

**RBMS Security Committee  
ALA Midwinter Meeting, 2012**

**MINUTES**  
January 21, 2012

Oak Room, Fairmont Hotel  
Dallas, Texas

Members present: Alvan Bregman (Chair), University of British Columbia; Martha O'Hara Conway, University of Michigan; Jennifer J. Lowe, Saint Louis University; Michael Inman, New York Public Library (Secretary pro tem); William T. La Moy, Syracuse University; Isaac Gewirtz, New York Public Library

Members absent (and excused): Nicolette A. Dobrowolski, Syracuse University; Joel Kovarsky, The Prime Meridian; Lee Bagby Viverette, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Susan M. Allen, California Rare Book School (ex-officio)

Visitors: Lois Fischer Black, Lehigh University; Ellen Cordes, Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University; Beth Kilmarx, Binghamton University; Mark Greenberg, University of South Florida; Brittany Turner, Society of American Archivists Security Roundtable; Cynthia Becht, Loyola Marymount University; Martha Conway, University of Michigan; Erin Blake, Folger Shakespeare Library; Amy Brown, University of Texas, Austin; Emilia Mahaffey, University of Texas, Austin; Laila Milietic-Vejzovic, University of Central Florida; Everett C. Wilkie, Jr., Bluffton, TX.

**I. Call to order:**

Alvan Bregman (Chair) called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

**II. Introductions and News:**

All attending members and visitors introduced themselves.

Michael Inman reported that OCLC's MissingMaterials.org will cease to be supported and active by the end of 2012. The primary reason for the cessation of this utility is a lack of institutional buy-in; as of January 2012, only a small number of libraries have posted notices of missing collection materials.

Cynthia Becht solicited recommendations from the committee on best practices for exhibiting high-value collection materials—specifically, whether it is preferable to return “treasure” items to a storage vault at the end of each day, rather than leaving them overnight in a new exhibit gallery space. Several committee members suggested that, in deciding whether to move these items, a range of security criteria should be evaluated, including the overnight presence of

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security staff, the availability of security cameras, and the status of gallery and case alarms, among other factors.

Lois Fischer Black reported on a recent power outage at Leigh University, along with an IT infrastructure improvement project. She pointed out that both of these events occurred with little or no forewarning and noted the importance of having contingency plans in place, in order to deal effectively with unexpected potential security issues.

Finally, Erin Blake detailed a recent security initiative at the Folger Shakespeare Library, whereby all staff and researchers must wear visible photo IDs. This measure was enacted in part to clarify which staff members have vault access privileges.

### **III. Approval of minutes:**

The minutes of the last meeting (ALA Annual Conference, New Orleans, June 25, 2011) were approved, with two spelling corrections.

### **IV. Chair's Report:**

The Chair reported on the following:

The new RBMS *Security and Theft Guidelines* continue to be adopted by various bodies. In particular, IFLA-RBMS has now endorsed the *Guidelines*. It was reported, as well, that a translation of the *Guidelines* into Spanish has been completed.

The Chair then welcomed Brittany Turner, chair of the Society of American Archivists' Security Round Table, who reported on progress within SAA to endorse the *Guidelines*. She noted several points of concern over the document within SAA, including a perceived focus on rare book materials and questions about the feasibility of marking archival materials at an item level, given the usual volume of manuscript collections. She noted that many in SAA favor reformatting, in order to create surrogate service copies of documents. Brittany Turner also reported that in reaction to concerns within SAA about the *Guidelines* being viewed as a legal precedent, a task force is drafting a preamble to be appended to the document; it is anticipated that this preamble will state that the *Guidelines* are nonbinding to SAA members. In spite of some concerns, Brittany Turner noted that SAA expects to endorse the *Guidelines* by August 2012—and that SAA applauds the Security Committee for its work drafting the document.

