

NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES

OFFICE *of*  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

Date : May 22, 2012

Reply to  
Attn of : Office of Inspector General (OIG)

Subject : Management Letter No. 12-13, Security Incident at AI

To : David S. Ferriero, Archivist of the United States (N)

On April 17, 2012 a suspicious individual entered the Archives I Pennsylvania Avenue entrance with a bag containing what appeared on x-ray to be ammunition and possibly a semi-automatic handgun. The individual was able to retrieve his bag and leave without NARA: (1) physically searching his bag; (2) saving the x-ray image of the bag; (3) capturing useful video images of the Pennsylvania Avenue lobby or building exterior; or (4) alerting appropriate law-enforcement officials in accordance with applicable policies and procedures. This Management Letter alerts you to the Office of Investigations (OI) review of this incident, and our findings and suggestions to improve security protocols, response, and equipment.

**BACKGROUND:**

**Security Incident Report**

On April 17, 2012, NARA Security Services (BX) reported a security incident at Archives I to the OI. According to the Incident Report<sup>1</sup>, an unidentified man entered the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance, stated he was there to do research and asked a contract security officer (CSO1) if his camera needed to go through the x-ray machine. CSO1 told the man his camera would need to go through the x-ray machine. The man stated he would return and left the building without allowing security to screen his camera. He returned approximately four minutes later without his camera, placed his backpack on the x-ray machine and walked through the magnetometer. However, the magnetometer was not functioning and CSO1 inspected the man with a hand wand, which indicated the man had metallic items in his pants pockets. CSO1 instructed him to step back through the

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<sup>1</sup> An initial Incident Report was prepared, but then replaced by a more detailed Incident Report. This second Incident Report was prepared by a contract guard supervisor on duty at the time of the incident, not by the officers involved.

magnetometer, place the contents of his pockets into one of the trays, and put the tray through the x-ray machine.

During this time a second contract security officer (CSO2) reviewed the x-ray of the man's backpack, and saw what he thought were seven or eight rounds of rifle ammunition and possibly a weapon. CSO2 reversed the x-ray machine belt to look at the bag again and asked CSO1 to look at the monitor. CSO1 looked at the monitor and agreed with CSO2's findings. CSO2 then told the man he needed to search his bag. The man refused, retrieved his backpack, and left through the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance.

CSO2 notified a guard supervisor who reviewed the x-ray image of the bag and agreed that it appeared the bag contained ammunition and possibly a weapon. The guard supervisor notified the Archives I Chief of Security who also responded to the Pennsylvania Avenue lobby and reviewed the x-ray image.<sup>2</sup> The guard supervisor told the contract security officers at the Archives I Constitution Avenue side entrance about the situation, and notified the security contractor on-site manager who was at Archives II in College Park, MD. Finally, the Chief notified the OIG, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and NARA management.

Although not noted in the Security Incident Report, during the time this man attempted to gain access to AI some of the "staff only" doors near this entrance area were propped open and unsecured. In general, the possession of an unregistered firearm is a violation of D.C. Code § 7-2502.01, and possession of ammunition without a registered firearm is a violation of D.C. Code § 7-2506.01. Both are generally punishable by imprisonment for not more than one year, a fine not more than \$1000, or both.

### **OI Investigation**

On April 17, 2012, the OI initiated a joint investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Joint Terrorism Task Force, Washington Field Office (JTTF), to identify the man and address any potential ongoing risks to NARA facilities and personnel.

#### **Interviews of Security Officers and the Chief of Security**

CSO2 provided details of the incident showing the Incident Report prepared by the guard supervisor was inaccurate. CSO2 stated while initially screening the man's bag, CSO2 only thought he observed ammunition. It was not until he reviewed the image after the man left Archives I that he saw a handgun. CSO2 stated he was "100 percent sure" he saw ammunition, and "80 percent sure" he saw a handgun when he reviewed the x-ray image. CSO1 also provided details of the incident differing from the Incident Report. CSO1 clarified he was unsure whether he saw ammunition on the x-ray image, and did not believe he saw a handgun. The Chief stated he did not see a weapon when he viewed

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<sup>2</sup> CSO1 and CSO2 hand checked items until the Chief responded approximately 30 minutes after the incident. Once the Chief reviewed the image, the CSOs began using the x-ray machine again.

the x-ray image, and he thought the contract security officers handled this incident appropriately.

#### Review of Available Video Footage

A review of video footage from the east and west-side Pennsylvania Avenue lobby security cameras confirmed the general activity described above. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] No footage was available from the exterior cameras outside the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance because the Genealogy Fair tent was blocking the cameras. A review of video footage from all Archives I exterior cameras, and from cameras on other buildings adjacent to Archives I, did not identify any additional footage of the individual.

#### Review of X-ray Image

The image of the unknown man's backpack on the x-ray machine was not recorded or saved, and could not be reviewed by the OI. While the x-ray machine does have an archive feature, the machine's control panel indicates this feature has not been activated. However, according to the manufacturer this feature should be available on the machine sold to NARA. The machine is clearly capable of keeping an image even after an item has been removed, as both the security officer supervisor and the Security Chief reviewed the image after the suspicious man left. However, no attempt was made to photograph or otherwise document the image of the backpack.

