INTRODUCTION

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is a nationwide system across England and Wales (but not Northern Ireland, Scotland or the British Crown Dependencies). Through the presence of regional Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs), the PAS provides an opportunity for the voluntary recording of chance archaeological finds and discoveries by members of the public. In practice, most people using the service are metal detecting enthusiasts. In the United Kingdom the metal detecting hobby has a long history, dating back to at least the 1960s, and my own doctoral research reached an estimate of between 15,449 and 16,777 metal detecting enthusiasts in England and Wales, with a possible total of between 16,196 and 17,525 for the whole of the UK (Thomas 2012a: 59). By contrast, Roger Bland, who founded the PAS, has recently estimated the total number in England and Wales to be around 9,000 (2014). Factors such as the tendency for some metal detecting enthusiasts to be members of more than one metal detecting club, along with an unknown number of what have been termed 'lonely wolves' (Rasmussen 2014), working independently and perhaps secretively of recognized clubs, mean that such estimates have severe limitations. Nonetheless, it is clear that the number of people metal detecting as a hobby is significant in England and Wales, and goes some way to explaining why a system such as the PAS is important, even essential.

In this brief paper I will outline firstly the legal context within the UK and England and Wales, how the PAS developed (and why), how it functions in practice, and finally I will offer some insights into some of the more common criticisms and even threats that the PAS has faced.

LEGAL CONTEXT

Other parts of the UK

The UK consists of a number of different countries, with different legal systems in place in each of the different jurisdictions. Hence, in regard to portable archaeological heritage, Scotland has a different set of laws pertaining to portable antiquities, following a system of treasure trove which is more exhaustive in its coverage than the legislation in other parts of the UK (Campbell 2013). In Northern Ireland too, there are differences in the law. The Treasure Act 1996, described in outline below, operates in Northern Ireland as it does in England and Wales. However, in

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1 To find out more, also visit http://www.treasuretrovescotland.co.uk.
addition there are further restrictions on intrusive investigations of archaeological areas, including by users of metal detectors, that do not exist in other parts of the UK (Hurl 2009: 101), with elements similar to both UK legislation and that of the Republic of Ireland (Kador 2014: 37). PAS, which complements the Treasure Act 1996 in England and Wales, does not operate in Northern Ireland. Much smaller in both population and area, but with yet more varieties of legislation, are the British Crown Dependencies, namely the Isle of Man, the Bailiwick of Guernsey (consisting of Guernsey, Alderney, Herm, Sark and some smaller islands), and the Bailiwick of Jersey. These all have their own versions of treasure trove, which are similar to the treasure trove common law that operated in England and Wales before the introduction of the Treasure Act 1996 (see Fox 2013 for a discussion of the treasure legislation on the Isle of Man).

The Treasure Act 1996

The Treasure Act 1996 came into force in September 1997, and operates across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It replaced the old common law of treasure trove, and provided clearer guidance and definition of what constitutes 'Treasure' in a legal sense, in areas where the Treasure Act 1996 is in force. Other laws in England and Wales also affect the use of metal detectors, including the designation of areas of archaeological significance where metal detecting without permission is a criminal offence, under Section 42 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (Fincham 2008: 354). Illegal metal detecting, a subject worthy of its own paper, is known colloquially as 'night-hawking' in the UK, and has been summarized elsewhere (e.g. Campbell and Thomas 2012).

The definition of Treasure, provided by the Treasure Act 1996, is as follows:

1. Treasure is—
   (a) any object at least 300 years old when found which—
      (i) is not a coin but has metallic content of which at least 10 per cent by weight is precious metal;
      (ii) when found, is one of at least two coins in the same find which are at least 300 years old at that time and have that percentage of precious metal; or
      (iii) when found, is one of at least ten coins in the same find which are at least 300 years old at that time;
   (b) any object at least 200 years old when found which belongs to a class designated under section 2(1);
   (c) any object which would have been treasure trove if found before the commencement of section 4.
   (d) any object which, when found, is part of the same find as—
      (i) an object within paragraph (a), (b) or (c) found at the same time or earlier; or
      (ii) an object found earlier which would be within paragraph (a) or (b) if it had been found at the same time.

