

STEALING FROM ARCHIVES

A report on European archive theft

EBNA – European Board on Archives
Working Group: Prevention Against Theft

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Foreword

The Working Group appointed at the EBNA meeting in April 2005, as confirmed by the EAG meeting in November that year, and tasked with steering work in the priority field of Theft of Archival Documents, hereby presents its first report, charting the situation in the 25 Member States of the European Union. This report on the extent of the problem is based on a questionnaire circulated to a large number of public archives. The questions asked were concerned among other things with who steals, what gets stolen, where the stolen property goes to, who buys it and what we are doing to impede and prevent thefts both now and for the future. The report is divided into two parts: the main text, containing an account and analyses, and a second part describing a number of “case histories”. To keep the report within manageable limits, the basic material – the actual questionnaire – has been omitted.

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The report was compiled by Erik Broström and the translation was made by Roger Tanner.

Finally I wish to record my sincere gratitude to the Working Group for their constructive efforts as work proceeded, and also, of course, to all the archives taking the time to complete the questionnaire, as well as the report’s author. A word of thanks must also go to the EU for funding a couple of the group’s meetings. It shall be stated that the report should be considered as a first step which will help to define concrete activities for European co-operation in this field as well as activities at the national level for member states.

Tomas Lidman

Background

As is well known, several European national libraries have been the victims of serious thefts in recent years. The national libraries of Great Britain, Scotland, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and Denmark have all been subjected to both external and internal thefts. It seems that the eyes of international crime have been opened to cultural objects to a greater extent than previously, in which case the archive sector is also affected.

The EBNA meeting in The Hague in October 2004 discussed what measures could be taken against thefts from archives and the ensuing illegal trade in cultural artefacts. A questionnaire survey commissioned by Archives de France that year had revealed a widespread desire for broader international co-operation on these issues. At the EBNA meeting in Luxembourg in April 2005 it was resolved to arrange a workshop on the subject at EBNA’s London meeting in December that year. A Working Group was formed, made up of representatives from Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Sweden, and at the London meeting presented a joint document setting forth five recommendations, one of them being the carrying out of a study to show the extent of theft problems among archival institutions in the member countries. It is the findings from that study which you now hold in your hand, have on your desk or are viewing on your screen.

Purpose

The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the extent to which theft is a problem to archival institutions in the member countries, the nature of that problem and the measures which have been taken to deal with it.

More specifically, the survey was aimed at finding out:

- what we know about thefts and how and when they are resolved,
- what we know about the thief,
- what measures have been taken to prevent thefts.

Method

The empirical material in which the survey is based was collected by means of a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was sent to the national archives of 25 European countries, requesting them to distribute it to not more than 15 archival institutions which they believed to be representative of archival institutions, both public and private, in the country concerned. Replies were received from 22 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the UK. The questionnaire was also sent to international institutions, four of which replied.

Altogether answers were received from 190 archival institutions. Of these, 94 simply replied “No” to the first item in the questionnaire (whether the institution had ever been troubled by thefts) and left it at that. There are several possible reasons for such an answer, the main one presumably being that many institutions have never experienced thefts (or are unaware of having been subjected to them) and that the wording of the questionnaire can be taken to imply that institutions answering the first question in the negative were not intended to answer the other questions at all. One of the questions was about the number of identified thefts during the last ten years. This specified time span might have had an effect on the number of answers as well. There are other possible reasons for institutions not replying to the questionnaire or just answering the first question in the negative and ignoring the rest. For example, institutions with deficient security systems and poor routines for checking their documents may be reluctant to disclose this to their European colleagues in a questionnaire. Lack of time and motivation is another conceivable cause. This, however, is less likely, since both European co-operation and security issues should be priority fields, and it takes very little time to complete a simple questionnaire.

The findings are presented all together. One might think that archival institutions ought to look more or less alike and operate in more or less the same way in all countries. This is of course not so, but we do not consider this being important when evaluating the result of the questionnaire.

The first column of the table gives the inter-regional breakdown of replies received. The second shows how many replies (hereinafter termed “detailed replies”) went further than just answering the first question in the negative. The last two columns show, respectively, the number of replies and detailed replies received per country.

Table 1: Replies received

	No. replies	No. detailed replies	No. replies per country	No. detailed replies per country
Total	190	96		
Average			6,4	3.2

What we know about thefts and about how and when they are detected and resolved

This section begins by showing how many institutions have experienced theft problems, both certain and suspected. Figures are then given concerning the number of institutions which have compiled a database for recording thefts. This is followed by particulars as to what is stolen and how, plus information concerning damage to archival materials in connection with theft and whether the

institution has ever experienced forgeries or counterfeit documents being planted in the archives. The section ends with particulars as to how and when thefts are discovered and resolved.

Number of thefts

The following table shows how many institutions have ever experienced theft problems, and how many have reported having such problems in the past ten years.

Table 2: Theft problems

	Theft problems	Theft problems during the past ten years
Total	78 (41%)	63 (33 %)

This table shows 78 institutions (41 per cent) to have replied in the affirmative when asked whether they have ever experienced theft problems. Of these, 15 state that the thefts took place over 10 years ago. Thus the number of institutions reporting theft problems for the past ten years is 63, equalling 33 per cent. The proportion of institutions stating that they have been subjected to theft is strikingly similar across Europe.

The next table shows the number of institutions stating that they are certain of having had cases of theft in the past ten years, and the number with suspected cases in the past ten years. This table also gives the *number* of certain and suspected cases respectively.

Table 3: Institutions with certain and suspected cases of theft

	Certain thefts		Suspected thefts	
Total	53 (28 %)	90 cases	33 (17 %)	75 cases

This table shows 28 per cent (53 institutions) to be certain of having been subjected to theft in the past ten years. At these 53 institutions, the total number of thefts occurring was 90. The proportion of institutions stating that they experienced certain cases of theft is strikingly similar as between the three regions. The number of suspected cases of theft was harder for the institutions to specify. The following statement concerns the number of suspected thefts and is typical of many answers received:

Impossible to say, figures are kept for missing material but there are other explanations for why it is missing.

In addition to the above type of answer, suspected cases of theft have been reported on 75 occasions. The true number is probably far greater.

Number of databases concerning (possible) thefts

One specific questionnaire item concerned the number of institutions which had compiled a database for all conceivable cases of theft affecting them. To this question 20 per cent replied in the affirmative, 76 per cent in the negative and 4 per cent not at all. The following remarks concerning databases for recording thefts are typical of the comments received from many replying in the affirmative.

