Show calling and comms cheat sheet

Standby and go, radio words and a channel plan that works

VIRTUAL STUDIO EVENTS

> One voice calls the show. Everyone else answers, reports problems and stays off the channel. If two people are calling cues, the show is being called by neither.

Standby and go

- **Standby** comes 10 to 30 seconds before the cue, longer for anything physical: "Standby VT 2, standby lights 14, standby mic 3."
- Each department answers with its name: "VT standing by." Silence is not an answer.
- **Go** is the last word, and nothing follows it: "VT 2... go." "Lights 14... go."
- Say the department and number before the action, so nobody fires early on "go".
- Group cues together only when they truly happen together: "Lights 14, VT 2... go."
- If a cue is cut, say so plainly: "Stand down VT 2."

Counting in

- Count down aloud from 10 or 5 for VTs and stings: "In 5, 4, 3..." and the last two silently on fingers to the presenter.
- Give the floor manager times to pass on: "Two minutes to on air", "30 seconds", "Wind up".

Comms manners

- Name who you want, then who you are: "Camera 2, gallery."
- Key, wait half a second, speak, release. Clipped first words are the usual reason for "say again".
- No chat on the show channel. Take it to a side channel or off headset.
- If something breaks, say what and where, once: "Gallery, lav 2 is dead, swapping to handheld."
- "Clear the channel" means stop talking now.

Radio words

Go ahead	I'm listening, send your message
Copy / received	I heard and understood
Stand by	Wait, I'll come back to you (or: get ready for a cue)
Say again	Repeat your last message
Clear	I've finished; or the area is clear
Wilco	Will comply
Negative / affirmative	No / yes (clearer than no and yes on a bad radio)
Radio check	How do you hear me?
Loud and clear	The answer to a radio check

Agree the words at the crew briefing. Venues and security teams sometimes use their own codes for fire and medical calls: learn them before doors.

A channel plan that works

Channel	Who's on it
1 Show	Show caller, vision, cameras, sound, lights, VT and graphics, floor
2 Production	Producer, show caller, stage manager, client lead
3 Engineering	Vision engineer, streaming, IT, LED and projection
4 Cameras	Camera director to operators, so framing notes stay off the show channel
Radio	Floor, stage hands, venue duty manager, registration
IFB	Programme sound plus talkback to presenters and remote guests

Before doors

- [ ] Comms check: every station calls in by name on every channel it uses
- [ ] Spare beltpacks and headsets charged and labelled
- [ ] Radio channels written on a card on every radio
- [ ] Cue numbers in the run order match the cue sheet and the lighting desk
- [ ] Who calls the show if the show caller loses comms
- [ ] Emergency calls and the venue's fire procedure briefed to everyone on headset

Watermarked preview. Get the clean file free at www.virtualstudio.events/tech-show-calling-comms-cheat-sheet.html