2. Treasure does not include objects which are—
   (a) unworked natural objects, or
   (b) minerals as extracted from a natural deposit, or which belong to a class designated under section 2(2). (HMSO 1996)
In addition, the *Treasure (Designation) Order 2002* added further definitions to Treasure for items found after 1 January 2003:

The following classes of objects are designated pursuant to section 2(1) of the Act.

(a) any object (other than a coin), any part of which is base metal, which, when found is one of at least two base metal objects in the same find which are of prehistoric date;

(b) any object, (other than a coin) which is of prehistoric date, and any part of which is gold or silver. (HMSO 2002)

Under the Act, finders of objects that may be Treasure must report these finds to the local Coroner (although this process can also be facilitated by the local FLO), within fourteen days of discovery. A decision is made as to whether the discovery is in fact Treasure, and if so, a local museum or the national museum (National Museum of Wales for finds made in Wales, or the British Museum for finds made in England), has the right to purchase the find or assemblage for their collection. If they do not want to acquire the find, the discoverer is free to do with it what they wish (although if they have made a finders agreement with the landowner they may have to split any profit made with them). If a museum is interested in the find, the services of the Treasure Valuation Committee – members from archaeological and legal backgrounds – are used in order to establish the market value of the discovery. This is to ensure that the payment to the finder, their reward, is consistent with current market trends, with advice given by members of the antiques and antiquities market.

As Bland (2013) explains:

The reward is normally divided equally between the finder and landowner. The Committee is advised by a panel of valuers drawn from the trade, and interested parties can commission their own valuations which the committee will consider. The reward can be reduced or not paid at all if there is evidence of wrongdoing on the part of the finder or the landowner. Once a valuation has been agreed museums have up to four months to raise money. Archaeologists are not eligible for rewards. Not all finds reported as Treasure are acquired by museums and indeed about 60% of all cases are now disclaimed and returned to the finder who is free to dispose of them as he wishes.

Failure to report a find that is Treasure may result in imprisonment for up to three months, a fine, or both (Fincham 2008: 353).

There have been various debates concerning the different merits of the *Treasure Act 1996*, for example Addyman and Brodie (2002: 179) maintained that laws in the UK continue to be 'permissive', while Carman (2005: 22) has commented that 'the practical effect of the English law of Treasure was always to deal with objects as if the precious metal of which they were made was the important thing about them'. From a legal perspective Ulph (2012: 89) has noted that, for objects that fall outside of the legal definition of Treasure, such as the famous Crosby Garrett Helmet discovered in Cumbria in 2010, there is little provision in the law to curtail the sale of archaeologically significant pieces to private collectors rather than to museums.

Despite these concerns, the *Treasure Act 1996* is important, not only for providing legal guidance for the treatment of particular categories of archaeological finds, but also...
for providing the backdrop for the concurrent formation of the PAS. The PAS was designed to come into operation, at least as a pilot scheme, at the same time that the new law was enacted.

**HISTORY OF THE PAS**

Before the PAS was formed, archaeologists had tried various approaches towards 'dealing' with metal detecting enthusiasts. The metal detector used by hobbyists derives from mine detection devices used by the military. Metal detecting as a hobby seems to have appeared in the USA sometime in the 1940s (Cornelison and Smith 2009: 33). Later, in the 1960s, the first publicly available metal detectors started appearing in the UK, with the earliest detectors being imported from the USA (Thomas 2009a: 184). By the time of the 1970s, the hobby had grown significantly, and discussions were already underway among different organizations concerned with archaeological heritage, such as the Council for British Archaeology and the Museums Association, over how to respond to this proliferation of individuals digging into known and unknown archaeological sites and features.

On 12th March 1980, a coalition of seven core heritage organizations (with many more voicing their support) launched the STOP Campaign. This stood for 'Stop Taking Our Past' (Figure 1), and while it tried to raise awareness of the damage caused by metal detecting for 'treasure', many have argued that it ultimately failed in its goals (e.g. Bland 2005: 441). In comparison, the metal detecting enthusiasts, having recently formed a national association, and with communication possible through their specialist magazines, launched a counter-campaign called DIG – Detector Information Group. Achievements of this group included coordinating, through magazine articles, numerous letters to Members of Parliament by metal detecting enthusiasts, causing questions to be asked in Parliament. In addition, they held a rally in Parliament Square and handed in a petition to the Prime Minister’s office in Downing Street (DIG 2003).