Yes, there is a list over missing records by unknown reasons. When a file is discovered to be missing, a notice about it is entered in the inventory.

Database of missing items (but these may be misplaced rather than stolen).

What gets stolen

Archives contain theft-prone objects of many different kinds. Some have a commercial value by virtue of their age or historical importance, while others may be of value to individual persons because of the information they contain regarding present-day properties or deceased relatives. The table below shows what the institutions have reported as objects of theft, divided into the following categories: Autographs, letters (handwritten letters etc. from well-known persons; Maps, drawings and

photographs (maps, drawings and photographs having an artistic or historical value); Philatelic material; Ownership title etc. (documents of legal or economic importance to a private person); Genealogical documents (documents concerning the thief or the thief's family and having no direct economic value); Seals; and Sundry (everything not referable to the preceding categories).

The table is based on the replies to question 4d, in which the institution is asked to “describe some of the more important recent cases of certain theft in your institution.” Accordingly, it does not offer any complete statistics of material stolen but is rather to be seen as a pointer to the material which thieves are most attracted by. In several instances the institutions have reported objects of several different kinds as stolen. All these examples are included in the table, which shows the number of institutions which have been robbed of the different kinds of archival material, but not the number of objects stolen.

Table 4: Objects of theft

	Auto-graphs	Philatelic material	Maps	Ownership title	Genealogy	Seals	Sundry
Total	14	11	10	9	3	3	33

This table shows autographs, letters and philatelic material to be common objects of theft in all regions. Thefts of genealogical documents and seals, on the other hand, seem to be relatively few in number. “Sundry” is by far the biggest category, comprising objects of two kinds: those which have a cultural and/or historical value but do not fit into any of the other categories, and those which are so scantily described in the questionnaire replies that they could not be referred to any specific category.

How the thefts take place

In order to combat theft properly, we need to know the *modus operandi*. The answers to how the institutions report the thefts to be committed have been divided into the following categories: Insider jobs; Thefts during archive opening hours; Thefts at night/after opening hours; and Thefts in connection with repairs/alterations/relocation. In cases where the institutions have been unable to decide how the thefts were committed (with reference to the above categories), they have been entered in the “Not known” column. The figures are based on question 4 in the questionnaire. That question was answered in detail by 68 institutions which between them reported 90 thefts.

The following table shows the *numbers of thefts* committed in the various ways mentioned.

Table 5: How the thefts take place

	Insider	Opening hrs/Research environment	Night/after closing	Rebuild/relocation/repairs	Not known
Total	19 (21 %)	49 (54 %)	1 (1 %)	4 (4 %)	17 (19 %)

Not very surprisingly, most thefts are committed by visitors during the daytime. Of the 90 thefts described at least 49 (i.e. 54 per cent) were thus committed. The table shows at least 19 thefts (21 per cent) to have been committed by insiders, i.e. persons connected with the institution concerned. Two of these thefts were committed by employees' children and on one occasion the culprit was a security guard. Contracted building workers have not been included as insiders. The table shows four certain thefts to have taken place in connection with a rebuild/repairs/relocation. Three of these four thefts have yet to be cleared up. Only one theft is known to have taken place at night/after closing. We may add, though, that two (if not more) thefts committed by persons connected to the institution took place after closing. In 17 cases of the 90 described (i.e. 19 per cent), the institutions have been unable to say anything as to how the theft was committed.

Damage to archival materials in connection with theft

It is common for archival materials to suffer damage in connection with theft. In nearly all cases this has been due to the thief cutting or tearing out material. In at least 16 of the 90 thefts described (18 per

cent), the material was damaged. In those cases where the material has not been recovered, we are of course unable to tell whether it was damaged or destroyed in connection with being stolen or subsequently.

Forgeries

A specific question in the questionnaire concerned forgeries of archival materials, or counterfeit documents planted in the archives. Ten institutions (10 per cent) stated that they had experienced one of these things. In all cases the purpose of the interference was either to make money (e.g. by manipulating documents concerning rights of ownership) or to eliminate evidence.

When the thefts are discovered

The time elapsing between the occurrence of a theft and its discovery has a very important bearing on the prospects of solving the crime. The table below describes this state of affairs in the following categories: The theft was discovered within a day; The theft was discovered within a month; The theft was discovered within a year; The theft was discovered after more than a year; Not known; and No reply. When the institution has been unable to state which year the theft was committed, the crime has been consigned to the “Not known” category. In cases where no indications of time are given in the questionnaire at all, the crime has been placed in the “No reply” category. The table contains both categories certain and uncertain theft.

Table 6: Length of time after which the thefts were discovered

	Within a day	Within a month	Within a year	After more than a year	Not known	No reply
Total	15 (9 %)	19 (12 %)	41 (24 %)	48 (29 %)	37 (22 %)	5 (3 %)

Of the 90 certain and 75 uncertain thefts described, 15 (9 per cent) were discovered within a day. In about half these instances the thief was caught red-handed (about which more presently), while the other half were discovered in the course of routine checks of the material returned. If the theft was not discovered within a day, the chances of it being discovered within a month were not very great: the difference between these two columns is only 4 thefts. But 41 thefts (24 per cent) had been discovered within a year. Of the 165 thefts described, 37 (22 per cent) could not be assigned by the institutions to a particular year. In most of these cases, however, the institutions state that the theft was presumably committed many years ago.

How the thefts are discovered

It is interesting to know how thefts are discovered, not least because this shows what security measures have been taken and have paid off. The following table shows how thefts were discovered, divided into the following categories: The thief was caught red-handed; The theft was discovered as a result of material being returned to the institution; The theft was discovered by the institution’s own staff or by visitors (this category includes the two preceding categories); The theft was discovered in connection with sale (regardless of whether it was discovered by the institution staff, the police or an external agent); and The theft was discovered by an external agent. In cases where there is nothing in the questionnaire to show how the theft was discovered, the theft has been consigned to the “No reply” category.

Table 7: Way in which the thefts were discovered

	Thief caught red-handed	Material returned	Own staff / visitors	In conn. with sale	External agent	No reply
Total	8 (9 %)	2 (2 %)	47 (52 %)	16 (18 %)	20 (22 %)	7 (8 %)

Of the 90 thefts described, 8 (equalling 9 per cent) were discovered by the thief being caught red-handed. In two cases (2 per cent) the theft was only discovered after the material had been returned to

the institution. In one of these cases a contrite thief came back with the material, and in the other the material was posted to the archive. In addition to these thefts, another 37 were discovered by institution staff or visitors. By far the commonest mode of discovery was the material being missed when next ordered. Altogether then, at least 47 thefts (52 per cent) were discovered by the archive's own staff or by visitors.

