



Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 07-Dec-2016 | Report No: PIDISDSC18435



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Vietnam	Project ID P159238	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Central Highlands Connectivity Improvement Project (P159238)
Region EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC	Estimated Appraisal Date Mar 15, 2017	Estimated Board Date Nov 13, 2017	Practice Area (Lead) Transport & ICT
Lending Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Government of Vietnam	Implementing Agency Traffic Safety Projects Management Unit	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To improve safe and climate-resilient road connectivity along the National Highway 19 Central Highlands-Central Coast corridor in Vietnam.

Financing (in USD Million)

Financing Source	Amount
Borrower	20.00
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery	0.20
Global Road Safety Program	0.15
International Development Association (IDA)	150.00
Local Sources of Borrowing Country	2.00
Total Project Cost	172.35

Environmental Assessment Category B-Partial Assessment	Concept Review Decision Track I-The review did authorize the preparation to continue
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B. Introduction and Context

1. Vietnam has achieved high rates of sustained economic growth over the past 20 years. Between 1990 and 2015, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at an average annual rate of 7.4 percent—among the world’s top five growth performance records over the same period. Meanwhile, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line decreased from 58 percent in 1993 to 15 percent in 2008. Vietnam joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007, and trade and foreign direct investment have grown significantly in the last 10 years.

2. In 2015, GDP per capita reached an estimated USD 2,111 at market rates, confirming Vietnam’s recently rated status as a lower middle-income country. Infrastructure investment has been a key component of Vietnam’s growth trajectory, while fully aligning with the recently concluded 2016 Systematic Country Diagnostic in the dimensions of the inclusion for ethnic minorities, the need to build productive infrastructure, and the resilience to climate change. Annual expenditures in infrastructure have been sustained at between 9 and 10 percent of GDP over recent years, about half of which devoted to transport. As urbanization continues to expand, further expansion of the road, rail, and inland waterway transport networks will be required to alleviate bottlenecks, drive productivity improvements, and meet key growth and poverty reduction targets.

3. Focusing particularly on the South Central Coast and the Central Highlands regions presents an opportunity to address extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity in Vietnam. While economic growth and poverty reduction in Vietnam over the last two decades has been remarkable, not all the regions have benefitted equally. Poverty, and extreme poverty rates are the third highest in the Central Highlands region of the country (32.8 percent), and this region has experienced substantially less poverty reduction than other parts of Vietnam over the last decade. Since 1999, the Central Highlands region has had the second highest rate of extreme poverty in the country, after the Northern Mountains¹. In addition to the high incidence of poverty, districts in the Central Highlands suffer higher expenditure inequality than other regions, indicating an uneven distribution of recent prosperity not only among the regions but also within them.

4. Over the past decade, Vietnam has taken advantage of its rapid economic development to develop both its transport infrastructure and services. The Government has continued to increase public spending on transport, from about USD 1 billion in 2002 to more than USD 5 billion in 2012, and has introduced a number of measures to improve the competitiveness of road transport. The road network has been significantly transformed over the past 10 years from 2005 to 2014, with a total percentage of paved network that increased from 19 to 50 percent, and a total length that increased by 30 percent. While Vietnam has a complete road network with a relatively high road density of about 0.87km of road per sq.km, the full potential of such a network is indeed hindered by its poor condition due to low levels of maintenance and maintenance financing, as well as the lack of a sufficient core network of main roads. Currently the extent of expressways is at 740km, or 2.2km per 1000 km², a significantly lower density than most neighboring countries. About 96 percent of national roads are paved, but only about 43 percent are in good condition; 37 percent are in average condition; and 20 percent in poor to very poor condition. Provincial and local roads are in worse condition than national and urban roads. The overall network is only about 30% paved due to the significant share of district and commune roads that remain unpaved. When paved, the road pavements are often of poor quality. The average spending on road maintenance in the Central Highlands region is one of the lowest in the country in absolute value, with about VND 270 billion spent in 2011 at the Provincial level, far behind the VND 2,800 billion spent in the Red River Delta

¹ Government Statistics Office, Monthly average income per capita at current prices by residence and by region (2013)



(MoT/DRVN data). Such a level of spending further deteriorates the road asset and hinders the life-cycle performance of the roads. Road investment spending in the Central Highlands region is also one of the lowest on average in the period 2011-2015, with about VND 6,055 billion spent in 2011, to be compared with the VND 12,552 billion spent in the Red River Delta in the same year (MoT/DRVN data).

