

THE ACRONYM BUSTER

UK Security Acronyms, in Plain English

A verified reference of the acronyms, standards and legal frameworks that apply to non-domestic premises and public sector organisations. Every entry checked against primary sources. Not legal advice; for specific compliance questions, seek a lawyer or your CTSA.

REGULATORS & BODIES

- **CTSA**
Counter Terrorism Security Adviser
A specialist police officer or staff member working within local police forces, coordinated by NaCTSO, who provides free protective security advice to businesses and organisations.
- **DfE**
Department for Education
The UK government department responsible for education and children's services in England.
- **HSE**
Health and Safety Executive
The national regulator for workplace health and safety in Great Britain.
- **ICO**
Information Commissioner's Office
The UK's independent regulator for data protection and information rights, operating under the Data Protection Act 2018.
- **NaCTSO**
National Counter Terrorism Security Office
A police unit that provides counter-terrorism protective security advice across the UK, hosted by Counter Terrorism Policing.
- **NPCC**
National Police Chiefs' Council
The coordinating body for UK policing, formed in April 2015 as the successor to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).
- **Ofsted**
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
The non-ministerial government department that inspects and regulates schools, further education and skills training in England.
- **SIA**
Security Industry Authority
The UK regulator for the private security industry, established under the Private Security Industry Act 2001.

LEGISLATION & FRAMEWORKS

- **DPA**
Data Protection Act 2018
The UK legislation that implements the UK GDPR and covers areas outside its scope, including law enforcement processing and intelligence services.
- **FOIA**
Freedom of Information Act 2000
UK legislation giving the public a right of access to information held by public authorities, including schools, colleges and local authorities.
- **KCSiE**
Keeping Children Safe in Education
The DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges in England, issued under sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002.

● **RRFSO**

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The primary fire safety legislation for non-domestic premises in England and Wales.

Not legal advice; for specific

● **SBD**

Secured by Design

A UK police-led initiative owned by the NPCC that provides a preferred specification for crime prevention through design of buildings, systems and products.

● **TPPA / Martyn's Law**

Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

UK legislation that will place duties on qualifying publicly accessible premises to have protective procedures in place.

● **UK GDPR**

UK General Data Protection Regulation

The UK's version of the EU GDPR, retained in UK law after Brexit and sitting alongside the Data Protection Act 2018.

ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION

● **BAFE**

British Approvals for Fire Equipment

An independent, third-party certification scheme provider for the fire safety industry.

● **BSI**

British Standards Institution

The UK's national standards body, publisher of British Standards (BS) and the UK member of ISO and CEN.

● **LPCB**

Loss Prevention Certification Board

The certification arm of BRE, providing product-level certification against Loss Prevention Standards (LPS).

● **NSI**

National Security Inspectorate

A UKAS-accredited certification body that inspects and certifies companies providing security systems, fire detection and manned guarding services against BS and BAFE standards.

● **SSAIB**

Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board

A UKAS-accredited certification body that certifies companies providing security systems, monitoring services, guarding and telecare against relevant BS standards.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

● **BS 5839-1**

Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings, Part 1: Non-domestic premises

The UK code of practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in non-domestic buildings.

● **BS 8243**

Design, installation and configuration of intruder and hold-up alarm systems designed to generate confirmed alarm conditions

The UK code of practice for confirmed alarm systems, which require two or more independent detections before triggering a full police response.

- **BS 8418**
Design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of detector-activated video surveillance systems
The UK code of practice for remotely monitored, detector-activated CCTV systems where an alarm signal triggers live operator engagement.
- **BS EN 50131**
Alarm systems: Intrusion and hold-up systems
The European standard series that specifies requirements for the design, installation and performance of intruder and hold-up alarm systems.
- **BS EN 50136**
Alarm systems: Alarm transmission systems and equipment
The European standard series specifying performance and testing of the transmission paths that carry alarm signals from a system to an alarm receiving centre.
- **BS EN 50518**
Monitoring and Alarm Receiving Centre
The European standard covering the physical construction, staffing and operational requirements of alarm receiving centres.
- **BS EN 62676**
Video surveillance systems for use in security applications
The European standard series covering requirements, performance and testing of video surveillance systems.
- **PD 6662**
Published Document 6662: Scheme for the application of European Standards for intrusion and hold-up alarm systems
The BSI Published Document that sets out how BS EN 50131 and related European standards should be applied in the UK.

TECHNICAL TERMS

- **ACT**
Action Counters Terrorism
NaCTSO's public awareness campaign encouraging the reporting of suspicious activity, together with the free ACT Awareness e-learning package for frontline staff.
- **ANPR**
Automatic Number Plate Recognition
A camera-based technology that reads vehicle number plates and matches them against watchlists or access lists.
- **ARC**
Alarm Receiving Centre
A secure, 24/7 monitoring facility that receives alarm signals from remote sites and takes agreed action, typically to BS EN 50518.
- **CCTV**
Closed-Circuit Television
The umbrella term for video surveillance systems, whether analogue or, more commonly today, IP-based network cameras.
- **HVM**
Hostile Vehicle Mitigation
Physical security measures designed to prevent or reduce the impact of vehicle-borne threats, including bollards, planters, active road blockers and vehicle security barriers.
- **IP**
Internet Protocol
The network protocol that underlies almost all modern security systems.

- **NVR**
Network Video Recorder
The dedicated device or server that records and stores video from IP cameras on a network.
- **PIR**
Passive Infrared
The most common motion detection technology used in intruder alarms and lighting controls.
- **PoE**
Power over Ethernet
An IEEE 802.3 standard that allows Ethernet cabling to carry electrical power alongside data, powering devices like IP cameras, wireless access points and access control readers from the network switch.
- **ProtectUK**
ProtectUK
The Counter Terrorism Policing digital platform providing protective security advice, training and, in due course, Martyn's Law guidance and support tools for the Responsible Person.
- **PSTN**
Public Switched Telephone Network
The traditional analogue and copper-based telephone network in the UK.
- **VMS**
Video Management System
The software platform that manages CCTV cameras, recordings, users and integrations.

ROLES & ORGANISATIONS

- **DPO**
Data Protection Officer
The individual formally designated under UK GDPR Article 37 to advise on and monitor compliance with data protection law.
- **DSL**
Designated Safeguarding Lead
The named senior member of school staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, required by KCSIE.
- **ISBA**
Independent Schools Bursars Association
The professional membership body for bursars, business directors and finance directors in independent schools in the UK.
- **ISBL**
Institute of School Business Leadership
The professional body for school business leaders in England, formerly the National Association of School Business Management (NASBM).
- **MAT**
Multi-Academy Trust
A group of academy schools operating under a single trust and governance structure.
- **NGA**
National Governance Association
The national membership organisation for governors and trustees of state schools and academy trusts in England.

- **Responsible Person (Fire)**

Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The person who has control of non-domestic premises for fire safety purposes, whether as employer, occupier or owner.

- **Responsible Person (Martyn's Law)**

Responsible Person under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025

The person or body who has control of the qualifying premises or event under Section 3 of the Act.

- **SBM / SBP**

School Business Manager / School Business Professional

The senior operations and finance role in a school, responsible for premises, contracts, procurement and non-teaching operations.