These events, and others, are described in more detail elsewhere (e.g. Thomas 2012b), but are mentioned here to give an idea of the tensions that existed between archaeologists and metal detecting enthusiasts before the emergence of the PAS. As mentioned above, the PAS came into being at the same time as the new *Treasure Act* 1996, in fact in September 1997. The case made in Parliament for passing the new law was greatly assisted by a significant case of looting that had taken place in the 1980s. When the Romano-British site at Wanborough in Surrey, southern England, was set upon by countless nighthawks, the damage was quick and profound. Some estimated that up to £2 million worth of archaeological treasures may have disappeared, without provenance, onto the international market from that one site (Hanworth 1995: 173), and while it took another
ten years for change, this event is largely regarded as a significant one in the long history of campaigns to change the law of treasure trove.

It was fortuitous that members of the Surrey Archaeological Society, amateur archaeology enthusiasts active in the same county as Wanborough, had at that time Viscountess Hanworth as their President. Hanworth was connected to many important figures in the House of Lords, and it was an associate of hers, Lord Perth, who agreed to propose the Treasure Bill in Parliament. The Treasure Bill, sometimes called the Perth Bill or the Surrey Bill after Lord Perth or the Surrey Archaeological Society respectively, took a further two years from its initial introduction in 1994 to make its progress through the two Houses of Parliament to eventually become law. That is not to say that other events did not also have an impact. For example, a report by the Council for British Archaeology, commissioned by English Heritage, on the extent and nature of metal detecting in England (Dobinson and Denison 1995) was also significant and was cited several times in the parliamentary debates. This report, which estimated metal detecting enthusiasts to numbers around 30,000 at that time, also highlighted a number of other significant archaeological sites that had been victim to nighthawking. These included Corbridge in Northumberland and Gestingthorpe in Essex (Dobinson and Denison 1995).

The success of the Bill was remarkable, given that it had begun as a Private Members Bill (these traditionally have less chance of success than, for example Government Bills that automatically have the support of the government). However, much like the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, which originated from a Private Members Bill from a member of the House of Commons, its sentiment and message were timely. In the case of the Treasure Bill, this included that the shortcomings in the treasure trove system were highlighted by the subsequent criminal trials around the looting of Wanborough (see Thomas 2009b). In the case of the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Bill, the 2003 looting by nighthawks of Yeavering Bell in Northumberland (Standing Committee Debates 2003) as well as the recent allied invasion of Iraq (and the subsequent damage to and loss of cultural heritage – Stone 2005: 941), were fresh in people's minds.

Therefore, conditions had to be conducive to the introduction of the Treasure Act 1996. It was also known that, while the new Act represented a significant improvement on treasure trove, there were still many different types of artefact that would not be protected and subject to obligatory reporting under law. Metal detecting hobby representatives were actively involved in discussions concerning the Treasure Bill through the National Council of Metal Detecting, after having expressed concern at what the implications of the draft law might be for them (Bland 2005: 442). They made it clear that they would not support a push for obligatory reporting of all finds, and after an analysis of responses to a Portable Antiquities discussion document, the government agreed to fund a pilot scheme, initially in just six regions (Bland 2005: 445). So, in 1997 the PAS began, first as a pilot scheme hosted by organisations in six different regions of England: Kent County Council, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, North Lincolnshire Museums, Liverpool Museum, Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery and Yorkshire Museum (Clark 2008: 10). By 1999, the scheme expanded further, including coverage in Wales, and in 2003 the PAS was rolled out to cover all regions of England and Wales. Currently there are 36 FLOs (PAS 2014a).
HOW PAS WORKS

The PAS, then, very clearly works in partnership with the established law of the *Treasure Act* 1996. Its role is essentially to facilitate the recording of those archaeological objects which are not protected by law in some way, but which still add value to our knowledge of the past if they are properly recorded.

The network of FLOs act as local points of contact for individuals wishing to record archaeological objects that they have found. If considered to be 'archaeological' (for PAS this usually has to be objects over 300 years old – PAS 2014b), the objects will be recorded, taking details such as photographs and measurements, and crucially, the coordinates of the find spot. As mentioned above too, the FLO can take a role in processing objects designated as Treasure under the *Treasure Act* 1996, in addition to recording the data from non-Treasure finds.