5. Recent figures from the General Statistics Office of Vietnam report an exponential increase of trade after 2007, with trade between the two countries reaching USD 2.3 billion in 2010 and USD 3.03 billion in 2015. Border gate trade between Vietnam, China, Laos and Cambodia is expected to reach USD 30 billion in 2016, with trade between Vietnam and Cambodia representing 11 to 12% of the share. Trade between Cambodia and Vietnam is supported by the Regional corridor R9 from the ASEAN Highway Network, which mostly includes the National Highway No. 19 (NH19) on the Vietnamese side. The objective of this project is indeed not only to connect the coastal regions to the poorer central highlands regions, but also to boost the Cambodian economy while linking it to the thriving economy of Vietnam. The increase of regional trade and cross-border trade is however hindered by the quality of the road, low density of the core road network, and high cost of road transport. Average road transport costs, represented by trip time are the highest in the region after Indonesia, are indeed holding back Vietnam's competitiveness and trade efficiency. Meanwhile, there is a serious backlog of unmet demand, while inter-city two-lane roads such as NH19 are insufficient in meeting the growing demand for regional and inter-city mobility. The core national road network, representing the corridors of the country, is not sufficient to support growth and trade development, and needs further investment. This shows that investment needs in the road sub-sector are still substantial and would benefit from continued financing, especially for inter-modal road links between major transport hubs, such as the object of the proposed project.

6. Road fatalities account for about 96 percent of transport fatalities in Vietnam, and while death rates have been reduced by more than 30 percent between 2004 and 2012, road safety remains a challenge. According to ADB's estimates, the economic loss and damage caused by annual road accidents in Vietnam is about USD 880 million, making up 2.45% of GDP (in 2003), which is higher than the average level of ASEAN countries (2.1% of GDP). According to the Master Plan on road traffic safety in Vietnam, the loss and damage caused by traffic accidents on road in 2007 was estimated to be 2.89% of GDP, equivalent to VND 32,600 billion. Increase in motorcycle use has substantial consequences in terms of the increase in accidents;² additional vehicles within the same land area, increased capacity of vehicles to accelerate, as well as the limited protection offered to users, are all elements that make this transport mode more dangerous than others. In 2004, Vietnam had a death rate from road accidents of 16 per 100,000 inhabitants, but reduced this to 10.2 in 2012 (MoT/DRVN data), an encouraging reduction (World Bank data).³ Motorization rates increased by 320 percent from 2002 to 2013 (compound annual growth rate of 11 percent), while road length network increased by 30 percent over the same period (CAGR of 4 percent). This motorization rate coupled with weak regulations and capacity to tackle the challenge of road safety is leading to further levels of congestion, faster degradation of assets, as well as lower levels of safety for road users.

7. The current Vietnam climatic environment, with its variability and frequency of extreme weather events makes it transport infrastructure in hilly to mountainous terrain, such as the terrain encountered in the Central Highlands region, particularly vulnerable to climate threats and associated impacts. The risks arising from these impacts are considerably increased when the likelihood of increasing climate threats from future climate change is taken into account. Climate, through prolonged rain-events, has long been identified as the single greatest factor in initiating slope failure in vulnerable terrain. Slope failures are common along the NH19 and create unsafe conditions for road

² It is estimated that 65 to 75 percent of road accidents in Vietnam involve motorcycles (WHO).

