

Martyn's Law: Security, Sound and Vision the Missing Layer

In 2027, the UK will implement the *Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act*, widely known as **Martyn's Law**. It will require venues hosting more than 200 people to take meaningful steps to reduce the risk of terrorist attacks.

Much of the debate has centred on physical security: barriers, checking bags and training. Yet the Act's most significant impact may be elsewhere.

It compels a rethink, not just of how venues prevent attacks, but how they communicate when prevention fails.

From Protection to Response

Most venues today are not designed to communicate in a crisis.

Public address systems are often limited to main areas. Back-of-house spaces, offices, and external zones remain disconnected. Under Martyn's Law, these are no longer minor oversights—they are points of failure.

Hostile threats introduce scenarios that go beyond evacuation:

- directing people away from danger
- holding people in place during lockdown
- managing invacuation from external areas
- and maintaining control as situations evolve

Effective response depends on clarity, reach, and control.

Everyone on site: staff, visitors, contractors - must be able to hear, understand, and act.

Beyond the Building

Martyn's Law applies to individual premises which may be part of a wider community.

For example: University campuses, Hospitals, Retail environments, Transport hubs operate as interconnected ecosystems. A threat rarely respects building boundaries.

A compliant building with a disconnected neighbour is still a vulnerable site.

This is where many organisations are now encountering a gap; not in intent, but in coordination.

True preparedness requires:

- site-wide visibility,
- centralised communication control,
- and the ability to deliver different messages to different zones simultaneously.

What the Evidence Tells Us

We already know what happens when communication fails.

Research by **Jonathan Sime** showed that most delay in emergencies comes from uncertainty, not physical obstruction.

Real incidents reinforce this:

- **Manchester Arena bombing** exposed the consequences of unclear messaging.
- **London Bridge attack** highlighted the risks of delayed instruction.
- **Stade de France attack** showed controlled announcements prevented panic.
- **Nathan Phillips Square incident (Toronto)** demonstrated rapid communication reduced escalation.

The pattern is consistent showing **people do not act until they understand**.

Therefore, **clarity** in communications saves time which saves lives.

A Fragmented Market

The challenge facing organisations today is not a lack of technology, it is fragmentation.

Voice alarms, PA systems, mobile alerts, digital signage, and control platforms often exist in isolation—procured at different times, for different purposes, from different vendors.

Martyn's Law potentially exposes this fragmentation.

It raises new questions:

- How do these systems work together?
- Who validates that they are fit for purpose?
- How do you design responses for scenarios that have never been tested in real life?

For many, the issue is no longer ***what to buy***, but ***how it all connects***.

The Emergence of a New Layer

What is beginning to take shape is a new operational layer—one that sits above individual technologies.

A layer that:

- maps environments in their entirety,
- defines response scenarios in advance,
- integrates multiple communication channels,
- and provides a single point of control during an incident.

Increasingly, this layer also draws on AI to model risk, simulate scenarios, and support faster decision-making under pressure.

It does not replace existing systems.

It makes them work together.

From Compliance to Capability

This shift changes the conversation.

Martyn's Law is often framed as a compliance exercise. In practice, it is becoming a capability question:

- Can you reach everyone, everywhere?
- Can you adapt messaging in real time?
- Can different agencies coordinate through a shared communication framework?

Organisations that answer “**YES**” are not just compliant—they are operationally resilient.

A Practical Route Forward

For many venues, the starting point is not installing more hardware. It is understanding what already exists.

- Where are the communication gaps?
- Which areas are unaddressed?
- How do systems interact—or fail to?

From there, the focus shifts to integration, scenario planning, and validation.

This is where structured ecosystems are beginning to play a role, bringing together:

- vetted technologies,
- certified solutions,
- and a framework for testing and assurance.

Not as a single product, but as a coordinated approach to preparedness.



The Role of Martyn's Law Solutions

In response to this coordinated approach to preparedness, **Martyn's Law Solutions** is providing a source of information for multiple technologies and their effective integration.

Our role is not to replace manufacturers or consultants, but to connect them, providing:

- a marketplace of validated technologies,
- a register of audio-visual and security consultants,
- independent product testing and registration pathways,
- and a structured way for venues to navigate an increasingly complex landscape.

In effect, **Martyn's Law Solutions** act as a bridge between legislation and implementation.

www.martynslawsolutions.com

The Future of Emergency Communication

Martyn's Law does not require venues to become fortresses. It requires them to become more responsible for managing risk.

Physical measures may reduce the likelihood of an incident.

Communication determines the outcome when an incident occurs.

The organisations that recognise this early are not just meeting a legal requirement, they are redefining what "safe" looks like in a modern environment.

Because when the moment comes, it will not be the presence of technology that matters, it will be whether the technology works together to communicate effectively, and if people understand what to do.



**MARTYN'S LAW
SOLUTIONS**

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