



## Public Venues: Safety and Security QSD on 3 February 2020

On 3 February 2020, Lord Harris of Haringey (Labour) is due to “ask Her Majesty’s Government what plans they have to improve the safety and security of public venues, and whether they intend to introduce a Protect duty under the CONTEST strategy for countering terrorism”.

### Summary

- [CONTEST](#) is the United Kingdom’s counter-terrorism strategy. It was first developed in 2003, before revised versions were published in 2009, 2011 and 2018. The strategy has four work strands: Prevent; Pursue; Protect; and Prepare. The Protect strand includes several objectives to strengthen the country’s protection against potential terror attacks. This includes improving security in crowded places through collaboration between local authorities and private sector partners. There is already a statutory Prevent duty in place.
- Several reviews into the safety and security of public venues have previously taken place. These include a [review](#) in 2007 by Lord West of Spithead (Labour), then parliamentary under secretary at the Home Office, into how best to protect crowded places from terrorist attacks. More recently, in 2016, Lord Harris of Haringey was tasked by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, to undertake a [review](#) into London’s preparedness for dealing with a major terror attack.
- On 22 May 2017, a suicide bombing took place at the Manchester Arena. The incident killed 22 people, and over 100 more people were injured. It was the deadliest attack in the United Kingdom since the London bombings on 7 July 2005.
- Following the bombing, the mother of one of the victims [campaigned](#) for the introduction of anti-terror measures at concert venues. For example, metal detectors and bag searches. The campaign has been named ‘Martyn’s Law’.
- In January 2020, Manchester City Council [announced](#) that it would be acting on proposals to enshrine the principles behind ‘Martyn’s Law’ into future regulations. It was also in the process of developing a scheme of best practice amongst licensed venues, exploring ways to implement ‘Martyn’s Law’ at a local level.
- In the same month, the Minister of State for Security, Brandon Lewis, [stated](#) that Prime Minister Boris Johnson was “100 percent behind” the ‘Martyn’s Law’ campaign and that the Government was working to improve security measures at public venues and spaces.
- On 21 January 2020, the Government [announced](#) new counter-terrorism measures, including a pledge to introduce counter-terrorism legislation within the first 100 days of the new parliament.

Eren Waitzman | 28 January 2020

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## Further Information

- House of Commons, '[Written Statement: Countering Terrorism](#)', 21 January 2020, HCWS46; and Home Office, '[Tougher Sentencing and Monitoring in Government Overhaul of Terrorism Response](#)', 21 January 2020

*Written statement by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Priti Patel, and the accompanying article, detailing new counter-terrorism measures to be brought forward by the Government. This included details of a pledge to introduce a Counter-Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill within the first 100 days of the new parliament, which would provide for convicted terrorist offenders to serve the full length of any extended determinate sentences amongst other measures. In addition, the Government announced that it would launch an independent review of how different agencies—including the security services—monitor and manage terrorists. This would be led by Jonathan Hall QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation.*

- National Counter Terrorism Security Office, '[Police Call on Public to Sign Up to Free Counter Terrorism Training](#)', 9 December 2019

*Article calling on the public to participate in an online counter-terrorism training programme previously only available to staff working in crowded places, such as entertainment venues and shopping centres.*

- HM Government, [CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism](#), June 2018, Cm 9608, pp 7–12

*Executive summary from the latest version of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. A review leading to the updated version found CONTEST to be "well-organised" and "comprehensive". The strategy outlined the Government's intention to work jointly with industry to improve security at public venues in the UK. However, the review did not outline how this would take place.*

- National Counter Terrorism Security Office, [Crowded Places Guidance](#), 8 June 2017, pp 3–4, 10–11 and p 23

*Introduction and summary guidance for those tasked with the security of sports stadia, arenas and major events to help mitigate the threat of a terrorist attack on their venue.*

- Lord Harris of Haringey, [An Independent Review of London's Preparedness to Respond to a Major Terrorist Incident](#), October 2016, pp 6–7 and 53–8

*Introduction and recommendations from a report detailing the findings from a review by Lord Harris into the capital's preparedness to deal with a major terrorist incident. In his report, Lord Harris recommended that, as a condition of licensing, venues should be reviewed by counter-terrorism advisors and have to act on the results of that review.*

## Parliamentary Question

- [Oral Question on 'Counterterrorism: Martyn's Law'](#), HL Hansard, 22 October 2019, cols 486–88

## Press Articles and Comment

- Gabriel Power, '[What is 'Martyn's Law'?](#)', *The Week*, 13 January 2020
- Clea Skopeliti, '["Martyn's Law" Security Checks at Venues Win Government Backing](#)', *Guardian*, 12 January 2020
- Manchester City Council, '[Manchester City Council to Act on Martyn's Law](#)', 7 January 2020
- Fiona Murray, '[My Son Martyn Hett Died at the Hands of Terrorism—It's Time We Made Public Safety a Matter of Law](#)', *Huffington Post*, 3 January 2020
- Lord Harris of Haringey, '[After the Manchester Bombing, It's Time to Bring in Martyn's Law to Prevent Future Attacks](#)', *Huffington Post*, 22 October 2019
- Lizzie Dearden, '[Manchester Attack Victims' Call For Law Forcing Venues to Increase Security Considered by Government](#)', *Independent*, 18 June 2019
- Josh Halliday, '[Andy Burnham Calls for Mandatory Security at Major Public Venues](#)', *Guardian*, 18 April 2019