³ Japan had 5.0 per 100,000 inhabitants and Cambodia had 3.7 per 100,000 inhabitants.



users as well as increased transport costs. Sustainable design therefore should take into account these climate threats and identify suitable climate resilience measures that will reduce their impact on vulnerable highway assets. Climate strengthening for national roads and main corridors such as the NH19 must be planned and implemented within a framework that seeks to maximise the available resources through a clear understanding of the specific climate threats as well as the consequent impacts. The resilience options envisaged under the proposed project, both hard and soft, will be aligned to the governing physical, geotechnical and socio-economic environments of the targeted regions and land along NH19.

8. The proposed project aligns with the Government of Vietnam's objectives, policies and strategies, as confirmed by the Prime Minister Decision No. 07/2011 / QD-TTg approving the plan of transport development in the key economic zone of the Central Vietnam to 2020 and orientations to 2030 for national highways, as well as the Minister of Transportation Decision No. 3936 / QD-BGTVT on 3rd December 2014 approving orientations and transport infrastructure development in the Central Highlands in 2015, and to 2020. The proposed project also aligns in vision and timing with the one stop one window approach for the Le Thanh/Ou Yadav border gate at the Vietnam-Cambodia border, inaugurated in December 2015 as a way to reinforce trade and cooperation between the two countries, and to create favorable conditions in the transport links between Vietnam, Cambodia and other member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

9. To improve safe and climate-resilient road connectivity along the National Highway 19 Central Highlands-Central Coast corridor in Vietnam.

10. The intended PDOs are expected to be measured by the following outcome indicators:

- Increase of freight and passengers volume transported on the NH19 corridor
- Reduction in average travel time and vehicle operating costs on the NH19 corridor
- Achievement of International Road Assessment Program (iRAP) 3-star rating or above on the NH19 corridor
- Reduction of traffic accidents and fatalities on the NH19 corridor
- Number of days of interrupted traffic due to climate/disaster events

D. Concept Description

11. The National Highway No. 19 (NH19) runs East-West in the Central Highlands and Central Coast Regions from the regional port of Quy Nhon in Binh Dinh Province through Pleiku City in Gia Lai Province to the Cambodian Border of Le Thanh with a length of about 234 km. NH19 is recognized as a contribution to the ASEAN Highway Network as a key corridor in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). The ASEAN Highway (AH) network, also known as the Great Asian Highway, is a cooperative project among countries in Asia and Europe and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), to improve the highway systems in Asia. The corridor that NH19 supports connects Bangkok to the Central Coast of Vietnam through Cambodia, and is a major transport link for agricultural products of the hinterland of Gia Lai, as well as the cross-border trade from Cambodia and Southern Lao to NH1 and Quy Nhon Port.



12. The traffic characteristics on NH19 are quite mixed with a large number of heavy trucks and high speed 4-wheeled vehicles with significant number of motorcycles and non-motorized traffic with local pedestrians, but the lack of sufficient road capacity and its poor conditions keeps NH19 being exposed to a high risk of traffic accidents. During the implementation of the Vietnam Road Safety Project (VRSP) in 2012, the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP) consultant assessed most of NH19 as Star 1 and 2 ratings in the safety standard, which revealed that NH19 is one of the critically dangerous road in Vietnam, where a high priority should be given for upgrading. Data from the Traffic Safety Committee of the Gia Lai Province show that accidents in the Province did not substantially decreased between 2011 and 2015, and it remains a key challenge, with on average 219 crashes, 248 fatalities, and 163 injuries. More importantly, on average 76 percent of the crashes involve motorcycles, which take up to 95% of the total vehicles. The road accident related to motorcycles is also about 75%. Studies from international research institutions (GRSP, MIROS, iRAP etc.) show that application of separate motorcycle lane in countries with high volume of motorcycle like Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and India has proved a reduction in traffic accidents. According to the evaluation of Malaysian Road Safety Institute, 39% of accidents were reduced after the implementation of motorcycle lanes. The proposed activity under this project will focus on road safety infrastructure provisions for motorcycles and road safety management through capacity building. To this end, forgiving roadside features, including an investigation into good practices and standardization of segregated or dedicated motorcycle lanes will be conducted. As a result of road safety surveys and design support, speeds will be investigated to ensure they are appropriate. Overall, these measures will help reduce the number of incidents, accidents, deaths and injuries along the NH19.