On 16 occasions (18 per cent) the theft was discovered when the stolen material came up for sale. The reason for specifying these discoveries separately is that many institutions have only stated that the theft was discovered at the time of sale, and not who discovered and reported the theft, but there are instances of observant antique dealers, auctioneers and prospective customers, as well as the archive institution's own staff or the police noticing that material belonging to the archive was up for sale.

On 20 occasions (22 per cent) the theft was discovered by an external agent. In 8 of these instances the discovery was made in connection with a theft from another archive institution being discovered, in 4 cases another archive institution discovered the material in among its own documents, in 3 cases the theft was discovered after the word had been passed of other archive institutions having been robbed recently, and one theft was discovered by the police coincidentally (stolen archival material was found in a house search which had nothing to do with thefts from archives), and in 4 cases the theft was discovered following tip-offs from the general public.

It should be noted that for a relatively large proportion of thefts, 7 in all (equalling 8 per cent), no particulars were furnished as to how the discovery had been made.

The extent to which material is recovered

The next table shows the extent to which the property in the 90 thefts reported was or was not recovered. The three main categories are: Material returned to the institution; Material partly returned to the institution; and Material still not returned to the archive institution. In cases where a suspect has been identified but it remains uncertain whether the material will be recovered, the theft has been classified as "Under investigation". In these cases police investigations or judicial proceedings are currently in progress and there might be a big chance of the material involved being recovered.

Table 8: Cases of theft where the archival material was recovered

	Returned	Partly returned	Not returned	Under investigation
Total	36 (40 %)	14 (16 %)	37 (41 %)	3 (3 %)

As can be seen, in 36 cases (40 per cent) the stolen material was recovered in its entirety. For roughly the same number of thefts, no material has been recovered at all. In the other 18 cases, a certain amount of the material has been recovered or else the matter is still under investigation/*sub judice*.

Ways in which the material is recovered

Now that we knew how much of the stolen material was recovered, we also wanted to know the manner of its restitution. The table below is aimed at shedding light on this matter, in terms of the following categories: The material is instantly recovered, due to the thief being caught in the act; The material returns voluntary by thief; The material is recovered by the institutional staff (this category includes the previous two); The material is recovered by the police; The material is recovered after being offered for sale (irrespective of whether it is then recovered by the institutional staff or returned by an external agent); and Sundry. In cases where the manner of recovery is not indicated in the reply to the questionnaire, this is recorded in the "No reply" column. The presentation is based on the total of 50 cases of theft in which the material was partly or wholly recovered (see above).

Table 9: How the archival material was recovered

	Caught in the act	Returned voluntary	Institution staff	Police	At time of sale	Sundry	No reply
Total	5 (10 %)	3 (6 %)	15 (30 %)	15 (30 %)	14 (28 %)	1 (2 %)	5 (10 %)

The table shows that in 15 (30 per cent) of the 50 reported cases where material was partly or wholly recovered, this was through the action of the institutional staff. The nature of such action varies considerably, ranging from catching the offender red-handed to personally tracking down the material. In most cases where the culprits were insiders, the institutions have reported that the material was recovered through their own action. It is equally common for material to be recovered through the efforts of the police.

On 14 occasions (28 per cent) the material was recovered after it had come on the market. The police and the institution’s own staff, of course, were a part of this process, but the prime movers in these cases were market players, many of whom apprised the archive institution or the police of the whereabouts of the material.

In 5 cases (10 per cent) the material was instantly recovered, due to the thief being caught in the act. Since altogether 8 thefts were discovered in this way (see Table 7, above), there were three cases where, despite being spotted immediately, the thief was still able to get away with the material. In 10 per cent of these cases we are not told how the material was recovered.

Our knowledge of the thief

We already know that in one-fifth of the cases reported, the thief was an insider, that most thefts are committed by visitors in a research environment, and that in one-fifth of the reported cases the material vanished without the institution having a clue as to how it happened. In this section, dealing with what we know about the thief, we will start by seeing in how many cases the thief has been identified. Next we will turn to findings about the thief’s motives. Finally we will see how many of thieves were persistent offenders in the matter of archive theft, and what has emerged concerning their age and gender.

Identified and unidentified thieves

The table below shows the extent to which, in the 90 cases of theft reported, the thief has or has not been identified. The three main categories are: Thief fully identified; Theft can be linked to a person/occurrence, but the person’s identity is not fully known at present; and Thief wholly unidentified. In cases where no particulars of the thief’s identity were furnished in the reply to the questionnaire, this is recorded in the “No reply” column.

Table 10: Identified and unidentified thieves

	Thief fully identified	Thief partly identified	Thief wholly unidentified	No reply
Total	51 (57 %)	7 (8 %)	30 (33 %)	2 (2 %)

Not surprisingly, there are great similarities between this table and Table 8 (showing the extent to which material is recovered). In 56 per cent of the reported cases of theft, the material has been wholly or partly recovered, and in 57 per cent of cases the thief has been fully identified. In 41 per cent of the reported cases the material has not been recovered at all, and in exactly the same percentage of cases the thief remains unidentified or only partly identified. This connection, of course, is anything but coincidental: when the thief is identified the material is often recovered, or *vice versa*. In three of the cases where the thief has been only partly identifiable, the institution staff were able to see the thief but only discovered the theft after he or she had left, and in three other cases suspicion falls on employees of construction companies. In one instance the institution reports that the theft was committed by an “unknown delinquent, attached to the institution.”

The thief's motive

Money is the paramount motive for criminal activity. Demand for the cultural objects in archives exceeds supply and prices on the international market have risen dramatically in recent decades, rendering cultural objects more interesting to thieves with financial motives. Thieves stealing archival materials for financial gain can achieve their ends in three different ways. Firstly, a thief can attempt to sell the material on the open market. The survey has shown this to happen very often, and it has proved common for thefts to be discovered and solved in connection with the stolen property coming on the market. Secondly, the thief can retain the stolen material as an investment. In cases of this kind the culprit may be a collector of cultural objects who steals to build up a private collection, in certain cases with a view to selling the material later on. The survey has revealed several instances of archive thefts prompted by motives of this kind. The majority of such cases come in the “persistent offenders” category (see below). Thirdly, the thief can practise blackmail by trying to sell the material back to the archive institution it was stolen from, but no such case has emerged in the present survey.

