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**Report Highlights:**

Bite size local news, Post reports and activity summaries wrapped by ATO Hong Kong. In this issue: The Great American Texas Barbeque sets a record for attendance; ATO Hong Kong hosts Macau Trade Partners Reception; American Ginseng gets a boost at major Hong Kong retailer; U.S. Thanksgiving Festival retail promotion showcases turkey, seafood, spirits, and more; Watson's Wine takes local consumers on an American Wine Journey; and ATO Hong Kong helps kick off America 250 with U.S. beef smash burgers, an Alaskan seafood boil, and American whiskey restaurant promotion.

## “The Great American Texas BBQ 2025” Sets Visitor Record



On November 4, over 1,100 Hong Kong food and beverage industry professionals joined the 2025 Great American Texas Barbeque, setting a new attendance record for the annual event. Organized by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) with support from ATO Hong Kong and the Texas Beef Council, the trade-oriented event featured 36 food booths showcasing U.S. beef, pork, chicken, cheese, wine, and spirits sponsored by 85 U.S. and local food distributors and restaurants. Held annually for over forty years, the gathering serves as one of USDA's largest overseas events. Check out the event highlights on [our Instagram account](#).

**ATO Note:** What a year it's been! From our Agribusiness Trade Mission, USDA-endorsed HOFEX and Asia Fruit Logistica trade shows, inaugural American Whiskey Trail in Hong Kong, and a record-setting Great American Texas Barbeque, we've covered a lot of ground. Accordingly, we're closing out 2025 with a special double issue of the Wonton. ATO Hong Kong thanks all our great partners who supported an extraordinary year of activities, promotions, and events and wishes everyone a festive and joyful holiday season and New Year! See you in 2026!

# THE HONG KONG WONTON

## ATO Co-Organizes U.S. – Macau Partners Reception



On Dec. 9 2025, ATO Hong Kong, along with the Foreign Commercial Service and AmCham Macau, jointly hosted the United States – Macau Partners Reception at MGM Macau. U.S. Consul General Julie Eadeh and Deputy Consul General David Schlaefer helped welcome over 60 guests, including more than 30 contacts from local hospitality groups, food and beverage importers, and U.S. ag industry representatives. In 2024, Macau's global imports of consumer-oriented products were valued at \$2.6 billion. The region's growing hospitality sector generates strong demand for U.S. consumer-oriented products including beef, food preparations, wine, seafood, and tree nuts.