13. The upgraded road will help strengthen regional and trade-economic development within the two regions and with Cambodia, and help reduce poverty as it will ease mobility in the northeast provinces of Cambodia which are known for difficult meteorological and geographical conditions (frequent floods during the rainy season and mountainous terrain across Vietnam). The bypasses (An Khe bypass of 10km, and Pleiku bypass of 16km), the on and off ramps for trucks in strategic locations (mountainous areas), as well as safer and efficient intersections with feeder roads will contribute to trade related improvement and transport cost reduction. The proposed project will also leverage the current Government-financed program to rehabilitate the feeder roads that link the agricultural zones to the main corridor, therefore reducing further transport costs along the corridor. The proposed project will therefore strengthen transport and logistics connectivity along the East - West corridor from the Central Highlands to the Central provinces and contributing to the Asia Road system connection with neighbor countries.

14. In order to achieve these objectives, the proposed project may consist in the following two components:

(i) Component 1 – Road Improvements (estimated cost of USD155m): This component will support the physical improvement of three sections of NH19 including pavement rehabilitation, widening of the road with paved shoulders, widening of lanes and features for the safe sharing of the road by users, including the design and addition of dedicated motorcycle lanes, the improvement of intersections, provision of road safety facilities including guardrails, curbs, and road safety signs. The total length of these 3 sections is 142km (out of a total length of 234km of NH19), composed on 116km of inter-urban roads and 26km of urban roads (bypasses), to complement the two Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) sections of 75km implemented by the Government. The MoT and the two Provinces have indeed been addressing the connectivity improvement and road safety issues on NH19 by promoting two BOT improvement projects and the NH1-Quy Nhon Port section improvement financed by MoT and Binh Dinh Province during the past few years. The two BOT sections are now in service and collecting tolls. These BOT sections have also established a reasonable precedence for cross-section designs to accommodate the separation of fast and slow speed vehicles and motorcycles in urban, semi-urban and rural areas. The proposed project will help improve the remaining sections of NH19 by completing the



establishment of NH19 as a Road Safety Corridor that meets international connectivity requirements with traffic safety standards including the Vietnam's Traffic Safety Strategy requirements of a minimum of iRap 3-star standard, through road infrastructure safety features. In addition, as the proposed 142km section for financing contains sections which are highly prone to landslides and potential natural disasters, a targeted intervention on these sections contributes to the overall connectivity and safety along the entire corridor.

(ii) Component 2 – Institutional Strengthening (estimated cost of USD15.35m): This component will support the institutional strengthening aspect of the road improvement component through the preparation of the detailed design for the sections of the roads, bridges and bypass to be improved, as well as the supervision of the works, and the monitoring of the safeguards aspects. This component will be supported by technical assistance through the Global Road Safety Program (GRSF) and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GDFRR) grants to (i) carry out the road safety audit to the road designs under the project; (ii) assess impacts of motorcycle lanes in Vietnam and update the draft manual for motorcycle lane design and specifications with incorporation of international best practices; and (iii) enhance climate resilience road design for disaster prone areas. In addition, this component is supported by road activities (enhancement of the traffic safety management capacity of provincial, district and commune level Traffic Safety Committees; road safety awareness program on media; etc.) being implemented along the corridors through government funding.

