MERIDIAN PREAMPLIFIER 201 INSTRUCTION MANUAL

BOOTHROYD STUART

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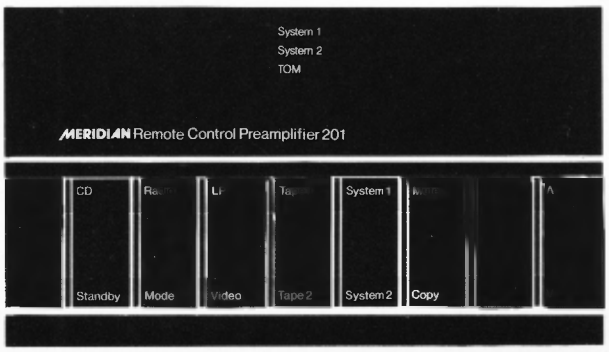
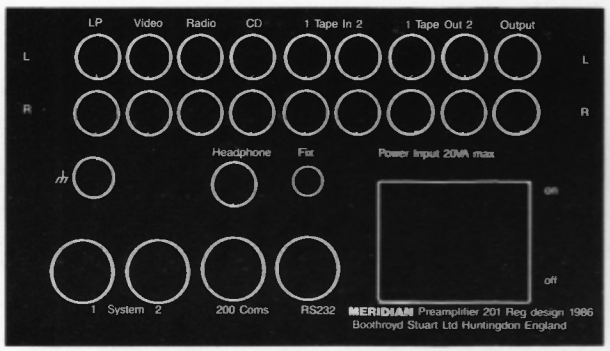
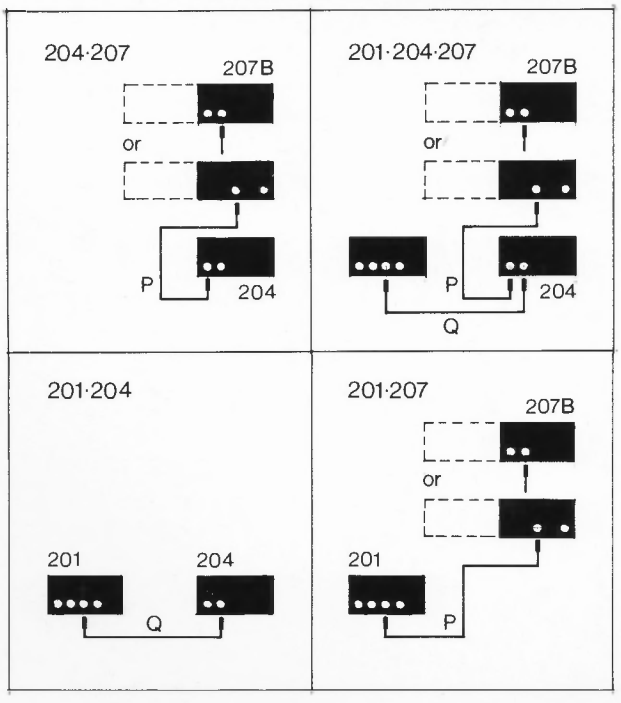
Meridian 201 Front/Rear Panels





Meridian 200 Series Network Connections



1 Unpacking

Be sure to retain the packaging for possible future transportation. In the pack you should find:

- 201 Preamplifier
- Power cord suitable for your territory

2 Accessories (not included)

Remote Control Unit Model 209 (optional extra)

System 2 plug-in module (optional extra)

P-lead for communication 201 or 204 to 207	Part number J22207
Q-lead for communication 201 to 204	Part number J22204
Power cord for Europe	Part number J21953
Power cord for USA and Canada	Part number J21954
Power cord for UK	Part number J21955

3 Installation

3.1 Siting

Do not place the 201 on top of a power amplifier or near radiators.

Avoid locations where the 201 would be subjected to direct sunlight.

3.2 Connecting

See opposite a diagram showing the connections which can be made to the back of the 201.