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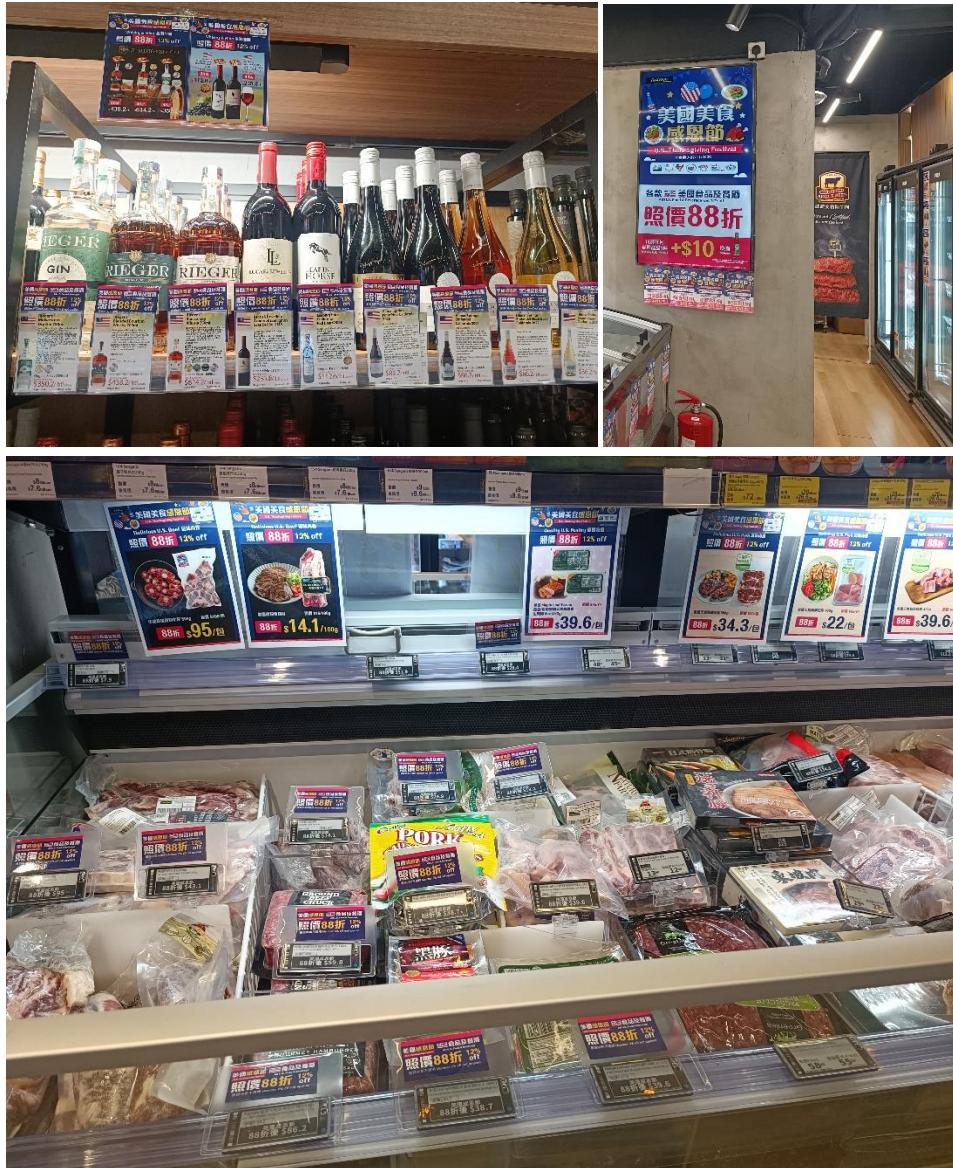
## ATO Retail Promotion Drives Sales of American Ginseng



From September 28 to October 15, 2025, ATO Hong Kong supported an American Ginseng promotion at 20 Old Shung Wan retail outlets across Hong Kong. The promotion, which included training staff on the qualities of American Ginseng, American Ginseng in-store displays, and a promotion to receive a free electric tea kettle with a qualifying purchase of American Ginseng helped boost sales 196 percent during the promotion period. Based on the robust sales performance, the retailer has retained the American Ginseng in-store promotional materials and reports sales continuing to exceed pre-promotion levels by more than 60 percent. Hong Kong is the largest market for wild and cultivated American Ginseng.

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## Thanksgiving Festival at Delifans Retail Stores



ATO Hong Kong partnered with USA Poultry and Egg Export Council and Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) to launch a U.S. Thanksgiving Festival promotion at Delifans, a 10-outlet retail chain specializing in frozen food and unique imported deli items. The campaign, which ran from November 7 to 27, showcased more than 100 U.S. origin SKUs, including multiple size options for U.S. turkey, Alaskan Black Cod, and a new-to-market American whiskey. In addition to discounts, customers enjoyed in-store cooking and tasting demos and gift rewards for purchases of U.S. products.