While the PAS is coordinated by the British Museum (with the National Museum of Wales), the FLOs are hosted by a network of different organizations across the country. These can be museum services, local authority offices, or even university departments. In addition to the extensive amount of data entry that FLOs have to undertake in order to feed their recordings into the Finds Database (http://finds.org.uk/database), they also carry out a lot of outreach work, in order to connect with the groups (largely, but not only, metal detector enthusiasts) within their respective regions. Among other things, finds days are held at local museums and heritage sites, FLOs attend regional events such as English Heritage's Festival of History (recently rebranded as 'History Live!') in Northamptonshire in order to raise awareness about the PAS, and naturally FLOs also go to the places where they will find the most metal detecting enthusiasts. This includes visiting many of the local metal detecting group 'club nights', where members bring their recent finds for the FLO to record. Many of these club nights take place in the evening, often in a local pub or working men's club. FLOs also frequently attend metal detecting rallies – events considered controversial due to the high scale of metal detecting taking place over a relative-

![Figure 2. Metal detecting rally near Methven, Perthshire, Scotland, in October 2012. Unlike English rallies, rallies in Scotland tend to be smaller; this rally had around 50 participants. Image courtesy of Scottish Treasure Trove Unit, National Museums Scotland.](image-url)
ly small area (rallies, which usually cover a whole weekend, can range in numbers from 100s to 1,000s of attendees). These events are not illegal, even in Scotland where the legislation is arguably stricter (Figure 2), and so the presence of FLOs, often supported by student volunteers and FLOs from neighbouring regions, in effect ensures that at least some of the finds are recorded (hopefully with accurate coordinates), perhaps best seen as a form of 'damage limitation'.

In addition to this, FLOs have an educational role to their work, and some visit schools or give talks to local history and archaeology groups. Many also contribute to university teaching, and are research active in their own right. A number of current FLOs are carrying out doctoral research that makes use of the PAS Database, while other former FLOs have gone on to academic positions at the British Museum, the University of Reading, the University of York, and other institutions.

FLOs are also supported by six Finds Advisors providing expert knowledge on specific categories of artefact, an illustrator, an ICT advisor, a Resources Manager, and the Head and Deputy Head of the Scheme (PAS 2014a). Some of the Finds Advisors are based in different parts of the country, but the core central team are based in the British Museum in London. In addition to the paid staff, volunteers (including students, retired people and even metal detecting enthusiasts) support the work of the PAS in different ways.

Describing its Aims and Objectives, PAS states:

The Portable Antiquities Scheme is a partnership project which records archaeological objects found by the public in order to advance our understanding of the past.

In order to do this the Scheme:
- promotes the maximum public interest and benefit from the recovery, recording and research of portable antiquities;
- promotes best practice by finders/landowners and archaeologists/museums in the discovery, recording and conservation of finds made by the public
- in partnership with museums and others, raises awareness among the public, including young people, of the educational value of recording archaeological finds in their context and facilitate research in them
- creates partnerships between finders and museums/archaeologists to increase participation in archaeology and advance our understanding of the past
- supports the Treasure Act, and increase opportunities for museums to acquire archaeological finds for public benefit.

In order to fulfil the aims of the Scheme staff:
- maintain an online database and promote it as a resource for education and research
- hold outreach events, such as finds days, attend metal detecting club meetings and give talks to national and local group and societies;
- facilitate displays of finds recorded by the Scheme in museums and elsewhere
- help finders to fulfil their obligations under the Treasure Act
- and publish an annual report and other publications in print and online. (PAS 2014a).

EVALUATING PAS

Those in support of PAS have highlighted the perceived benefits from the scheme, includ-
ing the measurable increase in the reporting of Treasure finds since its inception (Bland 2014). However, PAS has not been without its critics over the years either. The coverage in Wales, for example, is far less extensive than in England. Where England has a network of regional FLOs, in Wales there is only one FLO, who is based in Cardiff in the south of the country. Four Trust Liaison Officers act as liaison officers for PAS, but have other demands on their time within the four Welsh archaeological trusts\(^2\) as well.

Over the years, there have been a number of reviews of the scheme. The first of these was published in 2001, and was, in essence, a review of the first, pilot, stage of the scheme. One of the recommendations indicated that the data collected by PAS, especially if made available to cross-reference with other sources of archaeological information, could become of relevance and usable to a range of different audiences, including schools and community projects (Chitty 2001: 46). The report recognized the interests of the wider public, not only metal detector users. In addition, it stated that, 'the relationships between detectorists... ...and archaeologists were neither productive nor developing positively except in a few areas' prior to the scheme (Chitty 2001: 5). The report reflected on the suspicions that remained among many metal detecting enthusiasts, despite the existence of the PAS by this time. It identified concerns that, 'the rights and activities of detectorists might be limited by volunteering information about discoveries', and that archaeologists exhibited misunderstandings about the information potential of the data provided by metal-detector users (Chitty 2001: 5).

