

**Note Number 34/13**

Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate General presents its compliments to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Protocol Division, and has the honour to inform of the following.

The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 will allow British Diplomatic Missions overseas to marry same sex couples from a date yet to be confirmed in 2014, and for that marriage to be recognised under UK law. This marriage will only be recognised under England and Wales law, and will be treated as a civil partnership in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Marriages of same sex couples will be offered alongside civil partnerships, which will continue to be available only to same sex couples and can only be conducted through a civil ceremony. Civil partnership offers much the same legal rights and responsibilities as marriage, and couples in a civil partnership registered in England and Wales (or overseas in a consulate or armed forces base) will have the option to convert their relationship into a marriage if they so wish.

Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate General would be grateful to know whether the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has any objection to the Consulate General solemnising a consular marriage between any, or all of the following:

- a. Two British nationals of the same sex.
- b. A British national and a Chinese national of the same sex.
- c. A British national and a foreign national of the same sex.
- d. Converting an existing civil partnership registered at a British Embassy/High Commission/Consulate into a marriage.



In addition to marriage, the Civil Partnership Act 2004 allows British Consulates to register civil partnerships of same sex couples. Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate General would be grateful to know whether the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has any objection to the Consulate General registering a civil partnership between:

- a. Two British nationals of the same sex.
- b. A British national and a Chinese national of the same sex.
- c. A British national and a foreign national of the same sex.

Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate General would be most grateful to receive a response to this proposal as soon as possible, and avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Protocol Division, the assurances of its highest consideration.

BRITISH CONSULATE GENERAL  
HONG KONG  
18 OCTOBER 2013