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## U.S. Wine Promotion at Hong Kong's Largest Online Wine Store - Watson's Wine

**A Great American Wine Journey**

**EXPLORE NOW**

**Spend \$1,200 on American wines:**

**Gift** eStore Only

Raymond Family  
Classic North Coast  
Cabernet Sauvignon 2021  
(valued at \$220)

Terms and conditions apply.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

DELICIOUS USA

CALIFORNIA WINES

oregon wine

WASHINGTON WINE

From November 1 – 28, 2025, ATO worked with Watson's Wine, Hong Kong's largest online wine store, to promote 44 U.S. wine labels through a special "Great American Wine Journey." With support of California Wine Institute, Oregon Wine Board and Washington State Wine Commission, the promotion showcased a wide array of U.S. wines and demonstrated why Hong Kong is a top ten market for U.S. wine exports. Utilizing Watson's homepage banner, hot search function and social media marketing, as well as a special gift promotion for purchases, the campaign resulted in a sales uptick of U.S. wines during the promotion period compared to a preceding comparable period.

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## ATO Launches America 250 Restaurant Promotion



The celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence has already kicked off in Hong Kong. With support from the U.S. Meat Export Federation and Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute, ATO Hong Kong partnered with local restaurants Graceland and Big Pink Burgers to launch an America 250 promotion from October 25 to November 25, 2025. The promotion featured special menus highlighting a variety of U.S. ingredients, including U.S. beef, seafood, and spirits. The promotion was a hit on social media, with influencer videos at Graceland generating over 506,000 views!

### ECONOMY



#### **Hong Kong Exports Rise 16 Percent, Fueled by Growing Demand from Asian Markets [SCMP, Oct. 27]**

Hong Kong's exports rose by about 16 percent year on year in September, driven by significantly growing demand from Asian markets such as Vietnam and Malaysia. The value of the city's exports for the month reached \$59.5 billion (HK\$462.3 billion), pushing the third quarter total to \$173 billion (HK\$1.35 trillion), a 15 percent increase from the same quarter last year, according to the Census and Statistics Department. Exports to mainland China and most other Asian markets saw robust growth, and shipments to the United States and the European Union also grew moderately. In September, imports grew by 13.6 percent to \$65.6 billion (HK\$512 billion), resulting in a trade deficit of \$6.4 billion (HK\$50.2 billion). **ATO Notes:** Hong Kong also announced its third quarter GDP grew to 3.8 percent year on year, following 3.1 percent growth in the previous quarter and beating government announced expectations. On another positive note for the economy, Hong Kong reached a new post-pandemic high

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in terms of tourist numbers, with a 12 percent year-on-year increase to 33 million over the last eight months.

## Top Victoria Park Lunar New Year Fair Fast-food Stall Fetches \$29,489 (\$230,000) Amid Improved Market Conditions [[The Standard](#), Oct. 27]

The city's largest Lunar New Year Fair will feature 400 stalls, open for public bidding in batches for three days. Four fast-food and 73 wet goods stalls were auctioned on Monday, attracting nearly 100 participants. The two most highly sought-after fast-food stalls at the Victoria Park Lunar New Year Fair were sold for \$29,489 (HK\$230,000) and \$19,872 (HK\$155,000) respectively in a public bidding starting on Monday (Oct 27). It represents a 26 percent increase in the bidding price for the top-priced stall, amounting to \$6,154 (HK\$48,000) more than the previous year. The Lunar New Year Fairs will be held across the city at 14 locations and will be open for seven days from February 11 to 17. A total of 915 wet goods stalls, 647 dry goods stalls and 26 fast food stalls will be provided. **ATO Notes:** One of the most famous events of the season, the Victoria Park fair usually takes place seven days before Lunar New Year. It is the only fair of its sort on Hong Kong Island and the largest of all those hosted during this period in the region. A wide range of treats, such as toys, handcrafted crafts, Chinese New Year flowers, festive décor, snacks, and street cuisine are offered to tourists and locals. There were 380 stalls and 215,000 attendees last year.