3.3 AC connection

Before connecting to the AC supply check that the unit is adjusted to the correct voltage for your supply.

IMPORTANT: DO **NOT** MAKE CONNECTIONS OR INSERT OR REMOVE PLUGS WHILE THE UNIT IS CONNECTED TO THE AC SUPPLY AND SWITCHED ON.

Connect to AC power with the cord provided.

3.4 Turntable connection

A grounding terminal is fitted to the back of the unit to ground the turntable or tone-arm where necessary.

201 Preamplifiers leave the factory with the phono module set for Moving Magnet cartridges. If you wish to use a Moving Coil cartridge it will be necessary to remove the case of the 201 and move the switch on the phono module to the 'MC' position (position 1). Do not do this with the AC supply cord connected.

Remove the screw in the centre of the back of the unit and carefully slide the case off backwards. Looking in on the top of the unit you will see the switch on the phono module near the back of the unit.

3.5 CD connection

If you are adding the 201 to an installation previously centred round a 207 you may have to change the grounding switch at the back of the 207A from grounded to ungrounded. In addition you will need a P-lead to correlate control of the units. The P-lead is normally supplied with the 207.

3.6 Tuner connection

A radio tuner can be connected to the Radio sockets. When using the *Meridian* 204 FM tuner, the Q-lead (supplied with the 204) should be connected between 201 and 204 in addition to the screened audio connections. This lead will allow full use of the *Meridian* 209 Remote Control Unit.

3.7 **Video connection**
The audio output from a video recorder or any other line-level source can be connected to the Video sockets.

3.8 **Tape connection**
One or two reel, DAT or cassette recorders can be connected to the Tape 1 and Tape 2 In and Out sockets.

3.9 **Headphones**
There is a standard 1/4" stereo headphone outlet on the back panel designed for high impedance headphones.

3.10 **Comms**
The DIN socket marked '200 Comms' is for interconnecting a P-lead when the installation includes a 207 CD player, or a Q-lead if there is a 204 FM tuner in which case the P-lead will go between the 207 and 204.

These leads are needed in addition to the screened audio leads. Their function is to correlate the controls of the three units to allow full remote control from the *Meridian* 209 unit. See section 2 for part numbers.

3.11 **Output**
The output from the two phono sockets of the 201 Preamplifier must be connected to the input of your power amplifier or to the inputs on *Meridian* active loudspeakers.

The audio outputs are also available on pins 1 and 4 of the System 1 and System 2 DIN sockets. (Pin 2 common).

4 Operation

4.1 **Conventions of this manual**
Text printed in bold, centred on the page, indicates a key on the front of the 201 that you are asked to press. Thus **Standby**
has the meaning 'press the front-panel key marked Standby'.

Where there are two keys referred to with a * between them like this
Copy * Mode
you are asked to press **Copy**, then **Mode**.

Text enclosed in square brackets indicates the expected display on the right-hand side of the 201 front window, thus e.g. **[C. 27]**
is a display.

4.2 The power switch is at the back of the unit. Normally the 201 is switched on, even when the unit is not in use. The sound quality of the unit is at its best when the temperatures of the components have reached normal working levels. The various presettings which can be made to the 201, described in this section, are only 'remembered' so long as the power switch at the back is on, unless the installation includes a 204.

You should however switch off all audio equipment if you expect to be away from the house for a period of time.

4.3 Switch on at back. The Standby key will show green. To start up the 201 press
Standby
or any of the six input keys **CD, LP, Radio, Video, Tape 1, Tape 2**
To shut down the 201 **Standby**

4.4 **Inputs**
To switch from CD to another input, say Radio,
Radio
The other inputs to the unit, LP, Video, Tape 1 and Tape 2 can be selected in like manner. Notice that an indicator light shows behind the key selected.

4.5 **Volume**

To raise or lower the volume press the top or bottom
red key

The volume level is displayed and ranges from **[0]** to **[64]**.