Financial motives apart, thefts from archives can be prompted by considerations of status. Successfully stealing unique material from past ages can be a motive in itself, just as an eccentric collector may not necessarily intend making money out of the property dishonestly come by. If the objects had no financial value, they would probably be of no value to these thieves either, since it is the forbidden and most desirable fruit that has the strongest allure.

In many cases the replies received have not made clear which thefts were prompted by financial motives and which by motives of status enhancement, but it is possible to see which thefts were manifestly *not* dictated by financial motives. Out of a total of 90 thefts described, only about 10 were of this kind, though the factor of uncertainty here is very considerable, due to the information given in the questionnaire replies about the stolen material often being very scanty. Here we find thefts of genealogical material, and also thefts where the thief was impelled by a behavioural disorder, as well as thefts prompted by political motives. We will now turn to consider this last mentioned category.

Thefts for political reasons

Archive thefts prompted by political motives are very often concerned with blacking out personal contacts with political movements or defunct socialist dictatorships. One specific item in the questionnaire concerned the occurrence of thefts of politically sensitive material. Six institutions (6 per cent) reported having experienced this. In four instances the purpose of the theft, presumably, was for the particular information in the stolen documents to remain unknown, while in one instance the opposite was intended: the document was stolen with a view to passing on sensitive information to the media.

Persistent offenders

It is the spectacular thefts from archives that attract most attention. Often in cases of this kind the thieves have acted systematically, visiting many institutions (sometimes in several different countries). Out of the 58 thefts described where the thief has been partly or wholly identified (see Table 10), in 15 cases (26 per cent) the same thief had stolen material from other archive or library institutions as well. Since the questionnaire contained no specific item concerning knowledge of these criminals, the number of the reported crimes committed by persistent offenders may be greater, because the institutions may very well have omitted information on this point. Quite certainly, however, more than a quarter of the thefts described were committed by persistent offenders, and the proportion is probably also high in the cases where the thief remains unidentified. Persistent offenders, then, can be considered a relatively large problem.

Age and sex of the thief

The age and sex of the thief were not specifically enquired after in the questionnaire, but particulars of this kind were nonetheless furnished by several institutions. Ages are given in 11 cases, equalling 19 per cent of the reported thefts where the thief has been partly or wholly identified. On 4 occasions the thief is described as a young person, on 3 as a student, on 2 as middle-aged and on 2 others as a senior citizen.

Gender particulars were given for 29 cases, equalling 50 per cent of the thefts described in which the thief has been partly or wholly identified. In all these cases the thief was a man. Gender identity not having been enquired after in the questionnaire, we are unable to draw any conclusions from the data at our disposal.

Theft prevention measures taken

In this section an account will first be given of the security measures which have been taken to prevent theft. Security measures aimed both at the general public and at the institution's own staff will be considered. In addition, particulars will be given of the number of institutions allowing their staff to handle archival material when off duty. Particulars will then be given of the measures taken in order to discover when material has disappeared. And lastly, findings will be presented concerning the co-operation of archive institutions with the police, market players and the media.

Security measures targeting visitors

As has now been shown, most thefts are committed during daytime by members of the general public, the scene of the crime being the institutions' reading rooms. Security measures targeting the general public should therefore be given top priority. The table below shows which types of security measure have targeted the general public, based on the following categories: Institutions using technical surveillance methods; Institutions using other, non-technical security routines; Institutions using both technical surveillance methods and other security routines; Institutions lacking security measures in relation to visitors; and No reply.

The table is based on the replies to question 13, in which the institutions were asked to "describe what kind of protective measures have been taken to prevent theft by members of the public". The replies, then, show what the institutions considered worth pointing out, rather than giving a complete account of all security arrangements. Some answers are doubled, which may be confusing when compiling the statistics.

Table 11: Protective measures to prevent theft by members of the public

	Technical surveillance methods	Other security routines	Both technical surveillance methods and other security routines	No measures	No reply
Total	61 (63 %)	71 (74 %)	44 (46 %)	-	8 (8 %)

The table shows all institutions answering this question to have stated that they have taken security precautions to prevent theft by members of the general public. 61 institutions (63 per cent) state that they have technical surveillance methods, and an absolute majority of these state that they have CCTV cameras in the reading room. Technical surveillance methods also include:

Photographic pass system for admission to reading room; A small part of the collection is electronically tagged; Collection items are stamped with a unique (...) ownership stamp.

Weighing in and out bundles or packets of documents.

Tagging of all books, bound volumes and manuscript items.

71 institutions (74 per cent) state that they have other security routines. These include the following:

The area for the public is totally separated from the offices of the staff and from the stacks. No coats and bags in the reading room. Materials in especially valuable private fonds are given to researchers only in the form of copies (mostly microfilm).

Reading room always under supervision, strict rules about researchers' behaviour, their use of technical equipment, cell phones, bags, food etc. Education efforts to make our staff be prepared for different situations and to give the staff means of how to deal when confronted to suspect behaviour.

44 institutions (46 per cent) give examples of both technical surveillance methods and other security routines.

Security work targeting the institution's own staff

In one-fifth of the thefts described, the thief was connected with the institution. The question is what measures the archives take which make it harder for staff to misappropriate material, without detracting from the pleasantness of the working environment. The following table shows how many institutions state that they have taken security precautions targeting their own staff, based on the following categories: Institutions taking security precautions targeting their own staff; Institutions not taking security precautions targeting their own staff; and No reply.

Table 12: Measures taken to prevent theft by members of staff

	Measures	No measures	No reply
Total	52 (54 %)	24 (25 %)	20 (21 %)

This table shows 24 institutions, i.e. 25 per cent, stating that they have not taken any security precautions at all in relation to their own staff. Probably too, a large proportion of the 20 institutions (21 per cent) not answering this question had not taken any theft prevention measures either. The other 52 institutions (54 per cent) report various types of security arrangement targeting their own staff. Half of them state that they restrict staff access to all or parts of the archival material and/or can trace staff movements with the aid of electronic card systems. Other security measures are represented by the following quotations:

Staff bag searching on a random basis; Staff required to use the electronic order system so all staff use books is recorded; CCTV; All staff and long term contractors are security cleared via the (...) police national computer.

Members of the staff are not allowed to stay in the archives after working hours. Bags are not allowed to be taken to the store's zone.

Trade in archival documents

One specific questionnaire item concerned the number of institutions allowing their staff to engage in trade in archival documents during off-duty hours. 55 institutions (57 per cent) state that they do not allow this. Eight institutions (8 per cent) state that they permit their staff to engage in this kind of trade, albeit with certain restrictions. Restrictions include, for example, the following:

(...), staff members who collect privately within the profile of [the archives] collection, report any transactions to [the archive]. If an item appears at an auction which is interesting for the staff member as well as the archive, the archive takes priority.