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## HOTELS, RESTAURANTS, AND INSTITUTIONS

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## Service Robots Revitalize GBA's Hotel Industry [[China Daily](#), Dec.11]

Foodservice industry insiders encouraged the application of service robots in the hotel industry across the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, as they face market changes such as fluctuations in demand from business travelers, an increase in cultural and tourism consumption, and a growth in the number of foreign travelers attracted by the country's expanded visa-free policy. A recent study by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University's School of Hotel and Tourism Management reported that service robots are becoming an important driver of business growth for hotels. For every 1,000 tasks completed by robots, hotel occupancy rates rise by approximately 3.2 percent, with their average monthly revenue increasing by roughly 167,900 yuan (\$23,785). **ATO Notes:** Yunji Technology, a global leader in hotel robotics, went public on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in October 2025. The company indicated that its service robots have been deployed in over 34,000 hotels worldwide. Robots are now commonly seen in large-scale restaurants and hotels, mainly for cleaning and delivery.

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## Wine & Dine 2025 Attracts 163,000 Visitors over Four Days with Record Attendance and Spending [[The Standard](#), Oct. 27]

The Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival 2025 attracted approximately 163,000 visitors during its four-day run at the Central Harbourfront Event Space, marking significant growth in both attendance and spending compared to last year. Average daily attendance increased by over 30 percent year-on-year, while daily tasting coupon sales surged by nearly 40 percent. Both visitors and merchants praised the event, with vendors reporting sales growth of 40 to 50 percent compared to last year. The Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board credited the event's success to government support for extended operating hours, and the participation of 1855 classified growth chateaus brought by their partner. He highlighted the popular return of the Tasting Pavilion and Premium Wine Zone, as well as an enhanced Gourmet Street. **ATO Notes:** ATO collaborated with Hong Kong Tourism Board and several vendors to support a USA Pavilion at this year's Wine & Dine Festival. Three exhibitors, Apus Wine Hong Kong, Bubba Gump Hong Kong and Thy Wine, showcased quality U.S. food and wine at the USA Pavilion and shared positive feedback on the footfall and consumption. ATO hopes to expand the USA Pavilion at next year's event and to use it as a platform to highlight America 250.

## Why Budget-friendly '2-dish-rice' Shops are Feeling the Pinch in Hong Kong [[SCMP](#), Nov. 1]

Two-dish rice meals, offering two pre-cooked dishes with rice for approximately \$3.70 (HK\$30), gained popularity in Hong Kong as a budget-friendly takeaway during the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite challenges such as rising costs and increased competition, the number of such eateries has surged from about 300 to around 1,000. Industry insiders attribute this growth to lower rent rates, simplicity of setting up these eateries and franchising. Simon Wong Ka-wo, president of the Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants and Related Trades, suggests that while the catering industry in Hong Kong is not oversaturated, it is in a phase of consolidation, eliminating weaker businesses while allowing stronger ones to thrive. **ATO Notes:** The total restaurant sector receipts reached \$3.5 billion (HK\$27 billion) in the second quarter of 2025, representing a 0.8 percent increase compared to the same period last year. However, the expansion is slow, and the Hong Kong catering sector still faces challenges due to shifting consumer spending patterns among both domestic and foreign consumers.

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## RETAIL

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## McDonald's Sells First Hong Kong Property in \$154 million Asset-disposal Plan [[SCMP](#), Nov. 5]; From Record Rent to Retreat: Hong Kong's Currency Exchange Shops Have Become a Dying Breed [[SCMP](#), Nov. 9]

McDonald's Corporation has sold a shop in Yuen Long via public tender for \$9.9 million (HK\$77.4 million), the fast-food chain's first since it announced an asset-disposal plan in July. McDonald's said it would continue to operate its restaurants in the eight locations that put for public tender on long-term leases. Hong Kong's retail sector has yet to recover from the havoc wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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The overall vacancy rate for the city's four core shopping districts of Causeway Bay, Central, Mong Kok and Tsim Sha Tsui improved slightly to 8.3 per cent in the third quarter from 9.7 per cent in the previous quarter, while rents have declined between 26.3 per cent and 43.9 per cent over the five-year period from 2019 to 2024, according to data compiled by Cushman & Wakefield. **ATO Notes:** The retail rebound in Hong Kong continues, though at a relatively slow pace. Overall retail sales increased 5.9 percent to \$4 billion in September. Comparing September 2025 to September 2024, most retail establishments had gains in sales value. Food and alcoholic beverages saw a 3.9 percent rise, while supermarket sales saw a 3 percent increase.