The *Guide to Security Considerations and Practices for Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collection Libraries*, compiled and edited by Everett C. Wilkie, Jr., has been published by ACRL in an edition of 300 copies, of which more than 200 copies had already been sold. An e-book version of the work should be available soon.

The RBMS website has been substantially updated to reflect changes to various state laws related to library theft. The Chair particularly thanked the RBMS Web Editors for their help in bringing the state laws pages up to date. He also thanked members of the committee, all of whom had contributed to the state laws review.

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In July 2011, former RBMS Security Committee Chair Richard Oram was interviewed and quoted by *Time Magazine* about the recent theft of the *Codex Calixtinus* from the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain.

**V. LSO Listserv:**

Alvan Bregman noted that a decision needed to be made about reactivating the LSO listserv, which was currently dormant. Martha Conway inquired as to the purpose of the listserv. Alvan Bregman replied that it was a closed list whose function was to provide a venue for libraries to share privately information regarding suspected, in-progress (and potentially sensitive) security situations. Considering the difficulty of continually adding content and maintaining the LSO registry, as well as the very low amount of traffic that the listserv received, there was a discussion about the need to reactivate the list.

Isaac Gewirtz felt the list should be maintained—that it could be especially useful for those individuals who do not belong to the RBMS or Exlibris lists. A consensus developed that the list could be left dormant for the time being. Alvan Bregman and Erin Blake suggested that an RSS feed might be set up as a way of disseminating information pertaining to security incidents.

**VI. Old Business: Proactive Roles for the Security Committee:**

Alvan Bregman reported that the committee was proceeding with its plan to reach out to the heads of ARL, IRLA and Oberlin group institutions, encouraging them to adopt the revised *RBMS Security and Theft Guidelines* and, if they had not already done so, to name an LSO within their institution. This communication will take the form of an electronic letter based on a draft by Isaac Gewirtz and Alvan Bregman. Martha Conway suggested that it would be a good idea to attach the *Guidelines* as a PDF to facilitate printing. Erin Blake wondered whether it would be best to send the letter directly to the LSO of each institution; however, not every institution has an LSO, nor is there an up-to-date registry of all Library Security Officers. Erin Blake also suggested that the letter should state that the Security Guidelines were “freely available,” as a way of promoting their accessibility. Alvan Bregman suggested that since the LSO list was dormant, the communication should not mention it.

Jennifer Lowe reported on the committee’s proposed security survey, an electronic survey to be sent to ARL, IRLA and Oberlin Group institutions. The survey would enquire about the extent to which the recommendations included in the *Guidelines* had been implemented. The purpose was also to investigate areas in which the *Guidelines* could be improved or further developed. Alvan Bregman asked that the committee continue to discuss the content of the survey over the coming months via email.

To follow up on these initiatives, it would be necessary to gain access to emailing lists for the institutional associations.

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**VII. New Business:**

The following resolution of thanks to Everett C. Wilkie, honoring his work on the recently published *Guide to Security Considerations and Practices for Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collection Libraries*, was moved by Alvan Bregman, seconded by Michael Inman:

“Resolved:

- Whereas Everett C. Wilkie, Jr., has served the RBMS community as a member of the Security Committee for many years, and served numerous times as its Chair;
- And whereas, he has promoted the safety and long-term access of special collections through the development of professional standards and guidelines on security and theft, and championed initiatives involving state laws, replevin and related issues;
- And whereas, he has worked tirelessly and selflessly to mentor and involve others in the cause of collections security;
- And whereas, he oversaw the writing of and brought to splendid completion *The Guide to Security Considerations and Practices for Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collection Libraries*,

The RBMS Security Committee hereby offers its thanks and appreciation to Everett C. Wilkie, Jr., for his service, leadership and accomplishments.”

The resolution carried unanimously and was followed by an enthusiastic round of applause.

**VIII. Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was presented and passed at 5:31 p.m.

Michael Inman, Recorder  
Alvan Bregman, Chair,  
February 7, 2012.