MAYOR OF LONDON



Women's Night Safety Charter Toolkit

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Introduction

All women have the right to enjoy London after dark. Sounds obvious, doesn't it? And yet the four million women and girls living here still face many barriers when taking part in our city's life at night.

"I just want to be free and move around like a bird."

While we know that Londoners are actually no more likely to be a victim of crime at night than during the day, a combination of factors create an environment where women in particular are less likely to feel safe, as shown in our 2018 report into London at Night.

"I take a massive detour after my night shift because the quickest route has no lighting at all."

We also know that women and girls still face much higher levels of sexual violence, assault and abuse than the rest of society at night.

"When I'm working at the club, I should be confident that my manager will do something if some guy won't leave me alone."

We know too that sexual offences have the highest levels of under-reporting. This is often because victims fear being blamed or not being believed, or don't know or don't trust the reporting process. Whether she is your employee or your customer, you can help her feel safer when speaking out.

"I should be able to make my way home after an evening with friends on the night bus without being sexually harassed."

We believe that sexual harassment, in all its forms, is unacceptable. We are calling on businesses, organisations and services that operate in London at night to step up and be part of a huge change. It's about time, don't you think?

The Bigger Picture

All societies have 'social norms' around gender. These are deeply held cultural ideas about behaviour and qualities, which can include how we should look, act and behave, whether at home, at work or on a night out. Those who feel entitled to commit violence against women often use the idea that a woman has breached these norms as an excuse for their own actions. In this way, violence against women and girls is deeply related to women's inequality. Organisations that wish to further an agenda of equality need to take a stand against violence against women and challenge these restrictive social norms. That way, everyone can live their lives to their fullest potential.

According to the End Violence Against Women Coalition, experiences often play a role in stopping women achieving equality in our society. These daily, widespread and often normalised incidents limit women's freedom and choices, forcing them to make calculations about what is and is not safe for them to do. The expectation or fear of sexual harassment or assault, whether in public or at work, leaves women in a constant state of managing what author and Dr. Fiona Vera-Gray at Durham University calls 'the right amount of panic.'

The scale of the problem is huge. While statistics show only a partial picture due to low levels of reporting and high levels of normalisation and minimisation ("it's not a big deal, it happens all the time, he probably didn't mean it"), we do know that night time venues, such as pubs, bars and clubs, can play host to a range of unacceptable behaviours.

A YouGov poll of 2,013 adults aged between 18 and 24 who drink in bars, clubs or pubs found that:

- 72% said they had seen some form of sexual harassment
- 63% of women and 26% of men said they had experienced unacceptable behaviour
- 79% of women said they expected inappropriate comments, touching and behaviour on a night out toward them or their friends

The emotional impact shouldn't be understated either. Alcohol awareness charity Drinkaware's 'Drunken Nights Out' Survey asked those who had been on the receiving end of drunken sexual harassment for their emotional responses. When asked whether they had felt disgust, anger, fear, or surprise at the harassment, the top response for women was disgust (74%) followed by anger (63%). The lowest was surprise (14%).

Unacceptable behaviour is also high in our places of work. A ComRes study for the BBC of 2,000 adults found that in British workplaces half of British women and a fifth of men have been sexually harassed. Of the women who said they had been harassed, 63% said they didn't report it to anyone.

The Equality Act of 2010 deems sexual harassment as a form of unlawful discrimination, yet we know that this behaviour is too often laughed off as 'banter'. Wherever sexual harassment or assault happens, we must call it out and ensure this behaviour has clear consequences.

London's Women's Night Safety Charter

The Charter is part of the Mayor's Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and London's commitment to the UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces global initiative.

It's all about taking practical steps together to make London at night safer for women. Everyone should feel empowered to play their part in creating positive change. Whatever your size, shape or area of work, we encourage you to pledge your commitment to women's safety.

This toolkit is packed full of ideas, prompts and signposts. These are practical steps towards change. Some will take time, but there will be others you can do today. Some may require additional resources, but many will not.

Whatever steps your organisation is able to take, you can be sure: <u>every step will make a difference.</u> Whether you're already proud of the great work you've been doing for women's safety or are curious about what you could try, read on to find out where to start.

