Log #2 - TalkBack

In this log I will look at using the live room speakers and live room boundary mic for the purposes of talkback. I will also discuss alternative solutions to that which I used.

The first thing I did was take a look at the TalkBack section on the desk. There are two options:

1. Talk to Groups
2. Talk to Auxes

In a recording scenario involving Pro Tools, I would not see myself using the groups on the desk, therefore I decided that I would talkback through the Auxes. Occam's razor suggests that the simplest solution usually works so I simply patched Aux 6's output directly into 'Live Room Speaker L'.

After powering on the speaker, I held down the 'Talk to Auxes' and tried speaking to Danny in the live room. For him to be able to hear me I had to have the TalkBack Mic dial on full and the Auxiliary master on full. However, once I'd done this, it was at a reasonable volume whilst no instruments were playing. This solution would only really be suitable for a solo vocalist or a band that doesn't noodle[1] during downtime. To combat this, we would need to amplify the TalkBack mic. Unlike in Recording Studio 2, we do not have an direct output for the TalkBack mic. Therefore, we would need to TalkBack to groups, then use the 'Toft Subgroup Insert' channels to pass through an amplifier, then from the group into the Aux sends.

To TalkBack to both speakers, you would either have to go from the Aux through a parallel to both speakers, or take two Aux mixes to the speakers, eg. Aux 5=L, Aux 6=R. The left speaker is active and the right is passive, however the difference is not

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[1] 'Noodling' in this context being, random playing or messing around.

noticeable for TalkBack. Interestingly, in the live room, the speakers appear very directional.

To hear what is happening in the live room, the live room mic must first be fed through a pre-amp, provided with Phantom Power and then patched into a channel. As I didn't want it to get mixed up with channels used for recording, I used the last channel, 24. I just pulled up the monitor level on the channel and could hear Danny speaking in the live room. Peculiarly, when trying to TalkBack whilst music was playing, we discovered that 'Talk to Groups' ducks the master output however 'Talk to Auxes' does not, this meant that Danny could hear the track in the background unless I pushed down both buttons at the same time.

With this setup, I was able to interrupt Danny from playing the piano, talk to him and hear his responses without him having to wear headphones. Or have a microphone set up.