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(54) **SD-WAN ORCHESTRATOR FOR 5G CUPS NETWORKS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

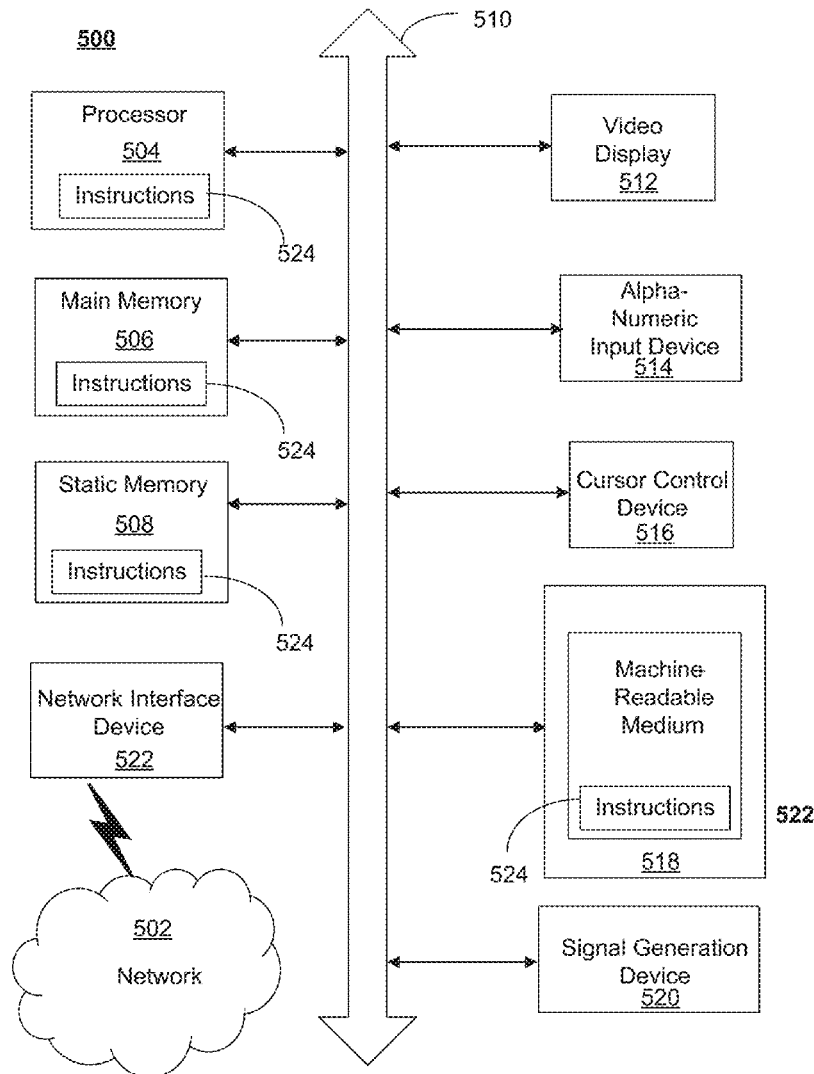
A system includes a software-defined wide area network having a software-defined wide area network control plane and a software-defined wide area network user plane; wherein the wide area network control plane is configured to operate in a first network and the wide area network user plane is configured to operate in a second network and further configured to communicate with the wide area network control plane, a serving gateway user plane in communication with the software-defined wide area network user plane, wherein the serving gateway user plane is configured to operate in the second network and further configured to communicate wirelessly with a device, and wherein the wide area network user plane is configured to route a communication between the device and a destination.

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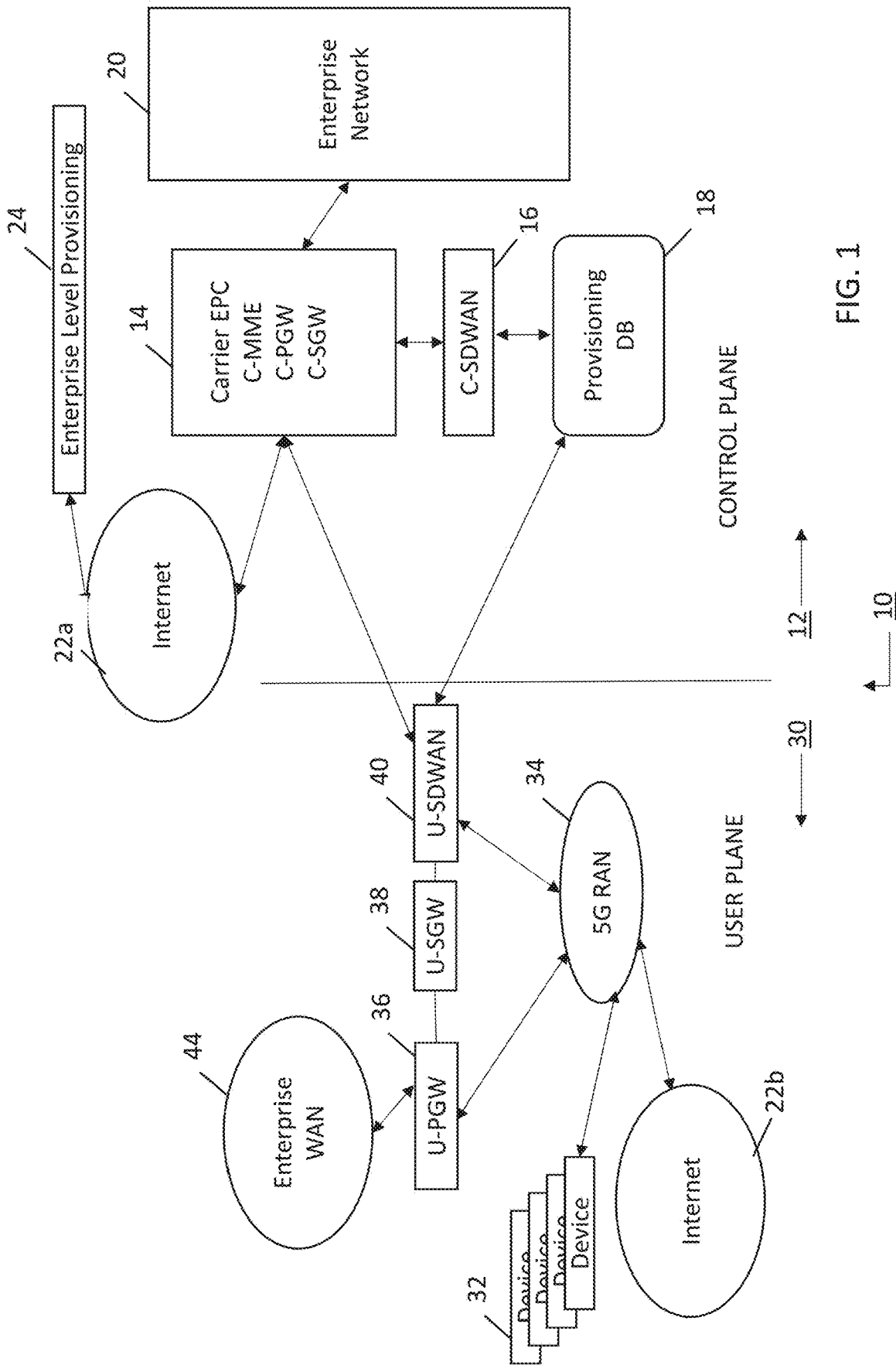