What does it mean to sign the Charter?

The Women's Night Safety Charter is a voluntary pledge to show you take women's safety seriously.

By signing the Charter, you show your acknowledgement of the issue and that you're ready to get proactive in improving women's safety and experience. We're building a strong network dedicated to making a positive change to women's experiences across London at night.

Whatever your organisation does for London at night, there will be something you can do to better support women's safety.

Making a change

Of course, we want sexual harassment, assault and other forms of gender-based violence to stop. However, we can all commit to do more, which is what the Women's Night Safety Charter is all about. Businesses, organisations and services can't do *everything*, but we can all do more.

The Four Rs

First, learn your four Rs: Responsibility, Report, Respond and Redesign.

Responsibility

Who is responsible for unacceptable behaviour? The person doing it! It's a simple equation, and yet we know victim-blaming culture still holds sway in too many places of work and play. Organisations that bring people together at night have a duty of care to ensure their spaces do not further enable harassment, assault or violence towards women or anyone else. It's also important to recognise that taking responsibility is not the same as taking liability.

Report

A total end to these often criminal behaviours is a long way off and you can't prevent every single incident. When it does happen, reporting it should be a simple, discreet and hassle-free choice. The process for what will happen next should be clear with a range of options for how an incident can be dealt with.

Respond

Choosing to speak up should be encouraged through promoting a supportive culture that believes those who do come forward. Staff should feel confident and clear on how to respond to these reports in a consistent, professional and empathetic way that prioritises safety and care, not personal judgement.

Redesign

We know that alongside experiences of harassment or assault, the perception of 'safety' plays into women's choices when avoiding certain areas, services and businesses. Nightlife spaces should be designed to be welcoming and to minimise the risk of enabling 'opportunistic' perpetrators, who may, for instance, use a lack of clear visibility in a venue to their advantage.

Based on our research and the backing of specialist support, policy and training organisations working in this area, we have put together seven commitments for women's night safety.

The Seven Commitments

1. Champion	Appointing a named contact for this work who will champion and drive forward any action taken
2. Communicate	Positive, public/staff facing communications campaign, both online and in your space(s)
3. Support your Staff	Routes for reporting unacceptable behaviour while at work and supporting cultural change
4. Support the Public	Routes for reporting unacceptable behaviour while using your service or space at night
5. Training: responding	Staff training on the issue, including what to say/do and not say/do, and any relevant policies
6. Training: recording	Staff training on information sharing and appropriate recording of details
7. Designing for Safety	Audit your spaces and adapt them to promote a safer environment and reduce risk of crime

Women's night safety and you: A checklist for action

This Toolkit provides ideas, inspiration, information and resources to help your organisation meet the seven commitments. It will advise you on possible courses of action, some changes you may need to make and how to upskill your staff.

This checklist compiles the recommended action towards each commitment, which are discussed in detail further on. There are also with examples from a range of signatory organisations to inspire and inform the changes you could make.

✓	Checklist
	Appoint a 'Champion' for women's safety within your organisation.
	Make all team members aware of who your Champion is so that they can go to them for advice and resources on women's safety.
	Partner with local Met Police and Safer Neighboured Teams to network and share best practice.
	Communicate to your staff and customers that your organisation takes women's safety seriously and that you encourage people to come forward to report incidents.
	Make use of your internal and external channels to communicate your zero tolerance policy on unacceptable behaviour and clear options for how and who to report this to.
	Create an environment where staff feel comfortable and confident to report sexual harassment or assault they have experienced at work.
	Provide signposting to local services and other HR and Employee Assistance resources if they need further information.
	Have a clear written policy and procedure on how your organisation will respond to reports of harassment or assault and what people can expect from any processes.
	Make sure that anyone who experiences sexual harassment or assault in a space you are responsible for is able to report it in a simple, straightforward way.
	Offer a range of reporting methods, for example: in person, email, telephone, or feedback form.

