LEON GUARDING

Security, compliance and risk intelligence from Leon Guarding & FM Limited

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LEON INSIDER

THIS MONTH

The SIA sets out a three-year plan that changes how security companies are judged, a national enforcement operation shows what inspectors are finding, and three separate changes come into force.

LEAD STORY | THE ACS IS BEING REPLACED — AND THE BAR MOVES TO QUALITY

The SIA published its Strategic Plan 2026–2029 and Business Plan 2026–2027 this month. For security buyers and providers alike, one line matters more than the rest: the Approved Contractor Scheme is being replaced by a new Business Approval Scheme.

What changes. The SIA states it will focus for the first time on the quality of security provision, not simply on licensing compliance. Where the ACS has centred on process audits and documentation, the successor scheme is being designed around outcomes — what a business actually delivers on site, and how its performance holds up under scrutiny.

Why now. The plan marks the largest expansion of the regulator's remit since 2001. The SIA will regulate premises for the first time under Martyn's Law alongside its existing responsibilities, giving it a much broader role across the UK's protective security landscape.

What this means for buyers of security

- Approved contractor status will become harder to hold and more meaningful when held
- Assessment is expected to become risk-led and tiered, with higher-risk operators facing more intensive oversight
- A provider's approval will say more about delivery than about its filing system
- If your incumbent provider holds ACS approval, it is a fair question to ask what their transition plan looks like.

Source: SIA Strategic Plan 2026–2029 and Business Plan 2026–2027, GOV.UK

SCALE | THE INDUSTRY IN ONE COMPARISON

The strategic plan puts the sector's size in context. There are over 517,000 SIA licences held by more than 458,000 vetted and trained people across the UK. By comparison, there were 169,348 police officers across the United Kingdom at the end of January 2026.

As the SIA notes, security operatives are often dealing with an incident before police and other emergency services arrive.

517,000
SIA licences currently held across the UK

458,000
vetted and trained people holding them

169,348
police officers in the UK at the end of January 2026

Roughly **40%** of licence holdersy are based in London and the South-East

11% are female

The largest age group is **26–35**

ENFORCEMENT | NATIONAL INSPECTION OPERATION, 21 JUNE

More than 40 officers from the SIA's Inspections and Enforcement Directorate, supported by policing partners, carried out co-ordinated inspections across the UK on Saturday 21 June. Teams visited 224 licensed premises and conducted 450 licence checks.

Most operatives were correctly licensed.

224
licensed premises

450
licence checks

6
suspected Section 3 offences

Investigators identified six suspected Section 3 offences under the Private Security Industry Act 2001, including:

- One individual suspected of using a counterfeit licence
- One working while their licence was suspended
- One suspected of working on somebody else's licence, who fled the scene while speaking to investigators

Inspectors also found venue staff undertaking or managing licensable activity without a licence — a criminal offence — and multiple suspected Section 9 breaches of licence conditions.

The venue-side risk is the one people miss. Duty managers stepping onto the door at closing time, or supervising search and refusal decisions, are performing licensable activity. Being employed by the venue does not always exempt them.

MARTYN'S LAW | CONSULTATION CLOSES, FINAL GUIDANCE DUE IN AUTUMN

The SIA's consultation on its draft Section 12 guidance closed on 12 June, drawing around 200 written responses. On 16 June the regulator confirmed it will publish the final guidance alongside a consultation report in autumn 2026.

Commencement remains anticipated for spring 2027. With the notification portal not expected until early 2027, the practical preparation window is now measured in months rather than years.

IN FORCE THIS MONTH

1 June — ACS annual registration fee rises to £25 per licensable individual deployed; the 50% additional-licence discount now requires a same-day application on the same form

2 June — the SIA becomes a prescribed person under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, giving legal protection to workers who report wrongdoing in the industry

29 June — a substantial tranche of the Crime and Policing Act 2026 commences

BY THE NUMBERS

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224 / 450
premises visited and licence checks made on 21 June

~200
responses to the SIA's Section 12 consultation

Autumn 2026
publication of final Martyn's Law regulatory guidance

FROM LEON GUARDING

In the community | HOPE Family Barking food bank

Leon Guarding's monthly support for the HOPE Family Barking food bank continued in June, with team members volunteering their time to help local families in need.

HOPE FAMILY | Stronger Families Brighter Communities

PRACTICAL TIP | START EVIDENCING OUTCOMES, NOT JUST PROCESS

The move from ACS to an outcome-based scheme rewards providers who can show what happened on site, not just that a policy exists. The same evidence makes a provider easier to hold to account.

What good evidence looks like

- Patrol records that prove the patrol happened, at the time and place claimed — not a signed sheet completed at shift end
- Incident reports with times, actions taken and outcomes, not narrative summaries written days later
- Training records tied to named officers on named sites, with refresh dates tracked
- Licence verification logs showing frequency, not a one-off induction check
- Turnover and absence figures by site — the clearest early warning of a contract in trouble

If your provider cannot produce these on request, they will struggle under the new scheme, and you are already carrying the risk.

Leon Guarding's CASPER platform captures GPS and QR-verified patrol records, timestamped incident reports and body-worn camera footage against each site. INDEL verifies every officer's SIA licence three times daily and blocks deployment on failure. Clients can request the underlying records at any time, not a summary of them.