## **HKT mall CEO made five Major Predictions for Hong Kong Retail Industry** [[HK01.com](#) Nov 12]

CEO Ricky Wong of HKT mall – the largest Hong Kong local online shopping platform, made a public speech on predictions for Hong Kong's retail industry. These include "Hongkongers no longer needing Traditional Chinese labeling on products" and major e-commerce platforms to take down physical stores, and a forecast that Hong Kong will achieve "custom-free logistics" within three years, upending the existing retail landscape. The group recently announced its 2026 strategic plan, starting with a HK\$250 million investment in marketing, including advertising and exclusive pricing mechanism aimed at increasing monthly active users to 2 million. Additionally, HKT mall will reduce its delivery time from 8 hours to 3 hours. **ATO Notes:** Hong Kong local retailers face pressure from mainland China e-commerce giants such as Taobao, JD.com, and Pinduoduo, which have gained significant market share in Hong Kong through free-shipping policies and robust services. The developments signal a transformation for Hong Kong's retail sector, moving from a traditional 'shopping paradise' to an integrated cross-border hub.

## **TRADE AND POLICY**

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## **British Wagyu Beef Arrives in Hong Kong to Challenge Japanese and Australian Dominance** [[SCMP](#), Oct. 19]

British Wagyu, the product of full-blood Wagyu bulls crossed with Holstein cows, has arrived Hong Kong. The importer of British Warrendale Wagyu beef noted a discernible difference in taste between British and Australian Wagyu. British Wagyu has a stronger, gamey meat flavor compared to Australian Wagyu because the cattle in the UK are grass-fed until the last 150 to 170 days of their lives, after which they are switched to a mix of grass and grain. UK Wagyu offers a healthier option while still providing the desirable fat profile that consumers crave. **ATO Notes:** In 2024, the United Kingdom exported \$32 million of beef to Hong Kong, making it the eighth largest supplier for beef, well below the top three origins: Brazil (\$564 million), United States (\$404 million), and Australia (\$100 million).

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## Hong Kong Leads Initiative for SAF Supply Chain [[RTHK, Oct. 21](#)]

Hong Kong is spearheading an initiative to build a robust supply chain for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) as part of the global aviation industry's push for decarbonization, according to authorities.

Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mable Chan announced in her keynote address the city's vision for 1 to 2 percent of all flights departing from Hong Kong International Airport to be powered by SAF by 2030. Leveraging Hong Kong's close proximity to mainland China, which has the largest supply of used cooking oil, the city aims to create a significant SAF supply. The Hong Kong government is actively exploring the construction of a SAF landing facility within the city. This facility is intended to support the provision of competitively priced SAF-blended jet fuel in the long term, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of Hong Kong's SAF industry. [ATO Notes: In July, FAS along with other Consulate agencies, hosted U.S. SAF expert Chris Tindal as a visiting speaker tour to showcase U.S. experiences in SAF adoption and standards development.](#) Both SAF and green marine fuels have emerged as key areas for the U.S. grains and biofuels industry.

## Hong Kong's Liquor Duty Cut Strengthens Spirits Sales [[RTHK, Oct. 21](#)]

The significant reduction in Hong Kong's liquor duty, announced in 2024, has fueled growing demand for premium spirits, particularly among younger consumers, further solidifying the city's status as a global hub for wine and spirits trading. The Deputy Executive Director of the Trade Development Council (TDC) highlighted that this policy is expected to boost demand significantly while also benefiting related industries, such as warehousing and restaurants. [ATO Notes: The Hong Kong government reduced the duty rate on liquor on October 16, 2024.](#) Since 2020, liquor imports to Hong Kong have increased from \$445 million to \$831 million in 2024. In the first three quarters of 2025, U.S. spirits exports grew 73 percent to \$5 million.

