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**ADVANCE WARNING TO ALL CLERGY AND OTHERS INVOLVED WITH THE  
LEGAL ASPECTS OF MARRIAGE IN CHURCH  
(INCLUDING ANY LAY PERSONS WHO PUBLISH BANNS)**

**From 2nd March 2015, it will no longer be lawful for the marriage of a non-EEA (i.e. non-European) national to be solemnized in the Church of England after the publication of banns or by a common marriage licence.** All such weddings will now have to be authorised by a superintendent registrar's certificate ('SRC').

Where an application for banns or for a common licence is made by any couple wishing to marry in church, after 2nd March 2015 both parties will be required by law to provide evidence of their nationality. If they do not produce evidence that they are EEA (i.e. British or European) nationals, they will need to apply for an SRC.

Until 2nd March 2015, the current arrangements for the marriage in church of non-British nationals will continue, in line with the guidance & directions issued by the House of Bishops in April 2011. In cases of uncertainty, clergy should consult with their diocesan registrar.

The government has announced that there will be transitional arrangements which will apply to a common licence that has been granted or applied for before 2nd March 2015.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's special marriage licence will continue to be necessary in the same cases as at present; i.e. where a couple does not have a legal right to be married in a particular parish church or where the building itself is not licensed for marriages, including school and college chapels, cathedrals, etc. A Special Licence will also continue to be necessary for Anglican marriages to take place in a hospital or hospice or at home, where there is urgent medical necessity and where no other preliminary is available. Further information is found on our Faculty Office website: [www.facultyoffice.org.uk/special-licences](http://www.facultyoffice.org.uk/special-licences)

The details of the changes to the law, including the transitional arrangements, are not expected to be finalised by the government until the early part of 2015. At that point, the Legal Office at Church House will circulate a detailed guidance note via the diocesan communications offices, which will be followed up by additional guidance from the Faculty Office regarding special marriage licences and to supplement the booklet 'Anglican Marriage in England and Wales: a Guide to the Law for the Clergy'.

**P F B BEESLEY & H J DELLAR**  
Joint Registrars

*3rd December 2014*