

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

Hertfordshire Pension Fund Audit results report

Year ended 31 March 2017



Private and Confidential

11 September 2017

Dear Audit Committee Members

We have substantially completed our audit of Hertfordshire Pension Fund for the year ended 31 March 2017.

Subject to concluding the outstanding matters listed in our report, we confirm that we expect to issue an unqualified audit opinion on the financial statements in the form at Section 03, before the statutory deadline of 30 September 2017.

This report is intended solely for the use of the Audit Committee, other members of the Fund, and senior management. It should not be used for any other purpose or given to any other party without obtaining our written consent.

We would like to thank your staff for their help during the engagement.

We look forward to discussing with you any aspects of this report or any other issues arising from our work.

Yours faithfully

Richard Page

Executive Director

For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

United Kingdom

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In April 2015 Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) issued "Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies". It is available from the via the PSAA website (www.PSAA.co.uk).

The Statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between appointed auditors and audited bodies. It summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies begin and end, and what is to be expected of the audited body in certain areas.

The "Terms of Appointment (updated February 2017)" issued by the PSAA sets out additional requirements that auditors must comply with, over and above those set out in the National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and in legislation, and covers matters of practice and procedure which are of a recurring nature..

This report is made solely to the Audit Committee, other members of the Fund and management of Hertfordshire Pension Fund in accordance with the statement of responsibilities. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Audit Committee, other members of the Fund and management of Hertfordshire Pension Fund those matters we are required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Audit Committee, other members of the Fund and management of Hertfordshire Pension Fund for this report or for the opinions we have formed. It should not be provided to any third-party without obtaining our written consent.



01

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Overview of the audit

Scope and materiality

In our Audit Plan presented to the 1 March 2017 Audit Committee meeting, we gave you an overview of how we intended to carry out our responsibilities as your auditor. We carried out our audit in accordance with this plan.

We planned our procedures using a materiality of £35.8 million. We reassessed this using the actual year-end figures, which have increased this amount to £42.4 million. The threshold for reporting uncorrected audit differences has increased from £1.8 million to £2.1 million. The basis of our assessment of materiality has remained consistent with prior years at 1% of Net Assets.

Status of the audit

We have substantially completed our audit of Hertfordshire Pension Fund's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017 and have performed the procedures outlined in our Audit plan. Subject to satisfactory completion of the following outstanding items we expect to issue an unqualified opinion on the Fund's financial statements in the form which appears at Section 03. However until work is complete, further amendments may arise:

- Final Director review
- Review of the final version of the financial statements and annual report
- Completion of subsequent events review up to the date of sign off
- Receipt of the signed management representation letter



Executive Summary

Executive summary (continued)

Audit differences

Subject to the completion of the outstanding matters above, there are currently no unadjusted audit differences arising from our audit.

Our audit identified a small number of disclosure errors which were highlighted to management for amendment. We do not consider any of these significant and therefore we have not provided further detail of these amendments.

Areas of audit focus

Our Audit Plan identified key areas of focus for our audit of Hertfordshire Pension Fund's financial statements. This report sets out our observations and conclusions, including our views on areas which might be conservative, and where there is potential risk and exposure. We summarise our consideration of these matters, and any others identified, in the "Key Audit Issues" section of this report.

We ask you to review these and any other matters in this report to ensure:

- There are no other considerations or matters that could have an impact on these issues
- You agree with the resolution of the issue
- There are no other significant issues to be considered.

There are no matters, apart from those reported by management or disclosed in this report, which we believe should be brought to the attention of the Audit Committee.



Executive Summary

Executive summary (continued)

Other reporting issues

We have reviewed the information presented in the Annual Report for consistency with the audited financial statements and our knowledge of the Fund. We have no matters to report as a result of this work.

We have no other matters to report.

Control observations

We have adopted a fully substantive approach, so have not tested the operation of controls.

Independence

Please refer to Appendix B for our update on Independence.





02

Areas of Audit Focus





Areas of Audit Focus

Audit issues and approach:

Management override


What are our conclusions?


We have not identified any material weaknesses in controls or evidence of material management override.
We have not identified any instances of inappropriate judgements being applied.

