

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill , also known as Martyns Law, and how it relates to The South Devon Players.

(Draft procedures for South Devon Players disclaimer: working document beun October 29th 2024)

<https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2024/09/13/martyns-law-factsheet/>

(news updated the Stage Oct 29th 2024 <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/counter-terrorism-law-set-to-pass-extra-responsibilities-on-to-theatre-buildings>)

Full library of factsheets: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024-factsheets>

Factsheet as relevant to South Devon Players:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024-factsheets/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-standard-duty-requirements-factsheet>

As a touring company moving into a variety of different spaces, we find ourselves in an unusual situation.

While the elements of the legislation – formally known as **The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill** , applies more to venues, than to touring organisations, we are aware that smaller venues or volunteer run community halls where we are provided a key and left to run the event ourselves, may not be aware of the legislation, or that by dint of hiring the venue for the time of the production, we therefore may become responsible for maintaining the following of this legislation under the elements of the legislation referring to “events”.

As we do not foresee our venues reaching over 799 capacity, all our notes refer to under 800. Some of our venues are smaller than 200 capacity but as some of our venues do come over potential 200 capacity, we need to follow these procedures.

The draft bill states that

“What are the requirements for standard duty premises?”

- Persons responsible for a standard duty premises, i.e. qualifying premises where it is reasonable to expect that between 200 and 799 individuals may be present at the same time, will be required to:
- notify the regulator of their premises; and
- put in place appropriate and reasonably practicable public protection procedures (as set out in Clause 5 of the Bill).
- These procedures are to be followed by people working at the premises if an act of terrorism was to occur at the premises or in the immediate vicinity, which may be expected to reduce the risk of physical harm being caused to individuals. This includes ensuring there are procedures in place to provide information to individuals on the premises and to evacuate, invacuate or lockdown the premises.
- The requirements for standard duty premises are focused on simple activities surrounding policies and procedures, which are to be followed by staff in the event

of terrorist attack or suspected terrorist attack occurring. The aim of these requirements is to improve staff preparedness and responses. There is no requirement to put in place physical measures in this tier. Furthermore, the reasonably practicable element will enable standard duty premises to tailor their approach to the resources they have available.

Responsibility as relating to us states “For qualifying events, the responsible person is the person who has control of the premises at which the event is to be held for the purposes of that event. The relevant circumstances of the event will need to be considered to determine who the responsible person is. For example, if a concert is to be held in a park and the company putting on the event takes control of an area of the park and has control of that area for the purposes of that concert, the company putting on the event will be the responsible person. “ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024-factsheets/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-responsible-person-factsheet>

The responsibility of South Devon Players at a relevant event is set out at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024-factsheets/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-standard-duty-requirements-factsheet>

The four types of procedures that must be put in place, as appropriate and reasonably practicable, are:

Evacuation	The process of getting people safely out of the premises
Invacuation	The process of bringing people safely into, or to safe parts within, the premises.
Lockdown	The process of securing the premises to ensure that the entry of any attacker is restricted or prevented e.g. locking doors, closing shutters or using barriers.
Communication	The process of alerting people on the premises to move them away from any danger.

When considering the procedures in place, the responsible person will need to consider what is appropriate and reasonably practicable for their premises. This will involve consideration of the nature of the premises and resources available. The bill does not require physical alterations or the purchase of equipment at standard duty premises.

The requirement has been designed with the intention of being simple for the responsible person to follow and the government will provide guidance to support the consideration of reasonably practicable public protection procedures.

As part of ensuring that public protection procedures are in place, people working at the premises must be made aware of the procedures so that they can be ready to put them

into practice. For example, it would not be sufficient to have an evacuation procedure in place if no one working on the premises understood how to follow it.

- This then means that all front of house/ ushers must be aware of this, as well as chaperones, stage manager and director, and able to follow the procedures at a moments notice. Because of the multitasking nature of South Devon Players shows, we will require that all cast and crew members are aware of this, in order to safely respond to any situation within the procedures set out.

