

Prevention - Minimising risks to the British Library collections

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This Morning

- Introduction & Context
- BL's Corporate Approach
- Risk Management & Mitigation
- Findings by area of risk
- Risk Assessment Matrix
- Conclusions

Introduction & Context

Threats

- Theft or misappropriation
 - complete books
 - items from books (maps, illustrated plates, etc.)
 - documents, manuscripts, letters, collectables, etc.
- Damage or mutilation
- Unauthorised copying
- Loss (poor accounting and stock control)

Risk Universe

- Strategic (Structural)
- Financial / Asset Management
- Customers (Readers)
- Legal
- People (Cultural)
- Operational
- Reputational
- Technology

- Policy Development & Delivery
- Physical Security
- Processes
- Procedures
- Building work
- Training

Growing Problem?

- National Libraries are gold mines of valuable and mid-range items
- Large and growing national and international marketplace – book shops, antiquarian dealers, auction houses, private buyers, eBay, etc.
- Limits to the security measures that Libraries can impose
- Risks associated with post case publicity and fostering an open information-sharing culture

Those who thief from and damage our collections

- Professional criminals working for organised gangs
- “Reputable” academics, bibliophiles, dealers
- Opportunist thieves
- Insiders i.e. staff
- New readers with different standards of behaviour

BL's Corporate Approach

BL's Corporate Approach

- Preventative measures kept under constant review
- A cross-directorate approach ensures collection security is a Library-wide concern
- Impacts our strategy, and many of our policies and processes:
 - how we protect the collections when they are acquired, catalogued, stored, moved, used, etc.
 - how our services, including Reading Rooms, operate
 - what we ask of our users and of our staff
- External scrutiny – internal audits, ‘health checks’, risk assessments, independent reviews
- Zero tolerance approach

Reader's Duty of Care

- Give the public our collections to hold and consult
- Allow free access to a vast range of material including rare and valuable items
- Impose legally binding 'Conditions of Use of the British Library Reading Rooms'
- Allows us to sanction and suspend, as well as prosecute

Conditions of Use of the British Library Reading Rooms

- The British Library must safeguard the collections for present and future users.
- 5. You must take utmost care of all material in the Library's collections. Damage to or theft of Library material is a criminal offence and may result in prosecution.
- 6. You must not remove any collection item from the Reading Rooms.
- 7. Items that could harm the collections are not allowed in the Reading Rooms.
- 8. You may not write on or mark any items from the collections.
- 12. You are responsible for the safekeeping of collection items at all times when they are in your use.

Context



150,000,000
collection items

959,900 items
acquired in 2006/7

410,000 visits to the
Reading rooms in the
year 2006/7

118,431 registered
Readers

Context



3 major instances
of theft over
last 10 years

47,761 items
issued in Rare
Books & Music
in August 2007

43,682 items
issued in
Humanities 1
In August 2007

BL's Strategic Challenge

- Broadened access policies versus collection security
- Providing sufficient security to prevent the theft of individual pages of volumes is unlikely to be possible, and certainly would not be cost efficient or conducive to broadened access policies
- Collection items = 3% increase per annum
- Reader visits = 16.8% increase since 2004/5

Existing Measures

- Ownership markings
- Tagging
- Physical Security
- CCTV
- Search reader belongings on exit
- No bags, no coats
- Pencils only
- Invigilation and patrols
- Strong audit trail for collection use
- Readers required to prove identity and address (photographic cards)
- Readers encouraged to help us protect the collections
- Access Control
- Control staff access to collection storage areas

Continuous Improvement Reviews

- Current collection security review focuses on BL collection items at St Pancras, Colindale, Micawber Street, Woolwich and Boston Spa
- The purpose of the review is to ensure that any weaknesses in protecting collection assets are identified and potential security improvements highlighted - **operational**
- This presentation will focus on how this risk-based review has helped improve collection security and our understanding of collection security - **strategic**

Main Conclusions

- Like all comparable collections, the BL is clearly vulnerable to a range of criminal threats and we must continue to identify and counter the dangers identified
- There is still scope for improvement in collection security performance
- We must define, explicitly accept, escalate and regularly review our risk tolerances
- We must constantly challenge and check to ensure that we have the right balance between **security** and **access**

Managing risks to our collections

Risk Mitigation

- Four risk response strategy types:
 - Avoid – seeking to eliminate uncertainty altogether
 - Transfer – passing ownership and / or liability to a third party
 - Mitigate – reducing the probability and / or severity of the risk below a threshold of acceptability
 - Accept – recognising residual risks and devising responses to control and monitor them
- Develop appropriate response strategies for identified opportunities to reduce risk and maximise the likelihood of achieving our objectives – **continuous programmes of work**

Methodology: understanding risks

- All risks that were identified were categorised
- They were given a risk rating
- They were then inserted into a risk matrix
- It is vital that the risks are understood: presenting them in a risk matrix renders them easily accessible