We did not identify any other transactions during our audit which appeared unusual or outside the Fund's normal course of business

What is the risk?

Risk of management override
As identified in ISA 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and to prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise seem to be operating effectively. We identify and respond to this fraud risk on every audit engagement.

 In Audit Report

 Significant Risk

What did we do?

Our testing of journal entries has not identified adjustments which were outside of the normal course of business. All journals tested have an appropriate business rationale.

We reviewed accounting estimates for evidence of management bias. We did not identify any evidence of management override.

We have reviewed the financial statements and not identified any significant unusual transactions.



03 Audit Report



Audit Report

Draft audit report

Our opinion on the financial statements

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Opinion on the pension fund financial statements

We have audited the pension fund financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The pension fund financial statements comprise the Fund Account, the Net Assets Statement and the related notes 5 to 6.22. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.

This report is made solely to the members of Hertfordshire County Council in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the authority and the authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Director of Resources and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Chief Financial Officer's Responsibilities set out on page 14, the Director of Resources is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts, which includes the pension fund financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the fund's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Director of Resources; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition, we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Hertfordshire County Council pension Fund Annual report in the Statement of Accounts 2016/17 to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.



Audit Report

Draft audit report (continued)

Our opinion on the financial statements

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion the pension fund financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of the pension fund during the year ended 31 March 2017 and the amount and disposition of the fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2017; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.

Opinion on other matters

In our opinion, the information given in the Statement of Accounts 2016/17 for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects

Richard Page (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP, Appointed Auditor
Bristol
Date:

The maintenance and integrity of the Hertfordshire County Council web site is the responsibility of the directors; the work carried out by the auditors does not involve consideration of these matters and, accordingly, the auditors accept no responsibility for any changes that may have occurred to the financial statements since they were initially presented on the web site. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.



04

Other reporting issues



Other reporting issues

Other reporting issues

Consistency of other information published with the financial statements, including the Annual Report

We must give an opinion on the consistency of the financial and non-financial information in the Statement of Accounts 2016/17 with the audited financial statements

Financial information in the Statement of Accounts 2016/17 and published with the financial statements was consistent with the audited financial statements.

Other powers and duties

We have a duty under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to consider whether to report on any matter that comes to our attention in the course of the audit, either for the Fund to consider it or to bring it to the attention of the public (i.e. "a report in the public interest"). We did not identify any issues which required us to issue a report in the public interest.

We also have a duty to make written recommendations to the Fund, copied to the Secretary of State, and take action in accordance with our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. We did not identify any issues.



Other reporting issues

Other reporting issues

Other matters

As required by ISA (UK&I) 260 and other ISAs specifying communication requirements, we must tell you significant findings from the audit and other matters if they are significant to your oversight of the [Fund]'s financial reporting process. They include the following:

- Significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;
- Any significant difficulties encountered during the audit;
- Any significant matters arising from the audit that were discussed with management;
- Written representations we have requested;
- Expected modifications to the audit report;
- Any other matters significant to overseeing the financial reporting process;
- Related parties;
- External confirmations;
- Going concern; and
- Consideration of laws and regulations

We have no such matters to report.



05

Assessment of Control Environment



Assessment of Control Environment

Assessment of control environment

Financial controls

It is the responsibility of the Fund to develop and implement systems of internal financial control and to put in place proper arrangements to monitor their adequacy and effectiveness in practice. Our responsibility as your auditor is to consider whether the Fund has put adequate arrangements in place to satisfy itself that the systems of internal financial control are both adequate and effective in practice.

As part of our audit of the financial statements, we obtained an understanding of internal control sufficient to plan our audit and determine the nature, timing and extent of testing performed. As we have adopted a fully substantive approach, we have therefore not tested the operation of controls.

Although our audit was not designed to express an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control we are required to communicate to you significant deficiencies in internal control.

We have not identified any significant deficiencies in the design or operation of an internal control that might result in a material misstatement in your financial statements of which you are not aware.



