

Protection of premises draft bill sets new standards for public safety

2 years ago



David Rowan, Sales Director at [Chubb Fire & Security](#), explains the steps public premises and venues will be required to take under new laws to improve public safety, and how Chubb's dedicated lone worker app can help.

The UK will be better prepared for and protected from terrorist attacks under new draft laws published by the government in May. The draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill¹ sets out the security measures that, under Martyn's Law, venues and other organisations will have to meet to ensure public safety. The draft Bill will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by the Home Affairs Select Committee ahead of formal introduction.

What is Martyn's Law?

The name Martyn's Law is a tribute to 29-year-old Martyn Hett, who was killed alongside 21 others in the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017. Since then, there have been a further 14 terror attacks in the UK, and according to the MI5² the current threat of terrorism to the UK remains substantial.

Martyn's Law has been developed following public consultation and extensive engagement across industry, charities, local authorities, security experts and survivors – as well as Martyn's mother Figen Murray and the Martyn's Law Campaign Team and Survivors Against Terror – to draw up the new legislation.

Seventy per cent of the thousands who responded to the consultation agreed that those responsible for publicly accessible locations should take measures to protect the public from potential attacks.

Premises will fall under the scope of Martyn's Law where 'qualifying activities' take place – which includes locations for entertainment and leisure, retail, food and drink, museums and galleries, sports grounds, public areas of local and central Government buildings, visitor attractions, places of worship, health, and education.

There are five requirements to Martyn's Law: that spaces and places to which the public have access engage with freely available counter-terrorism advice and training; places must conduct vulnerability assessments; they must mitigate the risks created by the vulnerabilities; they must have a terrorism plan; and local authorities must plan for the threat of terrorism.³

The Bill – and what it means for premises

The draft Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill describes the steps to be taken depending on the size of the premises and the activity taking place.

The standard tier will apply to public premises with a maximum capacity of 100 or more people, which can undertake low-cost, simple – yet effective – activities to improve preparedness. This will include terrorism protection training, information sharing and evaluating the best procedures to put in order to minimise impact, for instance, locking doors to delay attackers' progress, or knowledge on life-saving treatments that can be administered by staff whilst waiting for emergency services.

An enhanced tier will focus on locations with a capacity of more than 800 people. High-capacity locations will also be required to undertake a risk assessment to inform the development and implementation of a thorough security plan and appoint a designated senior officer who must regularly review the security of the premises.

Under Section 15, 'Security measures' the draft Bill states that: "The person responsible for enhanced duty premises or a qualifying public event must ensure that all such reasonably practicable measures are in place in relation to the premises or event as might be expected to (a) reduce the risk or acts of terrorism occurring at, or in the immediate vicinity of, the premises or event, and (b) reduce the risk of physical harm to individuals if acts of terrorism were to occur at or in the immediate vicinity of, the premises or event."

It goes on to say that the measures must include: "monitoring the premises or event and the immediate vicinity of the premises or event." This could include the implementation of physical measures like CCTV and access control and processes to enable better vigilance and consideration of security.

The government is working closely with businesses and other stakeholders to ensure this legislation is proportionate whilst also being effective.

Prioritising lone worker safety

With over 200 years of experience delivering fire safety and security solutions designed to help businesses protect their most valued assets, Chubb understands the challenges employers face in keeping their people safe.

In the workplace, all employees are exposed to risks; however, working alone makes lone workers more vulnerable to harm as they face risks alone. Currently, in the UK, there are an estimated 8 million lone

workers⁴, making up 22% of the 31.2 million working population. Lone working is defined by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as work carried out by people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, employers are obligated to manage the risks to lone workers; however, according to a recent survey of 1,300 lone workers⁵ and health and safety professionals, some employers are falling short. The survey explored how seriously employers take lone worker safety and found that 94% of companies gave themselves a 10 out of 10 rating. In contrast, just 45% of lone workers felt the same, and 33% believed other factors like deadlines and financial targets were considered more important than their safety.

SafeZone[®] – ultimate protection for your people

Chubb's SafeZone[®] app is an award-winning cloud-based safety, security and emergency management solution that was developed with personal safety at its core.

SafeZone has the ability to raise alerts and communicate critical information at the touch of a button which, in the event of a terrorist incident, could save lives. The app provides real-time co-ordination and response, wearable tech and mass communication of emergency messaging – such as flagging up threats, how to mitigate a potentially threatening situation and information about how to escape.

To find out more about Safezone, please visit: www.chubb.co.uk/safezone

References

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