

LEGEND CHANNEL

British console channel strip — preamp · filters · 4-band EQ · dynamics

User Manual · v1.2.4 · VST3 · AU · AAX (macOS, Pro Tools) · macOS / Windows / Linux



The Legend Channel is a circuit-level emulation of a legendary British large-format console channel: fat, forward and musical. Every stage (input transformer, op-amps, VCA dynamics) is solved as a real circuit per sample, so the strip reacts to level and drive the way the hardware does.

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01 — INSTALLATION & REQUIREMENTS

macOS

Run the installer package (`PAA-Legend-Channel.pkg`), signed and notarized by Apple, so it installs without a Gatekeeper warning.

FORMAT	LOCATION
VST3	<code>/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3</code>
AU	<code>/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components</code>
AAX	<code>/Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins</code> (Pro Tools)

The **AAX** build for Pro Tools is PACE-signed and Apple-notarized, and is installed by the same macOS package — no separate download.

Windows

Run `PAA-Audio-Legend-Channel_1.2.4_win.exe`. It installs the VST3 to `C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3`. If Windows SmartScreen appears, click More info → Run anyway, then restart your DAW.

Linux

Extract `PAA-Audio-Legend-Channel_1.2.4_linux.tar.gz` and copy the `PAA Audio Legend Channel.vst3` folder to `~/vst3` (or `/usr/lib/vst3`). Tested with Reaper, Bitwig and Ardour.

After installing, rescan plug-ins in your DAW (Logic validates the AU automatically on next launch).

System: macOS 10.13+ (Apple Silicon & Intel), Windows 10+ (64-bit), or modern 64-bit Linux (glibc 2.31+, e.g. Ubuntu 20.04+). The GUI is resizable from 100 % to 200 %.

02 — ACTIVATION & DEMO MODE

Without a license the plug-in runs in **Demo Mode**: fully functional, but a short noise burst is inserted periodically. The footer of the OUTPUT section shows **DEMO** and an **ACTIVATE** button.

1. Click **ACTIVATE** in the OUTPUT section.
2. Select the license file (`.lic`) you received after purchase, it lives in your Downloads folder by default.
3. The footer changes to **Licensed for <your name>** and the demo noise stops immediately.

The license is tied to your name/e-mail, not to your machine, install it on every computer you work on. Keep the original `.lic` file safe.

03 — INTERFACE OVERVIEW

The strip is laid out in three columns, signal flowing left to right:

- **Column 1, Input & Dynamics:** the mic/line preamp at the top, the full compressor and gate/expander below.
- **Column 2, Filters & Equaliser:** high-pass / low-pass filters and the 4-band EQ.
- **Column 3, Output:** output trim, channel fader and the output meter.



INPUT · DYNAMICS

preamp · comp · gate



FILTERS · EQ

HPF / LPF · 4-band



OUTPUT

trim · fader · meter

04 — INPUT

CONTROL	RANGE	FUNCTION
C/O	Line / Mic	Input change-over. Off = Line (default), lit = Mic (engages the input transformer and the red MIC gain).
LINE	−10 ... +10 dB	Line-input gain (centre = unity), used in Line mode.
MIC	20 ... 70	Mic-preamp drive (Mic mode). ITB there is no quiet mic to bring up to line level, so the knob drives the NE5534 preamp for harmonic colour while an auto-makeup holds the output at $\approx$ line — turn it up for more character at $\sim$ constant loudness (minimum = clean). Mic and Line therefore hit the dynamics at the same level.
−30	on / off	Input pad, attenuates the mic input by 30 dB for hot sources (shifts the effective range to roughly −10 ... +40 dB).
Ø	on / off	Polarity invert (phase).
PREQ	on / off	Pre-EQ, moves the equaliser before the dynamics section, so the compressor reacts to the EQ'd signal.

Preamp Drive (a highlight): just turn the **MIC** gain in Mic mode. It drives the NE5534 preamp for harmonic saturation while an auto-makeup holds the output at $\approx$ line level — so you dial in colour without getting louder, automatically. Minimum = clean; higher = more character.

05 — FILTERS

Two 12 dB/octave filters sit ahead of the EQ. Each has its own **IN** button.

CONTROL	RANGE	FUNCTION
HPF	31.5 Hz ... 315 Hz	High-pass filter, removes rumble and low-end build-up.
LPF	7.5 kHz ... 18 kHz	Low-pass filter, tames harsh top end / air.
IN	on / off	Switches each filter in or out of circuit.

06 — EQUALISER

A musical 4-band EQ. The master **EQ** button switches the whole section in/out. Boost/cut is ± 18 dB per band (knob marks show only  / ; 12 o'clock = flat).

BAND	FREQUENCY	NOTES
HF	1.5 kHz ... 17 kHz	SHF = shelf (default) or bell · HI-Q = narrower bell.
HMF	0.8 kHz ... 8.7 kHz	Bell, with its own Q control (proportional-Q response).
LMF	190 Hz ... 2 kHz	Bell, with its own Q control (proportional-Q response).
LF	33 Hz ... 370 Hz	SHF = shelf · HI-Q = narrower bell.

The **S/C** button (bottom of the EQ section) routes the EQ into the dynamics sidechain, see [Sidechain & Key](#).