Developing a risk matrix: the type of information we included

- Type of risk
- Description of risk
- Lead Directorate (who will take responsibility)
- Dependencies (other parts of the organisation affected)
- Impact (High, Medium, Low)
- 'Do-ability' Score (Resourcing)
- 'Affordability' Score (£s)
- Ranking
- Quick Wins

Description of risks identified: examples

- **High Risk:**
 - Overarching security strategy
 - The need to evolve performance metrics
 - Further development of our collection security culture
 - Need to raise employee awareness of risks to the collection
- **Medium Risk:**
 - A searchable system of intelligence collection and analysis
 - Structured approach to inter-agency cooperation
- **Low Risk:**
 - Increased compliance with the policy of staff visibly wearing their passes
 - Minor building work to improve sightlines at our Boston Spa Reading Room

Lead Directorates & Dependencies

- The management of the response to each risk needs to be clearly managed
- So each risk needs to be clearly located in a Directorate
- There is a process of gaining buy in
- This will vary with the culture of the section and its management
- Dependencies with other parts of the organisation that are needed to make the response work

‘Do-ability’ and ‘Affordability’ scores

- This is important and easily overlooked
- We need to know how easy this is to do
- A simple change in procedure may be easy to draw up, but how easy will it be to get people to follow it?
- Consideration needs to be given to what exists, what is proposed and what is involved in the change, they all impact on ‘do-ability’
- Affordability is categorised separately but is also an element of ‘do-ability’
- Clearly the cost will have an impact on what can be done and when
- Sometimes the costs will determine timescales

Ranking & Quick Wins

- Agree the risks that leave the collections most exposed
- Use the impact, do-ability and affordability scores to rank them
- Translate into an action plan
- Agree responsibilities and dependencies
- Set date targets
- Quick wins e.g. quarterly meetings between Reading Room Managers and the security management team

Findings by area of risk

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Risk Areas

- Strategic
 - clarity on the risk appetite of the organisation
- Financial / Asset Management
 - securing funds for essential improvements
- Customers (Readers)
 - further measures to improve Readers' awareness of their obligation to safeguard the collections – particularly new Readers

Risk Areas

- Legal
 - a simple system of temporary and permanent Reader suspension should be communicated to staff and readers
 - legal learning around DPA, the British Library Act 1972 and how we may be able to place restrictions and conditions on readers if we think they are necessary to safeguard the collections
- People (Cultural)
 - embedding a collection security culture
- Operational
 - revised policy on staff use of the collections

Risk Areas

- Reputational
 - strong internal communication
 - Press Office engaged
- Technology
 - vulnerable items digitisation project
 - automating requests for the (few) remaining parts of the collection that still use paper tickets
- Policy Development & Delivery
 - re-examining the policy that determines what level of security collection items receive while in storage

Risk Areas

- Physical Security
 - upgrading access control between public and staff areas
- Procedures
 - review circumstances under which books can be transferred between reading rooms
- Processes
 - process improvement (see attached)

Risk Areas

- Building Work
 - reducing the size of some bookcases in reading rooms
- Training
 - collection security awareness training for all staff
 - enhanced training in “active invigilation”

Risk Assessment Matrix

Risk assessment matrix – incident response

- Development of an intellectual framework to rationalise and systemise the Library's approach to managing the security risks to its Collections
- Designed to determine an appropriate response to security incidents
- Devised in consultation with curators and other colleagues
- Seeks to agree and define criteria that can be applied across all the collections
- Examples of the criteria are rarity, fragility, cultural significance, age, PR impact if item is damaged or lost, ease of concealment, value

Extract from draft matrix

	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Identity of Author/Performer Scale 1-5 Item was created/published/performed by a person of special significance in the development of such works.</p>					
<p>Date of Publication Scale 1-5 Item was created/published before a date key in the history of such items</p>					
<p>Fragility. Scale 1-5. Certain items are by their very nature fragile. For instance volumes that contain original dried plant specimens from before the mid-19th century. Such things might be in excellent condition, but they are intrinsically delicate, fragile and easily damaged. A score of 5 will indicate that the item is extremely fragile. If an item does not give rise to issues of fragility then '0' score should be given</p>					
<p>Condition Scale 1-5. A score of 5 will indicate that the item is in such a poor state of decay that it cannot now be moved or opened without causing considerable damage to what remains. A score of 2 would indicate that some pages of the item might be loose If an item is stable and robust and fit for any use then '0' score should be given</p>					
<p>Rarity/Replaceability Scale 1-5. A score of 5 will be given to items that are impossible to replace. A score of 1 will be given to items that are not on common sale but can be replaced from the open market. A '0' score will be given to items that are in print as easily available for purchase</p>					

Summary

Summary

- Understand the risks to the collections
- Define your risk tolerances
- Programmes of continuous review and improvement – development of performance metrics
- Clear simple tight procedures and consistent application by management
- Leadership, commitment, direction, focus, resource
- Engagement – staff, readers, Criminal Justice System, etc. and work with the market
- Open communication and shared intelligence
- **Shared value** – common view of strategic importance

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