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## MACAU

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## ‘Accelerate Reforms and Efficiency with Keen Determination; Overcome Challenges and Promote Diversification with Fortified Efforts’: Chief Executive in 2026 Policy Address [[Macau SAR Government News, Nov. 18](#)]

The Chief Executive, Mr. Sam Hou Fai, delivered the 2026 Policy Address titled “Accelerate Reforms and Efficiency with Keen Determination, Overcome Challenges and Promote Diversification with Fortified Efforts” at the Legislative Assembly on November 18, 2025. The 2026 Policy Address sets out a guiding principle of “doing our utmost within our capabilities, providing targeted assistance, and decentralizing resources,” with the aim of continuously refining livelihood policies. [ATO Notes: Regarding economic diversification, efforts will be made to optimize port management, improve facility connectivity to facilitate the movement of people, vehicles, and goods, and actively coordinate integrated development in education, science and technology, and talent cultivation.](#) The government plans to increase the competitiveness of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) by providing

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stronger financial support in the form of tax reductions and interest subsidies. Additionally, the government will encourage locals and tourists to spend money and explore nearby districts. Macau's third quarter 2025 GDP grew 4.2 percent.

## **Visitor Arrivals up 10 Percent Y-O-Y in September despite 34 Percent Drop M-O-M [[Macau Daily Times](#), Oct. 27]**

The number of visitors arriving in Macau in September reached 2.8 million, representing a 9.8 percent increase year-on-year according to data from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). In the first three quarters of 2025, Philippines became the largest non-Greater China visitor market while the leading long-haul market continues to be the United States. Visitors from Greater Bay Area cities rose 24 percent to 11 million, accounting for 50.5 percent of all mainland visitors. **ATO Notes:** Furthermore, overnight visits increased by just 2.5 percent to 12 million during the first three quarters of 2025, however same-day visitors increased by 25 percent to 17 million. The average hotel occupancy rate was 89.3 percent. Like Hong Kong, Macau is experiencing a rise in same-day visits, indicating that visitors are shifting their spending composition, saving on hotel costs.

## **Tourism boost for Macau as NBA China Games, Concerts Help hotels hit 90 Percent Occupancy Rates [[SCMP](#), Oct. 15]; Macau's 2025 Visitation is Unchanged From Last Year [[Daily Lodging Report](#), Nov.3]**

Hotels in Macau reached an occupancy rate of more than 90 percent as popular events including the NBA China Games at the Venetian Arena (owned by Sands) and concerts at the Galaxy Arena (owned by Galaxy Entertainment) gave the tourism industry a big boost. Macau Tourist Guide Association official noted that the event was successful in attracting diverse, high-value tourists. In the first nine months of the year, Macau's hotels had 10.9 million guests, reflecting year-on-year growth of 0.1 percent. **ATO Notes:** Macau's hotel industry in the first nine months of 2025 surpassed pre-pandemic levels with a 3 percent increase from the same period in 2019. The six casino operators in Macau, i.e. Galaxy Entertainment, MGM China, Melco Resorts, Sands, SJM Holdings and Wynn Macau are mandated to increase non-gaming investment, equivalent to \$16.1 billion in the 10-year concession from January 1, 2023.

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## ATO EVENTS CALENDAR



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Dec 2025**

Dec. 9

**U.S. - Macau Partners Reception**

**Jan 2026**

Jan 23 - 25

**Vegetarian Food Asia**

Jan 29 – Feb.1

**Pet Show 2026**

Hungry for more information about the Hong Kong and Macau markets?

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### Attachments:

No Attachments.