FIG. 1

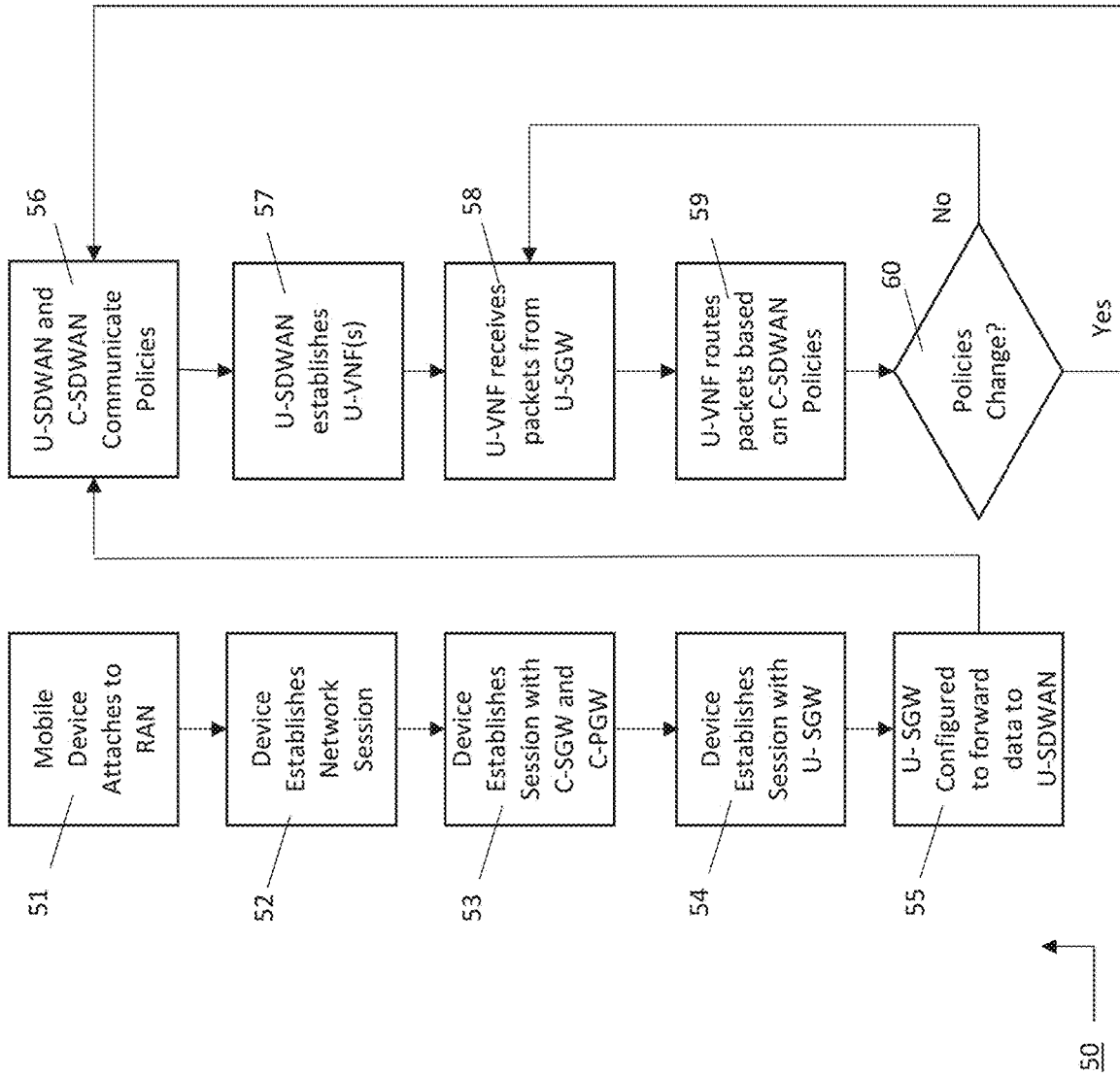


FIG. 2

300

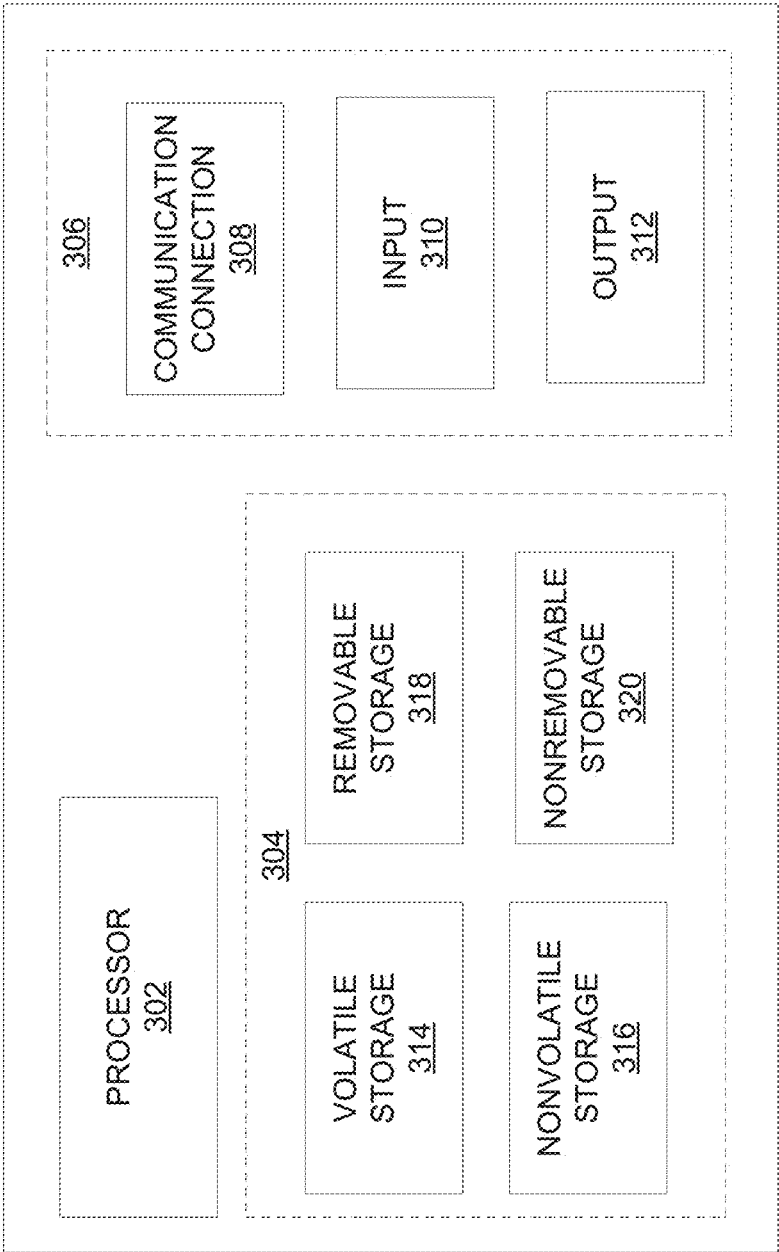


FIG. 3

400

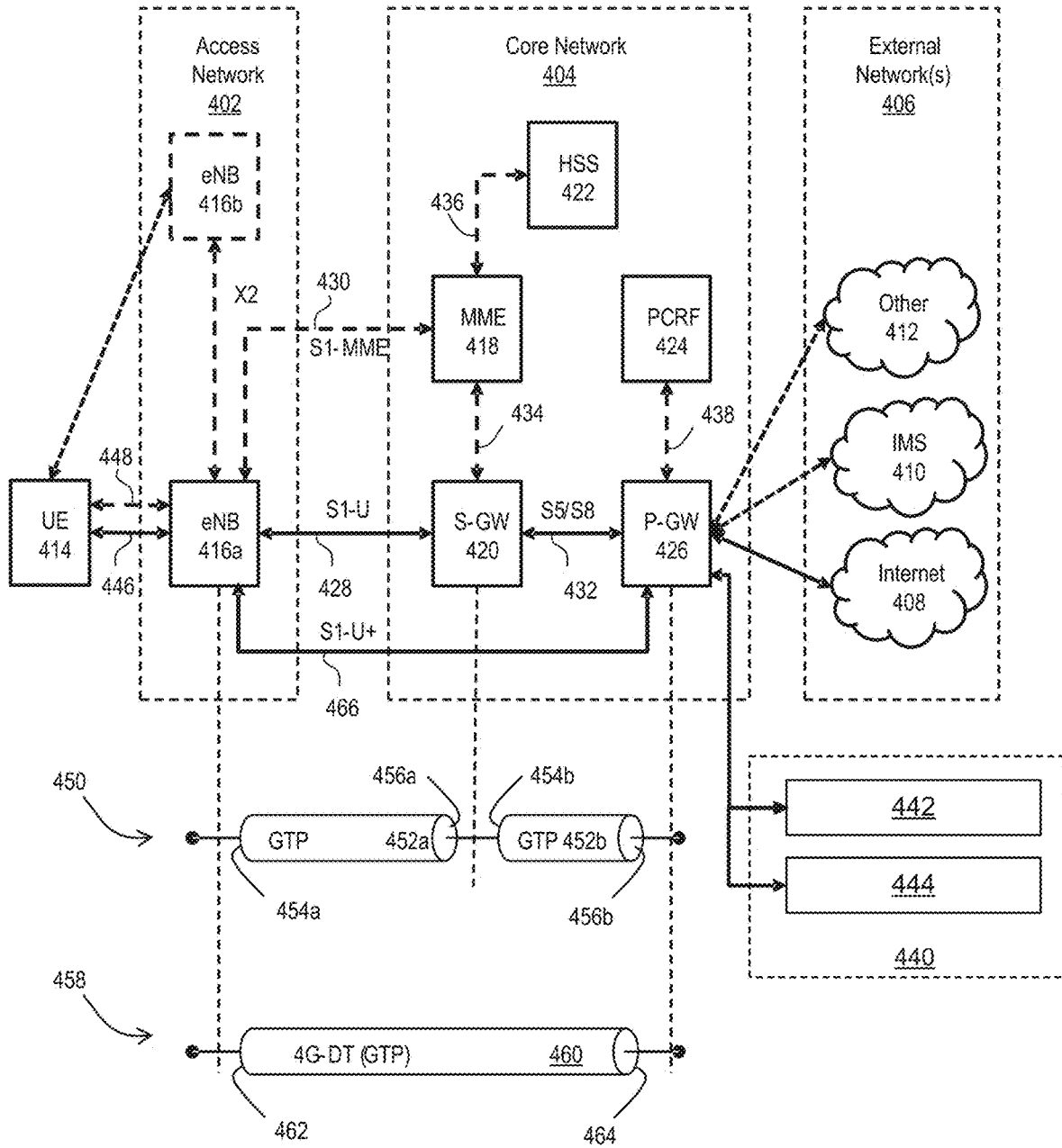


FIG. 4

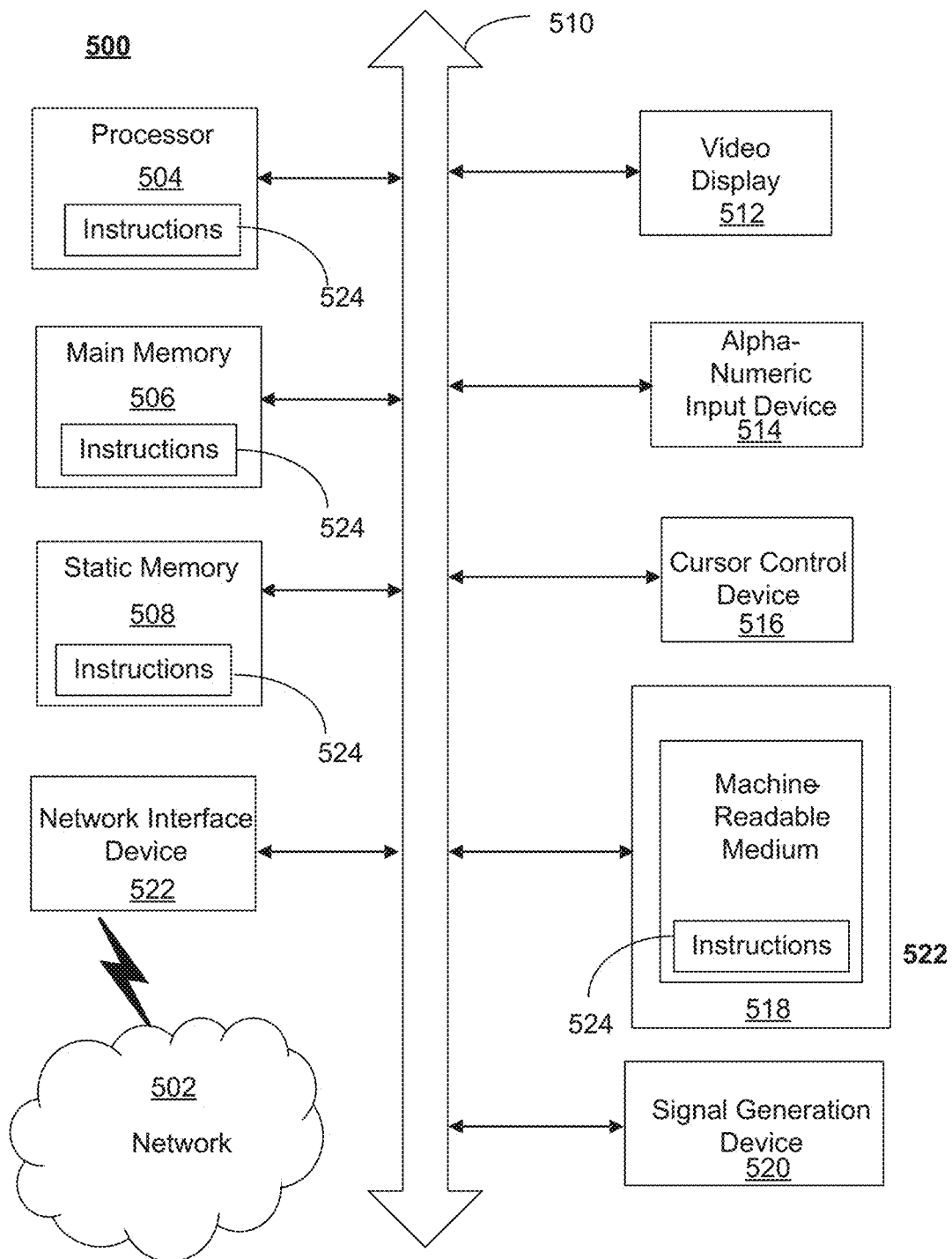


FIG. 5

600

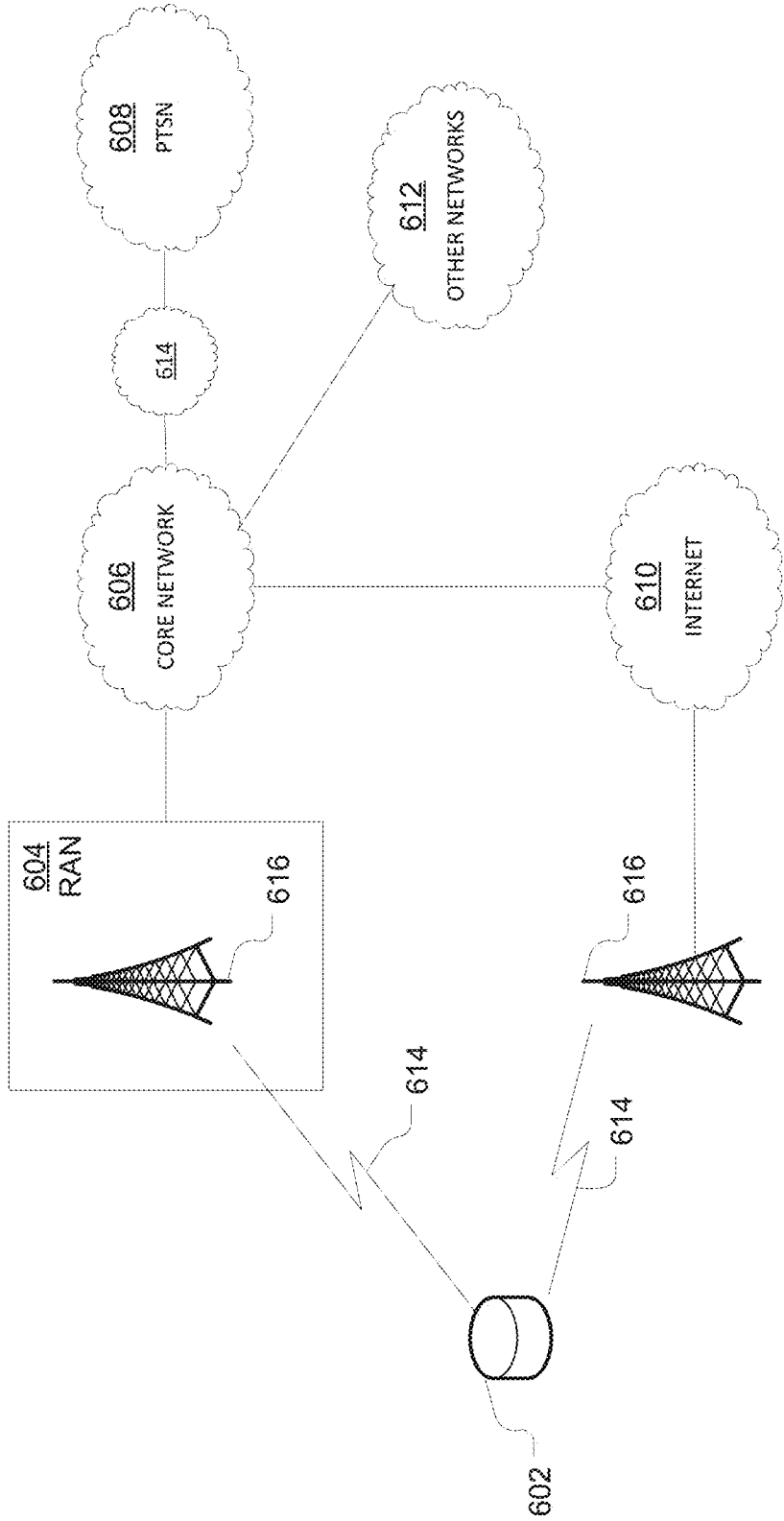


FIG. 6

700

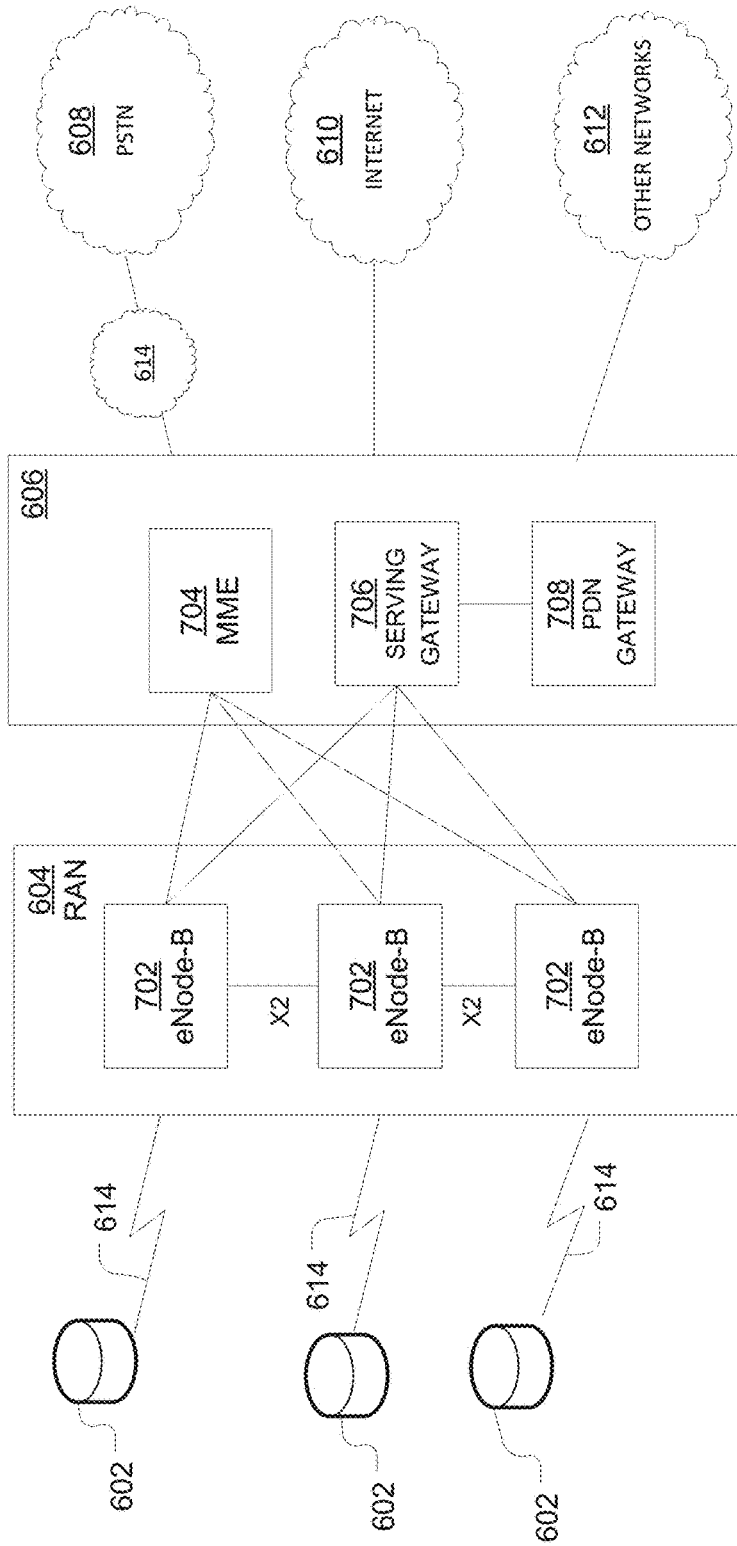


FIG. 7

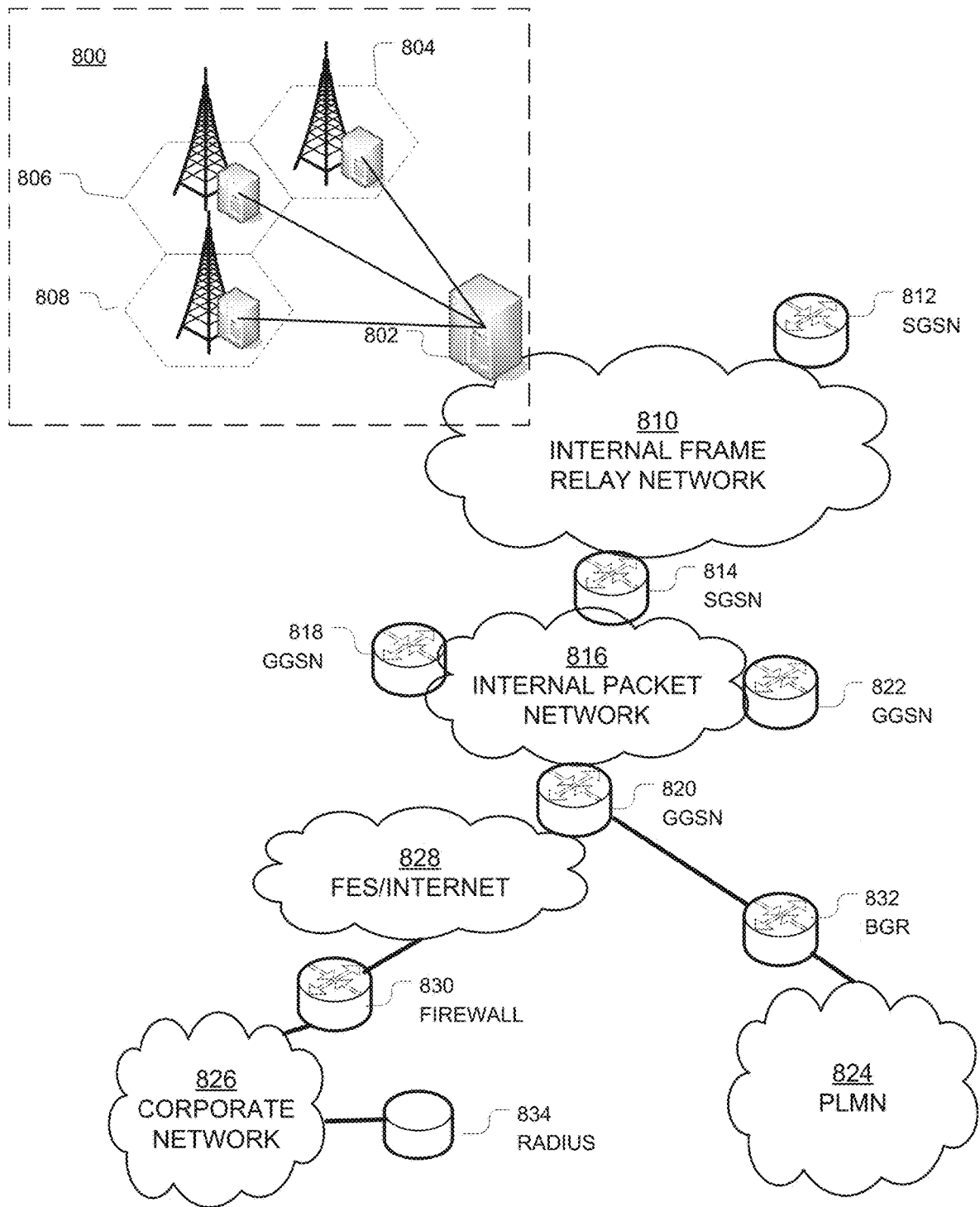


FIG. 8

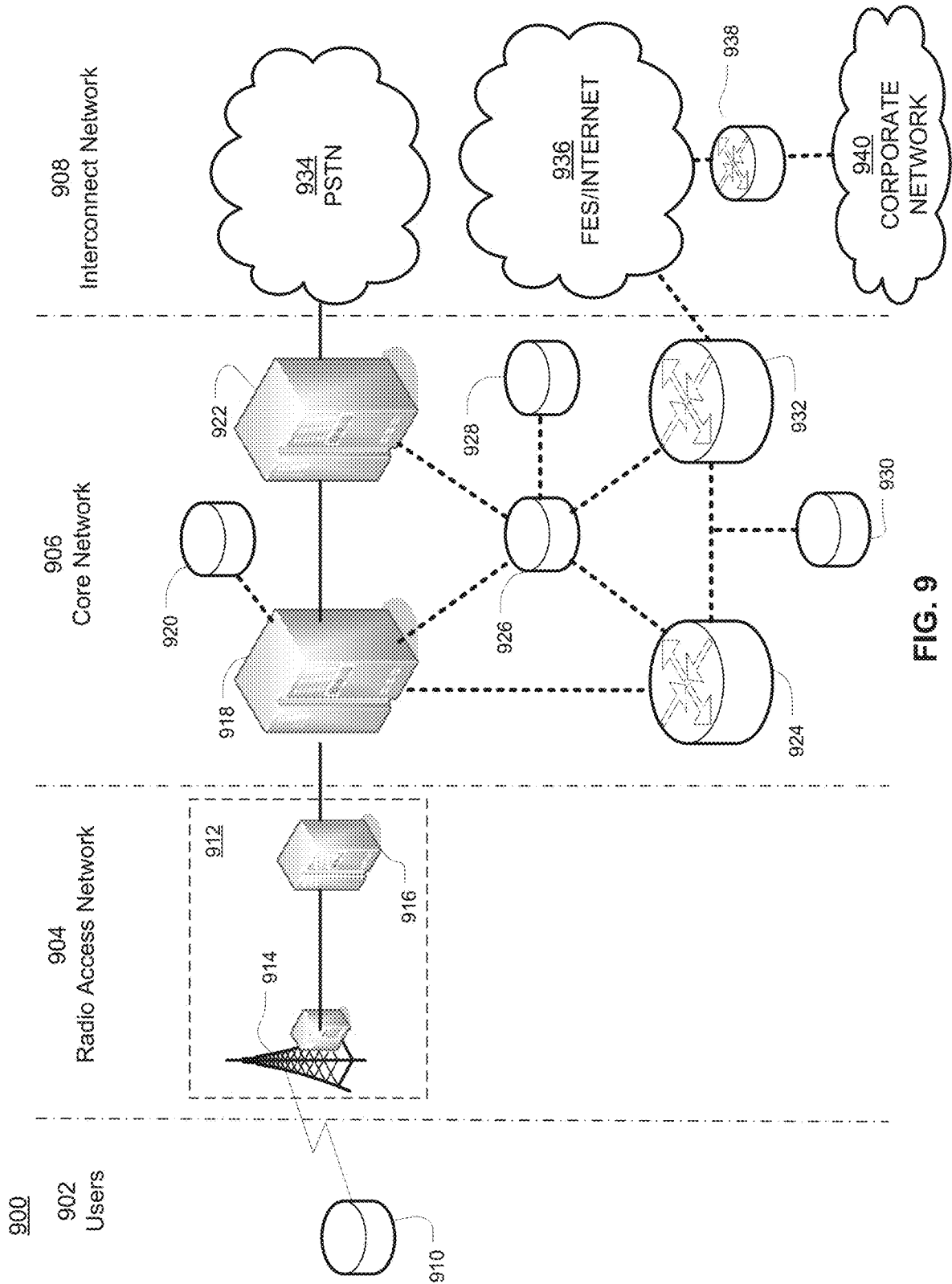


FIG. 9

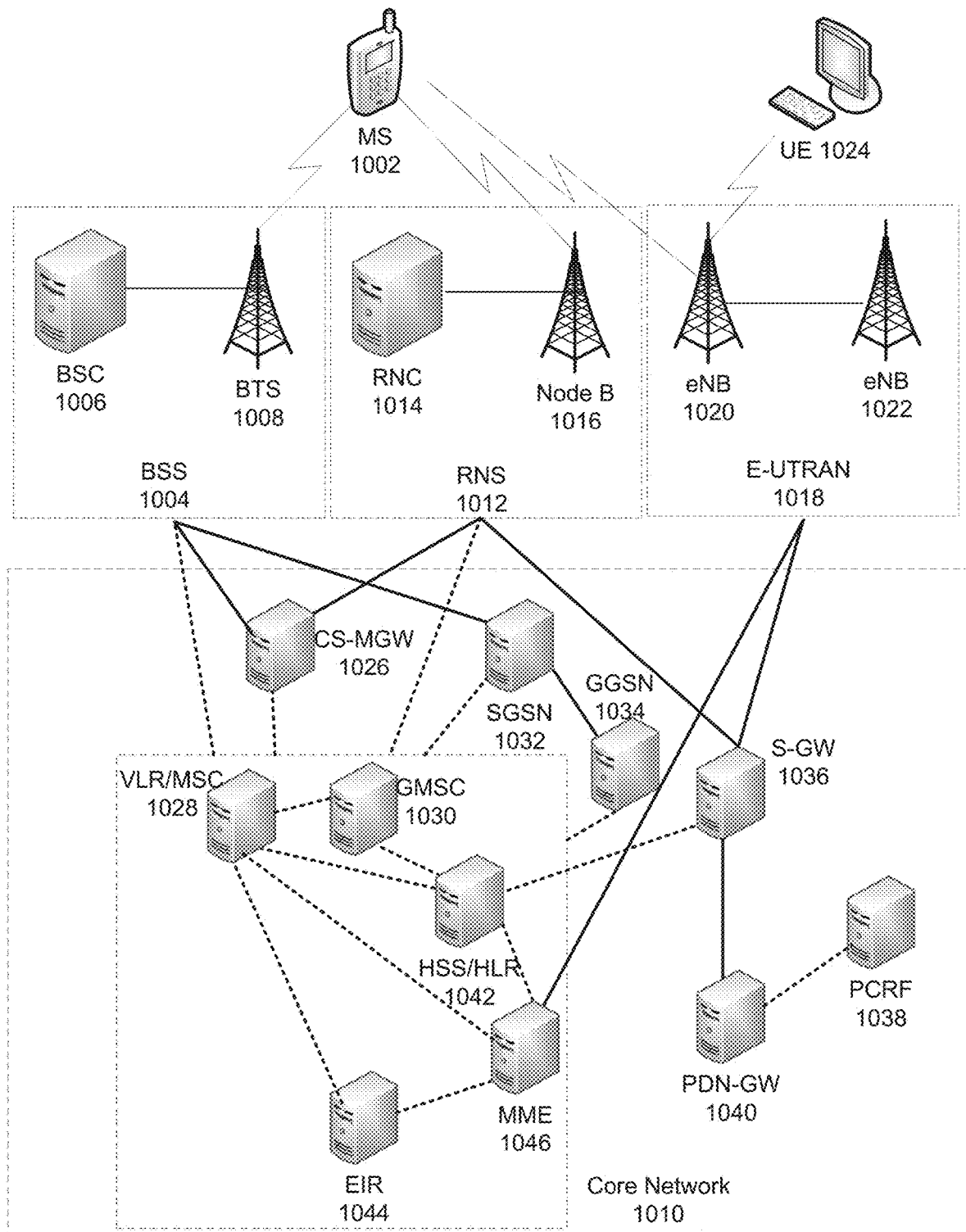


FIG. 10

SD-WAN ORCHESTRATOR FOR 5G CUPS NETWORKS

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] This disclosure is directed to a system and method for providing software-defined wide area networks, and, more specifically, to utilizing control and user plane separation architecture in such wide area networks.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Control and User Plane Separation (CUPS) is important to 5G networks because it allows operators to separate the evolved packet core (EPC) into a control plane that can sit in a centralized location, for example the middle of the country, and for the user plane to be placed closer to the application it is supporting. This type of separation may be helpful for applications such as the connected car. In that scenario, a network operator can place the EPC user plane in a data center in a city so that it is closer to the application and therefore reduces the latency. This scenario also works well for high-bandwidth applications like video. Because the core user plane is located closer to the end user the operator doesn't have to backhaul traffic all the way to central hub and therefore provides more efficient processing.

[0003] Another area of telecommunications networks involves wide area networks. Software-defined wide area network (SD-WAN) solutions exist in the market today. SD-WANs decouple the network hardware from the software to run network services. More specifically, SD-WAN solutions have been used in the market to create Virtual Network Functions (VNFs) that interconnect various sites—often multiple sites of enterprise customers—using the Internet or IP Broadband Circuits instead of dedicated MPLS circuits. Many customers have found that by implementing these VNFs in a redundant manner, the customer wide area network can achieve levels that come very close to the reliability of dedicated MPLS circuits at a fraction of the price.

[0004] In LTE and 5G networks, the data packets originating from mobile devices attached to the radio access network are delivered to a packet gateway (PGW). The PGW interfaces with network elements outside of the carrier network. The PGW delivers packets to a router gateway residing in the customer premises.

[0005] As such, current implementations of SD-WAN architecture cannot take advantage of the current 5G CUPS architecture which is deemed important for 5G processing in terms of performance metrics, including latency and throughput. Accordingly, there is a need to further develop the functionality of the SD-WAN in a CUPS environment.

SUMMARY

[0006] The present disclosure is directed to a system including a software-defined wide area network having a software-defined wide area network control plane and a software-defined wide area network user plane wherein the wide area network control plane is configured to operate in a first network and the wide area network user plane is configured to operate in a second network and further configured to communicate with the wide area network control plane, a serving gateway user plane in communication with the software-defined wide area network user plane, wherein the serving gateway user plane is configured to