A 2004 review of the PAS focussed on the results of a questionnaire survey distributed via the PAS website and through PAS staff and networks to target groups such as metal detecting enthusiasts, archaeologists, academics and school teachers and pupils (Chitty and Edwards 2004: 11). Recommendations included the development of a code of practice for responsible detecting (Chitty and Edwards 2004: 4), the development of which the CBA coordinated, with a code published two years later (CBA et al. 2006). Another recommendation, for the support of 'a new project to assess the impact of nighthawk activity' (Chitty and Edwards 2004: 4), also came to fruition in 2009 (Oxford Archaeology 2009).

Two years later, the questionnaire survey was repeated with minor modifications, with the aim of tracking whether attitudes towards PAS had changed (Edwards 2006: 4). Results indicated that, while the public remained the most 'convinced of the Scheme's progress towards its aims', archaeologists were still more sceptical than other respondents (Edwards 2006: 4).

It seems that the intention was to repeat the survey again in 2008, 'as a means of assessing progress towards the aims' of PAS (Edwards 2006: 7). Instead, a review was commissioned by the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to assess the effectiveness of the PAS (Clark 2008). The report acknowledged that it was written in relative haste, without the benefit of sufficient time for a more comprehensive review of a wider range of evidence relating to the performance of the PAS (Clark 2008: 5). Hence, there was no questionnaire survey. Nonetheless, the report captures a snapshot of some contemporary attitudes towards PAS, the majority of which are positive. For example, it reported that the PAS 'appears to be well-liked, delivering genuine partnership and good value... ...and archaeologists were neither productive nor developing positively except in a few areas' prior to the scheme (Chitty 2001: 5). The report reflected on the suspicions that remained among many metal detecting enthusiasts, despite the existence of the PAS by this time. It identified concerns that, 'the rights and activities of detectorists might be limited by volunteering information about discoveries', and that archaeologists exhibited misunderstandings about the information potential of the data provided by metal-detector users (Chitty 2001: 5).

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\(^2\) The four Welsh Archaeological Trusts are Gwynnedd Archaeological Trust, Clywd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust and Dyfed Archaeological Trust, respectively.
for money' (Clark 2008: 38). However, it also made recommendations to improve the scheme, such as changing its aims to reflect its relationship with museums, and developing more of a community-based recording capacity (Clark 2008: 6). Another recommendation was that, 'advisers should focus outreach on involving finders and other volunteers in the work of the scheme, including recording, education and promotion' (Clark 2008: 6). This has happened in more recent years, with some metal detecting enthusiasts now self-recording on the PAS Database (see for example Bryan 2010).

In 2007, in part explaining the short notice given for Clark's evaluation report, serious questions were raised about the future of the scheme by the MLA. There was speculation that PAS would at the very least lose its central unit (British Archaeology 2008: 7). The funding issues led to the loss of the post of Learning Coordinator, as well as two Finds Assistants. In fact, the proposal was to freeze funding (HL Deb 28th January 2008, col. 5), but, in light of inflation, this freeze was effectively a cut as other costs continued to rise.

The threat posed to the PAS by Government spending plans revealed widespread support for the scheme. Lord Renfrew, a prominent archaeologist from the University of Cambridge, contributed an article in The Guardian newspaper in support of the PAS (2007). In addition, an e-petition to send to Number 10 (the Prime Minister's Office website – see www.number10.gov.uk) was devised, 'to preserve and invest in the Portable Antiquities Scheme' (Haughton 2008). This petition was signed by 2080 individuals. While administrators of metal detecting website and discussion forum United Kingdom Detector Net (UKDN) initiated the petition, concerned at the implications for metal detecting, signatures came from professional archaeologists and the wider public too. A group was set up on Facebook called 'Save the Portable Antiquity Scheme', and there was an Early Day Motion (EDM) in Parliament on 12th December 2007:

That this House recognises the great contribution of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) to transforming the archaeological map of Britain by proactively recording archaeological finds made by the public; celebrates the fact that in 10 years the scheme has recorded on its public database more than 300,000 archaeological finds, which would not have otherwise been reported, for the benefit of all; expresses concern at the likely impact of funding cuts proposed for the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), following the recent Comprehensive Spending Review, on the PAS; and urges the Government to ensure that the scheme is at least able to maintain its current levels of activity and to consider urgently whether MLA offers the best home for the PAS or whether another body, such as the British Museum, would not be better placed to provide PAS with a long-term sustainable future.