4.6 **Mute**

To mute the sound **Mute**

The display now shows the muted level **[0]**

and the mute key lights up red.

To demute (restore the sound level) **Mute**

The Mute key light goes out.

The Mute key 'toggles' between mute and demute.

4.7 **System 1/System 2**

Without System 2 module fitted these keys will have no effect. The System 2 key will cause the error display. **[Err.]**

With System 2 module fitted – see appendix.

5 Tape recording

5.1 The 201 has two tape outputs connected in parallel; this means that whatever is fed to Tape 1 tape recorder is also fed to Tape 2 tape recorder. Normally the tape outputs are muted, this is indicated by the **TOM** (Tape Outputs Muted) light on the front panel.

To record **Copy**

The display will show **[COPY]**

Now select the input you wish to copy from (LP, CD, Radio, Video, Tape 1, Tape 2)

e.g. **CD**

The display shows **[C. 35]**

The CD input will now be copied to the tape outputs, the **TOM** light goes out. The **[C. 35]** stands for 'Copy', the 35 is the current volume number.

Pressing another input e.g. **LP**

allows an LP to be listened to whilst recording a CD. The 'C.' on the display shows that recording is continuing. You are free to change the volume setting.

Note that for a 3-head tape recorder with separate record and playback heads connected to Tape 1 sockets **Tape 1**

will allow listening to the recorded signal. Comparison is possible by
CD

to listen to the original signal again. Tape 2 operates identically to Tape 1.

5.2 The recorded signal can follow the input being listened to by
Copy * System 1

Whichever input is selected will now be fed to the Tape Out sockets. In this mode the **TOM** light is out but there is no 'C.' on the display.

Note. This mode is provided to give a tracking and fixed output in multiroom installations. It is not recommended for tape-recording generally since some tape recorders can howl-around on monitoring themselves.

5.3 To check which input has been set to record, a copy review is available
Copy

The display will show **[COPY]**

and the key of the input being recorded will be lit. If the **TOM** light is out and no key is lit this indicates that the record mode is set to follow the input selected.

To remove review facility **Copy**

5.4 When recording is complete, we advise you to mute the Tape Outputs.

Copy * Mute

To mute the tape outputs. Note that the **TOM** light is on again.

5.5 The tape outputs continue to be live even in standby so long as Copy is set. [C.]

5.6 If Copy is pressed accidentally **Copy**

again will revert to the normal display without affecting any recording in progress.

6 Customising

6.1 Mode

The 201 is as simple as possible to operate in normal use. The Mode key allows access to the more advanced functions. To prevent accidental changing of the settings, the unit can be 'locked'. The 201 will always be in the 'locked' state when first connected to the mains supply.

6.2 Mode lock

The Mode function is normally 'locked out' to prevent accidental alteration of any presettings. First bring the 201 out of Standby with any input key. Then

Mode

The display will momentarily show **[Loc.]**

This confirms that the Mode facility is locked out.

To unlock the Mode facility **Copy * Mode**

The display shows **[Unlo.]**

The Mode facility may be locked out again by

Copy * Mode

Copy * Mode will toggle the unit between locked and unlocked states.

6.3 Saving settings

Whenever any alteration is made to any of the following settings of the 201, the new values must be stored:

- Start-up input and volume.
- Mute level.
- Maximum level.
- Offsets between inputs.
- Internal/External volume control.
- Open/Closed state of systems (when System 2 module fitted).

With the mode function unlocked **Mode * Standby**

will store the new settings into the 201's memory.

If a 204 FM tuner is present in the system, with its Q-lead in place the settings will be stored in the 204's battery supported memory to prevent loss in the event of temporary power failure. Without a 204 the settings will return to their factory values if the mains supply is interrupted to the 201.

