

IMMUNITY FROM SEIZURE REPORT

In 2007 the Government brought in legislation (under Part 6 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007) to provide immunity from seizure for objects from abroad to temporary exhibitions. Museums mounting temporary exhibitions were invited to apply to the DCMS for approval under the Act. The Gallery prepared its application during the first half of 2008, which was approved by the Minister of State in September 2008.

The application process involved reviewing provenance research and due diligence procedures, as well as establishing a more detailed procedure within defined timelines. Provenance research is initially undertaken as early as possible by the relevant curators. A checklist is completed for each object and any gaps in provenance are carefully considered. Each object record in the collection management database is updated and, finally, details of the objects requiring immunity from seizure together with details of the research and decision are published on the National Gallery website at least four weeks and one day before the objects are imported into the UK. The DCMS 2005 publication *Combating Illicit Trade: Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives on Collecting and Borrowing Cultural Material* was a useful source of information throughout the application process.

The application process had a positive effect: it enabled a general refreshing of the Gallery's provenance research and due diligence procedures, as well as related training practices. It also led to the Gallery reviewing procedures dealing with the risks of seizure of its own pictures while on loan overseas.

Exhibitions including protected items (October 2008 – January 2010)

Renaissance Faces: Van Eyck to Titian

15 October 2008 – 18 January 2009

3 paintings, 1 bronze sculpture, 2 medals

Sisley in England and Wales

12 November 2008 – 15 February 2009

3 paintings

Picasso: Challenging the Past

25 February – 7 June 2009

7 paintings

The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600–1700

21 October 2009 – 24 January 2010

2 paintings, 1 polychrome sculpture

No enquiries or claims were received under Section 7 of the Protection of Cultural Objects on Loan (Publication and Provision of Information) Regulations 2008.