

A proportionate approach to Martyn's Law regulation

5.3.2026 - Laura Gibb | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

Laura Gibb, the SIA's Executive Director for Martyn's Law, gives her thoughts after 10 weeks in the role.

I'm now 10 weeks into my role at the SIA – and we are all 10 weeks closer to the end of the implementation period for Martyn's Law, the point by which the new regulatory regime must be ready to launch.

Where we are now

Martyn's Law has not yet come into force. The Home Office has always been clear that there will be a minimum 2-year implementation period from Royal Assent, which was granted in April 2025. This means:

- venues, premises, and events are not yet required by law to comply
- the SIA does not yet have its new powers
- the Home Office statutory guidance explaining how the Act will work in practice is still being finalised

Alongside the Home Office guidance, we are preparing our own statutory guidance (known as Section 12 guidance) which will explain how we will carry out our new regulatory functions. Once the Home Office guidance is published, we will share ours for consultation. When we do, we want to hear from you so we can make it as useful and informative as possible.

Why this matters now

We know many organisations already have good protective security measures in place. Some will be wondering whether they need to change or upgrade those measures, while others, particularly smaller venues, may be thinking about the steps that Martyn's Law will require them to take for the first time. That thinking and commitment to public safety is welcome. But we are increasingly hearing that people are being encouraged to buy specific products, consultancy advice or services now claiming to ensure or guarantee future Martyn's Law compliance.

At this stage, that is very unlikely to be a wise investment.

Until the Home Office statutory guidance is finalised, no one can offer a fully informed or accurate compliance solution. You will need to consider the Home Office guidance against the specific circumstances of your venue, premises or event. Products, advice or services that aren't informed by either the guidance or your circumstances may not help you to prepare to comply. We do not want responsible organisations spending money unnecessarily or being misled about what will be required. There is a wealth of technical information available on Protect.UK about protective security and a really useful Home Office myth buster specifically about Martyn's Law and a guide to whether you are in scope or not.

I can assure you that we will take a proportionate, supportive approach as the regulator. We understand that not every venue or premises will be fully compliant on day one.

Cost of compliance

During the Act's passage through Parliament, there was significant debate about ensuring the lowest possible burden on those responsible for venues, premises and events. This is reflected in the Act in the requirement for appropriate public protection procedures and measures to be in place only as far as is 'reasonably practicable'. The procedures and measures put in place at one location may not be appropriate and reasonably practicable at another.

The principle of minimising administrative burdens, and our obligation to consider the impact of regulation on economic growth, remains central to how we are designing the regulatory regime.

What you can expect from us

Our approach, consistent with the Regulators' Code, includes the following commitments:

We will explain what we're doing and how we're doing it

The SIA's section 12 guidance will set out how we will operate as a regulator in more detail, including our approach to investigations and use of powers. We need your input to make it genuinely useful. Please take part in the consultation when it goes live and tell us if it's not clear and what else would be helpful to know.

We will do more to help you comply

The Home Office statutory guidance on the requirements of the Act will necessarily be long and technical in places, because it must cover all the key requirements of the Act.

We want to understand what other information you need about how to comply, and how we can present it in ways that work for you and your premises. We will also ensure learning and themes from early casework informs further guidance. We know that clear, actionable information will be essential.

We will be proportionate

This means being fair and realistic in our inspection approach. It will be designed to improve public safety. That means directing our resources where they can have the greatest impact. Our regulatory decisions will be guided by risk, and we will be transparent about the principles behind our regulatory approach.

We will hold ourselves to high standards

We are bound by the Regulators' Code, including the principles of proportionality, consistency and accountability. Our inspectors will be well trained and appropriately vetted. We will moderate and quality assure our regulatory outcomes to ensure a consistent approach. The information you provide will be held securely and accessed only when necessary.

What's happening behind the scenes

A significant amount of work is underway to build the new regulatory regime — much of it not yet visible to those who will be in scope of Martyn's Law. Our work includes:

- engaging a digital delivery partner to design a secure and easy to use portal for premises and events to send us notifications and compliance documents
- drafting guidance to support the regulated community
- recruiting new colleagues to help carry out our regulatory functions

If you are interested in joining the SIA, keep an eye on the Civil Service Jobs website and our LinkedIn page for vacancies and opportunities.

Stay involved

We are grateful to everyone who has offered support so far. Your insight and experience are vital to getting this right.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/a-proportionate-approach-to-martyns-law-regulation>