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Medvedev Finalizes Investigative Committee

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President Dmitry Medvedev on Tuesday signed a law separating the Investigative Committee from the Prosecutor General's Office and defining their responsibilities, the Kremlin said on its web site.

The bill, approved earlier by the State Duma and the Federation Council, was introduced by Medvedev in September as a part of his plan to improve the law enforcement system. The law defines the responsibilities of the committee, which will handle investigations of grave crimes as well as crimes committed by prosecutors.

The prosecutors will oversee the investigators, with a right to hold inquiries into their decisions to not open a case or suspend a case.

Six constitutional laws had to be amended to put the bill into force, the statement said. But most of those cover formalities, such as the committee chief's right to hang a state flag in his office or the authorization to use the national coat of arms in paperwork.

The committee's chief also received the right to attend government meetings, a privilege he did not enjoy under the Prosecutor General's Office. The Investigative Committee is currently headed by Alexander Bastrykin.

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