Security and Privacy Sample Questions

1. Does the RFID tag have a portion of memory that can be locked (for item number) and a portion that can be re-programmed?
2. What encryption methodologies are available for your RFID tags?
3. Does the RFID tag have or not have a pre-programmed number that would be rendered redundant by unique library item number?
4. Do your RFID tags contain a manufacturer burned-in static ID number that cannot be changed by the library, such as for use in a collision-avoidance protocol?
5. Do your tags have a completely silent mode? Can they be "reawakened" from that mode?
6. What information can still be read in the "silent mode" Is there a static identifier built into the chips, such as manufacturer or customer number?
7. Are there access controls, like passwords or keys, which prevent unauthorized readers from reading the tags? If so, do authorized readers first authenticate themselves to the tags, or do tags reveal their IDs first?
8. If passwords or keys protect the RFID tags from unauthorized reading, are the same passwords or keys used by all of your systems, so that one library's readers can read another library's tags? Or are passwords or keys different for each of your systems?
9. If the system uses passwords or keys, how does a reader know which password or key to use? Do readers contain all passwords or keys?
10. Describe the encryption algorithm used with your system in a wireless environment.
11. Who can write to the tags?
12. How can tags be locked so that unauthorized parties cannot write to them?
13. Can the Security Bit be locked by an unauthorized party so that the library cannot unlock it again?
14. Do your tags support the option of writing a random ID to the tag on every checkout, with the library database retaining a map of the random ID to the item's number?
15. How do you address privacy concerns? Please detail.

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Permission was granted to publish this section from the Radio Frequency Identification and the San Francisco Public Library Summary Report, prepared by the San Francisco Public Library Technology and Privacy Advisory Committee, October 2005.

To see the entire Summary Report, please visit:
http://sfpl.lib.ca.us/librarylocations/libtechcomm/RFID-and-SFPL-summary-report-oct2005.pdf