operate in the second network and further configured to communicate wirelessly with a device, and wherein the wide area network user plane is configured to route a communication between the device and a destination. The first network may be a carrier network and wherein the second network is an enterprise network or alternatively the first network is a carrier network and the second network is an edge of the first network. In an aspect, the software-defined wide area network user plane routes the communication based on a policy received from the software-defined wide area network control plane. The software-defined wide area network user plane is configured to instantiate one or more virtual network functions therein wherein the one or more virtual network functions receive data packets from the serving gateway user plane and route the data packets to the destination. In an aspect, the system may further include a plurality of devices and wherein the one or more virtual network functions are configured to serve a subset of the plurality of devices. In an aspect, the software-defined wide area network user plane is configured to communication with a second software-defined wide area user plane wherein the second software-defined wide area user plane is configured to operate in a second location of the first network. In an aspect, the communication is routed wirelessly to a destination on the internet or to a wide area network portion of the second network.

[0007] The present disclosure is also directed to a method including establishing a session between a device and a first network and the device and a user plane of a serving gateway, wherein the user plane of the serving gateway operates in a second network, instantiating one or more virtual network functions in a user plane of a software-defined wide area network, wherein the user plane of the software-defined wide area network operates in the second network and is in communication with the user plane of a serving gateway and is managed by a control plane of the software-defined wide area network operating in the first network, forwarding data packets from the user plane of the serving gateway to the one or more virtual network functions and routing the data packets to a destination. The method may further include receiving policies from a control plane of the software-defined network operating in the first network and the routing step is performed based on the policies. The device may be in wireless communication with the user plane of a serving gateway. The destination may be the internet or a wider area network in the second network. In an aspect, one or more virtual network functions are operable to service a subset of a plurality of devices and wherein the policies associated with each of the one or more virtual network functions are different. The session may be authenticated by control planes in an evolved packet core in the first network.

[0008] The disclosure is also directed to an apparatus including an input-output interface, a processor coupled to the input-output interface wherein the processor is further coupled to a memory the memory having stored thereon executable instructions that when executed by the processor cause the processor to effectuate operations including establishing a session with a control plane of a software-defined wide area network operating in a first network, receiving a policy from the control plane of the software-defined wide area network, instantiating a virtual network function operable to act as a user plane of the software-defined wide area network, and routing data packets by the virtual network