✓	Checklist
	Take into account how accessible these methods are and how you can make sure people trust these methods.
	Ensure your staff believe and support anyone who comes forward to report something that makes them feel uncomfortable. Make sure management support staff by encouraging belief.
	Provide specialised training for your staff on sexual harassment and assault, with a focus on how to respond and intervene if incidents take place.
	Ensure all reported incidents of sexual harassment or assault are recorded in compliance with data and confidentiality guidelines.
	Check that all CCTV and lighting is functioning correctly.
	Assess your provision of accessible and gender-neutral bathrooms.
	Commission an access audit of your buildings and spaces and publish the findings online and in a printed form.
	Commission a safety audit of your buildings and spaces and publish the findings online and in a printed form.
	Partnering with the local Met Police Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Putting the commitments into action

✓	1. Champion
	Appoint a 'Champion' for women's safety within your organisation.
	Make all team members aware of who your Champion is so that they can go to them for advice and resources on women's safety.
	Partner with local Met Police and Safer Neighboured Teams to network and share best practice.

What is a Champion?

A Women's Safety Champion in your workplace is someone who makes a difference because they are:

- Passionate about helping people understand that women's safety is a shared responsibility
- Able to give time and resources to undertake meaningful activities and advocate for practical and cultural changes
- Willing to engage colleagues constructively and positively when taking action to address women's safety, and encouraging others to do so too
- Keen to spread the word about the commitments you have been able to meet
- Able to empower colleagues to challenge unsafe language, behaviours and practice and support the training agenda

Who should the Champion be?

The Champion could be a manager, the person responsible for licensing, or a member of your HR team if you have one. Ultimately, your organisation will need to decide which member of staff best fits the role of the Champion. Passion is more important than experience here. Many organisations will hopefully choose a member of staff with the time, energy and ability to inspire others to have honest conversations about this issue. Yes, men can be a Champion too!

What will the Champion do?

The Champion will be the point of contact for any work done on this issue, ensuring that

the commitments you prioritise are met by your organisation. They will oversee the promotion of a culture of belief at your organisation and share best practice with other organisations.

✓	2. Communicate
	Communicate to your staff and customers that your organisation takes women's safety seriously and that you encourage people to come forward to report incidents.
	Make use of your internal and external channels to communicate your zero tolerance policy on unacceptable behaviour and clear options for how and who to report this to.

Why is a communications campaign important?

The simple act of developing, distributing and displaying a poster or notice about your organisation's values in relation to women's safety and the consequences for unacceptable behaviour can have a hugely positive impact. In doing so, you are naming something that many organisations have traditionally refused to acknowledge. So publicly engaging with the topic could be read as 'we are not a safe place.' In fact, when we look at how common these experiences are, the direct opposite is true. Many women and girls are reassured to know what the values of that space are and who and where they can go to for support.

Too often, sexual harassment and assault is not spoken about due to fear of not being believed, or seen to be a private matter. We know that women's safety should be everyone's issue. Communication campaigns let staff and customers know that you take safety seriously. Naming your values publicly like this helps to create an environment where everyone feels confident to report incidents perpetrators will know that this kind of behaviour will not be tolerated.

What should this campaign look like?

This might take the form of a poster campaign, publishing your harassment policy on your website and reminding customers of your dedication to women's safety on your social media channels.

Some dos and don'ts for successful women's safety messaging:

Dos:

- Use positive language (e.g. "we aim to create a welcome space for all our customers...")
- Focus on the consequences for unacceptable behaviour (e.g. "you will be asked to leave...")
- Include why this is not okay (e.g. "no one should feel unsafe while they are here)
- Summarise the options you're able to offer for reporting (e.g. text, email, app)

Don'ts:

- Use graphic images which can be off-putting
- Use sensational language or humour when describing these offences
- Scaremongering or descriptions of victims or perpetrators
- Use any 'victim-blaming' language (e.g. telling people to stay with their friends and stay alert to their surroundings). While this might seem helpful and well-intentioned, women who are targeted should not have to change their behaviour when it is perpetrators who can make a choice not to harass. Further on in the toolkit we have included more examples of victim-blaming language.

"As part of the staff training, we provide posters for display to all the licensed premises we work with, because communication is key. Our posters say 'If something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable, you can speak to any member of our specially trained staff and they will work with you to make sure it doesn't have to ruin your experience.'

