and agree to comply with them.

The authorised person cannot delegate their function to another person. If a number of persons need to be authorised in order to provide continuous coverage, then each should apply for authorisation in their own right.

The district registrar may rescind an authorisation and should do so if an audit or other verifiable information indicates that the authorised person is not supplying the identifiers correctly or keeping the required records, or if special identifiers are being lost or misused. An audit checklist and report is available on the LHPA/I&I Extranet as above.

1.7.5 Records of special identifiers

Records are essential for traceability. The record must be made and kept by whoever supplies the special identifier, be it an authorised person, inspector or district registrar.

The record must contain the:

- Full name and business or residential address of the person to whom the special identifiers were supplied,
- Full name and business or residential address of the owner of the stock,
- Address and property identification code (if known) of the property of origin of the stock,
- Class and brief description of the stock to be identified,
- Type and quantity of special identifiers supplied,
- Reason for supply of special identifiers,
- Identification code and serial number on each special identifier supplied, and
- Date and place of supply of the special identifiers.

The record must be made by close of business on the next working day following the supply of the special identifiers and kept for at least two years.

These requirements are prescribed in the *Order pursuant to Clause 46 Determination of the records of special identifiers*.

The record may be kept as:

- a copy of the LHPA 'Application and invoice for special identifiers' form;
- a copy of the approved movement document (NVD, PigPass or TSS), with the reason for supply written on the copy (although small numbers of special identifiers may be assumed to be replacements for lost or non-reading tags);
- the data uploaded to the NLIS database, provided it includes a FROM PIC (this method would be suitable for lost and non-reading tags, but not for properties without a PIC);
- any other form or method specified by or acceptable to the district registrar (eg a log book or tax invoice). The district registrar may require the record of special identifiers supplied by an authorised person to be provided to the district registrar within a designated timeframe, eg 7 days, to speed up traceability if required and assist with compliance monitoring.

1.8 Offences for incorrect supply and use of identifiers

Identifiers must be supplied and used properly and in accordance with the Regulation.

A person must not order an approved identifier unless they are entitled to do so (clauses 47(2),(4)).

A person must not sell or supply an approved identifier unless the order has been made by a person who is entitled to do so (clauses 47(1) and (4)).

A person must not sell or supply an approved identifier unless the identifier refers or relates to an active property identification code (clause 47(3)).

A person must not, knowing that it is or may be intended to be attached to any stock, make, sell, supply or use any thing that is not, but could reasonably be mistaken for, an approved identifier (clause 54). This offence includes supplying identifiers with an incorrect or misprinted PIC, supplying an identifier that does not conform with approved specifications, or writing a PIC on a blank or existing management tag.

A person must not sell or supply, or cause or permit to be sold or supplied, an approved identifier if the identifier has been previously attached to any stock, unless the reuse is approved by the Director-General (clause 51).

There are a number of offences for the misuse of identifiers, for example attaching a breeder tag to an animal that was not bred on that property, attaching an identifier to stock on a property with a different PIC to that on the identifier, or altering an approved identifier (clauses 48, 49, 50, 53, 54, 55).

The penalty notice fine for all offences is \$550 and the maximum penalty for offences successfully prosecuted through a court is \$11,000.

Definitions and acronyms

<i>District code</i>	An identification code assigned to a Livestock Health and Pest District
<i>DPI</i>	Department of Industry and Investment – Primary Industries
<i>LHPA</i>	Livestock Health and Pest Authority
<i>NLIS</i>	National Livestock Identification System
<i>NLIS database</i>	The national database which is used to record livestock movements and is managed by NLIS Limited. Under the Regulation and associated Orders, the authorised administrator is NLIS Ltd and the permanent identification register is the NLIS database.
<i>NVD</i>	National vendor declaration (including PigPass)
<i>PIC</i>	Property identification code
<i>Property</i>	An area of land (including an area comprising one or more parcels of land that are proximate) that is worked as a single property. A property has a PIC.
<i>Regulation</i>	Stock Diseases Regulation 2009
<i>RFID</i>	Radio frequency identification device
<i>TSS</i>	Transported stock statement

Legislation

- Stock Diseases Regulation 2009

Related Policies and Procedures

Related NLIS Livestock Traceability Procedures and Circulars –

<http://extranet.dpi.nsw.gov.au/lhpa/animal-directory/stock-identification-and-traceability>

Contact

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Appendix 1 – Sample flyer / poster /check list about supplying tags (for use at rural outlets, stock agencies, saleyards, field days etc)

Before ordering NLIS tags or devices for any livestock, 'Search the PIC register' on the NLIS database and confirm that:

- The PIC is correct for that property
- The PIC is in the name of the person placing the order
- The PIC is 'Active'

If there are any discrepancies:

- Ask for additional evidence
- Suggest that the person to whom the PIC is registered orders the tags instead
- Contact the Livestock Health and Pest Authority
- Or reject the order

Advise your clients:

- Which types of tags they should use on their stock (eg breeder, post-breeder)
- How to attach the tags correctly and securely
- To only use tags on stock on the property with that PIC
 - stock born on agistment must be tagged with the agistment property PIC
- To preferably use the correct year of birth colour for sheep breeder tags
- To contact their Livestock Health and Pest Authority for further advice

When the tags are delivered:

- Check that the PIC and colour are correct
- Contact the supplier immediately if there are any problems *before* attaching the tags



Industry &
Investment

GUIDELINE



BIOSECURITY DOCUMENT Ref: PRO 2006/05/2

SC Ref: -/-/WI

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NLIS PROCEDURES FOR THE SUPPLY OF APPROVED IDENTIFIERS VERSION 2

The attached document is a **GUIDELINE** issued with the concurrence of the Director-General of NSW Department of Industry & Investment under Clause 6.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Director-General of NSW Department of Industry & Investment and the State Council of Livestock Health and Pest Authorities.

[APPROVED]

[APPROVED]

BM CHRISTIE for R F SHELDRAKE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
NSW DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY &
INVESTMENT

S ORR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
STATE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
LIVESTOCK HEALTH AND PEST AUTHORITIES

Date: 20/07/2010

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