Yes for buying – no for selling.

28 institutions (29 per cent) state that they have no regulations concerning staff trading in archival documents. Five (5 per cent) did not answer the question.

Routines for discovering that material is missing

We saw in the introduction to this report that a relatively large number of archives have never been victims of theft. This of course prompts one to ask what routines and capacity they have for discovering that a theft has occurred. The following table addresses this subject, in terms of the following categories: The institution applies routines for discovering that material is missing; The institution does not apply routines for discovering that material is missing; Other replies; and No reply.

The table is based on the replies to question 15, in which the institutions were asked to state their routines for “checking your holdings to identify missing/stolen documents”. Twenty or so institutions misunderstood the question and instead stated the measures taken to enable them to identify stolen material. Those measures are included in the “Other replies” category.

Table 13: Procedures for checking the holdings to identify missing/stolen documents

	Have routines	Have no routines	Other replies	No reply
Total	42 (44 %)	21 (22 %)	17 (18 %)	16 (17 %)

This questionnaire item having been variously interpreted, the answers are difficult to analyse, but it is clear that at least 42 institutions (44 per cent) have routines for discovering that material is missing. 26 of these, state that they carry out regular inventories of parts of their stock, while 20 state that they check the material before and/or after issue to readers.

Measures employed to facilitate the identification of stolen material comprise copying, scanning or microfilming theft-prone material and marking it with a stamp or suchlike. The two types of method are equally prevalent.

Lists at volume and document level

One precondition for knowing what is missing is knowing what you have got. A specific item in the questionnaire concerned the amount of archival material in the institutions not listed at volume and document level. This was evidently a tough question for the institutions to answer, because only one-third of them did so, but the answers received show most institutions to have less than one-fifth of their material unlisted at volume level and more than four-fifths of it unlisted at document level. It is impossible to tell how these figures are to be construed, beyond observing that most documents in the archives are more or less unlisted.

Co-operation with the courts and the police

In 30 per cent of recorded thefts where the material was partly or wholly recovered, this was due to the work of the police. The table below shows the extent to which the archive institutions co-operate with the police and the courts in order to catch and prosecute the culprits, based on the following categories: Institutions with co-operation; Institutions with no co-operation; and No reply.

Table 14: Institutions with established mechanisms for co-operating with the legal system and the police

	Co-operation	No co-operation	No reply
Total	33 (34 %)	59 (61 %)	4 (4 %)

The table shows 33 institutions (34 per cent) stating that they have established co-operation with the police and the courts, while a large majority state that they have not done so. Some of those which have established co-operation comment as follows:

Instances of theft are now automatically reported to the police right away.

Discussions with the police concerning surveillance methods and surveillance routines.

The buildings of our archive are guarded by police and our general department of archives is connected to the special police department.

Of the 33 institutions reporting co-operation, 13 (39 per cent) are satisfied with the arrangement. The remainder are dissatisfied or state that they have had too little dealings with the police and the legal system to be able to judge whether this co-operation has worked well or not. Several institutions would like to see better communication and faster handling procedures on the part of the police. One institution also reports lack of understanding on the part of the police for the documents in archives being an important part of the heritage, and claims that thefts from archive institutions would be given higher priority if that knowledge existed. If this is true, it amounts to a powerful incentive for closer co-operation between archive institutions and the police.

Co-operation with players in the market

16 of the 90 thefts reported were discovered when material was put up for sale, and in 14 of 50 cases where the stolen property was returned to the archives, this happened after it had come on the market. The following table shows the extent to which the archive institutions co-operate with players in the market (both dealers and known collectors), based on the categories: Institutions with co-operation; Institutions with no co-operation; and No reply.

Table 15: Institutions having established contact with participants in the trade

	Co-operation	No co-operation	No reply
Total	54 (56 %)	39 (41 %)	3 (3 %)

The table shows 54 institutions (56 per cent) stating that they co-operate with players in the market, while 39 (41 per cent) state that they have not established any such contact. Co-operation with players in the market, then, is a good deal commoner than with the police and the courts. Some respondents with established co-operation comment as follows:

We have contact with the Antiquarian Booksellers Association (ABA) and are on their circulation list. Our curatorial staff attends book fairs and has informal contacts with people in the trade. Curatorial staff in our Manuscripts Dept researches the provenance of potential acquisitions to check that they have not been stolen.

Printed catalogues are sent to the archives for inspection. This is, however, due to the regulations against exploration of cultural assets, and not especially designed as a safeguard against theft.

The questionnaire replies reveal instances of both successful and not-so-successful co-operation. In those cases where co-operation has been less fruitful, the archive institutions report reluctance on the part of antiquarian booksellers and auction rooms to involve themselves in the matter. However, the positive instances emerging from the questionnaire replies greatly outweigh the negative ones.

Co-operation with the media

There are both possibilities and dangers involved in contacting the media about missing material. The table below shows the extent to which the institutions contact the media in the event of material being stolen or going missing, based on the following categories: The institution has contacted the media; The institution has never contacted the media; and No reply.

Table 16: Institutions which have informed the media about documents missing or stolen

	Have informed	Have not informed	No reply
Total	18 (19 %)	72 (75 %)	6 (6 %)

This table shows that three-quarters of the institutions have never informed the media about stolen or missing material. Reasons giving for not doing so are that if the thefts became public knowledge this would harm the institutions' reputation, and that publicity can impede the legal inquiry. Some institutions have commented on the matter as follows:

When a theft has occurred the knowledge of it has usually been kept restricted to a limited circle of people, in most cases to ensure that the investigation can be undertaken discreetly and without alerting potential suspects.

No, far too sensitive to be made public knowledge.

One-fifth of the institutions state that they have contacted the media about thefts or missing material, mainly in the hope that this would help to get the material returned to them. Contacts have had both positive and negative outcomes, as witness the following quotations:

The wide publicity leads most probably to the happy end.

Unfortunately, the results were moderate. However, [the archive] has since managed to recover some stolen items.

Map theft case brought bad publicity to the institution but did assist in the arrest of the thief.

Summary

This study has shown 41 per cent of the 190 archive institutions replying to the questionnaire to have reported theft problems. 33 per cent state that they have had theft problems at some time or other in the past ten years. It is mainly autographs, letters and philatelic material that are stolen, i.e. documents having an economic value. In at least 18 per cent of the cases described, the material was damaged.

