[RU] Russia's Chief Communications Executive Authority Is Upgraded

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The passing on 28 March 2000 of the Russian Government's decree No. 265 "On Approval of the Statute on the Russian Federation's Ministry for Communications and Informatization" is a well-timed step to mark the culmination of the main stage of reforming the executive authority structure in the field of communications. The keynote of this reform has been, above all, the upgrading of the status of the federal department. In 1997, Russia's Ministry for Communications was transformed into the State Committee for Communications and Informatization and, later, into the State Committee for Telecommunications. The return to the status of a ministry, based on the Presidential decree of 12 November 1999, No. 1487, means that the Ministry for Communications and Informatizations ("Communications Ministry") will now not merely exercise interdepartmental co-ordination over matters of its concern, but also define and implement policies in the field of communications under the Government's general guidance. Among others, the Minister for Communications must regularly attend the Government's sessions to defend the interests of the players of the telecommunications market and inform the country's top leadership on reform issues in the field of communications that are on the agenda.

The Communications Ministry will supervise some bodies that carry out operative (day-to-day) administration and whose importance has also been strengthened by the current reform. Mainly, they are three commissions whose powers have been laid down in the Government's decree No. 346 of 15 April 2000 "On Approval of the Statutes on the State Commission for Radio Frequencies, the State Commission for Electrical Communications and the State Commission for Informatization at the Russian Federation's Ministry for Communications and Informatization". Major control powers over players of the telecommunications market is now delegated to the Gossvyaznadzor (State Communications Inspection), an agency subordinated to the Minister of Communications, that works through a system of agencies, which are directly responsible to the Communications Ministry. The Government's decree No. 380 of 28 April 2000 "On Re-organizing the State's Supervision over Communications and Informatization" had changed the status of the State Communications Inspection by widening its competence and formally adding new functions.

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As laid down by the Governmental decree No. 265 of 28 March, the Communications Ministry will now deal with the following matters: license activities in the field of communications, regulation of the use of the radio frequency spectrum and orbital fixes of civil-application communications satellites (except for the frequency bands and satellite fixes allocated for the purposes of television and radio broadcasting), organize the development and implementation of concepts for the principal scheme of development of the electrical communications networks, organize work on the development of the national information and telecommunications infrastructure, carry out the implementation of interactive systems of information services, determine technical requirements for communications hardware used in general-purpose communications networks, carry out accreditation of certification and testing centres, define major guidelines in charge-rate policy in the field of electrical communications, etc.

The government decree in question, besides upgrading the Communications Ministry, devotes much attention to regulating the introduction of new technologies used in electrical communications networks.

Ob utverzhdenii polozheniya o ministerstve Rossiyskoi Federatsii po svyzi I informatizatsii. Sobraniye zakonodatelstva RF, 3 April 2000, No.14, st. 1498.

The Russian Government's decree No. 265 of 28 March 2000 On Approval of the Statute on the Russian Federation's Ministry for Communications and Informatization. Sobraniye zakonodatelstva RF, 3 April 2000, No.14, st. 1498.

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