ProtectUK

Martyn’s Law Update - Government publish legislation draft

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On Tuesday 2nd May, the Home Office published a draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill. The new draft law will ensure that the UK will be better prepared for, and protected from, terrorist attacks.

The draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill sets out the requirements that, under Martyn’s Law, venues and other organisations will have to meet to ensure public safety. ‘Martyn’s Law’ is a tribute to Martyn Hett who was killed alongside 21 others in the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017.

The draft bill will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the Home Affairs Select Committee, ahead of formal introduction.

In December 2022, the government announced that Martyn’s Law will introduce a tiered model for certain locations depending on the capacity of the premises or event and the activity taking place, to prevent unnecessary burden to business. The legislation will ensure venues are prepared for, and ready to respond in the event of, an attack.

Security Minister Tom Tugendhat said:

> *“The threat from terrorism is enduring. In recent years, we have seen terrorists target the public at a broad range of locations, causing deaths and casualties amongst innocent people going about their everyday lives.*
>
> *“This is a significant step forward for Martyn’s Law and our ability to further protect the public. I welcome the committee’s scrutiny to ensure that this legislation is proportionate while enhancing our national security.”*

Figen Murray, mother of Martyn Hett, said:

> *“Today is an important step forward to a safer country. Martyn’s Law will end the ridiculous situation where venues have legal obligations for how many toilets they have but no obligation to keep their customers protected.*
>
> *“Of course Martyn’s Law won’t stop all terror attacks, but it will make crowded places better protected and prepared, and make the terrorists’ job that bit harder.*
>
> *“Almost six years after the Manchester Arena attack it’s now critical this bill is passed into law as quickly as possible and in the strongest form possible.”*

British Retail Consortium Assistant Director, Graham Wynn, said:

> *“Given the number of retail premises, Martyn’s Law is particularly relevant to retailers. We have appreciated the Home Office’s willingness to make adjustments to the bill - such as the move to make capacity the basis to meet changing needs - as well as make it more practical and proportionate.*
>
> *“It will be important to ensure all operational details work effectively - such as how the tiers operate at the margins. After closer examination of the detail, we look forward to the opportunity to provide additional suggestions as appropriate during the Parliamentary process.”*

The government is committed to working closely with businesses and other stakeholders to ensure this legislation is proportionate whilst also being effective. Dedicated guidance and support will be provided to ensure those in scope can meet their responsibilities. ProtectUK already hosts a range of expert advice, training, and guidance.

The standard tier will apply to public premises with a maximum capacity of 100 or more people, whilst the enhanced tier applies to public premises and events with a maximum capacity of 800 or more people. Limited exemptions to the capacity requirements apply to education establishments and places of worship. Guidance and training materials will also be available to premises with a capacity of under 100, should they want additional support.

Standard tier premises will be required to undertake basic, low-cost activities to improve their

preparedness, including terrorism protection training and evaluating the best procedures to put in place in order to minimise impact.

Enhanced tier premises and events have further requirements in recognition of the potential consequences of a successful attack. This will include appointing a designated senior officer who must regularly review the security of the venue.

An inspection and enforcement regime will be established to promote the requirements for each tier. In the event of non-compliance, sanctions and ultimately penalties will be issued to premises.

Martyn's Law will extend to and apply across the whole of the United Kingdom and has been developed following extensive consultation with the public, businesses and campaign groups. The significant majority agree that those responsible for publicly accessible locations should take measures to protect the public from potential attacks.

Among the campaigners was Figen Murray, the mother of Martyn Hett. Her campaign for 'Martyn's Law' has informed the process leading to the draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill. Figen and others have worked tirelessly with the government to ensure this bill is delivered and publishing the draft legislation is a credit to their efforts. Publication of the draft bill today follows a commitment made by the Prime Minister to Figen shortly after he took office that the government would bring forward the measures in the Spring.

- Press Notice – Martyn's Law progresses as government publishes draft legislation - GOV.UK
- Factsheet – updated and available at Martyn's Law Factsheet - Home Office in the media
- Draft legislation – Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill
- Security Minister WMS - Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament
- Martyn's Law – What you need to know?

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