



# CHRISTIAN RADIO FOR RUSSIA

*Sponsor of the New Life Radio Satellite Network-  
Moscow, Russia*

**May 2014**

**www.CRFR.org**

**NEW LIFE RADIO in the midst of crisis between Russia and Ukraine: An Update**

**Strategic planning to proclaim the Gospel in changing times:**

**The role of international partnerships between Christians in Russia and the USA:**

**NEW Satellite needed to cover all of Russia:**

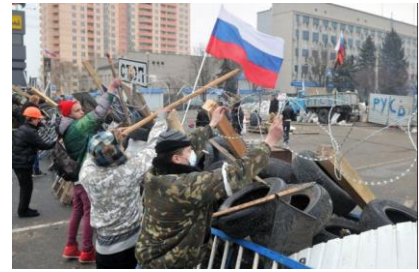
NEW LIFE RADIO is a media bridge of Christian unity and truth, now facing major challenges to its mission operations during this crisis time of political, cultural, and spiritual war between the closely connected peoples of Russia and Ukraine.

The president of Russia has set out on a personal vendetta to define a new destiny for his nation, which sadly, has caused the crisis we now find ourselves in, with uncertainty for millions.



The reality is, the Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate controller of the fate of peoples and nations, and our calling is to broadcast how to be salt and light amidst wars and strife. As a Christian radio network located inside the capital of Russia, we are not immune to the consequences of the trials now faced by a country experiencing new controls over freedom of conscience, assembly, religion, political rights, and the press. And because we are a global, evangelical media source charged to serve the international Slavic community, regardless of the national or patriotic persuasion of our listeners, our radio missionaries and transmission network are under threat unlike at no time since we began our radio service in 2000.

So when we encourage our Ukrainian and Russian listeners to



think about what Jesus would have them do, even as pro Russian militia take over Ukrainian government installations; or as patriotic pastors on each side struggle to find the proper response to give to their parishioners on what is right, or how to respond; New Life Radio clings to the words of Scripture to inform us how to live out the Christian life.

In doing so, our radio network has recently suffered setbacks in our operations due to Russian state media controllers who are limiting press freedom on those who would issue dissenting opinions that take a different view of reality on the ground.

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, NLR was forced off its Tricolor satellite radio channel, losing a potential audience of millions of Russian homes that could tune in to this secular satellite.



On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Russian federal broadcast agency issued a negative ruling on NLR's license application for satellite broadcasting, denying our ability to use domestic satellites that



cover half or more of the regions of the Russian Federation, because of their new determination (after 10 years) that defines NLR's non-profit agency as a majority *foreign owned* media entity and subject to new restrictions by government fiat.

While this limitation prevents New Life Radio from directly applying for new radio frequencies, or using satellites that cover most of Russia as accessed by domestic satellite uplink facilities (like Tricolor), the ruling DOES NOT prevent NLR from distributing its satellite service (from outside the country) to new FM channels owned by local Christians in Russia. Our primary satellite distribution continues over the HOTBIRD satellite that we access using facilities in Tel Aviv, Israel.

One more setback: the same federal agency is now demanding that NLR make excessive copyright payments for broadcasting our Christian music, even though the Russian and American Christian artists we air are not represented by the Russian copyright agency, nor will they be paid by this agency from the moneys we are forced to provide. This is an injustice to us and our fellow Christian musicians, but one we cannot overcome.

### Troubling news impacting our future...



The Russian government is using classic Soviet methodologies in political and information control to limit the ability of Russians to have a comprehensive understanding of the crisis from different perspectives. NLR is not alone in facing problems in their broadcasts, as even the few remaining independent, secular media have experienced interruptions or shutdowns based on the content and analysis they provide audiences. The Internet is also not immune to such control, as the Russian state maintains the technical means to institute a total blackout (firewall) of the entire nationwide Internet system.

To limit NLR's exposure to danger, the station is keeping tight rein on any information in news broadcasts (of a political nature) that would give the Kremlin an easy excuse to shut us down. Focusing more on Biblical responses to pressing issues of the day that mankind has faced throughout the generations, NLR is able to present what a Christian response should be, without promoting particular national or patriotic attitudes that might needlessly divide our listening audience. We remind our listeners that our ultimate allegiance is to the Kingdom of Heaven, and not to powers and principalities. If our broadcasts are terminated on this basis, then CRFR will implement contingency plans to ensure our broadcasts from outside of Russia

### Concerning the Ukrainian crisis:

Because Russia refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of the current Ukrainian government—led by a lay Baptist pastor, acting president Oleksandr Turchynov—there seems to be no limits to a Kremlin campaign of intimidation and misinformation.



One sad result of this state of affairs is a new line put out over Russian state TV that broadcasts the idea that the West *and* evangelicals (identified as Baptists in Russia/Ukraine) were responsible for the crisis in the Crimea. As a result, Russian evangelicals are facing various reprisals by state authorities that limit their freedom of action.

In truth, many in the evangelical movement are not critical of Russian moves on Ukraine, and there is much controversy between Church leaders in each nation regarding spiritual and political loyalties as the crisis continues unabated.

NEW LIFE RADIO understands its task to bring the Christian community together, and gives the leaders of each nation's evangelical Church airtime to address issues and seek healing.