6.4 Start-up conditions

When the 201 is first switched on the following factory settings apply:

- Input is CD.
- Volume is 32.
- Mute level is 0.
- Offsets are 0.
- Volume is internal **[Intl]**.
- Systems 1 and 2 are open.

The settings may be altered to any others of your choice. For instance you may wish to start up with Radio at a level of 25 with the mute level set to 14.

6.5 **Input**

To change the start-up input to, say, Radio at a level of 25

Radio

Use the **red keys** to adjust to a level of 25

Store the start-up with **Mode * Standby**

Now when the 201 is started up it will be set to Radio at a volume level of 25.

6.6 **Mute level**

To change the mute level to, say 14

Use the **red keys** to adjust to a level of 14

Mode * Mute

Notice that the display momentarily shows **[A.L.14]** and then reverts to **[14]**

The A.L. stands for 'Attenuated Level'. Now, whenever Mute is selected, the mute level will be 14.

6.7 **Maximum level**

The 201 can be set so that the maximum level is not 64 but some lower figure if desirable. Use the **red keys** to select the desired maximum volume level, then

Mode * Volume Up

The display will momentarily show **[H.L.42]** indicating that the 'Highest Level' is now set, in this case, to 42.

The maximum level can be reset to 64 by **Mode * Volume Up**

The display will momentarily show **[H.L.64]** indicating that the 'Highest Level' has reverted to 64.

6.8 **Input offsets**

When switching from one source to another, it is desirable that the sound level should remain unchanged. The 201 has a unique way of making this possible. Known as 'input offset' it allows you to raise or lower the volume setting of a quieter or louder input, and then feed this adjusted level into the 201's memory. Thereafter, switching between two inputs so adjusted will result in the sound levels being unchanged although the volume level indicator will show any adjustment which has been made.

A correctly set up installation will have all the inputs sounding of equal loudness. To bring this about it is first necessary to select a reference input by which the other inputs can be judged and adjusted. Since the output level from almost every CD player is substantially the same, the CD is the most suitable input to select as the reference. If you do not yet possess a CD player, any other input can be used.

6.9 To make the Radio of equal loudness to the CD proceed as follows:

Select Radio and tune in to a musical programme.

Choose a CD containing broadly the same type of music as the Radio and set it playing.

Mode

The mode key will be illuminated **CD**

The display now shows **[O. 0]**

Here the first O stands for 'Offset' and the last 0 is a zero.

Radio

Adjust the volume of the Radio up or down so that it sounds as loud as the CD. While you are doing this you can switch between CD and Radio to compare the loudness of each, but because the CD is your reference, make adjustments only to the volume when Radio is selected. As you make adjustments, notice that the display shows them. When the two inputs sound equally loud, the display should show:

On CD **[O. 0]**

On Radio (e.g.) **[O. −3]**

This would mean that the radio tuner had been somewhat louder than the CD and that a negative correction of three volume units (approximately 3.75dB) to the Radio input corrected this inequality. Had the tuner sounded less loud than the CD, the display would have shown a correction with no minus sign. **Mode**

The Mode key illumination goes out, and the display no longer shows the 'O' for Offset but reverts to showing the volume level. As you switch between CD and Radio you can see that the Radio level will be three units less than the CD level, showing that your correction has been remembered.

6.10 Should you have more inputs it is just as easy to carry out the input offset to all of them at once. If you are able to use CD as your reference, always make your comparison to the CD's loudness. When each input sounds equally loud, the process is ended and put into the memory by pressing **Mode**

thereby extinguishing the Mode light.

Note. Broadly similar musical material must be selected on each medium, we would recommend you use piano if possible.

Note. Remember to store these settings away in the 204, if connected, with **Mode * Standby**

6.11 **Internal/External volume control**

Note. This facility is only required when called for by manuals of other *Meridian* equipment. Details of operation are included here for reference only.

