



Informing Progress - Shaping the Future

FOIL Update 27th March 2025



The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill: Latest Update

Named in honour of Martyn Hett, one of the victims of the Manchester Arena attack in 2017, The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also referred to as Martyn's Law, is a piece of legislation focused on improving the security of publicly accessible venues in response to the ongoing threat of terrorism in the UK.

Introduced to Parliament in September 2024, the Bill sets out a responsibility on the owners of public venues to introduce measures to mitigate the risk of physical harm or the vulnerability to terrorist acts when applied to larger venues. Such measures should be reasonably practicable and appropriate for the specific venue, event, and resources.

Key Provisions

The Bill seeks to impose a 'Protect Duty', the first mandated by law, on those responsible for certain publicly accessible premises and events. The duty can be either 'standard' or 'enhanced', depending on the capacity of the venue, with an enhanced duty also requiring proactive and preventative measures to be in place.

The requirements placed upon venue owners include:

- **Risk Assessments:** Evaluate potential terrorist threats appropriate to their specific venue and/or event.

- **Security Plans:** Implement measures to reduce vulnerability and mitigate risks of physical harm to individuals.
- **Staff Training:** Ensure all personnel receive appropriate training and are adequately prepared to respond effectively to potential incidents.
- **Collaborate with Authorities:** Coordinate with the relevant law enforcement agencies and emergency services to enhance preparedness and response strategies.

More than 175,000 venues fall within the scope of the Bill, including bars, nightclubs, theatres, cinemas, restaurants and sports arenas. As many are licensed to sell alcohol, the Bill incorporates amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 to safeguard against licence applications or extensions falling into the public domain and provide those with ill intent advance notice of certain events. In addition to licensed premises, educational institutions, museums, parks and civic buildings are among the venues also impacted.

Legislative Developments

The government held a consultation on Protect Duty in July 2021, with policy proposals published at the end of 2022 and the Draft Bill published in May 2023. Further pre-legislative scrutiny of the detail followed that year until the Martyn's Law Consultation was launched in February 2024. The First Reading of the Bill in the House of Commons took place in September 2024, with its Second Reading following a month later. The Bill's First Reading in The House of Lords was in December 2024. The Bill has attracted support from across the political spectrum and among key stakeholder groups, allowing it to pass quickly through consultations and Readings with minimal amendment.

As of March 2025, the Bill continues its progression through the UK legislative process. On 4 March 2025, the House of Lords conducted a division on an amendment to the Bill, but the proposed amendment was rejected, with 248 votes against and only 214 in favour.

The Third Reading of the Bill was held on 11 March 2025 in the House of Lords, marking an important stage in its legislative journey. The next step is the consideration of Lords amendments, which is scheduled for 25 March, with the aim of the Bill receiving Royal Assent in the spring. Following Royal Assent, the government has suggested an implementation period of at least 24 months to allow event organisers and premises owners to plan and prepare.

Implications for Stakeholders

Once enacted, regulatory oversight will rest with the Security Industry Authority (SIA), with cooperation from the trade and local authorities. The legislation will impose specific duties on those responsible for qualifying premises and events, including:

- **Compliance:** Compliance with security measures and standards set out in the legislation to ensure adequate protection against terrorist activities.

- **Continuous Improvement:** Regular reviews and updates to security protocols in response to evolving threats.
- **Resource Allocation:** Investment in necessary infrastructure, training, and systems to achieve legislative compliance.

The Bill is a pivotal step towards fortifying public safety measures, and it introduces mandatory security protocols for venues and events that aim to create a more secure environment for the UK public and prevent future occurrences.

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