As we tour to a wide variety of venues , the core initial procedures, once this bill is enacted into law will require

- SDP to check that any venue with capacity for over 200 people (inclusive of audiences, actors, crew, etc) if they have standard procedures under this new legislation and if so, to communicate this to the team especially front of house/ ushers; chaperones, stage managers and anyone who may need to make evacuation announcements in the case of emergency.
- In cases of hiring a village hall or similar space where the venue owners are not present and not responsible for the running of the event, SDP “**will be required to notify the Security Industry Authority (SIA) when they become responsible for that premises. They must also notify the SIA when they cease to be responsible.**” for venues with capacity for over 200 people (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-2024-factsheets/terrorism-protection-of-premises-bill-standard-duty-requirements-factsheet>)
- For venues with a capacity of over 200, where SDP are the “responsible person”, SDP will need to create a procedure, for the event, to be followed in the case of terrorist emergency, which sets out the following points, and require that all relevant team members are fully briefed. On the shows where we do a “one day get in, show and get out” those team members will be required to arrive early enough to check the procedure in conjunction with the layout of the space alongside the main duties (eg, where evacuation points are, where doors lock, escape routes, etc) :

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DRAFT General procedure for SDP

(To be updated as the Bill is passed).

Terrorism could take many forms, it could be a threat (eg a bomb threat called phoned or emailed into the venue), it could take place as an act of violence using a weapon, it could be a hostage situation.)

The first point is that our team members need to remain calm. We have a number - even a majority - of admin, actors and crew team members who are neurodivergent, have anxiety or PTSD, and bearing this in mind, those leading in such a situation will need to be those who are able to act as that calm anchor for the rest. Creating panic however, will only serve to make the situation worse.

Before the show starts, all cast and crew must be familiarised with the relevant emergency exits of the building, which doors lock, which windows open and close. This will need to be factored into call times.

In a situation like this, the priority is to get everyone, or as many as possible, to safety.

EVACUATION

Backstage areas will be led by one named person, while front of house (audience) will be led by another named person. If a situation occurs, either the stage manager or director (dependant on who is available) will need to locate the probable area(s) of danger, if it is not immediately obvious, and communicate to the rest of those leading the evacuation, to prevent people being led into additional danger.

INVACUATION

Depending on the nature of the incident, eg an event taking place outside the building, evacuation may not be the correct option, and instead all people should be brought to a safe space within the building, potentially a space that can be locked or barricaded. In that event, rules about audience not being permitted backstage are immediately suspended, if that is the safest area. Basic advice would then be to keep away from sight through windows etc.

LOCKDOWN

In most of the venues we use, eg village halls, lockdown may be unlikely, there are not the spaces for barriers, or shutters, however if the attacker were in a room with only a door as exit, and that door had a lock, it is perfectly acceptable to lock them inside while people are evacuated.

COMMUNICATION

As relevant (and depending on proximity to the event) a specific announcement will be made by the director, stage manager or sound technician (as appropriate, that we are pausing the show to evacuate, and that people will be guided to the relevant exits as appropriate.

An important note should be made: At no point should anyone treat a note to evacuate or seek a safe space as a joke or someone "having a laugh". Nor should any such joke be made.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR SDP ARMOURERS

A lot of SDP shows involve prop weapons. While these are usually blunted swords or knives which could not cut anyone, or prop guns which have no facility to fire a projectile, these could potentially be used to threaten or cause fear.

In the case of a terrorist incident, the production team member calling the emergency services is required by SDP to appraise the call handler that there are prop weapons on site, what type, and

their location.

It is therefore additionally critical that those weapons are treated by all cast and crew members, through all rehearsals and performances, follow guidance from the armourer and stage manager around weapons, including replacing them in the storage area when not in use on stage, and refrain from any horseplay or unplanned “messing about” with them.

In the case of an evacuation or invacuation, actors and crew should not be carrying a weapon prop. Terrorism usually requires armed law enforcement, and depending on the nature of the situation, the possibility is that they may have an order to shoot to kill a terrorist, so carrying a weapon at that point is an especially bad idea.