07 — DYNAMICS

The dynamics section is a faithful model of the console's discrete sidechain driving a VCA. It holds a compressor and a gate/expander that share one detector path.

Compressor

CONTROL	RANGE	FUNCTION
THR	-10 ... +20 dB	Threshold. Starts at +20 (fully up = compressor inactive), turn down until it grabs.
RAT	1 · 2 · 3 · 5 · Lim	Ratio. Lim = limiting (∞ :1).
REL	0.03 s ... 3 s · Auto	Release. Fully clockwise = Auto (program-dependent).
GAIN	0 ... +30 dB	Make-up gain.
L/C	on / off	Switches the compressor into circuit.
FAST	on / off	Fast attack (otherwise program-dependent attack).
AUTO	on / off	Auto make-up gain, keeps perceived level steady as you compress.
THR pull	lamp	Pull the small lamp under THR to shift the threshold range down by 20 dB for very low thresholds.

Gate / Expander

The mode button cycles **OFF** → **EXP** → **GATE** (the label shows the current mode).

CONTROL	RANGE	FUNCTION
THR	-25 ... +15 dB	Threshold below which the gate/expander acts.
RGE	0 ... 50 dB	Range, how far the signal is attenuated when closed.
REL	0.03 s ... 3 s	Release time.
HYST	0 ... 25 dB	Hysteresis, gap between open and close thresholds (stops chatter).
FAST	on / off	Fast attack opening.
INV	on / off	Invert, turns the gate into a ducker (attenuates when the key is present).
KEY	on / off	Listen to the external sidechain key instead of the channel itself.
THR pull	lamp	Pull the lamp under the gate THR to shift its range down by 30 dB.

The two GR meters at the bottom-left show gain reduction for the compressor (**L/C**) and the gate/expander (**EXP/GATE**).

Gain reduction is also sent to your host’s metering, so an **SSL 360° / UC-1** controller (and the Pro Tools mixer) shows the Legend Channel’s compressor and gate reduction on its own channel meters — no setup, just insert the plug-in.

Stereo Mode

The button at the bottom of the DYNAMICS column sets how the two channels of a stereo instance relate. It affects the **dynamics only** and adds no colour — it changes which gain reduction is applied, not the tone.

DUAL	default	Left and right run as two fully independent mono channels, each with its own compressor and gate detector (classic dual-mono).
STEREO		The compressor and gate sidechains of both channels are linked — exactly like the console’s link bus. Both sides always react to the louder channel and apply the same gain reduction, so the stereo image stays locked instead of drifting when one side gets louder. Compressor and gate link independently.

Use **STEREO** on any stereo source you compress or gate — mix bus, drum overheads, stereo synths, piano, stereo recordings — to keep the dynamics from pulling the stereo image around.

08 — OUTPUT

CONTROL	RANGE	FUNCTION
TRIM	−20 ... +20 dB	Output trim.
Fader	−∞ ... +10 dB	Channel fader (the printed scale tracks the cap exactly).
Meter	peak, dBFS	Output peak meter with the console’s headroom scale.

09 — SIDECHAIN & KEY

The dynamics can be driven from an external source (the “key”):

1. Route a track to the plug-in’s **sidechain input** in your DAW.
2. Enable **KEY** in the gate/expander section to listen to that source.

For frequency-conscious dynamics, enable **S/C** in the EQ section: the EQ is then inserted into the detector path. Boost the sibilance region on the EQ and the compressor becomes a **de-esser**; this works on the channel's own signal, no external routing required.

10 — PRESETS, SIZE & MANUAL

Right-click anywhere on the chassis background to open the menu:

- **Presets:** factory presets (Init, Vocal, Drums Punch, Bass, Mix Glue) plus Save Preset... and your own saved presets.
- **Startup Default:** Save Current as Startup Default makes every new instance open with the current settings; Clear Startup Default returns new instances to the factory start. **Init** resets the current instance to factory. Saved projects always keep their own settings.
- **Size:** GUI scale 100 % / 125 % / 150 % / 175 % / 200 % (remembered with the project). Use Save current size as default for new instances to make every new instance open at your chosen size.
- **Manual:** opens this manual.

Click the **PAA** logo in the OUTPUT section to open paa-audio.de.

11 — TIPS & WORKFLOWS

Colour without volume: drive the **MIC** gain in Mic mode — it pushes the preamp harder while auto-holding the level, so you add saturation without getting louder. Great on drums, bass and vocals.

- **Glue on a bus:** low ratio (2:1), Auto release, threshold just catching the peaks, AUTO gain on.
- **De-essing:** enable **S/C**, boost 5–8 kHz on the HF band, set a fast compressor.
- **Tighten a noisy source:** EXP mode with a moderate RANGE and some HYST is more natural than a hard gate.
- **Pre vs post EQ:** **PREQ** feeds the EQ'd signal to the compressor, useful when you want the compressor to react to a bass boost or a presence lift.
- **Audition a move:** /Alt-click any knob to snap it to its neutral value, /Alt-click again to jump back — a fast A/B of a single band without losing your setting.

Questions, license trouble, or just feedback? Write me at paa-audio.de. Please include your plug-in version (shown in your DAW) and the host/OS you're running. PAA Audio is one person, so it's actually me reading and replying. Thanks for trying the Legend Channel.

Philipp

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