

## **Implementing Martyn's Law: a CEO's view**

### **Multitone Electronics meets Andy Grays, CEO of The Guildhall Trust, Portsmouth, and a member of the LIVE group venues sub-committee to discuss how the new Protect Duty law will work in practice**

Martyn's Law is a proposed new law, enhancing the UK's ability to improve public safety against terrorist attacks. The guidelines require public and private venues to undertake a comprehensive review of their policies and procedures. Venues will do this by carrying out detailed risk assessments and updating their operational plans. Recently, Multitone met with Andy Grays, CEO of The Guildhall Trust, Portsmouth to discuss what Martyn's Law means in practice for venues across the UK.

#### **What event prompted the introduction of Martyn's Law?**

The horrific bombing at the Manchester Arena in May 2017 killed 22 people with a further 1,017 injured. Martyn's Law – a tribute to Martyn Hett who lost his life during the incident – signifies a major change in the country's approach to public safety and counterterrorism. The legislation will place venues into tiers, depending upon their size and type of activity.

#### **Working together to introduce positive change**

As well as being CEO of the Trust, Andy Grays is a member of a consortium of UK entertainment venues – the LIVE group, sitting on its venues sub-committee. Set up during the COVID-19 pandemic, this group is taking a leading role in helping venues to implement the new legislation.

Andy started the discussion by reflecting on the changes during his 30 years of working in the industry:

*“Communicating with audiences has transformed over recent decades, shifting from off-line to on-line. When I first started in the entertainment industry, there was no digital communication. If an issue arose when one of the team needed help, there were no mobiles or apps – we had to run quickly to seek help from a colleague upstairs or backstage.”*

*“Of course, during the 80's and 90's there were a number of terrorist incidents in London and other cities. Worrying about how I could keep patrons and our colleagues safe, when the risk of an attack was high, certainly kept me awake at night.”*

*“Today, these risks remain; the complex nature of the challenge has changed fundamentally. Keeping venues safe nowadays involves in-depth training, meticulous planning and robust technology. Most team members use radio communication and ear pieces; they are very effective but can be distracting if someone is talking directly to you at the same time. So, in order to achieve better and immediate communication, the sector is seeking to bring in new product solutions.”*

#### **What changes has The Guildhall Trust made in preparation for the new law?**

The industry expects the new legislation to pass through Parliament soon; indeed, the pace of change is much faster than expected.

*“Martyn's Law is necessitating venues to take a good, hard look into their policies and procedures; it will require them to review operations and take steps to reduce risk. This will raise security standards at the UK's entertainment venues, ultimately protecting members of the public and employees in the event of a terrorist incident.”*

*“Changes made by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) are a good example. Before venues can obtain a licence for security, they must successfully complete a six-day training course. Before the changes, this was three days. Training will help increase awareness on what to look for, including hostile reconnaissance and other preventative measures. All of our team involved with security are SIA door-supervisor trained.”*

*“Furthermore, the Trust has invested heavily in CCTV – reaching previous blind spots – as well as facial recognition software. Using biometrics technology, we can detect suspects before they enter the*

*building unidentified. We have recently strengthened our longstanding security plan and counterterrorism risk assessment and will review this again once the bill becomes law.”*

### **How will Martyn’s Law work in practice, for venues with differing capacities?**

The law follows a tiered model approach; key factors include the type of activity at the venue and its capacity.

- Tier 1: Standard tier will apply to locations with a capacity of 100 – 700 (this could change after the consultation process).
- Tier 2: Enhanced tier will apply to locations with a capacity of over 800.

Therefore, with the Guildhall’s maximum capacity of 2500 for standing events, it will fall under the enhanced tier (Tier 2).

Both tiers will have to fulfil measures such as staff training, public awareness campaigns, and most importantly the development of the Martyn’s Law preparedness plan. The Enhanced Tier venues will have to follow further guidance and put extra measures in place in line with its capacity and individual venue challenges.

### **How can members of the public help venues to reduce the risk of terrorism, in a safe way?**

The Guildhall Trust will launch a public awareness campaign after the government enacts the legislation.

Visitors to venues can help by being vigilant. For example, if something doesn’t feel right then they should tell someone immediately. The Guildhall Trust will encourage customers to do this and train staff appropriately to respond.

There are other things people can do to help. The Trust advises customers to only bring small bags into the venue that you can keep to hand easily. This will mean that no large bags are left lying around in the venue. Finally, anyone visiting the venue should make sure that they know where the nearest exit is in the event of an emergency.

Peter Lomax, Multitone’s Sales & Marketing Director said:

*“I am grateful to Andy Grays and his team at the Guildhall Trust for their valuable insight into how the UK’s venues are responding to these difficult challenges. Secure communications technologies are a key component in enhancing public and staff safety, which is why Multitone Electronics’ product development continues to adapt to society’s evolving needs, with solutions such as EkoTek and i-Message for use in emergency situations such as a terrorist attack, where every second counts.”*

Join us in ensuring the safety of our communities and workplaces. Together, we can make a difference in reducing the risk of terrorism and creating a safer environment for all. Learn more about how Multitone Electronics' solutions, such as EkoTek and i-Message, contribute to enhancing public and staff safety at <https://www.multitone.com/solutions/>.