

CORPS RELAY

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CORPS
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SECURITY

New Class C Status for Anti-Social Drug

Nitrous Oxide (NOS), known informally as laughing gas and 'balloons' due to balloons being used in the inhaling of the gas, has become a class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

In 2020/21, NOS was the third most used drug among 16-59-year-olds in England and Wales according to the NHS, and the Office of National Statistics (ONS) suggested that equates to around 230,000 young people who have inhaled this harmful substance.

The Home Office have now updated the law to make unlawful possession of NOS illegal if it is, or is likely to be, wrongfully inhaled. Community punishment, unlimited fines, and cautions against a criminal record are all possible outcomes of prosecution. Repeat offenders may face prison sentences of up to two years and unlimited fines. The penalty for the supply or production of NOS is up to 14 years in prison and unlimited fines.

The changes in law come into force to tackle the effects of the inhalation as it can result in serious health issues and even death due to the risk of falling unconscious and/or suffocating from lack of oxygen. In addition, there have been growing concerns of the anti-social impact of NOS. This includes the behaviour of those using NOS, and the impact of discarded balloons and NOS canisters on local environments. Front-line security staff have also been impacted, including those working in licensed premises, and those tasked to provide a presence in public places such as high streets and parks, the latter of which has become a common environment for NOS use. This change in the law is likely to help reduce these issues, although it is unlikely that use of the drug will dissipate completely due to its ease of access including affordability, and the sheer volume of users at this time.

Thieves Cut Through Floor to Commit Museum Theft

Nottinghamshire police are investigating a theft which occurred at the Royal Lancers & Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum. Thieves drilled through an archway to gain access to an internal display cabinet containing several precious metal military antiques.

This theft highlights organised crime as one aspect of the threat landscape that security operations exist in, and museums as one of the many different targets for organised crime. In this instance the motive is unknown, however it is possible that the precious metals may simply be melted down for their intrinsic value. It is highly likely that this crime was preceded by some degree of hostile reconnaissance, which underlines why it is important for at least all public facing staff to be practicing counter-hostile reconnaissance techniques that are integrated into a professional customer service-based approach.

The potential for insider involvement has also not been ruled out. The latest National Strategic Assessment on serious and organised crime from the National Crime Agency emphasises how these types of crimes are commonly made possible through staff members unwittingly giving up knowledge, or knowingly assisting criminals, most often for financial gain. Organisations should ensure that their personnel security measures, such as staff vetting processes, are sufficiently robust, and that physical security operations are necessarily supported with a staff training programme that includes educating staff members on how to avoid becoming an unwitting insider threat, and awareness initiatives that promote a positive security culture.

Pro-Palestinian Protest Terrorism Arrests

Two women aged 29 and 44 are being held in custody at a police station in south London after they were included in Metropolitan Police appeal pictures that were released following a pro-Palestinian march in Whitehall on 14th October. They are currently being held on suspicion of inviting support for Hamas, which is proscribed by HM Government as a terrorist organisation.

The police are continuing to appeal for help to identify a third woman, seen on social media at the same protest with an image of a paraglider on her top, and a man seen waving a placard that said: "I fully support Hamas".

Commander Dominic Murphy, head of the Met's Counter Terrorism Command, said: "I am grateful to the public who have reported information to us, and I urge anyone who has information about the man and woman we are still seeking to please let us know." Additionally, he added, "if the people in the pictures recognise themselves, I urge them to come forward so we can speak with them."

These arrests provide evidence that within pro-Palestinian protests, there are a number of protestors who will overtly support Hamas, despite it being illegal to do so as Hamas are a proscribed terrorist organisation, and despite the actions of Hamas in Israel on October 7th, 2023. This is one indication that a self-initiated terrorist attack could occur in the UK, inspired by the actions of Hamas, which could be directed at targets such as Jewish businesses, Jewish communities, or generally within a UK public place. There has been evidence in recent days of anti-Israel terrorism plots in Brazil, where federal police have detained several suspects with links to Hezbollah who were allegedly planning attacks against Jewish targets in Brazil, including synagogues.

