

Free case study about comprehensive security plan for a local public library

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Research studies indicate that the level of criminal activities have accelerated at an alarming rate in today`s world. Everyday crime is reported in the newspapers and on the internet. According to a recent research, crime with fine arts market is the second largest category preceding international drug trafficking. Being in the 21st-century we must understand that early 20th-century literature and materials are over 100 years old, virtually irreplaceable without a massive investment, and also out-of-print. Books, atlases and maps are precious and at the same time vulnerable. It is important to preserve our popular culture through maintaining, caring and providing access to our collections. Access to this collection has supported scholarship in humanities, social sciences and sciences and remains critical to our intellectual freedom. Therefore, administrators must ensure that the staffing and the infrastructure will allow security, appropriate access, and preservation of our primary source materials (Carver, 2014).

The library has three floors and a basement. The basement is located in the wall box of the staircase in the periodicals room. It is adjacent the elevator. The staff room is in the locker at the entrance. In the wall box also there is work room facing the left-hand side when one is facing the wall close to the supply closet. Between the staircase wall and near the emergency door there is a wall way. To the left of the emergency door, is the auditorium foyer. The library has two children`s room one in the wall box to the right-hand side of the entrance door, and the other one is located in first floor. The elevator is located next to the security desk. The second and third floor is where books and other collections are found.

This paper is aimed at assessing the library facility, and the current security

policy to identify the potential areas of risk in the installation. It is also aimed at finding the gaps in the current security system, and to analyze various security threats. This analysis will allow the identification of the most critical security threats. It will hence assist in planning the most efficient security system. The study looks at the external library perimeter and also its interior areas of potential weaknesses such as lighting, signaling, locks, and intrusion detection. It also looks at materials and collection protection. Once this study is completed various recommendations will be made accordingly (Carver, 2014).

Libraries and archives are failing today to take into account the vulnerability of their collection to loss. Notably collections are threatened not only by vandalism and theft, but also by disasters such as fire and floods. In addition, poor environmental conditions and careless handling are posing a threat to our collection. Any public library seeking to preserve its collections must put in place a comprehensive security system that encompasses all these threats. The current security policy in my local library was prepared long ago. Going through it, I was able to identify various gaps in it that require an immediate action. For instance, in my interview with one of the staff members I realized how unprepared they are in case of a fire outbreak. Surprising the building has only one or two fire extinguishers, and there is no fire alarms system. Another major point of concern is that the library does not have a security director. This paper outlines a security system that will ensure physical protection of the facility, the library users and the staff. It also addresses the issues of disaster preparedness and the general evacuation procedures (DENA BUNIS, 2003).

The staff member must be prepared for dangerous situations. Recent research studies shows that in the event of any kind of emergency, the security director should be informed immediately or call the police department and evacuate the building if need be. At the circulation desk, we need to have a panic button that will be used for the purposes of summoning the police department. The police department may be consulted to advise on problems related to misuse of library property, theft, perimeter security of the building, and disorderly conduct (Carver, 2014).

General evacuation

In case of a condition that makes it unsafe to remain the library facility, a library security in charge will ensure safe evacuation of the users and the staff members. The in charge in this case must make an announcement requiring everybody to leave the facility immediately. He must also search all corners of the library such as the restrooms and inform the occupants the need to evacuate immediately. All the occupants should then be assembled on the sidewalk. One of the staff members should then take the daily schedule and conduct a count to ensure that nobody has been left inside the building.

The study begins by looking at the general security of the building. The collections and the library must be secured both after normal and during regular working hours. Unauthorized removal of library collection and entrance to the facility must be prevented. A well-maintained and well-designed perimeter fence or wall provides a first line of defense. Perimeter fence also serves as warning approach to the library. However, if monitored by CCTV cameras and alarms, it makes it easy to address the security issue.

This system need be combined with the physical security to provide the best results. The availability of bright security lighting, especially those triggered by PIR detectors, can provide a cost-effective prevention in the area. An intruder detection system that can quickly identify any intrusion and alter the security personnel through a message is entirely appropriate in this premise. As the shell of the library is mainly regarded as a security perimeter, the available opening should be limited to those deemed necessary for access and to comply with the statutory human comfort and health requirement. Windows and doors and spotlights must be protected to reduce the risk of loss during the night. They must be able to resist any determined physical attack to allow enough time for the security force to attend. While exit routes are crucial, it is critical that they do not make it easy for a thief to escape. At night, some form of deadlocking may be used. However, it must be unlocked when the library is occupied. It may be linked to the intruder detection system that will indicate the locked state either audibly or visually in order to alert the person in charge (Carver, 2014). The layout of circulation and exhibition routes needs to be rearranged to provide the best security without limiting the presentation of the library collection. Sightlines mainly must be given special attention to make sure that any supervisors have the best view possible. To increase the security, the staff must be the route through galleries since their presence can act as a deterrent. It is advisable to have several pair of watchful eyes. Also since much of the electronic and physical security of the library cannot operate efficiently during open hours security thus depends heavily on the staff (Cervone, 2005). The search rules need to be tightened. Currently coats,

food and drinks, and bags are excluded. The right search must be conducted. Currently, it is easy to walk away with books since the library is still relying on a physical search. An electronic detection system needs to be installed. Gates with electronic antennae have to be placed at the reading room exit and books affixed with bar codes. This measure can reduce theft since if any tagged text is taken through the gate an audible alarm is triggered and prompting a quick search. Installing CCTV surveillance in the readings rooms can improve crime prevention and detection. Ideally the camera should be fixed facing its entrance to record the visual details of anyone who enters the reading room (DENA BUNIS, 2003).

