



24 February 2020

NATIONAL BULLETIN

## Government announces plans for legal duty to protect public spaces from terror attacks

### HOME OFFICE NEWS RELEASE

**Security Minister James Brokenshire today announced plans to introduce a law which will require owners and operators of public spaces and venues to put in place measures to keep the public safe from a terrorist attack.**

Delivering on the manifesto commitment to improve the safety and security of public venues and spaces, the new 'Protect Duty' will reflect lessons learned following the terrorist attacks in 2017, as well as more recent attacks. The proposals also follow discussions with victims' groups such as the Martyn's Law campaign, established by Figen Murray, whose son was killed in the Manchester Arena attack.

The new law, to be consulted on in the Spring, would require venue operators to consider the risk of a terrorist attack and take proportionate and reasonable measures to prepare for and protect the public from such an attack.

This could include appropriate physical security, having training in place, incident response plans and exercises for staff on what to do during an attack.

CT Policing already works with a range of partners to guide and assist in developing public space and venue security. This includes advice and training that is freely available online and which many businesses already implement. We want the legislation to help make this more consistent across the UK.

- There is no single solution that will protect our people and crowded places, but we hope the proposed legislation will take us one step closer to a fully integrated and overlapping protective security system which will help defend against the range of threats we face.
- We do not wish to place a financial burden on small businesses, nor create 'bollard Britain' which is why these measures will be scalable, appropriate, and proportionate to the size of the organisation that it applies to.
- A key part of this work is ensuring the public play their part by being aware of the threat, are equipped with the knowledge of how to react to an emergency and also make security-minded decisions when travelling to crowded places. Our ACT campaigns and e-learning provide this foundation and our guidance and training is already freely available online at [www.gov.uk/ACT](http://www.gov.uk/ACT).

The Head of Counter Terrorism Policing, Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu said: "In just the last few weeks we have seen an attack on a high street in Streatham, and an individual plead guilty to a

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plot to detonate a device in St Paul's Cathedral – demonstrating that it is not just iconic locations and venues that are potential terror targets. Attacks can happen anywhere, and at any time.

“Counter Terrorism Policing and the security services work tirelessly to protect the public, and the support of the private sector is absolutely crucial to the work we do. To deliver a protective security system which best defends against the wide range of threats we face, we need the whole of society, including business and the private sector, to contribute to that effort.

“That is why we support today's announcement for consultation on a Protect Duty, which we hope will encourage even more businesses to adopt appropriate and proportionate measures of protective security and crisis planning consistently across the UK.”

Graham Williams, Chairman of industry body Revo's Safety and Security Committee said: “As owners of retail spaces, we take our responsibility for ensuring the safety of our customers and retailers very seriously and therefore welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Home Office on this initiative.

We look forward to contributing to this consultation on behalf of our industry.”

Matt Maer, Director, Security and Resilience, Canary Wharf Group, said: “This legislation has the potential to make a significant impact on public security, improving the situation for people as they go about their daily lives.

Canary Wharf Group supports this initiative and look forward to assisting where we can in shaping this work.”

The public consultation will be launched in Spring and will seek views from a broad range of organisations including business, public authorities, the security

industry and campaign groups to ensure the proposals remain proportionate for publicly accessible spaces and venues across the country.

The consultation will ask for views from business and the public sector on the proportionality, scope of the duty, and how it should be enforced.

The Government also continues to engage with a range of organisations, including business and industry to encourage them to adopt best practice, as well as working alongside [Counter Terrorism Police](#) and the [Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure](#) (CPNI) to extend the reach of advice, guidance and training across all sectors.

Further information on Counter Terrorism training and awareness guidance is available on the [NaCTSO website](#).



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