Most of all thefts are committed in research reading rooms during the daytime, by visitors to the archives. One-fifth of the thefts described in the questionnaire replies, however, were committed by persons connected with the institutions – insiders. In an equal number of cases the institutions have absolutely no idea how the thefts were committed.

17 per cent of the thefts described were discovered within one day, and in 9 per cent the thief was caught red-handed. 46 per cent of the thefts reported were discovered within a year. In 41 per cent of cases the institutions cannot say which year the theft took place, but in the majority of such cases the institutions state that the theft probably occurred many years ago. Most commonly, the culprits are archive staff members or visitors. 18 per cent of thefts, however, remain undiscovered until the material comes on the market. Material from 56 of the thefts reported was returned, partly or wholly, to the institution.

In 65 per cent of the theft cases reported, the thief was partly or wholly identified. Not altogether unexpectedly, the majority of thefts are prompted by financial motives, and in 26 per cent of the cases where the thief was partly or wholly identified, he or she had robbed more than one archive institution, which must be termed remarkable.

All institutions have taken security measures targeting the general public, while 54 per cent state that they have taken security measures concerning their own staff. Limited access to parts of the material and a ban on dealings in archival documents are among the commoner security measures targeting institutional staff.

34 per cent of the institutions state that they co-operate with the courts and the police, while 56 per cent state that they co-operate with the trade. The material contains both positive and negative instances of these forms of co-operation.

Attachment I

1. UK case study I: Theft and falsification of the archival record

A specialist UK repository experienced a case of theft where the thief removed certain items from the archival files of commercial galleries and replaced them with forged items in order to create a false provenance for forged works of art. The corruption of the archival record was therefore intended to facilitate a wider fraud. The crime took place in the reading room during standard opening times and was perpetrated by a team of people acting on behalf of the main culprit. The perpetrators aroused suspicion among archival staff at the institution in question and the police were also contacted by a third party who reported the thief's activities. A search of material accessed by the thief revealed the loss of certain items and their replacement with forged material. The items in question consisted of photographs, correspondence and catalogues. The thief who organised the operation was an outsider, not a member of the institution's staff, and was successfully prosecuted. Co-operation with the police proceeded smoothly and resulted in a conviction providing a deterrent to others.

Although the archive in question did not inform the media about the theft, subsequent coverage of the trial and conviction of the thief was anticipated and appropriate covering statements were prepared in advance. The case illustrates the importance of close invigilation of archival search rooms and the need to pursue thieves through the courts, even if this generates unwelcome publicity, in order to minimise the risk of future thefts.

2. UK case study II: Map thefts

Maps often represent high-value, aesthetically-pleasing items which can be attractive to thieves as there is a ready international market for them. A number of national UK institutions have suffered losses engineered by thieves stealing single items or volumes containing high-value material, although these have tended to be printed rather than MS items. Discovery of the thefts was aided by alerts from other specialist collections which had been raided. Successful prosecutions have followed and procedures have been tightened to reduce the risk of any re-occurrence and additional security measures introduced. In the case of high-value items, the use of surrogates can often be an effective way of protecting the originals. Although many of the items in question have been recovered there has been considerable damage to the volumes from which they have been cut and experience has shown that recovery can be much more difficult once items have escaped onto the open market.

Some items were taken by an American who was eventually arrested while targeting another institution in the USA and who confessed to other crimes. Recovery of lost items involved international co-operation between American and British police forces in one case but there has been some criticism of the leniency of the sentence imposed on the perpetrator as not providing a sufficient deterrent to others.

3. France: AFFAIRE FIEY

Les faits

M. Jean-Marc Fiey, citoyen français, domicilié à Lille, est arrêté, à la suite d'une dénonciation anonyme, le 12 juin 2002, en flagrant délit de vol, aux archives de l'Etat à Liège. Grâce aux aveux de M. Fiey qui sera incarcéré pendant quelques semaines, les autorités policières belges saisissent chez un marchand de vieux papiers de Liège qui a joué le rôle de receleur, près de 65 000 documents confiés pour expertise et inventaire par le juge belge, au responsable des archives de l'Etat à Liège.

La direction des archives de France est rapidement informée de ces faits par les archives de Liège. Une première expertise effectuée par ces dernières permet d'identifier parmi les documents saisis un grand nombre de pièces provenant des archives publiques françaises. Le 4 juillet suivant les archives de France prennent contact avec l'OCBC et demandent aux services juridiques du ministère de porter plainte avec constitution de partie civile. Le 2 juillet, le réseau des archives françaises est alerté et une enquête est lancée afin de préciser les dates du passage du voleur présumé dans les services, d'établir la liste des documents consultés par lui, d'en donner une analyse précise et d'identifier les éventuelles soustractions et dégradations. Cette enquête montrent que le voleur présumé fréquente depuis vingt ans les services d'archives françaises sous couvert de recherches à caractère généalogique. Parallèlement, dès le 17 juillet, à la demande de l'OCBC, la direction des archives de France dépose une plainte; une information judiciaire est ouverte à Lille. A l'automne 2002, l'Etat, représenté par l'agent judiciaire du Trésor, se constitue partie civile d'une part auprès du juge d'instruction de Lille, et d'autre part auprès du juge d'instruction à Liège. Un fichier électronique recensant les documents consultés par le voleur présumé, leurs analyses et leurs dates, est réalisé par la direction des archives de France, afin d'identifier les documents des archives françaises saisis en Belgique et en permettre la revendication ultérieure. Ce fichier a été régulièrement mis à jour en fonction des informations communiquées par les services d'archives.

Les archives belges, avec l'aide ponctuelle d'une mission de conservateurs français, procèdent de leur côté à l'inventaire des archives saisies. Sur la base de ce repérage, la justice belge décide de restituer aux archives françaises et belges les documents identifiés comme leur appartenant. 27450 documents sont ainsi restitués à la France, 30 000 autres ayant été restitués aux archives belges.

Les archives belges identifient au cours des mois qui suivent de nombreux documents analogues à ceux saisis, dans des ventes publiques, sur les catalogues de marchands d'autographes et de philatélie ainsi que sur de nombreux marchés et foires belges. Au début de l'année 2004, les autorités belges procèdent à la saisie de plusieurs lots d'archives mis en vente dans différents salons et foires ainsi que chez un particulier; 30 000 documents sont ainsi collectés et confiés pour expertise aux archives belges. Par ailleurs, plusieurs documents relevant des collections publiques françaises sont retirées de ventes organisées à Bruxelles à la demande de la direction des archives de France et sont pris en charge par les archives générales du royaume.