(Loughton 2008)

The EDM attracted 229 signatures, making it the 18th most popular EDM of the Parliamentary session (out of 2727 EDMs).

LOOKING AHEAD

Returning to the 2008 evaluation of PAS, Recommendation 7 was, 'do more to build skills in community engagement. Skills in
community engagement are just as relevant for FLOs as finds expertise. This needs to be taken into account when recruiting and consideration should be given to more formal training and guidance in this field for FLOs' (Clark 2008: 7). Many FLOs of course do have excellent relationships with their local communities, and have spent years building trust between themselves and local metal detecting clubs. Nonetheless, this recommendation in 2008 highlights the importance of selecting individuals with the social and communication skills necessary for a job of this nature. While finds identification is an extremely important aspect of the job, so-called 'soft skills', required for successful social interaction, are absolutely essential for the PAS to succeed, especially given the troubled history of archaeologist/metal detecting enthusiast relationships in the UK in the past. Metal detecting is still controversial within the archaeological community, and some metal detecting enthusiasts still exhibit suspicion towards the motivations of the PAS. Hence, an individual who was not naturally outgoing, but was easily offended, might not be a suitable candidate to be a FLO. This would be particularly true if they had personal doubts about engaging with a community who will not always share the same opinions as them regarding the treatment of archaeological heritage.

There are still some concerns from the archaeological community regarding the effectiveness of the PAS. Gill, for example, has suggested that in reality very few metal detecting enthusiasts may be actually engaging with the scheme (2010: 3), although Moshenska (2010: 24) has countered this criticism by reminding us that the scheme is voluntary, not compulsory. Fincham (2008: 353) has also suggested that the related practice of paying rewards for certain finds under the Treasure Act 1996 may have a 'consequence of incentivizing metal detecting'.

In terms of the actual quality of recording too, questions must inevitably be asked about accuracy. Some finders report their find locations in only vague terms, for example only to parish level (Clark 2008: 17). Despite that, archaeological research has been carried out based on the data that can be gleaned from the PAS Database, even taking into account the biases caused by different frequencies of metal detecting activity in different parts of the country (e.g. Robbins 2013). I would add a personal reservation about the PAS Database, and possibly an unfair one although it is not possible to tell, that we are limited in nearly all instances to knowing the find spot only from what the finder chooses to tell FLOs and the Database. I am in no doubt that many do report accurate find spots, but the truth is that we can never know for certain how many find spots are genuine, and how many may be fabricated in order to create a more respectable find spot for an object that was perhaps found on restricted land. This concern is not shared by all, and I have been told by some PAS staff the effort that a metal detecting enthusiast must go to in order to record their find spots means that they are unlikely to go to such lengths if they were then going to provide falsified data. On the other hand, I have also noticed that the reference code for an object in the PAS Database is often cited in online auctions and auction catalogues as a means of providing provenance for an object up for sale. This would suggest a financial incentive for recording with the PAS, as the authentication provided by the Database may be used in providing a legitimation in the commercial sector for otherwise dubiously obtained cultural objects. This is, of course, a very sceptical standpoint, but nonetheless it must be considered.

Whatever misgivings there may be about the PAS and its effectiveness, is perhaps in-
dicates of the esteem in which the PAS is held by a reasonable number of people (or perhaps at least the recognition that, in England and Wales, we would be worse off without a PAS), that when it faced significant threat to its funding in 2007–2008 public response and support was such that it survived. Furthermore, other countries have, at times, looked to the PAS as a possible model for their own nations, and I have seen discussions of this at a number of European Association of Archaeologists conferences. I am not sure whether a straight copy of the PAS is the answer for other countries, since they operate with different jurisdictions and often different cultural attitudes to both archaeology and metal detecting. However, the importance of keeping a dialogue with the metal detecting community cannot be over-staged.

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