

Sydney Opera House Policy

Title:	Lost and Found Property Policy
Policy Number:	SOH130
Effective Date:	8 August 2011
Authorisation:	Chief Executive
Authorisation Date:	22 July 2011
Superseded Policy:	N/A
Accountable Director:	Director, Marketing, Communications & Customer Services
Responsible Officer:	Head of Patron Services

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy describes the conditions and procedures for the handling, retention and disposal of lost and found property on Sydney Opera House premises.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Sydney Opera House staff and contractors. It also applies to staff of presenting partners, business partners and hirers working onsite at Sydney Opera House and other Sydney Opera House owned or operated premises. This policy has specific application to the members of Customer Service teams and the Emergency Planning and Response Group (EPRG) in relation to the proper management and disposal of found property.

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Found property** – Found property refers to items, including cash and other valuables that have been found on Sydney Opera House premises and reported to Sydney Opera House.
- 3.2 **Lost property** – Lost property refers to items, including cash and other valuables that have been reported as lost on Sydney Opera House premises.
- 3.3 **Claimed property** – Claimed property is defined as items of found property which have been claimed either by the owner or the finder.

4 POLICY

General

- 4.1 Sydney Opera House will only manage property found within the organisation's owned or operated facilities. Sydney Opera House has no legal right or obligation to manage property found outside its facilities.
- 4.2 All property entrusted to Sydney Opera House will be safeguarded and all reasonable attempts will be made to return items of found property to the rightful owners. Sydney Opera House recognises finders may acquire a legal claim to items of found property in the event the rightful owner is not identified.
- 4.3 Host Team members are responsible for the receipt and registration of found property from visitors, patrons and staff and for the safe custody of items of low value (e.g. umbrellas, books etc.). Operational Security Officers (OSOs) and Emergency Operations Duty Managers (EODMs) are responsible for the safe custody of items of significant/high value (e.g. wallets, jewellery, cameras etc.), and individual sums of money found.

- 4.4 EPRG managers may delegate responsibility for managing lost and found property to a staff member. All staff under contract to EPRG Security act for and on behalf of Sydney Opera House and will handle lost and found property in accordance with this policy.

Property found onsite

- 4.5 All found items will be registered in the Lost Property Register along with details of the finder. Items will be tagged for identification purposes and information regarding the storage, claims and disposal maintained.
- 4.6 All items determined to be of significant/high value (except money) will be conveyed to the police for management and disposal. Items of low value will be stored within the Lost Property Locker and disposed of in accordance with standard procedures (see *Lost and Found Property Procedures*).

Note: Determinations of whether an item may be of significant or high value will be made by the EODM or delegate and may be in conjunction with the advice of relevant persons.

- 4.7 Any dangerous goods received will be immediately conveyed to an appropriate authority (e.g. Fire Brigade).
- 4.8 Where an individual sum of money (Australian or foreign currency) is handed in, the money will be counted and recorded in the Lost Property Register in accordance with standard procedures (see *Lost and Found Property Procedures*). All money will be transferred to Financial Services where it will be held for a period of no more than three months.

Claims for property

- 4.9 When a claim is made for lost property, the claimant will be required to provide evidence of ownership (i.e. identification) and to describe the item in question. Decisions to release items to claimants will be made by the relevant Host Team Member (low value items) or Security Officer (significant/high value items and money). Details of claimants and staff authorising the release of property will be recorded and items will only be released upon signature of the claimant.
- 4.10 When a claim is made for an item of significant/high value that has been conveyed to the police, the claimant will be referred directly to the police who will make a decision regarding the release of the item.
- 4.11 Where a claim is made for property held in a Sydney Opera House cloakroom without a corresponding ticket for that item, the claimant will be required to provide proof of identification, describe the item and sign for the item in question.

A superficial description is not sufficient. Claimants must be able to provide a deeper level of proof of ownership, such as a description of the content of a bag or pockets of a coat. Where this level of description cannot be provided, claimants are to be asked to wait until all other items have been collected before the item will be released.

Retention and disposal

- 4.12 Unclaimed property held by Sydney Opera House will be retained for a period of four (4) months. Items deemed to be of nil value may be disposed of immediately. Retention and disposal of high value items referred to the police will be determined by the police.
- 4.13 At the end of the disposal period, and having established that Sydney Opera House has obtained legal title to the property, unclaimed property will be disposed of or donated to charity as outlined in the *Lost and Found Property Procedures*. Under no circumstances will unclaimed property of nil or low value be appropriated by staff for their personal use.

- 4.14 Unclaimed monies will be held by Sydney Opera House for a period not exceeding three months. At the end of this period, any unclaimed monies will be transferred as follows:
- Single amounts up to and including \$100 will be transferred to the Sydney Opera House Annual Giving Fund.
 - Single amounts above \$100 will be transferred to the Office of State Revenue.

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

- 5.1 All found property is to be handed to the Host Team at stage door for receipt and processing. This includes property found by visitors, patrons, guests and staff members.
- 5.2 Enquiries regarding lost property are to be made to the Host Team at stage door.
- 5.3 Procedures for the handling and disposal of lost found property and money by staff apply as described in the *Lost and Found Property Procedures*. This includes information on receipt of property, registration and records, claims to property and retention/disposal.

5 ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 6.1 Emergency Operations Duty Managers are responsible for:
- Liaising with Host Team members, OSOs, Finance Officers and claimants regarding lost and found property on Sydney Opera House premises.
 - Making determinations regarding items of high value and subsequent referral to the police in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.
 - Making determinations regarding individual sums of money lost on site.
 - Authorisation and directions for the disposal of unclaimed items.
 - Maintaining the Lost Property Registers and appropriate records as required.
 - Ensuring all staff under their direction are aware of and abide by the Lost and Found property policy and procedures.
- 6.2 Host Team members are responsible for:
- Handling enquiries regarding lost and found property from visitors, patrons and staff;
 - Receipt and registration of all items of found property;
 - Storage and maintenance of items of low value and referral to EPRG for disposal;
 - Liaising with EPRG Security for the management and storage of items of significant or high value and individual sums of money;
 - Maintaining the Found Property Register and ensuring the completeness of entries in the register; and
 - Assessing and managing claims for low value items in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.
- 6.3 Operational Security Officers are responsible for:
- Storage of all found items of significant or high value at the direction of the EODM
 - Liaison with police for the collection of items of significant/high value;
 - Disposal of items in accordance with this policy and the directions/authorisation of EPRG management; and
 - Providing assistance and advice to Host Team members as required.

6.4 Finance Officers are responsible for:

- The management of unclaimed monies, including receipt, storage, retention and disposal of individual sums of money.
- Liaising with EPRG to ensure information on individual sums of lost money, retention and disposal is accurately recorded in the Lost Property Register
- Liaising with EPRG in relation to any claims for monies
- Reporting on all unclaimed monies in accordance with Financial Services reporting processes and procedures.

6.5 All staff are responsible for adhering to the policy in handling any items of property found on Sydney Opera House premises. Staff are responsible for directing any enquiries regarding lost and found property by visitors and patrons to the Host Team.

6.6 The Head of Security, Emergency Planning and Response is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

6 REFERENCES

Sydney Opera House *Code of Conduct*

APPROVED



Chief Executive

Date: 22 July 2011

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Approval	Details/Comments
1.0	Jan 2011	EPRG		Draft
1.1	Feb 2011	EPRG		Draft 2
1.2	March 2011	EPRG		Draft 3
1.3	April 2011	EPRG		Draft 4
1.4	July 2011	EPRG		Draft 5