Les caractéristiques

Il convient de noter que l'établissement du fichier des documents consultés par M. Fiey dans les services d'archives français s'est heurté à de nombreuses difficultés qui tiennent en premier lieu à la nature des documents volés, le voleur ayant privilégié des documents secondaires, à la valeur historique et vénale limitée comme des documents portant des marques postales ou des timbres anciens mais aussi des documents de nature économique et commerciale conservés dans des fonds privés qui répondent en fait aux demandes d'un public d'amateurs, de petits collectionneurs, de marcophiles et de philatélistes. Ces documents sont écoulés en Belgique par des maisons spécialisées peu prestigieuses, sur des foires aux documents et salons qui se rapprochent des brocantes. Ont été pillés les fonds privés donnés ou déposés dans les services d'archives territoriaux, les fonds d'entreprises mal répertoriés, en général non estampillés ni numérotés. Le choix de ces documents explique que les vols n'aient pas été repérés d'autant que la direction des archives de France n'effectue une veille

que sur les catalogues de ventes publiques comme le prévoit la loi mais non sur les catalogues de marchands de timbres et de marcophilie.

Ces particularités expliquent par ailleurs les difficultés rencontrées pour préciser exactement la nature et l'analyse des documents consultés par Fiey dans les services d'archives et davantage encore pour déterminer les lacunes dans ces mêmes articles. L'incapacité pour les services de préciser les vols dont ils ont pu être victimes, d'identifier précisément les documents dérobés a posé évidemment un problème de taille aux autorités policières et judiciaires tant belges que françaises qui exigeaient des preuves formelles. Les difficultés du recensement tiennent à d'autres raisons. En premier lieu, à la répugnance d'un certain nombre de services d'archives, surtout communaux, à reconnaître qu'ils avaient été victimes de vols.

Enfin dernier facteur, l'informatisation des communications des services d'archives a fait souvent, trop souvent, obstacle à des recherches approfondies. Dans plusieurs services, les fichiers informatiques n'ont pu être retrouvés ni exploités. Les recommandations de la CNIL n'ont par ailleurs pas favorisé la conservation de ces fichiers puisqu'elle avait demandé qu'ils soient détruits après un délai réduit. Enfin, il convient de s'interroger sur les complicités internes dont aurait bénéficié le voleur, dénoncées par le receleur. Si aucune preuve ne peut être apportée, mais aucune enquête n'a non plus été engagée, le recensement dans les papiers saisis en Belgique de dossiers entiers de certains services du nord de la France (CAMT, AD du Pas-de-Calais) laisse subsister un doute.

4. The Netherlands case study I

The National Archives of the Netherlands were confronted with some major thefts of documents in the nineties of the 20th century.

The first theft was discovered after a society of old stocks and bonds collectors in England tipped off the municipal archive of Amsterdam that a Dutch seller of old stocks and bonds was the sole source of old stocks of the Dutch East India Company and other antique Dutch trading societies, which this society found curious. The municipal archive of Amsterdam informed the National Archives, and together they addressed the police to start an investigation.

This investigation made visible, at least for the archival institutions, that there was a collector market for old stocks and bonds and other financial papers, of which they were unaware. And in this market stocks of the Dutch East India Company were the most valuable, because they were seen as the first and oldest stocks of a limited enterprise.

The Dutch supplier of these stocks was a visitor of archives throughout the Netherlands (and maybe beyond). He was a self-made entrepreneur in collecting and selling these kinds of documents, originally starting as a genealogist. While doing his archival research he found out those archives contained an abundant number of financial documents, which were valuable in the old stocks and bonds collector market. He also found out that these documents were not specifically listed, but were mostly hidden in piles of papers described in finding aids under a general description. This find, as you might say, opened up for him a goldmine which was just there for the picking, with almost no risk of discovery. In that time security and surveillance in the reading room was completely absent, and even seen, at least in the Netherlands, as not very client friendly. So it was not that difficult to put some documents in a bag or folder, and take them outside. The fact that the few documents he took out of a pile were not numbered or in other ways specified made it even easier.

During the investigation this Dutch old stock trader was arrested, his complete collection was seized by the police. Archivists of the Municipal Archive of Amsterdam and the National Archives reviewed the complete collection. 95 percent of it contained printed stocks and bonds. The survey concentrated then on the 17th and 18th century documents, which are partly handwritten and easier to detect. The trader kept his most valuable documents in a safe in a bank. The majority were photocopies of documents he already sold to collectors or other trader. In his safe there were only a few original documents. These remaining documents were checked with the documents still present in the original

inventory number of which they, at least this was suspected, were removed. It showed that stains and insect damage were the same. This seemed to be the proof the archives were looking for. Unfortunately, judicially it says nothing. It only shows that at a certain time these documents were together, but in a time period of centuries they could be separated; so no proof of removal by the accused.

To make a long story short, the criminal investigation was dropped, partly by inactivity of the public prosecutor, partly by the difficulty of the case. Police and prosecutors are not well informed about archives, their structure and their specifics. Archivists will see immediately the connection, but for lay people it is not that clear. The weakness of the archives is, in this cases, that documents are not listed separately or individually numbered, but even in the case they are, there is no proof that a given moment they were physically together. They could be removed before the consultation by a supposed thief. The thief will always hammer on that fact in any prosecution.

After the dropping of the criminal case, the National Archives pursued a civil case against the supposed thief. It is still under way (now already for more than 10 years!). In a intermittent verdict the “accused” was asked to prove that he obtained the discussed documents in a legal way. Off course this is difficult for him, he doesn’t have receipts of buying the documents (always saying that he bought them cash on fairs or from private people). This year the final verdict will be given, but it is very unsure which way it will go.

The second theft occurred a few years later. The thief was caught red-handed by bringing documents outside the reading room. His statement was that he wanted to copy them, and that he was unaware that this was not allowed. In the investigation it became clear that he was already caught at another archival institution. But this institution was inclined to play the matter down, and didn’t inform other archives!

The thief in question was a collector of so-called “prefilatia”; stamps on letters before the introduction of the postal stamp. He was a regular visitor of the National Archives and solely was responsible for 1% of all the requests for the reading room. He went through thousands of inventory numbers, always checking the stamps – off course not the content- of letters. In his collectors world he was seen as the pre-eminent collector. He won prizes with his presentations. Afterward we can construct that he stole thousands of documents from the National Archives, but also from local archives.