Note. This facility will **NOT** function unless a special plug is fitted to the RS232 socket of the 201. To set to external control **Mode * Volume Down**

The display will momentarily show **[Etnl]**

In the external mode the internal volume control will not function. To revert to internal control **Mode * Volume Down**

The display will momentarily show **[Intl]**

7 Maintenance

7.1 **Cleaning**

The main body of the 20I is epoxy-enamelled aluminium. To clean it use a cloth barely moistened with a mixture of washing-up detergent and water. Disconnect the power cord before doing this and make sure the cloth is dry enough to ensure that no water can get inside the 201.

The top of the front of the 201 is glass. The bottom part of the panel is plastic. To clean the plastic do not use abrasive cleaners or solvents. A barely damp chamois leather is recommended.

The audio sockets are gold plated, and where gold-plated phono plugs are used there should be no need for cleaning of the contacts. For non-gold-plated phono plugs, it is good practice to remove and replace the plugs at least once a year. Proprietary contact cleaners may be used to some advantage.

7.2 No routine maintenance of the electronics is required. There are no user-serviceable parts inside the 201.

8 Help!

REMEMBER to switch all units off before changing any connections.

8.1 **No sound.**

- Check mains supply to 201 – indicated by Standby key lit green.
- Check mains supply to other units of system.
- Check correct input is selected on 201 and that the unit selected is running and producing music.
- Check interconnections are made to correct sockets.
- Check that the 201 is not in Mute, i.e. the Mute key is not lit.
- Check volume is set, to say 25, for audibility.

If there is still no sound reset the 201 by switching the power off, wait 30 seconds, switch back on. If a 204 is present switch it off also but when switching back on depress its Mono key. This will reset the 201 settings in the 204's memory without affecting the station presets.

8.2 **Sound from one channel only** (or channels reversed).

- Check interconnect and speaker wiring

8.3 **Settings lost** in Standby (or power-down with 204 connected).

- Remember to press **Mode * Standby** whenever any settings are altered to store the new values in the 201's, or 204's, memory (see 6.3).
- Check that Q-lead is connected correctly to the 204.

8.4 **Mode gives [Loc.] on display.**

This is the normal function.

Mode is locked; unlock with **Copy * Mode**

8.5 **Turntable sounds louder/softer than other inputs.**

- Check MM/MC cartridge setting on Phono module.

8.6 **Hum.**

- Turntable only – Check turntable earth wire is connected to earth terminal on rear panel of 201.
- 207 only – check 207 ground switch is in the ungrounded position when connected to 201.
- All inputs (in systems with active speakers), check that the active speakers are set to Balanced and Grounded.

9 Service

There are no user-serviceable parts inside the 201. Should the unit need service, it should be returned in the original packing to the dealer who supplied it or, in case of difficulty write to:

- In the UK, Boothroyd Stuart Ltd, 13 Clifton Road, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE18 7EJ.
- Outside the UK contact the importing agent for the territory. A list of *Meridian* agents abroad is available from the above address.

The owner is responsible for the Preamplifier during transit.

10 Guarantee

The 201 Preamplifier is guaranteed against defects in material and workmanship for 12 months from the date of purchase.

The guarantee is void if the Preamplifier has been subject to misuse, accident or negligence, or has been in any way modified without Boothroyd Stuart Ltd written authorisation. Attempted servicing by unauthorised people may result in loss of guarantee.

Labour and carriage charges are not covered unless by local agreement.

When seeking service under guarantee, it is necessary to produce dated proof of purchase.

Outside the UK local warranty liability is restricted to equipment purchased within the territory. Our agents abroad are only under contractual obligation to service under guarantee equipment sold through them. They are entitled to make a nonrefundable charge for any service carried out on equipment not supplied through them.

This guarantee does not limit your statutory rights within the UK.

