


Martyn's Law: Paving the way for enhanced security measures across UK venues and events

13 December 2024  Andrew Hopkin and Lydia Pincott

In the wake of increasing global terrorism threats, the UK is strengthening its defences with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill. This legislation, which has recently passed its third reading in the House of Commons, aims to bolster security and preparedness across UK venues and events, inspired by the tragic 2017 Manchester Arena bombing and subsequent calls for enhanced public safety measures.

The Bill introduces a tiered system of responsibility for venues and events based on size and activity type, incorporating amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005. It emphasises the principle of control over premises, extending responsibility to operators of arenas, educational institutions, event organisers and mandates coordinated efforts in shared responsibility scenarios.

'Qualifying premises' are defined by their use, size, and capacity, with 'standard duty' and 'enhanced duty' classifications based on expected attendance (200 for standard and 800 for enhanced duty). The legislation outlines specific security measures and procedures to mitigate the risk of terrorist attacks, including evacuation plans and information dissemination to attendees, with enhanced duty premises required to document compliance.

The Security Industry Authority is designated as the regulator, with powers for inspections, enforcement, and compliance advice. The Bill also introduces criminal penalties for non-compliance and obstructive behaviours.

Named after Martyn Hett, a victim of the Manchester bombing, the Martyn's Law bill represents the UK's commitment to improving national security while balancing the operational impact on businesses and organisations, ensuring a safer future in the face of terrorism threats.

Here are some things that organisations can do to prepare:

- Understand which tier your premises or event falls into
- Develop and update security plans that include measures for prevention, mitigation, and emergency response
- Enhance collaboration across all duty holders in respect of emergency procedures, and how to identify and respond to potential threats
- Train staff and volunteers on emergency procedures, and how to identify and respond to potential threats
- Engage with the Security Industry Authority about the latest regulations and compliance
- Prepare documentation that evidences compliance (if required)

Key contacts

Andrew Hopkin

Partner

andrew.hopkin@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)115 976 6030



Lydia Pincott

Trainee Solicitor

lydia.pincott@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)330 045 1026

Related expertise

Criminal compliance and regulatory

Public inquiries

Public law