[RU] Access to Information Law Adopted

IRIS 2009-3:1/31

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On 9 February 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation signed the Federal Statute On provision of access to information on activity of the State bodies and bodies of local self-government, earlier adopted by the State Duma (the national parliament). The Statute enters into force on 1 January 2010.

The main aims of the new Statute are openness of activities of governmental and municipal authorities, a wide use of new technologies, and objective and full information for the public on the activities of the State. The Statute is founded on the principle of the presumption of openness of information with the exception of certain cases, as envisaged in federal statutes and related to legally protected secrets (Art. 5, para. 1). The need to explain the reasons to obtain information sought from the authorities shall become unnecessary (Art. 8, para. 3 point 1).

The Statute sets forms and means of provision of information. In a number of cases the information shall be provided for a nominal fee to be set by the Government.

The Statute foresees the establishment and regular updating of official Internet websites of State bodies and bodies of local self-government. With this aim such offices, as well as public libraries and other places open to public shall have points of access to the Internet. Article 13 of the Statute enumerates the types of information that are allowed to be provided on the Internet. It includes inter alia technical standards, information on results of inspections by the authorities, statistical data, information on expenditures of public money, and on vacancies. The exact types of information to be provided on official Internet websites, though, shall be determined by the authorities that hold these websites. In fact the only obligatory items for official websites are the address of the official e-mail for inquiries, working hours and news updates.

The Statute sets out the possibility for citizens to be present at the meetings of collegial State bodies and collegial bodies of local self-government, as well as their collegial committees. At the same time the authorities themselves regulate the presence of citizens at their meetings in by-laws (Art. 15).

The Statute introduces amendments to the Code of Administrative Offences that envisage administrative fines for violations of the Statute. Control over the execution of the Statute shall be conducted by the heads of the State bodies and

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heads of the bodies of local self-government. No regular reporting on its application is envisaged by the Statute.

« Об обеспечении доступа к информации о деятельности государственных органов и органов местного самоуправления »

Federal Statute On provision of access to information on activity of the State bodies and bodies of local self-government) of 9 February No. 8-FZ, published in official daily on 13 February 2009

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