function to a destination based on the policy. The data packets are received from a user plane of a software-defined serving gateway. The instantiating step may include instantiating a plurality of virtual network functions and wherein there are a plurality of policies and each of the plurality of policies is assigned to each of the virtual network functions. In an aspect, the data packets received from a device are routed by one of the plurality of the virtual network functions and data packets received from a second device are routed by a second of the plurality of the virtual network functions.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] Aspects of the herein described telecommunications network and systems and methods are described more fully with reference to the accompanying drawings, which provide examples. In the following description, for purposes of explanation, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide an understanding of the variations in implementing the disclosed technology. However, the instant disclosure may take many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the examples set forth herein. Where practical, like numbers refer to like elements throughout.

[0010] FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an exemplary operating environment in accordance with the present disclosure.

[0011] FIG. 2 is a flowchart of an exemplary method of operation for the architecture described in FIG. 1.

[0012] FIG. 3 is a schematic of an exemplary network device.

[0013] FIG. 4 depicts an exemplary communication system that provide wireless telecommunication services over wireless communication networks with which edge computing node may communicate.

[0014] FIG. 5 depicts an exemplary communication system that provide wireless telecommunication services over wireless communication networks with which edge computing node may communicate.

[0015] FIG. 6 is a diagram of an exemplary telecommunications system in which the disclosed methods and processes may be implemented with which edge computing node may communicate.

[0016] FIG. 7 is an example system diagram of a radio access network and a core network with which edge computing node may communicate.

[0017] FIG. 8 depicts an overall block diagram of an example packet-based mobile cellular network environment, such as a general packet radio service (GPRS) network, with which edge computing node may communicate.

[0018] FIG. 9 illustrates an exemplary architecture of a GPRS network with which edge computing node may communicate.

[0019] FIG. 10 is a block diagram of an exemplary public land mobile network (PLMN) with which edge computing node may communicate.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0020] System Overview. The present disclosure includes new and novel customer premise equipment and new network elements to provide SD-WAN functionality within the core of 5G CUPS networks. The SD-WAN gateways may be placed within the 5G core and in the user premises as part of the 5G CUPS architecture. The system and method

disclosed herein are a practical application of telecommunications technology and advance the state of the art in that telecommunications technology. While the system and method will be described herein in an exemplary configuration in which the user plane of the SD-WAN operates in an enterprise environment, the system and method of the present disclosure is also useful in any 5G CUPS environment wherein the user planes may be located on an edge of a carrier network, for example, in a data center in a city serving communications with a connected car, to provide higher bandwidth and lower latency communications.

[0021] On the customer premise side, new software-defined network equipment may host multiple VNF's which will be referred to as a user plane SD-WAN gateway (U-SDWAN). The U-SDWAN gateway (U-SDWAN) may be managed by a control plane SDWAN orchestrator (C-SDWAN) in the 5G core network. The U-SDWAN may be logically placed in communication with user plane of the serving gateway (U-SGW) and the user plane of the packet data network gateway (U-PGW) at the customer premises. The U-SDWAN residing in the customer premises may communicate with other U-SDWAN functions at other customer locations. Multiple VNF's may be established in each U-SDWAN as needed or desired. In an aspect, the U-SDWAN VNFs would not communicate with entities outside of the carrier network.