The library staff must cultivate a healthy patron relation in the process of enforcing procedures and rules. Most trusted professionals and some regular patrons have been privileged to access collection without supervision. However, it is then realized later that some groups are missing. A good number of the users will comply with the procedures and rules if the reasons for them are explained. The best ways of protecting the unique collection is by monitoring of the patrons and maintain up to date records that document the use of the individual collections. Inspection and surveillance can help prevent vandalism and theft. Involving the library staff in planning efforts may increase the chance of smooth running the security program. The staff can work with the public to get useful information on how the security system can be improved. The members should be encouraged to give their views (Cervone, 2005).

Training the library staff how to implement the Security plan is very crucial, because the existing security existing security plans are not entirely

implemented as the staff finds them awkward and inconvenient to apply. All the members should be instructed to ensure that the rules and regulation are adhered to with or without exceptions. Due to limitation in educating the staff a lax atmosphere as emerged that has encouraged vandalism and theft of library collection. They should also have training in observational techniques. The supervisor should at least move around checking. All the chairs in the reading room need to be rearranged to face the supervisor and should provide him with clear sight lines. Chairs arranged on either side of the table make observation very difficult. It is also important that they are trained to handle stressful situations that can make security procedures difficult to enforce. For instance, how he or she could deal with a patron who fails to provide his or her registration details (DENA BUNIS, 2003).

The management should buy a backup power generator due any potential power blackouts. The generator should be automatic this will ensure that in an event of a sudden power shortage the security lights and other systems are not interrupted. The elevator requires a telephone that can be used to call for emergency rescue in case any person is trapped inside. If the elevator has stopped at the floor level, the doors can be opened by pushing its doors gently. In the event of a suspicious envelope package it should be opened and handled with ultimate care. To ensure personal safety of the library users children who are incapable of taking care should always be given close supervision. Nobody should be allowed to the library if they are suspected to be under drug influence (Cervone, 2005).

The current layout of circulation and exhibitions routes should be rearranged to provide the maximum security without limiting the space provided for the

presentation of the collections. Particular attention should be given to the sightlines to ensure that those who will be monitoring them have the best view and to eliminate the chances of creating hidden corners where people with ill intentions can hide. In the interest of everyone's safety, the layouts must be able to deal smoothly with the flow of the visitors at whatever condition. It is important to separate the areas used by the staff from the public areas. However, the staff should be the route through galleries as this move can increase security. Their presence can act as a deterrent and also enhance the number of the watchful eyes. The security must depend on the staff as most of the electronic and physical protection measures cannot operate during regular hours. It is also important to display the collection in such a manner as to prevent their easy removal (DENA BUNIS, 2003).

The library is relying mostly on trust. However, this can contribute heavily to great loss of property. The security team should be firm on search in the reading room and also ask the users to provide their identification documents. The library should also have rule that excludes food, bags and coats. In this case a turnstile arrangement must be used to control entry in order to facilitate the use of this regulation. The library should in this case provide secure lockers for the patron's items. To achieve this goal, a coin operated self-help system should be adopted. A record system that records all the materials, date and time is very critical. In addition, an electronic detection system can help to curb the increased loss of material. The system will entail installation of gates at the exit of reading rooms that have antennae. The library collection and books should then be affixed with bar codes. Therefore, in case somebody moves out with any coded material

without any official authority and audible alarm is activated (Cervone, 2005).

Adequate training is essential. The staff should be enrolled for short courses security training. The cultural heritage training organization is one of the best. It offers guidelines on SVQ and NVQ. In the case of any exhibitions the attendants should be given a briefing to help them appreciate our collections and to respect it. The issue of staffing should also be approached with an ultimate consideration. Only honest people should be considered especially the security officers. Therefore, human resource recruitment process should be rigorous. From the recent research it is evident that the extensive use of computers for record keeping and display purposes has come with its own threat. In this regard, computer protection is vital (Banerjee, 2003).

In conclusion, the security system is vital in security solution. To give advice on the system that can best serve for each duty, a right approach is critical when it comes to procurement of the equipment. All threat analysis need to be done carefully to get with the best operational requirement. The automated security system will serve to reduce potential risks. The system acts as a crime deterrent and also in case of an intrusion it will be easier to realize and take the appropriate action immediately.

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