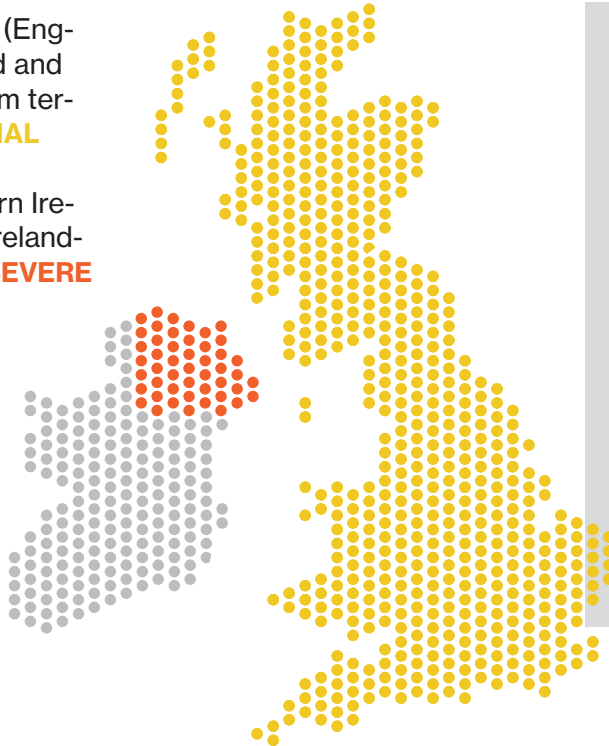
The need for vigilance is critical, and security operations must remain aware of not just protest activity linked to Israel and Gaza, but also the possibility of a terrorist attack (see Counter Terrorism Police Launch Their Winter Campaign).



Current National Threat Level

The threat to the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) from terrorism is **SUBSTANTIAL**

The threat to Northern Ireland from Northern Ireland-related terrorism is **SEVERE**



NOTE:

Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack

LOW means an attack is highly unlikely

MODERATE means an attack is possible, but not likely

SUBSTANTIAL means an attack is likely

SEVERE means an attack is highly likely

CRITICAL means an attack is highly likely in the near future

Counter Terrorism Police Launch Their Winter Campaign

Counter Terrorism Policing have urged the public to stay alert and report anything that doesn't seem right during the festive season. The launch comes as figures show a surge of reports from the public in relation to terrorist activity that have almost doubled since this time last year, especially since the conflict between Israel and Hamas began in October.

The senior national coordinator for Protect and Prepare, Laurence Talyor stated, "As the international picture continues to develop at pace, UK policing is working closely with affected communities across the country to offer support and reassurance. Sadly, history tells us that events overseas can inspire or accelerate acts of violence much closer to home. We are working day and night with our partners to monitor the threat picture." Adding, "whilst we are working incredibly hard, with our partners, to make sure you (the public) can enjoy this time of year safely, our message is simple, stay alert and trust your

instincts. Whether you're a business, an event organiser, a local authority or simply heading out with family and friends, if you see something that doesn't feel right, please report it."

Security operatives are crucial in the fight against terrorism, and it is important that staff remain aware of the threat, and remain conversant in stress-tested emergency procedures, which should include what to do in the event of a marauding terrorist attack, and how to deal with unattended articles and vehicles.

Suspicious activity can be reported in the following ways:

Emergency: 999

Suspicious Activity: 0800 789 321

Anonymously via Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111

Online: <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>

Martyns Law Update

Corps Focus: Security Issue of the Month

Martyn's Law included in Kings Speech

On the 7th of November, King Charles III delivered his first King's Speech as part of the State Opening of Parliament. The King's Speech is a key part of the state Opening of Parliament ceremony, marking the start of the parliamentary year, and providing the government with an opportunity to outline its priorities for the months ahead.

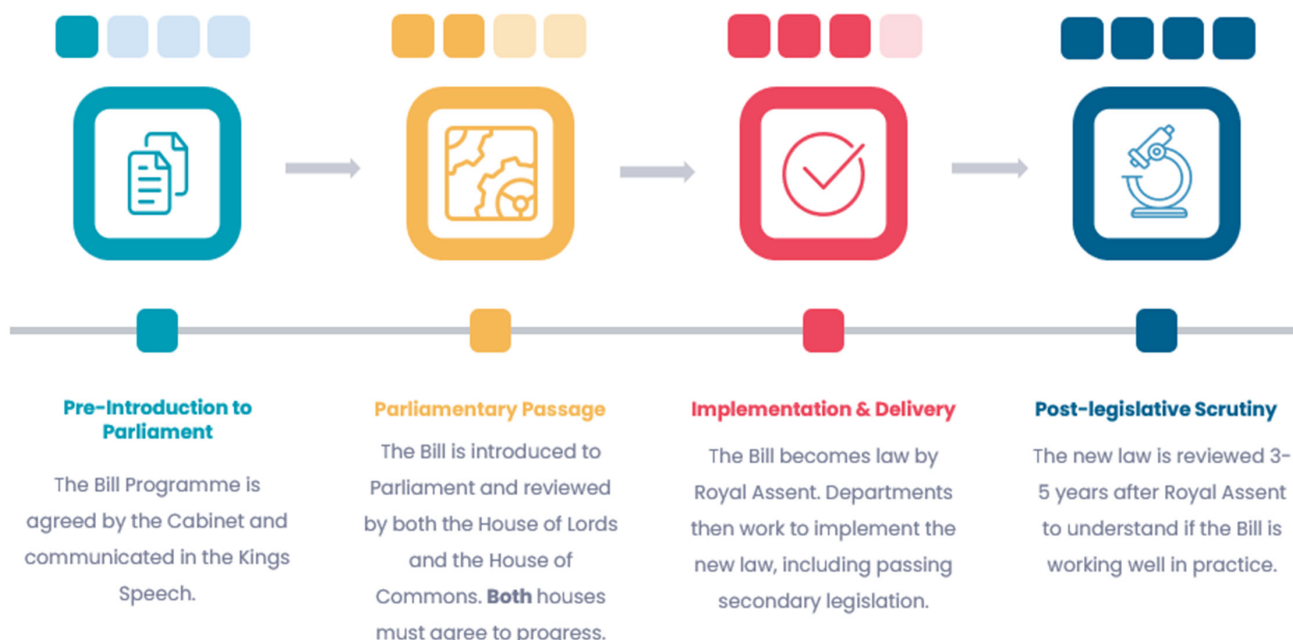
In a pivotal step forward for the security industry / public safety, the King referred to the highly anticipated Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, also known as Martyn's Law, by stating the following:

