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NASA Eyes Reducing Russia Presence – Reports

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NASA reportedly has around 90 employees and Russian service staff in Russia's space agency Roscosmos and other spaceflight offices around Moscow. **Todd Lappin / Flickr (CC BY-NC 2.0)**

NASA is considering reducing its presence in Russia under new U.S. President Joe Biden, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Thursday.

In addition to its liaison office in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, NASA reportedly has around 90 employees and Russian service staff in Russia's space agency Roscosmos and other spaceflight offices around Moscow.

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"Employees working at the Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City will be the first to go," RIA quoted an unnamed space industry source as saying.

They linked the move to the U.S. discontinuing regular flights aboard Russian spacecraft as

Elon Musk's SpaceX became the world's first private company to send humans into orbit last year.

The news agency added that NASA plans to stop renting cottages that housed astronauts with their families but does not plan to close the office entirely.

RIA cited another industry source as saying that NASA representatives will reduce its permanent presence at the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Biomedical Problems office.

The only NASA office not to undergo any changes in Russia is Mission Control Center, which controls operations at the International Space Station, RIA said.

"All NASA central office employees in Moscow are expected to be dismissed, but the Johnson Space Center office at Roscosmos will continue to work," a third source was quoted as saying.

Roscosmos said it did not receive official notifications from NASA on office and staff cuts, RIA reported. European and Japanese space agencies said they don't plan to change their presence in Moscow in any way.

Roscosmos keeps a small staff presence at the NASA space center in Houston but does not have any offices in the U.S., according to RIA.

With relations strained over regional conflicts and election meddling accusations, Russia and the United States had seen space as a rare area of bilateral cooperation in the past decade.

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