

Bill on Academy of Sciences Property Agency Set for Final Draft

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A task force was expected Tuesday to present the final draft of a statute establishing a federal agency to manage the Russian Academy of Science's property and institutions, a task force member said.

Critics of the government's proposals for reorganizing the academy have staged a series of demonstrations across the country in recent months out of concern that intervention in RAN's operations will strip the Russian sciences of their autonomy.

A recent addition to the statute giving the new agency authority to have a say in RAN's research topics could further fuel these anxieties.

However, an unidentified official said that this point "remains under discussion" and may be removed from the statute during Wednesday's discussion, Kommersant reported.

The task force has already incorporated elements of the 84 amendments proposed by State Duma deputies into the draft bill and is scheduled to consider proposals from members of RAN on Tuesday, deputy Mikhail Degtyaryov said.

Deputies criticized the first draft of the statute for failing to define both the new agency's personnel structure and the status of the "scientific coordinating council," an institution that would purportedly give the scientific community a voice in the agency's decisions, but whose actual degree of influence remains unclear.

The question of cooperation between the agency and RAN likewise remains unresolved, with the current draft saying only that the agency will "consider" RAN's recommendations when allocating property to scientific institutions and deciding on investment plans and contracts.

"Cooperation with RAN is written out like some kind of ritual formula in the form of a completely non-binding stipulation," the newly-formed Council of Scientific Institutions, which represents the majority of Russia's independent scientific organizations, said in a statement Monday.

Scientists are also concerned that the statute does not provide any means by which to control the agency's activity, the statement said.

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