[0022] On the carrier network side, the corresponding control planes may form a part of the Evolved Packet Core (EPC), which may, for example, include the control plane Mobility Management Entity (C-MME), control plane of the serving gateway (C-SGW) and the control plane of the packet data network gateway (C-PGW).

[0023] The U-SDWAN may route packets originating from the mobile or fixed 5G RAN to the appropriate destination. In operation, the mobile device may attach to the 5G RAN and establish a session with the network through the EPC by being authenticated by the control plane C-MME and then establishing a session with the C-SGW and C-PGW. The mobile device may then establish a session with the U-SGW. The U-SGW forwards the data to the U-SDWAN being managed by C-SDWAN. The U-SDWAN establishes one or more user plane VNFs. The U-VNF may route the packets to entities outside of the carrier network or to multiple customer locations. The C-SDWAN provides the policy considerations derived from the enterprise network with intelligence in the U-SDWAN routing the packets through various possible connections. The C-SDWAN can communicate with other orchestrators outside of the carrier environment and interface with enterprise customers via an external web interface. The C-SDWAN and the U-SDWAN would communicate to update policies as requested by the network or the customer.

[0024] Operating Environment. FIG. 1 shows an exemplary systems architecture 10 of a 5G CUPS architecture with a network portion 12 and a customer premise equipment (CPE) portion 30. Consistent with the CUPS architecture, the network portion 12 includes the control planes of various components and the CPE portion 30 includes the user plane of those various components.

[0025] While the network portion 12 is described in further detail below, the block diagram of FIG. 1 shows the exemplary network portion 12 as it may be configured in accordance with the present disclosure. There is shown the network carrier EPC 14. Within the EPC 14, there is shown

the control plane of the mobility management entity (MME) (C-MME), the control plane of the PGW (C-PGW) and the control plane of the SGW (C-SGW). The EPC 14 interacts with the enterprise network 20, which may be a private or shared network operated by the network carrier or by an enterprise customer. The EPC 14 may have an interface to the internet 22 through a direct connection or through an internet service provider. Provisioning of the EPC 14 and mobile devices 32 may be performed by the enterprise customer by accessing the enterprise level provision interface 24 accessed through the to the internet 22a. The provisioning may also be done by a carrier on behalf of an enterprise customer. Note that the internet portions 22a 22b in FIG. 1 are considered to be part of the global internet, however they are referenced separately herein only for the convenience in describing the internet interface with respect to the network portion 12 and the CPE portion 30 of system 10 and the recognition that the actual internet access points may differ between those portions.

[0026] There is also shown the control plane of a new and novel software-defined network element, the C-SDWAN 16. The C-SDWAN 16 may, among other functions, control the policies to be implemented by the network carrier globally or geographically or by individual enterprise customers. The C-SDWAN 16 may be provisioned with provisioning data stored in a provisioning database 18. The C-SDWAN 16 may thus be configured to form part of the EPC 14 or to closely interact with the EPC 14 on the carrier network portion 12. Likewise, the C-SDWAN may be configured to interact with the enterprise customer network 20, the enterprise level provisioning interface 24 and the provisioning database 18. With the C-SDWAN 16 being software-defined, multiple instances of the control plane WAN may be implemented for multiple-enterprise customers or individual customers being serviced by the network carrier.

[0027] Turning to the CPE portion 30 of FIG. 1, there is shown the user planes corresponding to the control planes discussed above. There is the U-PGW 36, U-SGW 38, and the new and novel CPE software-defined element, the U-SDWAN 40. The U-SDWAN 40 may be an intelligent device. Each of the U-PGW 36, U-SGW 38, and the U-SDWAN 40 may be in communication with each other, directly or indirectly through one of the interfaces as shown in FIG. 1. The U-PGW 26 and the U-SGW 38 may functionally operate as is known by those skilled in the art of telecommunications using the 5G CUPS architecture. For example, the U-PGW 36 may interface and exchange data with an enterprise wide area network, shown as Enterprise WAN 44. That U-PGW 36 may thus provide a gateway to and from the Enterprise WAN 44 from and to the 5G Radio Access Network (RAN) 34. One or more mobile devices 32 may also access the 5G RAN 34.

[0028] There may be one or more U-SDWANs 40 in any architecture. Because they are software-defined WANs, enterprises may configure the U-SDWANs to meet specific or personalized processing requirements. For example, different U-SDWANs 40 may operate using different policies received from the C-SDWAN 16 described below. There may be different policies for different devices, users, or classes of users. Within each U-SDWAN, one or more U-VNFs may be instantiated. For example, there may be one U-VNF per device or class of devices. There may be a separate U-VNF for a particular function at the enterprise, for example, an assembly line. Because all the user plane

WAN processing can be local at the enterprise location, communications within the local enterprise location or between enterprise locations may be processed more efficiently with less latency and higher throughput and other enhanced performance metrics.

[0029] There may also be a communication interface between the 5G RAN 34 and the internet 22b. As such, there is an established communication path between mobile devices 32, the enterprise WAN 44 and the internet 22b. In this example, the enterprise WAN 44 may be a traditional enterprise WAN connecting multiple customer sites through a wide area network. It may be a software-defined WAN which connects enterprise networks including branch offices and data centers over large geographic distances. Those connections may, for example, use broadband internet, 4G, LTE or MPLS connections. With reference to the U-SDWAN 40, there are shown exemplary connections to the 5G RAN 34, the EPC 14 and, directly or indirectly, to the C-SDWAN 16, and provisioning database 18.

[0030] THE C-SDWAN 16 may be configured to manage the U-SDWAN 40. The C-SDWAN 16 may provide policies and policy updates from time to time and may otherwise provide control plane management services such as routing and connection information. It is also noted that the C-SDWAN 16 may serve as the EPC or 5G CUPS SD-WAN orchestrator and be configured to communicate with other orchestrators outside of the carrier environment. The C-SDWAN 16 may also interface with the customer premise equipment via an external internet interface such as internet 22a. The C-SDWAN 16 may also have a configuration and security repository for customer records, routing, security and other purposes.

[0031] Operations. An exemplary operational flowchart 50 in accordance with a method of the present disclosure is illustrated in FIG. 2. The process starts at 51 when one or more devices 32 attach to the 5G RAN 34. At 52 the device 32 then establishes a session with the network portion 12 and is authenticated by the C-MME which may be part of the carrier EPC core 14. Once authenticated, at 53 device 32 then may establish a session with the C-SGW and C-PGW, also part of the carrier EPC core 14. At 54 the device then may establish a session with the U-SGW 38 on the CPE portion 30. At 55, the U-SGW 38 is configured to communicate with the U-SDWAN 40. Once configured as such, the U-SGW 38 will be able to forward data packets to the U-SDWAN 40 for routing.

[0032] At 56, the U-SDWAN 40 and the C-SDWAN 16 are shown communicating with each other. That communication is shown serially in the flow-chart of FIG. 2, but it is understood that the communications may happen at any time during, before or after a session. For example, at 60 there is shown a decision point to determine whether any policies or other management data require updating in the user plane based on communications received from the control plane WAN and if so, the communication occurs at 56. However, that decision point may arise at any point in the process and the user plane tables would be updated accordingly. At 57, the U-SDWAN 40 establishes one or more U-VNFs. At 58, the U-VNF may receive data packets from the U-SGW. At 59, the U-VNF routes data packets to their intended destinations. The U-VNF may be configured to communicate with other U-VNFs locally or at other customer locations. As such, the U-VNF may route the data packets to entities outside the carrier network and to multiple enterprise loca-

tions, but otherwise may be restricted from communicating with other entities outside of the carrier or enterprise networks. These packets may be routed in accordance with predefined rules.

[0033] Establishing an SD-WAN solution within the carrier core network would allow a carrier to manage the network routing environment and establish a set of services being offered and controlled by the carrier. Using the CUPS SD-WAN solution may eliminate the need to use existing SD-WAN Services for data originating within the carrier network, for example, In accordance with the system and method of the present disclosure, a customer may implement the U-SDWAN solution in their environment. For example, a customer that has one hundred locations may then have multiple VNF's residing in their one hundred locations being hosted by U-SDWAN services. Communication between those one hundred locations may then be managed by the U-SDWAN services without the need to having those services managed by the customer SD-WAN functions as they currently exist and thereby reduce the need for dedicated MPLS circuits.

[0034] The system and methods of the present disclosure provide a practical application that advances the state of the telecommunications technology. The system and method provide near zero latency, orchestration within the core, and coordination with other SD-WAN solutions that a customer may have outside of the carrier environment. In view of the nature of the software-defined SDWAN control plane and user plane elements, it is possible to implement many user plane SD-WAN functions at various and multiple locations that may provide redundant routing and thereby increase reliability.

[0035] Device and Network Description.

[0036] FIG. 1 shows a portion of a core network 12. What follows is an exemplary detailed description of a core network 18. FIG. 3 is a block diagram of network device 300 that may be connected to or comprise a component of edge computing node 104 or connected to edge computing node 104 via a network. Network device 300 may comprise hardware or a combination of hardware and software. The functionality to facilitate telecommunications via a telecommunications network may reside in one or combination of network devices 300. Network device 300 depicted in FIG. 3 may represent or perform functionality of an appropriate network device 300, or combination of network devices 300, such as, for example, a component or various components of a cellular broadcast system wireless network, a processor, a server, a gateway, a node, a mobile switching center (MSC), a short message service center (SMSC), an ALFS, a gateway mobile location center (GMLC), a radio access network (RAN), a serving mobile location center (SMLC), or the like, or any appropriate combination thereof. It is emphasized that the block diagram depicted in FIG. 3 is exemplary and not intended to imply a limitation to a specific implementation or configuration. Thus, network device 300 may be implemented in a single device or multiple devices (e.g., single server or multiple servers, single gateway or multiple gateways, single controller or multiple controllers). Multiple network entities may be distributed or centrally located. Multiple network entities may communicate wirelessly, via hard wire, or any appropriate combination thereof.

[0037] Network device 300 may comprise a processor 302 and a memory 304 coupled to processor 302. Memory 304 may contain executable instructions that, when executed by

processor 302, cause processor 302 to effectuate operations associated with mapping wireless signal strength. As evident from the description herein, network device 300 is not to be construed as software per se.

[0038] In addition to processor 302 and memory 304, network device 300 may include an input/output system 306. Processor 302, memory 304, and input/output system 306 may be coupled together (coupling not shown in FIG. 3) to allow communications therebetween. Each portion of network device 300 may comprise circuitry for performing functions associated with each respective portion. Thus, each portion may comprise hardware, or a combination of hardware and software. Accordingly, each portion of network device 300 is not to be construed as software per se. Input/output system 306 may be capable of receiving or providing information from or to a communications device or other network entities configured for telecommunications. For example, input/output system 306 may include a wireless communications (e.g., 3G/4G/GPS) card. Input/output system 306 may be capable of receiving or sending video information, audio information, control information, image information, data, or any combination thereof. Input/output system 306 may be capable of transferring information with network device 300. In various configurations, input/output system 306 may receive or provide information via any appropriate means, such as, for example, optical means (e.g., infrared), electromagnetic means (e.g., RF, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth®, ZigBee®), acoustic means (e.g., speaker, microphone, ultrasonic receiver, ultrasonic transmitter), or a combination thereof. In an example configuration, input/output system 306 may comprise a Wi-Fi finder, a two-way GPS chipset or equivalent, or the like, or a combination thereof.

[0039] Input/output system 306 of network device 300 also may contain a communication connection 308 that allows network device 300 to communicate with other devices, network entities, or the like. Communication connection 308 may comprise communication media. Communication media typically embody computer-readable instructions, data structures, program modules or other data in a modulated data signal such as a carrier wave or other transport mechanism and includes any information delivery media. By way of example, and not limitation, communication media may include wired media such as a wired network or direct-wired connection, or wireless media such as acoustic, RF, infrared, or other wireless media. The term computer-readable media as used herein includes both storage media and communication media. Input/output system 306 also may include an input device 310 such as keyboard, mouse, pen, voice input device, or touch input device. Input/output system 306 may also include an output device 312, such as a display, speakers, or a printer.

