



Leabharlann  
Náisiúnta  
na hÉireann  
National Library  
of Ireland

24 October 2014

Ms Margaret Falsey  
Committee Secretariat  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2

Dear Ms Falsey,

I refer to your letter of 2 October last regarding the Public Accounts Committee's request for a note on the C&AG's financial statement on the National Library 2012.

Please find the note attached. If you have any additional queries then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Catherine Fahy'.

**Catherine Fahy**  
**Acting Director**



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## **Note on matters referred to in the C&AG financial statement on the National Library 2012 and mentioned at the PAC meeting of 2 October 2014.**

### **Theft of materials from the Library**

In August 2013 NLI senior staff discovered the loss of certain items from its collections. The matter was reported immediately to the Gardaí. The Library Board, along with officials of the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht were also immediately informed. Detectives from the Art and Antiques Unit of the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation commenced an investigation. In November 2013 reports appeared in the media that an employee of the Library had been arrested in connection with theft of material from the Library. A significant number of missing items were recovered. The matter is the subject of an ongoing Garda investigation. The Library will not be in a position to quantify losses until the investigation and any subsequent proceedings are concluded. The Library is not in a position to comment further at this stage.

Since the discovery of the loss, action has been taken in the Library to immediately restrict access to collections where possible. Additional access control measures were introduced, and a programme of stock checks of particular collections was initiated. The Library contains many valuable heritage collections, however those collections which the Library has identified as being of the highest monetary value are and have always been kept in the highest security conditions.

A review of security by the Crime Prevention Unit of An Garda Síochána was undertaken at the request of the Library and an additional review by two internationally recognised library security experts from the Royal Library in Copenhagen (who offered their services gratis) was also carried out. The initial drafts of the security reports have now been completed and will be finalised shortly.

It is clear that the Library requires additional staff resources and funding to ensure that effective security is in place for all of its heritage collections. A request for staff resources has been made to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. A request for the additional physical security measures necessary will follow.

A purpose-built repository would significantly enhance the overall security of the Library's collections, as well as ensuring the preservation of these collections. Library management are now engaged in the process of exploring options for a collaborative store or repository with colleagues in the libraries of Trinity College and UCD.



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## **Studentships**

Subsequent to the audit of the 2012 accounts, email correspondence dating from September 2010 between the Library and its overseeing Department came to light. Through an omission this correspondence had not been noted in the file which was available to Finance and HR staff in the Library or to the C&AG auditor. The correspondence indicates that the Library had proceeded with the studentships in 2011 – 12 on the basis that the studentships did not constitute actual appointments to any grade in the public service and so did not contravene the procedures for sanction. The relevant correspondence has now been forwarded to the C&AG.