

Martyn's Law receives Royal Assent: What does it mean for retailers?

16 April 2025  Rachel Lyne

On 3 April 2025 the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as 'Martyn's Law,' received Royal Assent.

Martyn's Law will apply across the UK and its purpose is to enhance security measures and protect public spaces from terrorist threats. This will be done by mandating, for the first time, who is responsible for considering the risk from terrorism and how they would respond to a terrorist attack at certain premises and events.

Martyn's Law is part of a broader effort to make the UK more resilient to the threat of terrorism by establishing clear responsibilities for premises, businesses, and public spaces.

Retailers' responsibilities

Whether or not a retailer has any duties under Martyn's Law will depend on whether you operate a 'qualifying premises', which includes retail premises but only if it is reasonable to expect that 200, or more, individuals may be present on the premises at the same time. As the person in control of the premises, a retailer will be a responsible person under the new law.

A two-tier system has been created by Martyn's Law imposing greater controls on higher risk premises. A qualifying retail premises will either be a Standard Duty Premises or an Enhanced Duty Premises and the duties placed on a retailer will differ depending on the type of premises they operate.

Standard Duty Premises

A Standard Duty Premises refers to any retail premises with a capacity of 200-799 individuals. Retailers in this category will be expected to meet basic security obligations, including:

- Establishing a **procedure** for:
 - **Evacuation** – how to get people out of the building.
 - **Invacuation** – how to bring people into the premises to keep them safe or move them to safe parts of the building.
 - **Lockdown** – how to secure the premises against attackers, e.g., locking doors, closing shutters, and using barriers to prevent access.
 - **Communication** – how to alert staff and customers and move people away from danger.
- Ensuring **staff are clear on the protocols** in place and what to do in an emergency.

Enhanced Duty Premises

Enhanced Duty Premises apply to retail premises with a capacity of 800, or more, individuals. These premises will be required to put in place all the measures that a Standard Duty Premises must have but also implement the following measures:

- **Monitoring** the premises, and their immediate vicinity.
- **Controlling** the movement of individuals into, out of and within the premises.

- **Physical safety and security** of the premises.
- **Security of information** which may assist in the planning, preparation or execution of acts of terrorism.

Overlapping duties

It will be critically important for retailers to work in collaboration with shopping centre operators, where relevant, to ensure that the controls they develop and implement to discharge their duties under Martyn's Law are joined up. It would be a sensible early step for retailers to begin discussion with shopping centre operators so that you can work in partnership to ensure you develop a set of controls that complement each other.

How will Martyn's Law be enforced?

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) has been tasked with establishing a regulatory body to oversee and enforce compliance with Martyn's Law. We are awaiting guidance from the SIA on how organisations can achieve compliance with the new duties.

It is expected that the regulator will be given powers to inspect premises to make sure duty holders are meeting their obligations. The regulator will also be given powers to take enforcement action against those who persistently fail to comply with their duties which could result in compliance notices, monetary penalties and restriction notices. There are also criminal offences created under Martyn's Law for those who fail to adhere to a Compliance Notice or in circumstances where false or misleading information is provided to the regulator.

What can retailers do in preparation for Martyn's Law?

The Government has indicated that it will take up to 24 months for Martyn's Law to be implemented and so there is no immediate requirement for retailers to put in place the controls necessary to meet the duties set down in the new law.

We know that the new regulator will publish guidance that will support businesses, including retailers, to understand how they can best discharge their duties. If you want to start to prepare for the changes then a good place to start would be to identify whether your premises are 'qualifying premises' and if so whether they will need to meet the Standard or Enhanced Premises Duties. It would also be a sensible early step to identify premises that sit within a shopping centre where both you as a retailer and the shopping centre will have duties to discharge under Martyn's Law.

An obvious next step in the planning and preparation stages for the implementation of Martyn's Law is to undertake a gap analysis of your current control procedures to identify what you already have in place to meet your duties and where you will need to focus your attention as you plan for the implementation of the new law. It is sensible to wait for the promised Guidance from the regulator before you invest too much time in the planning stages and certainly avoid finalising any plans until that guidance has been published and you have had the opportunity to review it.

In future editions of [Retail Law Roundup](#), we will update you with any news on the regulator's guidance and any other helpful information that can support you as you plan your own strategy to ensure that you are fully compliant once the new law comes into effect.

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