[0040] Processor 302 may be capable of performing functions associated with telecommunications, such as functions for processing broadcast messages, as described herein. For example, processor 302 may be capable of, in conjunction with any other portion of network device 300, determining a type of broadcast message and acting according to the broadcast message type or content, as described herein.

[0041] Memory 304 of network device 300 may comprise a storage medium having a concrete, tangible, physical structure. As is known, a signal does not have a concrete, tangible, physical structure. Memory 304, as well as any computer-readable storage medium described herein, is not to be construed as a signal. Memory 304, as well as any

computer-readable storage medium described herein, is not to be construed as a transient signal. Memory 304, as well as any computer-readable storage medium described herein, is not to be construed as a propagating signal. Memory 304, as well as any computer-readable storage medium described herein, is to be construed as an article of manufacture.

[0042] Memory 304 may store any information utilized in conjunction with telecommunications. Depending upon the exact configuration or type of processor, memory 304 may include a volatile storage 314 (such as some types of RAM), a nonvolatile storage 316 (such as ROM, flash memory), or a combination thereof. Memory 304 may include additional storage (e.g., a removable storage 318 or a nonremovable storage 320) including, for example, tape, flash memory, smart cards, CD-ROM, DVD, or other optical storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, USB-compatible memory, or any other medium that can be used to store information and that can be accessed by network device 300. Memory 304 may comprise executable instructions that, when executed by processor 302, cause processor 302 to effectuate operations to map signal strengths in an area of interest.

[0043] FIG. 4 illustrates a functional block diagram depicting one example of an LTE-EPS network architecture 400 related to the current disclosure. In particular, the network architecture 400 disclosed herein is referred to as a modified LTE-EPS architecture 400 to distinguish it from a traditional LTE-EPS architecture.

[0044] An example modified LTE-EPS architecture 400 is based at least in part on standards developed by the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), with information available at www.3gpp.org. In one embodiment, the LTE-EPS network architecture 400 includes an access network 402, a core network 404, e.g., an EPC or Common Back-Bone (CBB) and one or more external networks 406, sometimes referred to as PDN or peer entities. Different external networks 406 can be distinguished from each other by a respective network identifier, e.g., a label according to DNS naming conventions describing an access point to the PDN. Such labels can be referred to as Access Point Names (APN). External networks 406 can include one or more trusted and non-trusted external networks such as an internet protocol (IP) network 408, an IP multimedia subsystem (IMS) network 410, and other networks 412, such as a service network, a corporate network, or the like.

[0045] Access network 402 can include an LTE network architecture sometimes referred to as Evolved Universal mobile Telecommunication system Terrestrial Radio Access (E UTRA) and evolved UMTS Terrestrial Radio Access Network (E-UTRAN). Broadly, access network 402 can include one or more communication devices, commonly referred to as UE 414, and one or more wireless access nodes, or base stations 416a, 416b. During network operations, at least one base station 416 communicates directly with UE 414. Base station 416 can be an evolved Node B (e-NodeB), with which UE 414 communicates over the air and wirelessly. UEs 414 can include, without limitation, wireless devices, e.g., satellite communication systems, portable digital assistants (PDAs), laptop computers, tablet devices and other mobile devices (e.g., cellular telephones, smart appliances, and so on). UEs 414 can connect to eNBs 416 when UE 414 is within range according to a corresponding wireless communication technology.

[0046] UE 414 generally runs one or more applications that engage in a transfer of packets between UE 414 and one or more external networks 406. Such packet transfers can include one of downlink packet transfers from external network 406 to UE 414, uplink packet transfers from UE 414 to external network 406 or combinations of uplink and downlink packet transfers. Applications can include, without limitation, web browsing, VoIP, streaming media and the like. Each application can pose different Quality of Service (QoS) requirements on a respective packet transfer. Different packet transfers can be served by different bearers within core network 404, e.g., according to parameters, such as the QoS.

[0047] Core network 404 uses a concept of bearers, e.g., EPS bearers, to route packets, e.g., IP traffic, between a particular gateway in core network 404 and UE 414. A bearer refers generally to an IP packet flow with a defined QoS between the particular gateway and UE 414. Access network 402, e.g., E UTRAN, and core network 404 together set up and release bearers as required by the various applications. Bearers can be classified in at least two different categories: (i) minimum guaranteed bit rate bearers, e.g., for applications, such as VoIP; and (ii) non-guaranteed bit rate bearers that do not require guarantee bit rate, e.g., for applications, such as web browsing.

[0048] In one embodiment, the core network 404 includes various network entities, such as MME 418, SGW 420, Home Subscriber Server (HSS) 422, Policy and Charging Rules Function (PCRF) 424 and PGW 426. In one embodiment, MME 418 comprises a control node performing a control signaling between various equipment and devices in access network 402 and core network 404. The protocols running between UE 414 and core network 404 are generally known as Non-Access Stratum (NAS) protocols.

[0049] For illustration purposes only, the terms MME 418, SGW 420, HSS 422 and PGW 426, and so on, can be server devices, but may be referred to in the subject disclosure without the word "server." It is also understood that any form of such servers can operate in a device, system, component, or other form of centralized or distributed hardware and software. It is further noted that these terms and other terms such as bearer paths and/or interfaces are terms that can include features, methodologies, and/or fields that may be described in whole or in part by standards bodies such as the 3GPP. It is further noted that some or all embodiments of the subject disclosure may in whole or in part modify, supplement, or otherwise supersede final or proposed standards published and promulgated by 3GPP.

[0050] According to traditional implementations of LTE-EPS architectures, SGW 420 routes and forwards all user data packets. SGW 420 also acts as a mobility anchor for user plane operation during handovers between base stations, e.g., during a handover from first eNB 416a to second eNB 416b as may be the result of UE 414 moving from one area of coverage, e.g., cell, to another. SGW 420 can also terminate a downlink data path, e.g., from external network 406 to UE 414 in an idle state, and trigger a paging operation when downlink data arrives for UE 414. SGW 420 can also be configured to manage and store a context for UE 414, e.g., including one or more of parameters of the IP bearer service and network internal routing information. In addition, SGW 420 can perform administrative functions, e.g., in a visited network, such as collecting information for charging (e.g., the volume of data sent to or received from the

user), and/or replicate user traffic, e.g., to support a lawful interception. SGW 420 also serves as the mobility anchor for interworking with other 3GPP technologies such as universal mobile telecommunication system (UMTS).

[0051] At any given time, UE 414 is generally in one of three different states: detached, idle, or active. The detached state is typically a transitory state in which UE 414 is powered on but is engaged in a process of searching and registering with network 402. In the active state, UE 414 is registered with access network 402 and has established a wireless connection, e.g., radio resource control (RRC) connection, with eNB 416. Whether UE 414 is in an active state can depend on the state of a packet data session, and whether there is an active packet data session. In the idle state, UE 414 is generally in a power conservation state in which UE 414 typically does not communicate packets. When UE 414 is idle, SGW 420 can terminate a downlink data path, e.g., from one peer entity 406, and triggers paging of UE 414 when data arrives for UE 414. If UE 414 responds to the page, SGW 420 can forward the IP packet to eNB 416a.

[0052] HSS 422 can manage subscription-related information for a user of UE 414. For example, HSS 422 can store information such as authorization of the user, security requirements for the user, quality of service (QoS) requirements for the user, etc. HSS 422 can also hold information about external networks 406 to which the user can connect, e.g., in the form of an APN of external networks 406. For example, MME 418 can communicate with HSS 422 to determine if UE 414 is authorized to establish a call, e.g., a voice over IP (VoIP) call before the call is established.

[0053] PCRF 424 can perform QoS management functions and policy control. PCRF 424 is responsible for policy control decision-making, as well as for controlling the flow-based charging functionalities in a policy control enforcement function (PCEF), which resides in PGW 426. PCRF 424 provides the QoS authorization, e.g., QoS class identifier and bit rates that decide how a certain data flow will be treated in the PCEF and ensures that this is in accordance with the user's subscription profile.

[0054] PGW 426 can provide connectivity between the UE 414 and one or more of the external networks 406. In illustrative network architecture 400, PGW 426 can be responsible for IP address allocation for UE 414, as well as one or more of QoS enforcement and flow-based charging, e.g., according to rules from the PCRF 424. PGW 426 is also typically responsible for filtering downlink user IP packets into the different QoS-based bearers. In at least some embodiments, such filtering can be performed based on traffic flow templates. PGW 426 can also perform QoS enforcement, e.g., for guaranteed bit rate bearers. PGW 426 also serves as a mobility anchor for interworking with non-3GPP technologies such as CDMA2000.

[0055] Within access network 402 and core network 404 there may be various bearer paths/interfaces, e.g., represented by solid lines 428 and 430. Some of the bearer paths can be referred to by a specific label. For example, solid line 428 can be considered an S1-U bearer and solid line 432 can be considered an S5/S8 bearer according to LTE-EPS architecture standards. Without limitation, reference to various interfaces, such as S1, X2, S5, S8, S11 refer to EPS interfaces. In some instances, such interface designations are combined with a suffix, e.g., a "U" or a "C" to signify whether the interface relates to a "User plane" or a "Control

plane." In addition, the core network 404 can include various signaling bearer paths/interfaces, e.g., control plane paths/interfaces represented by dashed lines 430, 434, 436, and 438. Some of the signaling bearer paths may be referred to by a specific label. For example, dashed line 430 can be considered as an S1-MME signaling bearer, dashed line 434 can be considered as an S11 signaling bearer and dashed line 436 can be considered as an S6a signaling bearer, e.g., according to LTE-EPS architecture standards. The above bearer paths and signaling bearer paths are only illustrated as examples and it should be noted that additional bearer paths and signaling bearer paths may exist that are not illustrated.

[0056] Also shown is a novel user plane path/interface, referred to as the S1-U+ interface 466. In the illustrative example, the S1-U+ user plane interface extends between the eNB 416a and PGW 426. Notably, S1-U+ path/interface does not include SGW 420, a node that is otherwise instrumental in configuring and/or managing packet forwarding between eNB 416a and one or more external networks 406 by way of PGW 426. As disclosed herein, the S1-U+ path/interface facilitates autonomous learning of peer transport layer addresses by one or more of the network nodes to facilitate a self-configuring of the packet forwarding path. In particular, such self-configuring can be accomplished during handovers in most scenarios so as to reduce any extra signaling load on the S/PGWs 420, 426 due to excessive handover events.

[0057] In some embodiments, PGW 426 is coupled to storage device 440, shown in phantom. Storage device 440 can be integral to one of the network nodes, such as PGW 426, for example, in the form of internal memory and/or disk drive. It is understood that storage device 440 can include registers suitable for storing address values. Alternatively or in addition, storage device 440 can be separate from PGW 426, for example, as an external hard drive, a flash drive, and/or network storage.

[0058] Storage device 440 selectively stores one or more values relevant to the forwarding of packet data. For example, storage device 440 can store identities and/or addresses of network entities, such as any of network nodes 418, 420, 422, 424, and 426, eNBs 416 and/or UE 414. In the illustrative example, storage device 440 includes a first storage location 442 and a second storage location 444. First storage location 442 can be dedicated to storing a Currently Used Downlink address value 442. Likewise, second storage location 444 can be dedicated to storing a Default Downlink Forwarding address value 444. PGW 426 can read and/or write values into either of storage locations 442, 444, for example, managing Currently Used Downlink Forwarding address value 442 and Default Downlink Forwarding address value 444 as disclosed herein.

[0059] In some embodiments, the Default Downlink Forwarding address for each EPS bearer is the SGW S5-U address for each EPS Bearer. The "Currently Used Downlink Forwarding address" for each EPS bearer in PGW 426 can be set every time when PGW 426 receives an uplink packet, e.g., a GTP-U uplink packet, with a new source address for a corresponding EPS bearer. When UE 414 is in an idle state, the "Current Used Downlink Forwarding address" field for each EPS bearer of UE 414 can be set to a "null" or other suitable value.

[0060] In some embodiments, the Default Downlink Forwarding address is only updated when PGW 426 receives a new SGW S5-U address in a predetermined message or

messages. For example, the Default Downlink Forwarding address is only updated when PGW 426 receives one of a Create Session Request, Modify Bearer Request and Create Bearer Response messages from SGW 420.