SAFEGUARDS

A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project will finance small scale physical construction to rehabilitate and upgrade selected sections of NH19 which runs through two provinces from the coastal Binh Dinh province in the central region to Gia Lai province in the Central Highland. NH19 runs from east to west from coastal lowland urban area in Quy Nhon City to hilly and mountainous areas in Gia Lai province. The road includes two high mountain passes of An Khe at km 59 - km 67 and Mang Yang at km 109 - km 112. It crosses a number of small streams and Ba river. The total length of selected sections of NH19 for rehabilitation and upgrade under the project is anticipated at this stage about 142 km (out of a total length of 234km of NH19), of which 116km located in rural areas and 26 km located in urban centers. Right of way of the selected sections is physically demarcated. No natural vegetation is present along both sides of the road which are characterized by mainly agricultural fields for rice, cassava, maize, coffee and rubber gardens, plantation forests and bushes. These forest are for economic purpose and will be harvested during year 5-7. The National Park Kon Ka King in Gia Lai province locates 20 km from project sites. Houses locate sparsely in two sides along the road and mostly behind the demarcated right of way. A number of houses have temporary cottages for small services along the road. Various pagodas locate along the road and are behind the demarcated right of way. The two bypasses of about 16km and 22km are expected to be newly constructed to avoid urban populated areas. These bypasses run through agricultural field, plantation forest and residential areas. The project is anticipated to support the rehabilitation of about 15 small existing bridges along NH19 and the new construction of 6 small bridges along the bypasses. Existing bridges are mostly small with lengths ranging from 9 to 122 meters and widths from 8 – 10 meters. Lengths of bridges to be newly constructed are estimated about 33 to 99 meters and width about 12 meters. Existing and to-be-newly-constructed bridges cross mostly small streams and one river (Ba river). All streams and river are used for irrigation purpose. There is a An Khe – Kanak hydropower plant under operation upstream of the bridge on Ba river.

B. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

MOT has the overall responsibility of project management and implementation. The ministry is experienced in



implementing a number of World Bank-financed projects in transport sector, which include road rehabilitation and safety. The Traffic Safety Projects Management Unit (TSPMU) is expected to be assigned by MOT to be the implementing agency of the project. TSPMU has managed the Bank-financed Road Safety Project thus they are familiar with the World Bank safeguard policies, procedures and the requirements. They have demonstrated their capacity for preparation, implementation, and management of transport sector project, including the compliance of safeguard policies. The safeguard capacity of the project will be further assessed during project preparation to inform the requirement of safeguard training during project implementation.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Thu Thi Le Nguyen, Parthapriya Ghosh, Giang Tam Nguyen

D. Policies that might apply

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>Based on the information available, project can be categorized as B. Though 235 ha of land will be acquired, there will be no planned physical displacement. Majority of the widening work will be carried out in the existing right of way and only 5 m of land on either side of the existing alignment will be acquired. The 2 bypasses proposed are green field, cross cultivable land, and thereby avoid urban areas</p> <p>The physical work of the project to upgrade selected sessions of the existing NH19 of 142 km would include pavement rehabilitation, widening of the road with paved shoulders, the widening of lanes and features for the safe sharing of the road by users, including the design and addition of dedicated motorcycle lanes, the improvement of intersections, provision of road safety facilities including guardrails, curbs, road safety signs, as well as improved standard towards resilience to landslide, erosion, and flooding. The average carriageway of existing NH19 is 8,5 meters width and would be widen to 8 to 13 meters depending on each section and embankment would be widen to 9 to 15 meters respectively. The two bypasses of 26 km to be newly constructed are expected to have the embankment with of 12 meters. These improvement of road conditions would lead to shortened transportation time and increased road safety, leading to reduction of road accident and mortality. The two bypasses are expected to lead to reduction of air and noise pollution in the urban populated centers, as they would divert traffic away from these areas.</p>