[REDACTED]

#### Review of Applicable Orders, Procedures and Statutes

##### Pennsylvania Avenue Lobby Security Orders

Contract security guards are given specific written instruction in how to carry out their duties in Security Post Orders and Special Security Orders (SSOs). The SSO for entrance screening procedures requires security officers to inspect bags and articles either physically or with the x-ray machine. If the search reveals a weapon, the security officer must then follow a different SSO titled "Weapons/Destructive Devices" which was updated December 19, 2011 (attached). Ammunition is considered a weapon in the SSOs.

When a search reveals a weapon or destructive device, the "Weapons/Destructive Devices" SSO requires security officers to consider the situation dangerous, immediately notify the supervisor and Security Control Center, and determine if the individual is authorized to legally possess the weapon. If the individual is not authorized to possess the weapon the security officer is required to follow the procedures in the SSO part entitled "(2) Possession of Unauthorized Weapons on NARA Property." Unfortunately, the SSO **does not** contain any such section.

Instead, the SSO only contains “(1) Possession of Authorized Weapons on NARA Property.” This part is broken down into inconsistently formatted lettered sections containing obvious omissions and irregularities. Regardless of the confused format, page five of the SSO does have a section titled “h. Ammunition. (The possession of ammunition without a registered firearm.)” This section states:

- *The S.O. will not authorize unregistered ammunition on NARA property.*
- *The S.O. will notify the supervisor and the Security Control Center of the incident.*
- *The Security Control Center will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and request their assistance.*
- *An Offense / Incident and Investigative Report (NA Form 6037) will be prepared.*

#### Special Police Officer Authority


All of the contract security officers at the Archives I building are Commissioned Special Police Officers (SPOs). While on duty SPOs have the same authority as an MPD police officer. That authority is limited to the particular place or property which the SPO is commissioned to protect (Archives I building and grounds in this case). However, a SPO may exercise their authority outside that particular property if they are in fresh pursuit of a criminal leaving the property.

#### **PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED**

The investigation revealed the following:

- The security officers failed to immediately notify the Security Control Center when CSO2 identified the ammunition, as required by the SSO. This prevented the Security Control Center from notifying MPD and requesting their assistance. Additionally, under their SPO authority, the security officers could have detained or arrested the unidentified man for violating D.C. Code § 7-2506.01 while they waited for MPD to respond.
- The security officers failed to take all the necessary precautions to mitigate the situation. The security officers allowed the man to regain control of a backpack CSO2 thought contained ammunition. This increased rather than mitigated the severity of a potentially dangerous situation.
- The “Weapons/Destructive Devices” SSO is incomplete, confusing and inconsistently formatted. The SSO also does not specifically require security officers to maintain custody over items they identify as suspicious using the x-ray machine.
- The security officers failed to properly identify the suspicious individual. The CSOs did not request or review the man’s picture identification. Additionally, when the unidentified man left the Archives I building for the final time, the security officers did not follow him to determine where he went. Direction of

travel and the time the individual left would have been useful in locating security footage from adjacent government facilities and in identifying the man.

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- The image archive feature was not activated on the x-ray machine in the Pennsylvania Avenue lobby, and no contract or NARA security personnel attempted to capture the image in another way. As a result, OI and JTTF could not independently review the image, and no image was available for potential prosecution.
- The Genealogy Fair tent obstructed the exterior camera view of the Archives I Pennsylvania Avenue entrance, so there was no video footage of the unidentified man leaving Archives I.
- The Incident Report prepared by the security supervisor was not consistent with details provided by the two CSOs involved in the incident.

#### **MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED:**

- Security officers should know how they are required to respond to weapons and destructive devices. OIG Audit Report No. 11-05 (Audit of NARA's Security Guard Contract for AI and AII) issued on February 18, 2011 recommended BX implement scenario based training to assess security officer knowledge and response. This incident further illustrates the need to test and assess the security officers understanding of their responsibilities.
- Update the SSOs to ensure they provide clear and accurate guidance to the security officers.
- Require security officers in the Security Control Room to take measures to more accurately record suspicious individuals, such as zooming in lobby cameras when a suspicious person has been identified.
- Consider reconfiguring the equipment used to record images of activity in the lobby to increase detail. This could be done by upgrading equipment or other measures. For instance, if the current digital video recorder system can support it, the resolution and frame rate of lobby recordings could be increased.
- Activate the x-ray image archive feature or similar functionality on all x-ray machines, and ensure all security officers are trained in how to properly use the machines. Any future procurement should address this functionality as well.

- Roof cameras at Archives I do not capture sufficient detail to identify individuals and record direction of travel. Other options should be considered, such as more exterior street level cameras.
- Ensure responding/involved contract security officers concur with Incident Reports prepared by guard supervisors.

Please provide a written response to these matters within 30 days of the date of this letter. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me or Matthew Elliott, my Assistant Inspector General for Investigations, at 301-837-2941. As with all OIG products, we will determine what information is publically posted on our website from this management letter. Should you or management have any redaction suggestions based on FOIA exemptions, please submit them to my counsel within one week from the date of this letter. Should we receive no response from you or management by this timeframe, we will interpret that as confirmation NARA does not desire any redactions to the posted report.



Paul Brachfeld  
Inspector General

Attachment:

Special Security Orders – Weapons/Destructive Devices; dated December 19, 2011; 5 pages

The attachment, pages 7 to 11, consisting of detailed Post Orders outlining responses for security guards to take in various situations has been redacted in full.