4th LIBER Collection Security Conference 2012
The Hague, National Library of The Netherlands, November 2012
Report on an international Roundtable meeting
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On Thursday 22 November 2012, the first day of the conference, representatives of twelve European archives and libraries met at an invitee-only Roundtable to discuss issues of collection security. The aim of the meeting was to share experience in a secure and confidential environment and to explore how collaboration in future can be extended and intensified, not only between libraries, but also between libraries and archives.

The meeting started with a formal announcement from LIBER and CERL. From 1 January 2013 on LIBER will no longer support the Library Security Network. LIBER and CERL have agreed that CERL will take over responsibility for the network, which will be renamed the CERL Security Network. CERL will create a website (embryonic at http://www.cerl.org/collaboration/security), and will endeavour to increase the visibility of the Security Network. Administration of the Network will remain at the KB Copenhagen, which will set up a new electronic system for this purpose.

In a Roundtable meeting at the 2008 conference it was agreed that a questionnaire-based benchmark exercise should be undertaken, that might subsequently lead to the development of collection security guidelines. In the 2012 meeting a draft questionnaire, prepared by Judith Barnes of the British Library, was discussed. The scope of the questionnaire is based on collection stewardship, from a life cycle point of view. Participants suggested a variety of additions and revisions, which Judith Barnes agreed to reflect in the questionnaire.

It was agreed that the questionnaire will first be send to the participants at the Roundtable, as a test group, and later will be distributed among European libraries and archives (via International Council of Archives, LIBER and CERL). As the questionnaire pays attention to different aspects of collection security, it is important that the answers from an institution will not just reflect one person's view, but the overall view of the institution involved. An integrated approach is necessary.

CERL will take the lead in new initiatives for collaboration. A CERL Security Working Group will be formed, chaired by Kristian Jensen of the British Library, which will draw up a plan for collaboration. Various elements from that plan will be taken up by action groups, chaired by members of the Security Network. As possible themes were named
   - an international database for collection security incidents
   - a review of training of staff, e.g. an exchange programme for security staff, integrity training, scripts for role play
   - recommendations for co-operation with book trade and police, perhaps even private investigators
   - recommendations for crisis management and communication
   - an exploration of DNA marking, and other new technologies
   - prevention or early recognition of staff theft
   - an overview of international and national legislation on divulging information about suspected thieves/mutilators

The next conference should be held no later than Spring 2015. CERL will suggest a location for the next conference.