LEON GUARDING
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LEON INSIDER

THIS MONTH

The SIA sets out the practical tools it will give organisations preparing for Martyn's Law, and the qualifications consultation enters its final weeks. With the year's regulatory picture now largely settled, this issue also looks back at what changed.

LEAD STORY | MARTYN'S LAW: THE PRACTICAL HELP ARRIVES

On 11 September the SIA published its latest monthly update, focused on the three questions organisations keep asking: am I in scope, what do I actually have to produce, and what will notifying the regulator involve?

Working out whether you are in scope

Protect UK hosts flowcharts to help you check, and the Home Office's Section 27 guidance includes case studies designed for exactly this question. The SIA is also building an online scope-checking tool, due to be available in the new year. Volunteers are wanted to test it — particularly organisations that are genuinely unsure whether the law applies to them.

Templates for both tiers

The SIA is developing templates to help document procedures and measures, with separate versions for standard and enhanced tier. These are being tested now with protective security partners and volunteers, and will be published over the coming months. Using them will be optional.

Notification

The notification portal will be accessed through GOV.UK, so it should feel familiar to anyone who has renewed a passport or filed a tax return online. The SIA is working through how notification should differ for a single small venue versus an organisation managing a large or complex portfolio. More volunteers are needed for building and testing, and the need will grow as commencement approaches.

Premises with more than one use

Where a single premises has multiple uses within scope — a hall hired out for activities that also runs a café, for example — responsibility sits with whoever controls the premises for its principal use. The Home Office has published separate guidance on determining this. It does not apply to sites made up of several separate premises with different uses.

Pilots

A first round of pilot assessments and inspections has been completed, shaping both the tools and the inspection approach — including how inspectors gather information without disrupting the security work going on at the premises. A second round begins this autumn.

Source: GOV.UK, SIA Martyn's Law update, 11 September 2026

REMINDER | QUALIFICATIONS CONSULTATION CLOSES 23 OCTOBER

The SIA's consultation on proposed changes to licence-linked qualifications remains open until 11:59pm on Friday 23 October. It covers updated content specifications, a separate independent English language assessment, a new security-specific first aid qualification, and a possible standing licence condition requiring a valid first aid certificate.

Employers and buyers of security can respond, not just licence holders. If the proposals would create a practical problem in your operation, this is the window to say so. Final specifications are due in winter, with new qualifications in 2027.

Also expected this autumn: the SIA's final Section 12 guidance on how it will regulate Martyn's Law, together with the report on that consultation.

THE YEAR IN REGULATION | WHAT CHANGED IN 2026

Nine months on, the shape of the year is clear. Five changes will still matter in 2027:

Licensing got stricter. The December 2025 criteria widened the offence list, extended overseas checks and brought non-criminal conduct into suitability decisions.

Martyn's Law became concrete. Statutory guidance in April, an enforcement consultation through the spring, pilot inspections over the summer, and tools arriving now. Commencement is expected spring 2027.

Retail crime law changed. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 created a standalone offence of assaulting a retail worker and repealed the £200 shoplifting threshold.

Training came under enforcement. Operation RESOLUTE, the termination of an awarding organisation's recognition, and a consultation that will rewrite what every licence holder must learn.

The standard for security businesses moved. The ACS is being replaced by a Business Approval Scheme that judges quality of delivery, not just documented process.

The common thread is a regulator shifting from checking that paperwork exists to checking what actually happens on site. That is a harder test, and a fairer one.

BY THE NUMBERS

23 October 2026
qualifications consultation closes

Autumn 2026
final Section 12 guidance and consultation report

New year
SIA online scope-checking tool available

Spring 2027
expected commencement of Martyn's Law

Source: GOV.UK, SIA and Ofqual, September 2026

FROM LEON GUARDING

Ilford & Redbridge Business Awards 2026 | Voting closes 30 September

There are only days left to vote in the Ilford & Redbridge Business Awards 2026. Voting closes on 30 September, and winners will be announced at the ceremony on 3 December.

If Leon Guarding has looked after your site, worked alongside your team, or supported your business this year, we would be grateful for your vote. It takes a couple of minutes, and for a local business, that kind of recognition genuinely matters.

Vote here: [insert voting link]

In the community | HOPE Family Barking food bank

Our team was back at the HOPE Family Barking food bank again this month. Nine months into the year, the monthly commitment has not missed a beat, and it remains one of the things we are most proud

PRACTICAL TIP | A PLAN IS NOT THE SAME AS PREPAREDNESS

As the Martyn's Law framework firms up, there is a risk that organisations mistake having the documents for being ready. A written evacuation procedure is evidence of thought. It is not evidence that staff will act on it correctly, at night, in a busy venue, under stress.

Four questions worth asking before the winter season

01 When did you last run the procedure as an exercise, rather than read it?

02 Do the officers on shift tonight know the lockdown trigger and who calls it?

03 If the person named as responsible is on leave, who decides?

04 Does anyone new since your last briefing know any of this?

None of these requires new spending. All of them are the difference between a compliant file and a competent response.

Leon Guarding works with clients on procedure drafting, officer briefing and practical exercises ahead of Martyn's Law commencement. If your sites sit near the 200 or 800 capacity thresholds, the time to prepare is now rather than in the spring.