Communicating your policy in clear language that everyone understands will encourage women to report. Putting it on posters, for example, is one positive solution. With the posters your customers will know what they can expect from your staff and it will give your staff back-up when dealing with a confrontation."

Ester van Kempen, Project Coordinator, Good Night Out Campaign

✓	3. Support your staff
	Create an environment where staff feel comfortable and confident to report sexual harassment or assault they have experienced at work.
	Provide signposting to local services and other HR and Employee Assistance resources if they need further information.

How can we create this environment?

The Equality Act 2010 defines sexual harassment at work as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Sexual harassment, sexual assault and hate crimes more generally are not experienced in the same way as other offences. This is in part because they target identity, that is, who a person is or is perceived to be. This is very personal. It means that victims often blame themselves and remain silent about what happened, whether due to self-blame, fear of being blamed, of being disbelieved, or being further victimised.

Workplaces should acknowledge these barriers and help to reduce and remove them with a combination of cultural and practical changes.

You could:

- Undertake an anonymous survey of your staff team to get a full view of how safety is experienced across the organisation. Who feels safest and in which roles? When do particular workers feel the least safe and why?
- Send a memo to all staff clearly communicating your policy and reminding them that all reports are confidential and will be taken seriously
- Call a special meeting with managers to discuss and plan the different ways women's safety could be made a priority, including support the progress and leadership journeys of women in your organisation.
- Address workplace bullying and use administrative measures to vary power dynamics, for example rotating who chairs meetings
- Investigate how skilled your teams feel when it comes to challenging harmful jokes or comments in the workplace and role play the best way of doing this to normalise it
- Publish your Sexual Harassment Policy and Equalities Statement online
- Invest in Sexual Harassment and Equalities training for the whole team

"Sometimes the person accused of harassment retaliates by further harassing or bullying the person who has lodged a complaint. Or in some instances an employer might treat a victim of sexual harassment unfairly because they are perceived as being 'difficult' or causing problems in a team. Your employer is not allowed to victimise you for complaining about sex discrimination or sexual harassment at work. If you are victimised for complaining, or for helping a colleague to make a complaint, you can make a claim for unlawful victimisation to an employment tribunal."

Your Rights at Work; Protection from Sexual Harassment, TUC

✓	4. Support the public
	Have a clear written policy and procedure on how your organisation will respond to reports of harassment or assault and what people can expect from any processes.
	Make sure that anyone who experiences sexual harassment or assault in a space you are responsible for is able to report it in a simple, straightforward way.
	Offer a range of reporting methods, for example: in person, email, telephone, or feedback form.
	Take into account how accessible these methods are and how you can make sure people trust these methods.

Why is having a clear policy and offering different reporting methods so important? Having multiple ways to report will make it easier for people to overcome barriers they may be facing around sharing their experience with you. Accessibility is also an issue. Women with disabilities, including those who are deaf or blind, should feel equally able to make a report.

"Sexual harassment is very common and gets in the way of the freedom and enjoyment that women and girls can have when out at night. It is crucial that all organisations have specific policies in place on sexual harassment and assault, because this ensures that employees and customers know what behaviours are unacceptable and how complaints will be dealt with.

Policies should include your definition of inappropriate conduct, making clear that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. They should be given to staff during induction and training, reviewed regularly and be made accessible and available on your website, staff intranet or handbook. This creates a sense of safety and fairness in the workplace. All staff should be fully aware of how, by whom and within what timeframe any reports will be responded to and investigated."

Rebecca Hitchen, Campaigns Manager, End Violence Against Women Coalition

5. Training: responding Ensure your staff believe and support anyone who comes forward to report something that makes them feel uncomfortable. Make sure management support staff by encouraging belief. Provide specialised training for your staff on sexual harassment and assault, with a focus on how to respond and intervene if incidents take place.

How can I make sure my staff respond the right way? Ensure that every team member who is public facing is confident and has been trained in how to take a report of sexual harassment.

"We wanted our venue staff to be trained in how to handle sexual harassment as we believe that cultural spaces have a responsibility to do everything within their power to be as safe and welcoming as possible.