Strategic planning to proclaim the Gospel in changing times:



NO ONE IS SURE what the future holds for the continuation and development of Christian media inside of Russia. The Russia of 2014 is vastly different from the one we experienced as we developed New Life Radio in the 1990s. In those past days, it seemed reasonable to expect an ongoing expansion of local, regional, and nationally-available Christian radio and TV. However, since 2000, Christian media has been thwarted in its growth due to state restrictions, and a number of radio stations that managed to begin, were eventually shut down by the Kremlin based on a variety of pretexts. Political demands of the state have triumphed over the free expression of the people, as reflected by activities of independent mass media.



Today, 99% of Russian communities still have no local Christian radio station. There is less than 1% of religious content in the Russian media of all types; evangelical Christian leaders are denied access to state TV and radio; the Kremlin refuses to issue radio licenses to local evangelical Christian applicants; unique evangelical ministries inside of Russia are being ended due to legal or financial problems; western missionaries are severely limited in their ability to stay and work inside of Russia; and now New Life Radio is being prevented from transmitting inside of the country using domestic satellites popular with Russian secular audiences.

We face a new era of heightened state control over every aspect of mass media, including telecom access, content control, organizational oversight and legal or criminal penalties in case of non-compliance.

IN DIFFICULT TIMES Christians are called to be bold in their proclamation of the Gospel, and also to be wise as serpents, and innocent as doves.

#### OUR

**STRATEGY** for continuing our outreach to Russia, Ukraine, and other Slavic nations is based on the following factors:

1) *Our call to proclaim the Gospel is sure and will continue as Christ allows. We will depend on His protection to broadcast.*

2) *We will strive to keep the current broadcast operation at NLR studios in Moscow with our*



*existing radio missionary staff. If subject to closure by state action, NLR will relocate outside of the country using current or new staff.*



3) *Satellite transmissions will be conducted from outside of Russian lands. Domestic transmissions will be Internet-based only.*

4) *Funding to keep NLR operational will continue to be the privilege of the global Christian community with management the responsibility of CRFR.*

The role of international partnerships between Christians in Russia, Ukraine, and the USA:



From its inception as Russia's 1<sup>st</sup> FM Christian radio station, and later, as an international broadcaster to the former Soviet republics, New Life Radio has been a partnership between Christians in Russia, Ukraine, the USA, and other nations.

Since 1996, our radio network has been a faith venture, with our Moscow missionaries overseeing the broadcasts, and Americans providing the funding to cover the

telecom and studio costs, as well as missionary support for the radio staff. NLR provides the Slavic Church and its many evangelical denominations with a free mass media service to reach their own people in evangelism and discipleship over telecom systems that can reach over 100 million targeted homes.

For many years, our Slavic colleagues have lamented the fact that they have been unable to subsidize the network from within their country. CRFR has always viewed our cooperation as part of the wider family of God, spread across many nations, but focused together to take up Christ's call to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth, using shared resources.

While current events inside of Russia and Ukraine bode ill for internal developments of Christian media, it is the mission of CHRISTIAN RADIO FOR RUSSIA to serve as a facilitator and catalyst for multiple ministry efforts and initiatives inside these nations, especially as it pertains to broadcasting the Gospel to peoples and communities in ways that can overcome federal or state-supported religious obstacles that interfere with the work of the evangelical Church at the local or regional level.

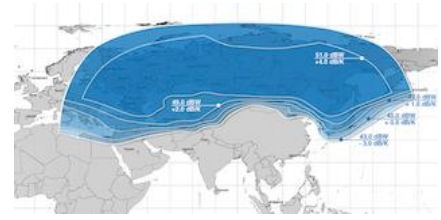
On April 30th, Pastor Ken Wagner, Chairman of CRFR was able to visit the staff of NLR in Moscow, along with Pastor Kent Egging. They were able to encourage the radio team, while discussing current issues impacting the NLR network. Ken and Kent also work to encourage mission endeavors between Christians in the US, Sweden, and Russia, and see NLR as a key component of this outreach.



We ask our CRFR partners to pray that God would bless our efforts in Russia and the US, so we can properly equip our radio network and increase its effectiveness and outreach for the Gospel. Pray that Christians around the world would

sense a calling to come alongside CRFR and the NLR team as they work to provide radio that can lead people to Christ.

**YOU CAN LISTEN** to our radio team on the air every day via Internet radio at [www.NLRadio.net](http://www.NLRadio.net)



## NEW SATELLITE needed to guarantee nationwide coverage of Russia for NLR

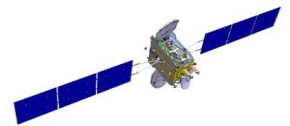


With the loss of Tricolor, our satellite coverage area of Russia is unavailable in Siberia and the Russian Far East. CRFR has found a solution to this, using our current satellite provider, *RRsat Telecom*, that rents us our HOTBIRD satellite.

RRsat has special access to the YAMAL 300 satellite, that provides coverage of Russia with a high power signal available to anyone. It is also beyond the reach of the Kremlin to interfere with their signal.

THIS IS AN URGENT PROJECT that needs to be funded so that we can ensure that Christian radio remains available across Russia and Slavic lands.

**the cost:**  
**\$27,000**  
**per year** with a 3 year contract term



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