06 Appendices



Appendix A

Required communications with the Audit Committee

There are certain communications that we must provide to the Audit Committees of UK clients. We have done this by:

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Terms of engagement	Confirmation by the audit committee of acceptance of terms of engagement as written in the engagement letter signed by both parties.	The statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies.
Planning and audit approach	Communication of the planned scope and timing of the audit, including any limitations.	1 March 2017 Audit Plan
Significant findings from the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our view of the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures Any significant difficulties encountered during the audit Any significant matters arising from the audit that were discussed with management Written representations we have requested Expected modifications to the audit report Any other matters significant to overseeing the financial reporting process 	11 September 2017 Audit Results Report
Going concern	Events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements The adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements 	11 September 2017 Audit Results Report No conditions or events were identified, either individually or together to raise any doubt about Hertfordshire Pension Fund's ability to continue for the 12 months from the date of our report.
Misstatements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected Significant corrected misstatements, in writing 	11 September 2017 Audit Results Report



Appendix A

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Asking the audit committee whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the Fund ▶ Unless all those charged with governance are involved in managing the entity, any fraud identified or information obtained indicating that a fraud may exist involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) management; (b) employees with significant roles in internal control; or (c) others where the fraud results in a material misstatement in the financial statements. ▶ A discussion of any other matters related to fraud, relevant to Audit Committee responsibility. 	<p>11 September 2017 Audit Results Report</p> <p>We have asked management and those charged with governance about arrangements to prevent or detect fraud. We have not become aware of any fraud or illegal acts during our audit.</p>
Related parties	<p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the Fund's related parties including, where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Non-disclosure by management ▶ Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions ▶ Disagreement over disclosures ▶ Non-compliance with laws and/or regulations ▶ Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity 	<p>11 September 2017 Audit Results Report</p> <p>We have no matters to report</p>
Subsequent events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Where appropriate, asking the audit committee whether any subsequent events have occurred that might affect the financial statements. 	<p>11 September 2017 Audit Results Report</p> <p>We have enquired of management and those charged with governance. We have no matters to report.</p>
Other information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Where material inconsistencies are identified in other information included in the document containing the financial statements, but management refuses to make the revision. 	<p>11 September 2017 Audit Results Report</p> <p>We have no matters to report</p>



Appendix A

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
External confirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Management's refusal for us to request confirmations ▶ We were unable to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures. 	11 September 2017 Audit Results Report We have received all requested confirmations
Consideration of laws and/or regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Audit findings of non-compliance where it is material and believed to be intentional. This communication is subject to compliance with legislation on "tipping off" ▶ Asking the audit committee about possible instances of non-compliance with laws and/or regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and known to the audit committee. 	11 September 2017 Audit Results Report We have enquired of management and those charged with governance. We have not identified any material instances or non-compliance with laws and regulations
Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit. 	11 September 2017 Audit Results Report We have no matters to report
Independence	Communication of all significant facts and matters that have a bearing on EY's objectivity and independence. Communicating key elements of the audit engagement partner's consideration of independence and objectivity such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The principal threats ▶ Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness ▶ An overall assessment of threats and safeguards ▶ Information on the firm's general policies and processes for maintaining objectivity and independence Communications whenever significant judgments are made about threats to objectivity or independence and the appropriateness of safeguards,	1 March 2017 Audit Plan 11 September 2017 Audit Results Report
Fee Reporting	Breakdown of fee information when the audit plan is agreed Breakdown of fee information at the completion of the audit Any non-audit work	1 March 2017 Audit Plan 11 September 2017 Audit Results Report



Appendix B

Independence

We confirm that there are no changes in our assessment of independence since our confirmation in our audit planning board report dated 1 March 2017.

We complied with the APB Ethical Standards and the requirements of the PSAA's Terms of Appointment. In our professional judgement the firm is independent and the objectivity of the audit engagement partner and audit staff has not been compromised within the meaning of regulatory and professional requirements.

We consider that our independence in this context is a matter which you should review, as well as us. It is important that you and your Audit Committee consider the facts known to you and come to a view. If you would like to discuss any matters concerning our independence, we will be pleased to do this at the meeting of the Audit Committee on 11 September 2017.