[0061] As values 442, 444 can be maintained and otherwise manipulated on a per bearer basis, it is understood that the storage locations can take the form of tables, spreadsheets, lists, and/or other data structures generally well understood and suitable for maintaining and/or otherwise manipulate forwarding addresses on a per bearer basis.

[0062] It should be noted that access network 402 and core network 404 are illustrated in a simplified block diagram in FIG. 4. In other words, either or both of access network 402 and the core network 404 can include additional network elements that are not shown, such as various routers, switches and controllers. In addition, although FIG. 4 illustrates only a single one of each of the various network elements, it should be noted that access network 402 and core network 404 can include any number of the various network elements. For example, core network 404 can include a pool (i.e., more than one) of MMES 418, SGWs 420 or PGWs 426.

[0063] In the illustrative example, data traversing a network path between UE 414, eNB 416a, SGW 420, PGW 426 and external network 406 may be considered to constitute data transferred according to an end-to-end IP service. However, for the present disclosure, to properly perform establishment management in LTE-EPS network architecture 400, the core network, data bearer portion of the end-to-end IP service is analyzed.

[0064] An establishment may be defined herein as a connection set up request between any two elements within LTE-EPS network architecture 400. The connection set up request may be for user data or for signaling. A failed establishment may be defined as a connection set up request that was unsuccessful. A successful establishment may be defined as a connection set up request that was successful.

[0065] In one embodiment, a data bearer portion comprises a first portion (e.g., a data radio bearer 446) between UE 414 and eNB 416a, a second portion (e.g., an S1 data bearer 428) between eNB 416a and SGW 420, and a third portion (e.g., an S5/S8 bearer 432) between SGW 420 and PGW 426. Various signaling bearer portions are also illustrated in FIG. 4. For example, a first signaling portion (e.g., a signaling radio bearer 448) between UE 414 and eNB 416a, and a second signaling portion (e.g., S1 signaling bearer 430) between eNB 416a and MME 418.

[0066] In at least some embodiments, the data bearer can include tunneling, e.g., IP tunneling, by which data packets can be forwarded in an encapsulated manner, between tunnel endpoints. Tunnels, or tunnel connections can be identified in one or more nodes of network 400, e.g., by one or more of tunnel endpoint identifiers, an IP address and a user datagram protocol port number. Within a particular tunnel connection, payloads, e.g., packet data, which may or may not include protocol related information, are forwarded between tunnel endpoints.

[0067] An example of first tunnel solution 450 includes a first tunnel 452a between two tunnel endpoints 454a and 456a, and a second tunnel 452b between two tunnel endpoints 454b and 456b. In the illustrative example, first tunnel 452a is established between eNB 416a and SGW 420. Accordingly, first tunnel 452a includes a first tunnel endpoint 454a corresponding to an S1-U address of eNB 416a

(referred to herein as the eNB S1-U address), and second tunnel endpoint 456a corresponding to an S1-U address of SGW 420 (referred to herein as the SGW S1-U address). Likewise, second tunnel 452b includes first tunnel endpoint 454b corresponding to an S5-U address of SGW 420 (referred to herein as the SGW S5-U address), and second tunnel endpoint 456b corresponding to an S5-U address of PGW 426 (referred to herein as the PGW S5-U address).

[0068] In at least some embodiments, first tunnel solution 450 is referred to as a two tunnel solution, e.g., according to the GPRS Tunneling Protocol User Plane (GTPv1-U based), as described in 3GPP specification TS 29.281, incorporated herein in its entirety. It is understood that one or more tunnels are permitted between each set of tunnel endpoints. For example, each subscriber can have one or more tunnels, e.g., one for each PDP context that they have active, as well as possibly having separate tunnels for specific connections with different quality of service requirements, and so on.

[0069] An example of second tunnel solution 458 includes a single or direct tunnel 460 between tunnel endpoints 462 and 464. In the illustrative example, direct tunnel 460 is established between eNB 416a and PGW 426, without subjecting packet transfers to processing related to SGW 420. Accordingly, direct tunnel 460 includes first tunnel endpoint 462 corresponding to the eNB S1-U address, and second tunnel endpoint 464 corresponding to the PGW S5-U address. Packet data received at either end can be encapsulated into a payload and directed to the corresponding address of the other end of the tunnel. Such direct tunneling avoids processing, e.g., by SGW 420 that would otherwise relay packets between the same two endpoints, e.g., according to a protocol, such as the GTP-U protocol.

[0070] In some scenarios, direct tunneling solution 458 can forward user plane data packets between eNB 416a and PGW 426, by way of SGW 420. That is, SGW 420 can serve a relay function, by relaying packets between two tunnel endpoints 416a, 426. In other scenarios, direct tunneling solution 458 can forward user data packets between eNB 416a and PGW 426, by way of the S1 U+ interface, thereby bypassing SGW 420.

[0071] Generally, UE 414 can have one or more bearers at any one time. The number and types of bearers can depend on applications, default requirements, and so on. It is understood that the techniques disclosed herein, including the configuration, management and use of various tunnel solutions 450, 458, can be applied to the bearers on an individual bases. That is, if user data packets of one bearer, say a bearer associated with a VoIP service of UE 414, then the forwarding of all packets of that bearer are handled in a similar manner. Continuing with this example, the same UE 414 can have another bearer associated with it through the same eNB 416a. This other bearer, for example, can be associated with a relatively low rate data session forwarding user data packets through core network 404 simultaneously with the first bearer. Likewise, the user data packets of the other bearer are also handled in a similar manner, without necessarily following a forwarding path or solution of the first bearer. Thus, one of the bearers may be forwarded through direct tunnel 458; whereas, another one of the bearers may be forwarded through a two-tunnel solution 450.

[0072] FIG. 5 depicts an exemplary diagrammatic representation of a machine in the form of a computer system 500 within which a set of instructions, when executed, may cause the machine to perform any one or more of the

methods described above. One or more instances of the machine can operate, for example, as processor **302**, UE **414**, eNB **416**, MME **418**, SGW **420**, HSS **422**, PCRF **424**, PGW **426** and other devices of FIGS. **1**, **2**, and **4**. In some embodiments, the machine may be connected (e.g., using a network **502**) to other machines. In a networked deployment, the machine may operate in the capacity of a server or a client user machine in a server-client user network environment, or as a peer machine in a peer-to-peer (or distributed) network environment.

[**0073**] The machine may comprise a server computer, a client user computer, a personal computer (PC), a tablet, a smart phone, a laptop computer, a desktop computer, a control system, a network router, switch or bridge, or any machine capable of executing a set of instructions (sequential or otherwise) that specify actions to be taken by that machine. It will be understood that a communication device of the subject disclosure includes broadly any electronic device that provides voice, video or data communication. Further, while a single machine is illustrated, the term “machine” shall also be taken to include any collection of machines that individually or jointly execute a set (or multiple sets) of instructions to perform any one or more of the methods discussed herein.

[**0074**] Computer system **500** may include a processor (or controller) **504** (e.g., a central processing unit (CPU)), a graphics processing unit (GPU, or both), a main memory **506** and a static memory **508**, which communicate with each other via a bus **510**. The computer system **500** may further include a display unit **512** (e.g., a liquid crystal display (LCD), a flat panel, or a solid state display). Computer system **500** may include an input device **514** (e.g., a keyboard), a cursor control device **516** (e.g., a mouse), a disk drive unit **518**, a signal generation device **520** (e.g., a speaker or remote control) and a network interface device **522**. In distributed environments, the embodiments described in the subject disclosure can be adapted to utilize multiple display units **512** controlled by two or more computer systems **500**. In this configuration, presentations described by the subject disclosure may in part be shown in a first of display units **512**, while the remaining portion is presented in a second of display units **512**.

[**0075**] The disk drive unit **518** may include a tangible computer-readable storage medium **524** on which is stored one or more sets of instructions (e.g., software **526**) embodying any one or more of the methods or functions described herein, including those methods illustrated above. Instructions **526** may also reside, completely or at least partially, within main memory **506**, static memory **508**, or within processor **504** during execution thereof by the computer system **500**. Main memory **506** and processor **504** also may constitute tangible computer-readable storage media.

[**0076**] As shown in FIG. **6**, telecommunication system **600** may include wireless transmit/receive units (WTRUs) **602**, a RAN **604**, a core network **606**, a public switched telephone network (PSTN) **608**, the Internet **610**, or other networks **612**, though it will be appreciated that the disclosed examples contemplate any number of WTRUs, base stations, networks, or network elements. Each WTRU **602** may be any type of device configured to operate or communicate in a wireless environment. For example, a WTRU may comprise drone **102**, a mobile device, network device **300**, or the like, or any combination thereof. By way of example, WTRUs **602** may be configured to transmit or

receive wireless signals and may include a UE, a mobile station, a mobile device, a fixed or mobile subscriber unit, a pager, a cellular telephone, a PDA, a smartphone, a laptop, a netbook, a personal computer, a wireless sensor, consumer electronics, or the like. WTRUs **602** may be configured to transmit or receive wireless signals over an air interface **614**.

[**0077**] Telecommunication system **600** may also include one or more base stations **616**. Each of base stations **616** may be any type of device configured to wirelessly interface with at least one of the WTRUs **602** to facilitate access to one or more communication networks, such as core network **606**, PTSN **608**, Internet **610**, or other networks **612**. By way of example, base stations **616** may be a base transceiver station (BTS), a Node-B, an eNode B, a Home Node B, a Home eNode B, a site controller, an access point (AP), a wireless router, or the like. While base stations **616** are each depicted as a single element, it will be appreciated that base stations **616** may include any number of interconnected base stations or network elements.

[**0078**] RAN **604** may include one or more base stations **616**, along with other network elements (not shown), such as a base station controller (BSC), a radio network controller (RNC), or relay nodes. One or more base stations **616** may be configured to transmit or receive wireless signals within a particular geographic region, which may be referred to as a cell (not shown). The cell may further be divided into cell sectors. For example, the cell associated with base station **616** may be divided into three sectors such that base station **616** may include three transceivers: one for each sector of the cell. In another example, base station **616** may employ multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) technology and, therefore, may utilize multiple transceivers for each sector of the cell.

[**0079**] Base stations **616** may communicate with one or more of WTRUs **602** over air interface **614**, which may be any suitable wireless communication link (e.g., RF, microwave, infrared (IR), ultraviolet (UV), or visible light). Air interface **614** may be established using any suitable radio access technology (RAT).

[**0080**] More specifically, as noted above, telecommunication system **600** may be a multiple access system and may employ one or more channel access schemes, such as CDMA, TDMA, FDMA, OFDMA, SC-FDMA, or the like. For example, base station **616** in RAN **604** and WTRUs **602** connected to RAN **604** may implement a radio technology such as Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) Terrestrial Radio Access (UTRA) that may establish air interface **614** using wideband CDMA (WCDMA). WCDMA may include communication protocols, such as High-Speed Packet Access (HSPA) or Evolved HSPA (HSPA+). HSPA may include High-Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) or High-Speed Uplink Packet Access (HSUPA).

[**0081**] As another example base station **616** and WTRUs **602** that are connected to RAN **604** may implement a radio technology such as Evolved UMTS Terrestrial Radio Access (E-UTRA), which may establish air interface **614** using LTE or LTE-Advanced (LTE-A).

[**0082**] Optionally base station **616** and WTRUs **602** connected to RAN **604** may implement radio technologies such as IEEE 802.16 (i.e., Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WiMAX)), CDMA2000, CDMA2000 1X, CDMA2000 EV-DO, Interim Standard 2000 (IS-2000), Interim Standard 95 (IS-95), Interim Standard 856 (IS-856),

GSM, Enhanced Data rates for GSM Evolution (EDGE), GSM EDGE (GERAN), or the like.