In the criminal case he was convicted, lightly, for the red-handed case, but for the whole scale theft he was acquitted. In this case the National Archives also pursued a civil case. In a intermittent verdict we were forced to give him back all the documents of which we ourselves could not make any connection with archives or collections in our holdings. He also argued about the other documents, but his sudden death made that, strangely enough obsolete. These documents were, by court order, to be resituated to the archives they originated from.

Both stories tell the same tale. In the Netherlands it is impossible for archives to prove that documents are stolen from them, at least in a criminal procedure. In a civil procedure the evidence load is more equal. But still then it is difficult. Documents are not paintings, they are unique but never photographed – even then, and in one case of the stocks, they appeared in a book, but that was 1987, so please can you prove that they were there afterwards? - and almost never uniquely listed – but that will also not help as long as they are part of a pile of papers. The second problem is that archives are not aware of the financial value of their documents. In both cases we were surprised to find out that there was a market for these kinds of documents. Archives look at the historical value of documents, sometimes for the artistically value (drawings, maps, etc.) but never at the financial component.

As the saying goes “everything of value is defenceless”. The only option is to enforce the surveillance and security of the reading room. This can be a menace for the regular honest visitor, and even be not full-proof, but the cases presented show that here is an eminent danger to the archives.

5. The Netherlands case study II

An employee from an archives service began by selling to a foreign collector various papers from the Library and documents which he himself had bought for the archives service at auctions. After a while he started dealing in financial documents from the archives. The damage in terms of paper securities is relatively ‘limited’ (€ 100,000 – 200,000). The commercial value of the other papers – mostly from the Library – is difficult to gauge, but there were many of them. When the employees’ house was

searched three plastic bags containing documents from the archives were found. A settlement was eventually concluded.

One supposed (never legally proven) theft was the oldest known 'share' (in fact, proof of a loan) in the VOC (Dutch East India Company). Until the early 1980s the Municipal Archives of Amsterdam had the oldest known share in the VOC in its possession. The document (dated 27 September 1606) related to a stake by the widow Agneta Kockx in the start-up capital of the VOC. In 1987 a visitor asked to see the share, but it was nowhere to be found. At first it was assumed that it had been mislaid. Years later, it became clear that the document was definitely no longer in the Archives. At the end of the 1990s an auction-house owner from Germany reported to the Amsterdam Historical Museum that she had been offered a VOC share to sell. An external expert suspected that it might be the missing VOC share and it emerged during the discussion in the auction-house office that this was indeed the case. It has never been legally proven who removed the VOC share.

Attachment II

Theft prevention: a survey.

A working group within EBNA, led by Dr Tomas Lidman, the National Archivist of Sweden, has been appointed to examine and provide guidance on measures to prevent theft of documents from archival holdings throughout Europe. This survey is part of the work programme and will be sent to the National Archives in 25 European countries. Please distribute the survey to a maximum of 15 archival institutions which you consider to be a representative sample of those in your country (including both private and public bodies) and report the result of the survey directly to the working group no later than October 1, 2006.

Return the survey to: survey@riksarkivet.ra.se

or by ordinary mail to:

Riksarkivet

Anna Karin Hermodsson

PO-Box 12541

SE-102 29 Stockholm

Sweden

The aim of this questionnaire is to find out what is really known about this problem of theft, rather than relying on hearsay evidence or the few well-publicised cases which have been reported to the media.

Returns will be held by the National Archives of each participating EU country. They will be regarded as submitted in confidence to be shared with the EBNA working party to inform its deliberations. If there are any proposals to disclose the returns further, the EBNA working party will be consulted. If a request for access to the returns is made under national freedom of information legislation, the National Archives of the participating country will be consulted.

Name of archival institution: _____

Country: _____

City: _____

Address: _____

1. Has your institution ever had any problem with theft?

Yes _____ No _____

If the answer is yes, please answer questions 2-22. If you never had any problems with theft, we are interested in this information as well and we thank you for your cooperation.

2. How many *certain* cases of such thefts from your institution are known to have occurred within the last ten years?

3. How many *suspected* cases of theft have happened within the last ten years?

4. Please describe some of the more important recent cases of certain theft in your institution. Please give the following information in each case which should be numbered 1, 2, 3 etc.

- a) time of theft
- b) time of discovery of the theft
- c) way in which the theft was discovered
- d) object of theft (e.g. maps, autograph letter, illuminated manuscripts)
- e) details of theft (e.g. letters were cut out of a bound volume of correspondence)
- f) data about the thief, if known
- g) how was the archival material retrieved if subsequently recovered.

5. Was the thief/thieves attached to your institution?

Yes _____ No _____

6. Was the thief/thieves a member of the public?

Yes _____ No _____

7. Do you have any knowledge about what happened to the stolen items?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe (e.g. sold on through dealers and not retrieved, owing to lack of sufficient evidence for the archival institution to establish ownership and recover it).

8. Do you have established mechanisms for cooperation with the legal system and police to apprehend and prosecute those suspected of theft? If yes, please describe.

Yes _____ No _____

9. Have these proved adequate over the last ten years in prosecuting offenders and recovering stolen documents?

Yes _____ No _____

If not, what improvements would you like to see?

10. Do you have any contact with art, book or manuscript dealers or other participants in the trade who might be offered, or could help to recover, stolen goods?

Yes _____ No _____

11. Do you allow your staff to take part in buying and selling archival documents when not on duty?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe whether any restrictions are placed on them.

12. Describe the most common or attractive item/items that have been stolen.

13. Describe what kind of protective measures have been taken to prevent theft by members of the public.

14. Describe what kind of protective measures have been taken to prevent theft by members of the staff.

15. What procedures do you have for checking your holdings to identify missing/stolen documents?

16. Do you consider your documentation system secure enough to prevent theft?

Yes _____ No _____

17. Describe the percentage of archival material that does not have an inventory or catalogue extending to
a) file level

b) item level

18. Do you have procedures or formal strategies in place for assessing and countering the risk of theft?

Yes _____ No _____

19. Do you keep a database of all likely events of theft that has occurred in your institution?

Yes _____ No _____

20. Have you had any cases of falsification of documents or of false documents being inserted into your files?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe.

21. Have you had cases of theft of a politically sensitive nature (e.g. archives of the KGB and /or other similar institutions) that may have been stolen for personal or political reasons or of thefts for malicious reasons (e.g. by individuals with antipathy towards your institution or seeking some kind of social protest)?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe.

22. Do you inform public media about the cases of theft or missing documents?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what have been the results and feedback of such cases?

Thank you for your cooperation!