As part of our reporting on our independence, we set out below a summary of the fees paid for the year ended 31 March 2017 confirm that we have not undertaken non-audit work outside the PSAA Code requirements. We have adopted the necessary safeguards in completing this work and complied with Auditor Guidance Note 1 issued by the NAO in December 2016.

Description	Final Fee 2016/17	Planned Fee 2016/17	Scale Fee 2016/17	Final Fee 2015/16
Hertfordshire Pension Fund Audit Fee – code work	£33,491	£33,491*	£27,991	£27,991
Total Audit Fee – code work	£33,491	£33,491	£27,991	£27,991

* £5,500 in relation to IAS 19 procedures. In previous years this work has been something of an anomaly in that we have not charged for it: however PSAA has agreed scale fee variations to cover the necessary work. This is consistent with the approach taken by other firms which act as external auditors for the Local Government Pension Schemes.



Appendix C

Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

[To be prepared on the entity's letterhead]

11 September 2017

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Hertfordshire County Council Pension Fund ("the Fund") for the year ended 31 March 2017. We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of the Fund during the year ended 31 March 2017 and of the amount and disposition of the Fund's assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2017, in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland); which involves an examination of the accounting system, internal control and related data to the extent you considered necessary in the circumstances, and is not designed to identify - nor necessarily be expected to disclose - all fraud, shortages, errors and other irregularities, should any exist.

Accordingly, we make the following representations, which are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

A. Financial Statements and Financial Records

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, under the relevant statutory authorities, for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with [the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17.
2. We confirm that the Fund is a Registered Pension Scheme. We are not aware of any reason why the tax status of the scheme should change.
3. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Fund, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the financial statements referred to above give a true and fair view of the financial position and financial performance of the Fund in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17, and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the financial statements.



Appendix C

Management Rep Letter

4. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.
5. As members of management of the Fund, we believe that the Fund has a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2016/17 that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
6. There are no unadjusted audit differences identified during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented.

B. Fraud

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
2. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
3. We have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud involving management or other employees who have a significant role in the Fund's internal controls over financial reporting. In addition, we have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud involving other employees in which the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements. We have no knowledge of any allegations of financial improprieties, including fraud or suspected fraud, (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers") which could result in a misstatement of the financial statements or otherwise affect the financial reporting of the Fund.

C. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

1. We have disclosed to you all identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.
2. We have not made any reports to The Pensions Regulator, nor are we aware of any such reports having been made by any of our advisors.
3. There have been no other communications with The Pensions Regulator or other regulatory bodies during the Fund year or subsequently concerning matters of non-compliance with any legal duty. We have drawn to your attention all correspondence and notes of meetings with regulators.



Appendix C

Management Rep Letter

D. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions

1. We have provided you with:

- Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.

3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Fund and committees of directors (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on 11 September 2017.

4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Fund's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.

5. We believe that the significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

6. We have disclosed to you, and the Fund has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.

7. No transactions have been made which are not in the interests of the Fund members or the Fund during the fund year or subsequently.



Appendix C

Management Rep Letter

E. Liabilities and Contingencies

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to you and are appropriately reflected in the financial statements.
2. We have informed you of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.
3. We have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and confirm that we have given no guarantees that we have given to third parties.

F. Subsequent Events

1. There have been no events subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

G. Other information

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information.
2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

H. Derivative Financial Instruments

We confirm the Fund's statement of investment principles has been duly reviewed to ensure that such investments comply with any limitations imposed by its provisions.

The financial statements disclose all transactions in derivative financial instruments that have been entered into during the period, those still held by the Fund at the year end and the terms and conditions relating thereto.

Management has duly considered and deemed as appropriate the assumptions and methodologies used in the valuation of 'over the counter' derivative financial instruments which the Fund is holding, and these have been communicated to you.



Appendix C

Management Rep Letter

I. Actuarial valuation

The latest report of the actuary Hymans Robertson LLP as at [Date] and dated [Date] has been provided to you. To the best of our knowledge and belief we confirm that the information supplied by us to the actuary was true and that no significant information was omitted which may have a bearing on his report.

Yours faithfully

Director of Resources

I confirm that this letter has been discussed and approved at the Audit Committee on 11 September 2017

Chair of Audit Committee

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ED None

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