The project is not expected to result in significant negative environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated. During the construction phase, direct environmental impacts associated with physical works construction are expected to be site-specific and moderate. The environmental impacts relating to road works are mainly noise, dust, worker safety, waste management, fumes from asphaltting and transportation of materials, temporary disruption of the traffic and access to roadside activities, temporary acquisition of land for construction materials and workers' camps, etc.. The construction of new bypass roads would require permanent land use changes through acquisition of mainly agricultural and small areas of residential land and plantation forest. Options for rehabilitation of current 15 small bridges along existing NH19 (current length ranging from 9 to 122 meters and width from 8 – 10 meters) crossing mostly small streams and Ba river would include the construction of new bridge next to the current bridge or replace it, or widen the bridge carriageway. These options are to be determined during project preparation. The new construction of two bypasses include new construction of 6 small bridges crossing small streams (lengths of bridges to be newly constructed are estimated about 33 to 99 meters and width about 12 meters). Construction of these new bridges may result in impacts of natural habitat which is unknown at this stage. During the operation phase, direct impacts would potentially include increased noise and vibration disturbance, air pollution from vehicle emission, fuel and lubricants spills. There will be one Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be prepared for all sections of the road to be supported under the project. The ESIA will be prepared during project preparation to evaluate potential impacts and specify mitigation measures.

For technical activities to support the improvement legal framework for traffic management of road sub-sector and other sub-sectors, during project implementation, the requirement of analysis of potential environmental and social issues will be included in the specifications for the studies in this regard. The studies are expected to describe how the



		identified issues will be addressed through provisions in proposed policies.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	TBD	The project is not expected to involve the significant conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats. The rehabilitation or construction of small bridges may result in impacts of natural habitat which are presently unknown. The ESIA to be prepared during project preparation will assess potential impacts of the project on natural habitat and establish appropriate mitigation measures, if necessary. Decision to trigger this policy will be based on the ESIA findings.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	TBD	The project may involve the acquisition of small areas of plantation forest for the construction of bypass roads. The project is not expected to involve significant conversion or degradation of critical forest areas or related critical natural habitats. The ESIA to be prepared during project preparation will assess potential impacts of the project on forests and/or the rights and welfare of local communities and their level of dependence upon or interaction with the forest, if necessary, establish appropriate mitigation measures. Decision to trigger this policy will be based on the ESIA findings.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	The project will not involve the procurement of pesticide or result in any increase in the use of pesticides.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	TBD	Project implementation is not expected to have any negative impact on physical cultural resources. The road works will be implemented on existing roads and the construction of bypass roads will be on agricultural, residential or plantation forest areas. The ESIA will assess the project's potential impacts on physical cultural resources and identify appropriate measures for avoiding or mitigating the impacts. Decision to trigger this policy will be based on the ESIA findings.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes	The policy on Indigenous Peoples is triggered as there is presence of ethnic minority along the project corridor. Social Assessment will be carried out during the project preparation stage to identify both positive and adverse impacts on ethnic minorities, their land and natural resources. As part of Social Assessment, demographic details of ethnic minority will be collected and free, prior informed consultation will be carried out. Project will prepare Indigenous Peoples



		Plan.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	<p>The OP 4.12 on involuntary resettlement has been triggered as project will result in permanent acquisition of approximately 235 ha of new land parcels. However, physical displacement is unlikely as only 5 meter will be additionally acquired along the existing alignment. The proposed bypasses avoid any urban area and go through only cultivatable land. The intersections will be limited to the bypasses' segments. The bridge works include the rehabilitation of 10 small bridges (current length ranging from 9 to 122 meters and width from 8 – 10 meters) and the construction of 5 small bridges (including 1 new bridge of less than 50 meters on the An Khe bypass, and 3 new bridges of less than 50 meters on the bypass in Pleiku Province). The land acquisition will not likely result in loss of income and sources of income.</p> <p>The project will conduct Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for all sections of the road to be supported under the project. The ESIA will be prepared during project preparation to evaluate potential impacts and propose mitigation measures. Based on the results of ESIA, Resettlement Action Plans will be prepared. Stakeholders mapping and consultations will be carried out as part of ESIA.</p>
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	The project will not finance building or rehabilitation of any dam and will not rely on the operation of any existing dam.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The project is not implemented in areas of international waterways.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	The project is not located in disputed areas.

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Mar 15, 2017

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

First draft of ESIA is expected by January 15, 2017. Final draft ESIA is expected by March 10, 2017.



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APPROVAL

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