The training gave the staff the confidence to confidently handle difficult situations with the care and attention that they need and gave us the opportunity to get this done in a thorough, understandable and affordable way."

Deano Jo, owner, Five Miles, a bar, club and brewery in Seven Sisters

Advice for responding to harassment

How to respond to a disclosure of harassment

The person coming forwards has chosen you because they feel able to let you know about what has happened. Most people never speak up due to fear of being blamed or disbelieved, so the first thing you say is vital.

Try this fail-safe opener:

- Demonstrate belief (e.g. "Thank you for sharing what happened.")
- Validate their experience (e.g. "That is <u>not</u> okay.")
- Explain their options (e.g. "We have a policy here which is..." and "I'm going to see what I can do to help.")
- Check you've understood what you've been told
- Ask about any physical injuries or urgent needs

Then if necessary support the person in passing up to the relevant manager or team member to take this forward. Offer to separately summarise their story on their behalf if they would like you to.

Communicate

You're not alone! Tell a colleague when you are concerned about behaviour you've witnessed, no matter how minor it seems, as this prevents escalation.

Be an active bystander

Responding effectively to harmful behaviour can start with focussing your attention and support on the person being targeted. Check in with the person who you think is experiencing unwanted attention, for example by making small talk, eye contact or giving them a discreet signal. This gives them an option to divert the harasser's attention.

Record keeping

Record all incidents and reports, no matter how minor. This helps others to keep up to date with issues and repeated behaviours. Keep your notes clear and stick to facts not opinions.

You can also ask for and record the name of any customer while they are on the premises, but they have the right to refuse to give this information. Remember your CCTV. **Don't** hesitate to call 101 or 999 in an emergency. But remember, the targeted person may prefer not to speak to the police and should never be coerced into doing so. You will be

assisting greatly by providing even general third-party intelligence to the police through 101, 999 or your local Safer Neighbourhood team.

A culture of belief can become embedded within your organisation by regularly briefing and training staff and including your policy in new staff inductions. Make women's safety, inclusion and diversity part of your team culture through daily conversations. This is an ongoing process. Staff teams should be encouraged to challenge victim-blaming attitudes and managers should provide and encourage learning opportunities on this topic.

Examples of victim-blaming attitudes:

"She was plastered at after work drinks, it's no wonder he took advantage"

"I heard they were having an affair and she's only calling it sexual harassment now that he's gone back to his wife"

"Women do need to bear some responsibility for making bad choices if they end up in one of our taxis with some dodgy guy."

"It takes two to tango when it comes to sexual assault"

✓

6. Training: recording

Ensure all reported incidents of sexual harassment or assault are recorded in compliance with data and confidentiality guidelines

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What incidents should be reported and how?

All organisations should follow appropriate discretion and confidentiality. Licensed premises should make use of their log book. If you have a HR team, consider additional training on understanding the dynamics of sexual harassment, assault, gender-based violence and other Equality Act issues. Staff should know that no matter how minor the incident might seem, it is important that it is recorded – in an appropriate amount of detail and in a factual manner without personal opinions.

You could also:

- Undertake a data and confidentiality review to ensure that personal details are not being misused
- Ensure that your HR team if you have one has appropriate guidelines to stop the flow of gossip and misinformation if a disclosure has been made by one team member against another

An official policy and procedure should set out clear expectations and ensure that each situation is dealt with fairly regardless of who is involved. This is important because it can reduce fear of victimisation. Women's Night Safety Charter signatory the Trades Union Congress (TUC) offers advice to staff, acknowledging that women who do speak up about sexual harassment should not 'become' the problem in the eyes of their employer. Your staff should know their rights.

"If there is ever an issue at a DICE event, we want fans to feel supported and listened to when they get in touch. Our support team gets amazing feedback from fans, mostly because they aren't robots and genuinely want people to have amazing nights out as well as deal with any issues that might happen. Our support team has gone through training which was valuable in helping us understand how do deal with disclosures of sexual harassment or assault. Plus, we have several 'Women in Music' events which we use to try and support cultural change."