11 Specifications

Inputs

CD	150mV, l0k ohms
Radio	150mV, 10k ohms
Video	150mV, 10k ohms
Tape 1	150mV, 10k ohms
Tape 2	150mV, 10k ohms
Phono	1.5mV, 47k ohms (MM) 100μV, 100 ohms (MC)

Outputs

Line	0dBm (775mV) +l2dBm maximum into not less than 600 ohms
Tape	150mV into not less than l0k ohms
Headphone	2V rms, maximum
Distortion	<0.01%
Controls	Input selection, Mute, Copy, Mode (set-up switch), System 1, System 2, Volume Up, Volume Down, Standby
Dimensions	160mmx100mmx310mm, 6.3"x4"x12.2", WxHxD

12 Keys (abbreviated operating instructions)

CD, Radio, LP, Video, Tape 1, Tape 2	These are the six source keys which select the input. They can also be used to start up the 201 from Standby. Tape 1 & Tape 2 can be used to monitor recordings being made from other sources.
Red keys	Top key is volume up; bottom key is volume down.
Standby	Switches the unit between standby and on.
Mute	Switches between mute and demute.
Copy	Used to select/review tape out signal.
Copy * X	Copy input X.
Copy * System 1	Set tape outputs to follow System 1 input.
Copy * Mode	Unlock/lock the mode function.
Mode	Allow presettings to be altered.
Mode * Standby	Stores the current preset values into 204's memory.
Mode * X	X is input: Enters offset routine. Using one input as a reference, set offset with red keys, change input etc. **Mode** to exit routine.
Mode * Vol Up	Sets maximum volume to volume on display. If maximum volume is already set then resets to 64.
Mode * Vol Down	Sets Internal/External volume control if special RS232 plug is fitted. Necessary only when specified by instructions of other *Meridian* components. Will have no effect without plug fitted.
Mode * Mute	Sets mute level.

Additional keys with System 2 module added

System 1, System 2	Selects the system to which the 201 front panel controls refer. When the system key is pressed for the system already displayed, the display will momentarily show Open/Closed state for that system.
Mode * System Y	Y is 1 or 2: Toggles the Open/Closed state for each system.

Appendix — Additional features with System 2 module

A1 Fitting module

The System 2 module is supplied either factory or dealer fitted. When upgrading a 201 to System 2 operation it may also be necessary to change the EPROM to the latest code version. This can also be dealer fitted.

A2 General points

A2.1 Commands from 209 handset

When directed at the 201 all commands are interpreted as System 1 commands.

When directed at a System 2 (or remote) receiver all commands are interpreted as System 2 commands.

A2.2 Commands from 201 front panel

System 1 light on — keystrokes received as for System 1.

System 2 light on — keystrokes received as for System 2.

In standby (neither light on) — keystrokes assumed to refer to System 1, except for System 2 key which brings System 2 out of standby.

Note. It is important that a System 2 sensor and the 201 should not be able to receive the same command from the handset.

A3 System 1/System 2

These keys give access to two virtually independent systems.

When the System 1 light (red) is lit on the 201, the controls and displays refer to System 1.

Press **System 2**

The System 2 light (yellow) is lit and the controls and displays refer to System 2.

System 1 and System 2 can use different sources, volume and mute levels at the same time.

The **Mute** key also operates independently for each system.

A4 Mode

The mode facility is expanded to allow setting up of individual start-up conditions for each system. Select the appropriate system and set-up conditions as discussed in section 6 of this manual.

The input offset facility only operates from System 1 and on each input key of the 201. The offsets are used identically in both System 1 and System 2.

Maximum levels and mute levels may be set independently for each system.

Internal/External volume can be set independently for each system.

Open/Closed states are now accessible and can be stored. See sections A5 and A6 of this appendix.

Remember to save any changes to the factory settings with

Mode * Standby

thus storing the new settings in the 201's memory, or the 204 FM tuner's battery-supported memory.

A5 System 1 or System 2 units

'System 1 units' are defined as those whose data leads are connected to the 'System 1' socket on the rear panel of the 201. Also included are a 207 CD player or 204 FM tuner when normally connected via P or Q-leads.