"At a time when threats to national security are changing rapidly due to new technology, my Ministers will give the security and intelligence services the powers they need and will strengthen independent judicial oversight. Legislation will be introduced to protect public premises from terrorism in light of the Manchester Arena attack".

What Does This Mean for Martyn's Law?

Following the inclusion of Martyn's Law in the Kings Speech, the government will consult on the Bill as per the introduction to the parliamentary process.

In a webinar hosted by the Home Office shortly after the Kings Speech, it was stressed that the timelines for parliamentary passage are not standardised, and this process very much depends on the level of scrutiny and debate at this stage. The aim for this stage is typically 6-9 months, before progressing to Royal Assent. The below diagram demonstrates the through life process for a Bill to become law from the point of pre-introduction to parliament.



Martyns Law Update

Regulatory Body for Martyn's Law

In the same webinar hosted by the Home Office, no update was given on who the regulator will be at this stage, although this is obviously one of the key discussion points. To confirm what is already known at this stage, the responsibilities of the regulator will be to inspect, guide, and advise.

With regards to legal powers of the regulator, the Home Office has advised that these reflect the legal powers of existing regulatory bodies. The Regulator will have several legal powers to fully exercise its functions and ensure that all inspection activity can be carried out consistently:

- **Power of entry.**
- **Power to be accompanied by Police Officers and qualified experts.**
- **Power to access all areas of a site.**
- **Power to obtain data and documents.**
- **Power to interview staff and contractors.**

As communicated previously in various forums and webinars relating to Martyn's Law, potential sanctions available for the regulator to enforce are expected to be as follows:

- Ability to accept **Enforcement Undertakings** from organisations.
- Regulator issued **Compliance Notices** that will require organisations to take steps deemed necessary to address non-compliance.
- Variable **monetary penalties** to remove any financial benefit of non-compliance. Up to £18m or 5% of worldwide turnover for enhanced tier. Up to 10k for standard tier.
- **Temporary restrictions or closure of a site** to the public until sufficient measures can be taken to bring the risk down to an acceptable level (enhanced tier only).
- **Criminal Sanctions** for the most serious of breaches (enhanced tier only), and obstruction related activity.

Whilst no further information about the regulator can be confirmed at this stage, it's expected they will be

accountable to the Home Secretary, with some level of accountability as part of the wider Counter Terrorism system (such as NaCTSO).

The Impact of Ministerial Changes

Following the Ministerial appointments of Monday 13th November, which has included the appointment of a new Home Secretary, it is emphasised that a common impact of key ministerial changes on impending legislation is the extension to legislation timelines. This is often due to a new minister requiring time to handover into their new role, and in some circumstances, due to the new minister being appointed to take forward an amended agenda. New Home Secretary The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP has yet to publicly remark on Martyn's Law since his appointment.

In addition to the above, it is likely (given current polling) that the Labour Party may win the General Election that is estimated to be held between Autumn 2024 and January 2025. Should this occur, it would mean that if Martyns Law has not been brought into law at that time then it could face further delays due to the appointment of a new government.

The Home Office have stressed, prior to the appointment of Mr Cleverly, that **the bill is still not law and the bill, in its current form, is highly likely to look very different by the time it eventually becomes law.**

Corps Consult continue to monitor the impact of all developments relating to Martyn's Law very closely and will communicate all significant developments as they occur.

Important note: The above information regarding the regulator and their legal powers is what is currently expected and to be used as guidance only at this stage. Full details around the regulator and their legal powers have yet to be confirmed / announced formally.



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