Tom Winterton, Global Head of Comms at DICE

✓	7. Designing for safety
	Check that all CCTV and lighting is functioning correctly.
	Assess your provision of accessible and gender-neutral bathrooms.
	Commission an access audit of your buildings and spaces and publish the findings online and in a printed form.
	Commission a safety audit of your buildings and spaces and publish the findings online and in a printed form.
	Attending meetings with the local Met Police Safer Neighbourhood Team

Only when we feel safe can we truly thrive as a city. That is why Safe & The City is proud to support the Women's Night Safety Charter toolkit. Providing a navigation tool and collecting smart-city data powers our ability to design safer and smarter streets together. These insights help to measure our progress as a safe city and showcase businesses who are leading this change at night."

Jillian Kowalchuk, Founder & CEO, Safe & The City

How can I adapt my space to make it feel safer?

If your organisation manages its own spaces, these should always be designed with health and safety in mind. The additional 'safety planning' that many women report having to undertake on a daily basis to remain alert against unwelcome sexual behaviour tells us that further steps can be taken.

Questions to consider:

- Does your premises' layout support a woman's ability to move around or leave an area easily?
- Are there sufficiently lit paths and appropriate levels of CCTV and do all staff understand who is responsible for using, maintaining and sharing this data?
- Can you designate a 'quiet' space in case staff or customers need some medical assistance or space to recover from an incident?

- In addition to this, designing for safety can include how you allocate your human resources. Are staff, including any security, positioned equally throughout the spaces you manage?
- How well-lit are the indoor and outdoor spaces you're responsible for?
- Would your CCTV be able to record any incident on site? Do you record sound?
- Can you confidently say your space is accessible for wheelchair users, Deaf people and people with disabilities?
- Can you confidently say that those who would prefer to use a gender-neutral bathroom would be able to find one in your building?

Met Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Partnering with these teams is great way to of plugging into issues that affect your local area. Poor street lightening, security issues and anti-social behaviour can all be discussed at regular meetings. These are also a good way of finding out about local good practice and initiatives.

"We know that feeling safe and comfortable on nights out is a very important part of accessibility, and that Deaf and disabled women experience higher levels of sexual harassment than other women.

Attitude is Everything's ethos is that Deaf and disabled people should be as independent as they want to be at live music and cultural events. Venues and events can do this by building equality into the strategic process. Over 190 venues and events have signed up to our Arts Council England-funded Charter of Best Practice, adopting it as an industry standard for accessibility and agreeing to be mystery shopped by our team of Deaf and disabled volunteers. Their detailed feedback on accessibility is then passed onto management, so that any potential issues are identified and practical solutions are suggested. We also offer Disability Equality Training, undertake Access Audits and offer Consultancy to advise on changes that may be required."

Suzanne Bull MBE, CEO of Attitude is Everything

Further information

Organisations that can help you

Contact these specialised organisations for information on training, designing safety, accessibility and diversity resources:

Attitude is Everything (for disability and access advice and guidance) www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk

Design and Access (for disability audits for general buildings) www.designandaccess.co.uk

Good Night Out Campaign CIC (training and licensed premises accreditation) www.goodnightoutcampaign.org

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (for training and campaign support) www.rasasc.org.uk

Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac

London VAWG Consortium (to find your local frontline women's support service) www.thelondonvawgconsortium.org.uk

End Violence Against Women (for specialist women's support services) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk

Suzy Lamplugh Trust (campaigning, education and support with a focus on stalking) www.suzylamplugh.org

The Havens (specialist centres in London for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted)

www.thehavens.org.uk

Southall Black Sisters (specialist support for BAME women) www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Galop (specialist support for LGBT+ women) www.galop.org.uk

Safer and the City (free street-smart app to safely navigate cities) www.safeandthecity.com

Further reading and resources

Equality and Human Rights Commission – Ending sexual harassment at work www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/ending-sexual-harassment-at-work.pdf

UN Women – Towards and end to sexual harassment www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/11/towards-an-end-to-sexual-harassment

House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee – Sexual harassment of women and girls in public places

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/701/701.pdf

Advice for Businesses – Business Crime Reduction Hub https://heartoflondonbid.london/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/ADVICE-FOR-BUSINESSES.pdf

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