'System 2 units' are those connected to the 'System 2' DIN connector of the 201. As above, if a 207 is connected as a System 2 unit then its additional inputs are classified as System 2 inputs. These should not normally be in the same room as the 201.

A6 System interdependence

Read this section in conjunction with section A7 for operation details.

Closed: A 'closed' system means that units of that system cannot have their settings altered by the other system. A 'closed' system will only retain control whilst it is in use, as soon as it is set to standby then the other system has access again as though the system had become 'open'.

Open: An 'open' system means that controls of units of that system are open to alteration by the other system.

An example: System 1 is closed. System 1 user is listening to radio, preset 3. System 2 user can select radio and listen but not alter preset. This could be important if System 1 is set to record a program on the radio, this recording cannot be changed by accidental use of System 2 keys. Be careful that if System 1 user switches his system to standby System 2 user could then alter settings of System 1 components. See section 5 on recording for more details.

As there are now two systems based around a central 201, control over interaction becomes necessary.

- The simplest configuration is to have both systems 'closed' i.e. completely independent of each other.
- Alternatively, a master/slave configuration whereby the master system has overriding control, the slave system works independently. Note that either System 1 or System 2 can be designated as masters.
- Or, finally, master/master systems where each system has a degree of control over the other.

A7 Open/Closed systems

When the 201 is first powered up both systems are in the 'open' state.

Each system may be closed or opened independently, with the Mode function unlocked.

Mode * System 1

Display will temporarily show **[S1. C]**

indicating System 1 is closed.

Mode * System 1

Display will temporarily show **[S1. O]**

indicating System 1 is open.

i.e. **Mode * System** 1 will toggle the Open/Closed state. This function is identical for System 2.

Note also that both systems may be closed at the same time, i.e. no possibility of interference.

A8 Open/Closed review

When the System 1 light is on, the Open/Closed state may be reviewed by

System 1

The display will show the state of the system. Similarly with the System 2 light on

System 2

will review the Open/Closed state of System 2.

A9 Standby

As there are now 2 systems controlled by the 201 the standby function is enhanced as follows.

A9.1 Both systems open; from either System 1 or System 2

Standby

switches both systems on/off.

A9.2 System 1 closed / System 2 closed

With both systems closed **Standby** operates independently for each system.

To switch System 1 to standby: select System 1 on the 201, then

Standby

The display will show **[Stb.]** indicating that System 1 is in standby but System 2 is still active

System 2

The display now shows System 2 information.

Standby

The 201 switches to complete standby as both systems are in standby.

To switch the 201 on again, each system has to be brought out of standby separately.

System 1

will switch on System 1, or **System 2**

will switch on System 2.

With either system switched on, selecting the other system will confirm that it is still in standby with the message **[Stb.]**

Standby

will bring the other system out of standby.

A9.3 System 1 closed / System 2 open

This mode behaves as for both systems closed except that when System 1 is switched to Standby, System 2 is also set to Standby. Similarly when System 1 is brought out of Standby then System 2 is switched on as well. Switching System 2 in and out of Standby has no affect on System 1.

For System 2 closed / System 1 open; the operation is exactly symmetrical.

Generally **Standby**

from the closed system will toggle both systems in and out of standby.

Standby

from the open system will only affect the open system.

A10 Tape recording

Remember that tape output continues in copy mode, i.e. **[C.]** even when the 201 is set to standby. Use **Copy * Mute**

to switch off tape outputs.

Tape copying is identical to the basic 201 without System 2 module fitted with the exception that **Copy * System 2**

will set the tape outputs to follow the System 2 input.

The display shows **[2. 32]**

to indicate this. The **TOM** light is also out.

Using **Copy** to review will show no key lit to indicate that the tape outputs are set to follow a system rather than a particular input. System 2 copying is distinguished from System 1 copying by the **[2.]** on the normal display.

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