[0083] Base station 616 may be a wireless router, Home Node B, Home eNode B, or access point, for example, and may utilize any suitable RAT for facilitating wireless connectivity in a localized area, such as a place of business, a home, a vehicle, a campus, or the like. For example, base station 616 and associated WTRUs 602 may implement a radio technology such as IEEE 802.11 to establish a wireless local area network (WLAN). As another example, base station 616 and associated WTRUs 602 may implement a radio technology such as IEEE 802.15 to establish a wireless personal area network (WPAN). In yet another example, base station 616 and associated WTRUs 602 may utilize a cellular-based RAT (e.g., WCDMA, CDMA2000, GSM, LTE, LTE-A, etc.) to establish a picocell or femtocell. As shown in FIG. 6, base station 616 may have a direct connection to Internet 610. Thus, base station 616 may not be required to access Internet 610 via core network 606.

[0084] RAN 604 may be in communication with core network 606, which may be any type of network configured to provide voice, data, applications, and/or voice over internet protocol (VoIP) services to one or more WTRUs 602. For example, core network 606 may provide call control, billing services, mobile location-based services, pre-paid calling, Internet connectivity, video distribution or high-level security functions, such as user authentication. Although not shown in FIG. 6, it will be appreciated that RAN 604 or core network 606 may be in direct or indirect communication with other RANs that employ the same RAT as RAN 604 or a different RAT. For example, in addition to being connected to RAN 604, which may be utilizing an E-UTRA radio technology, core network 606 may also be in communication with another RAN (not shown) employing a GSM radio technology.

[0085] Core network 606 may also serve as a gateway for WTRUs 602 to access PSTN 608, Internet 610, or other networks 612. PSTN 608 may include circuit-switched telephone networks that provide plain old telephone service (POTS). For LTE core networks, core network 606 may use IMS core 614 to provide access to PSTN 608. Internet 610 may include a global system of interconnected computer networks or devices that use common communication protocols, such as the transmission control protocol (TCP), user datagram protocol (UDP), or IP in the TCP/IP internet protocol suite. Other networks 612 may include wired or wireless communications networks owned or operated by other service providers. For example, other networks 612 may include another core network connected to one or more RANs, which may employ the same RAT as RAN 604 or a different RAT.

[0086] Some or all WTRUs 602 in telecommunication system 600 may include multi-mode capabilities. That is, WTRUs 602 may include multiple transceivers for communicating with different wireless networks over different wireless links. For example, one or more WTRUs 602 may be configured to communicate with base station 616, which may employ a cellular-based radio technology, and with base station 616, which may employ an IEEE 802 radio technology.

[0087] FIG. 7 is an example system 400 including RAN 604 and core network 606. As noted above, RAN 604 may employ an E-UTRA radio technology to communicate with

WTRUs 602 over air interface 614. RAN 604 may also be in communication with core network 606.

[0088] RAN 604 may include any number of eNode-Bs 702 while remaining consistent with the disclosed technology. One or more eNode-Bs 702 may include one or more transceivers for communicating with the WTRUs 602 over air interface 614. Optionally, eNode-Bs 702 may implement MIMO technology. Thus, one of eNode-Bs 702, for example, may use multiple antennas to transmit wireless signals to, or receive wireless signals from, one of WTRUs 602.

[0089] Each of eNode-Bs 702 may be associated with a particular cell (not shown) and may be configured to handle radio resource management decisions, handover decisions, scheduling of users in the uplink or downlink, or the like. As shown in FIG. 7 eNode-Bs 702 may communicate with one another over an X2 interface.

[0090] Core network 606 shown in FIG. 7 may include a mobility management gateway or entity (MME) 704, a serving gateway 706, or a packet data network (PDN) gateway 708. While each of the foregoing elements are depicted as part of core network 606, it will be appreciated that any one of these elements may be owned or operated by an entity other than the core network operator.

[0091] MME 704 may be connected to each of eNode-Bs 702 in RAN 604 via an S1 interface and may serve as a control node. For example, MME 704 may be responsible for authenticating users of WTRUs 602, bearer activation or deactivation, selecting a particular serving gateway during an initial attach of WTRUs 602, or the like. MME 704 may also provide a control plane function for switching between RAN 604 and other RANs (not shown) that employ other radio technologies, such as GSM or WCDMA.

[0092] Serving gateway 706 may be connected to each of eNode-Bs 702 in RAN 604 via the S1 interface. Serving gateway 706 may generally route or forward user data packets to or from the WTRUs 602. Serving gateway 706 may also perform other functions, such as anchoring user planes during inter-eNode B handovers, triggering paging when downlink data is available for WTRUs 602, managing or storing contexts of WTRUs 602, or the like.

[0093] Serving gateway 706 may also be connected to PDN gateway 708, which may provide WTRUs 602 with access to packet-switched networks, such as Internet 610, to facilitate communications between WTRUs 602 and IP-enabled devices.

[0094] Core network 606 may facilitate communications with other networks. For example, core network 606 may provide WTRUs 602 with access to circuit-switched networks, such as PSTN 608, such as through IMS core 614, to facilitate communications between WTRUs 602 and traditional land-line communications devices. In addition, core network 606 may provide the WTRUs 602 with access to other networks 612, which may include other wired or wireless networks that are owned or operated by other service providers.

[0095] FIG. 8 depicts an overall block diagram of an example packet-based mobile cellular network environment, such as a GPRS network as described herein. In the example packet-based mobile cellular network environment shown in FIG. 8, there are a plurality of base station subsystems (BSS) 800 (only one is shown), each of which comprises a base station controller (BSC) 802 serving a plurality of BTSs, such as BTSs 804, 806, 808. BTSs 804, 806, 808 are the

access points where users of packet-based mobile devices become connected to the wireless network. In example fashion, the packet traffic originating from mobile devices is transported via an over-the-air interface to BTS **808**, and from BTS **808** to BSC **802**. Base station subsystems, such as BSS **800**, are a part of internal frame relay network **810** that can include a service GPRS support nodes (SGSN), such as SGSN **812** or SGSN **814**. Each SGSN **812**, **814** is connected to an internal packet network **816** through which SGSN **812**, **814** can route data packets to or from a plurality of gateway GPRS support nodes (GGSN) **818**, **820**, **822**. As illustrated, SGSN **814** and GGSNs **818**, **820**, **822** are part of internal packet network **816**. GGSNs **818**, **820**, **822** mainly provide an interface to external IP networks such as PLMN **824**, corporate intranets/internets **826**, or Fixed-End System (FES) or the public Internet **828**. As illustrated, subscriber corporate network **826** may be connected to GGSN **820** via a firewall **830**. PLMN **824** may be connected to GGSN **820** via a boarder gateway router (BGR) **832**. A Remote Authentication Dial-In User Service (RADIUS) server **834** may be used for caller authentication when a user calls corporate network **826**.

[0096] Generally, there may be a several cell sizes in a network, referred to as macro, micro, pico, femto or umbrella cells. The coverage area of each cell is different in different environments. Macro cells can be regarded as cells in which the base station antenna is installed in a mast or a building above average roof top level. Micro cells are cells whose antenna height is under average roof top level. Micro cells are typically used in urban areas. Pico cells are small cells having a diameter of a few dozen meters. Pico cells are used mainly indoors. Femto cells have the same size as pico cells, but a smaller transport capacity. Femto cells are used indoors, in residential or small business environments. On the other hand, umbrella cells are used to cover shadowed regions of smaller cells and fill in gaps in coverage between those cells.

[0097] FIG. 9 illustrates an architecture of a typical GPRS network **900** as described herein. The architecture depicted in FIG. 9 may be segmented into four groups: users **902**, RAN **904**, core network **906**, and interconnect network **908**. Users **902** comprise a plurality of end users, who each may use one or more devices **910**. Note that device **910** is referred to as a mobile subscriber (MS) in the description of network shown in FIG. 9. In an example, device **910** comprises a communications device (e.g., mobile device **102**, mobile positioning center **116**, network device **300**, any of detected devices **500**, second device **508**, access device **604**, access device **606**, access device **608**, access device **610** or the like, or any combination thereof). Radio access network **904** comprises a plurality of BSSs such as BSS **912**, which includes a BTS **914** and a BSC **916**. Core network **906** may include a host of various network elements. As illustrated in FIG. 9, core network **906** may comprise MSC **918**, service control point (SCP) **920**, gateway MSC (GMSC) **922**, SGSN **924**, home location register (HLR) **926**, authentication center (AuC) **928**, domain name system (DNS) server **930**, and GGSN **932**. Interconnect network **908** may also comprise a host of various networks or other network elements. As illustrated in FIG. 9, interconnect network **908** comprises a PSTN **934**, an FES/Internet **936**, a firewall **1038**, or a corporate network **940**.

[0098] An MSC can be connected to a large number of BSCs. At MSC **918**, for instance, depending on the type of

traffic, the traffic may be separated in that voice may be sent to PSTN **934** through GMSC **922**, or data may be sent to SGSN **924**, which then sends the data traffic to GGSN **932** for further forwarding.

[0099] When MSC **918** receives call traffic, for example, from BSC **916**, it sends a query to a database hosted by SCP **920**, which processes the request and issues a response to MSC **918** so that it may continue call processing as appropriate.

[0100] HLR **926** is a centralized database for users to register to the GPRS network. HLR **926** stores static information about the subscribers such as the International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI), subscribed services, or a key for authenticating the subscriber. HLR **926** also stores dynamic subscriber information such as the current location of the MS. Associated with HLR **926** is AuC **928**, which is a database that contains the algorithms for authenticating subscribers and includes the associated keys for encryption to safeguard the user input for authentication.

[0101] In the following, depending on context, “mobile subscriber” or “MS” sometimes refers to the end user and sometimes to the actual portable device, such as a mobile device, used by an end user of the mobile cellular service. When a mobile subscriber turns on his or her mobile device, the mobile device goes through an attach process by which the mobile device attaches to an SGSN of the GPRS network. In FIG. 9, when MS **910** initiates the attach process by turning on the network capabilities of the mobile device, an attach request is sent by MS **910** to SGSN **924**. The SGSN **924** queries another SGSN, to which MS **910** was attached before, for the identity of MS **910**. Upon receiving the identity of MS **910** from the other SGSN, SGSN **924** requests more information from MS **910**. This information is used to authenticate MS **910** together with the information provided by HLR **926**. Once verified, SGSN **924** sends a location update to HLR **926** indicating the change of location to a new SGSN, in this case SGSN **924**. HLR **926** notifies the old SGSN, to which MS **910** was attached before, to cancel the location process for MS **910**. HLR **926** then notifies SGSN **924** that the location update has been performed. At this time, SGSN **924** sends an Attach Accept message to MS **910**, which in turn sends an Attach Complete message to SGSN **924**.

[0102] Next, MS **910** establishes a user session with the destination network, corporate network **940**, by going through a Packet Data Protocol (PDP) activation process. Briefly, in the process, MS **910** requests access to the Access Point Name (APN), for example, UPS.com, and SGSN **924** receives the activation request from MS **910**. SGSN **924** then initiates a DNS query to learn which GGSN **932** has access to the UPS.com APN. The DNS query is sent to a DNS server within core network **906**, such as DNS server **930**, which is provisioned to map to one or more GGSNs in core network **906**. Based on the APN, the mapped GGSN **932** can access requested corporate network **940**. SGSN **924** then sends to GGSN **932** a Create PDP Context Request message that contains necessary information. GGSN **932** sends a Create PDP Context Response message to SGSN **924**, which then sends an Activate PDP Context Accept message to MS **910**.

[0103] Once activated, data packets of the call made by MS **910** can then go through RAN **904**, core network **906**, and interconnect network **908**, in a particular FES/Internet **936** and firewall **1038**, to reach corporate network **940**.

[0104] FIG. 10 illustrates a PLMN block diagram view of an example architecture that may be replaced by a telecommunications system. In FIG. 10, solid lines may represent user traffic signals, and dashed lines may represent support signaling. MS 1002 is the physical equipment used by the PLMN subscriber. For example, drone 102, network device 300, the like, or any combination thereof may serve as MS 1002. MS 1002 may be one of, but not limited to, a cellular telephone, a cellular telephone in combination with another electronic device or any other wireless mobile communication device.

[0105] MS 1002 may communicate wirelessly with BSS 1004. BSS 1004 contains BSC 1006 and a BTS 1008. BSS 1004 may include a single BSC 1006/BTS 1008 pair (base station) or a system of BSC/BTS pairs that are part of a larger network. BSS 1004 is responsible for communicating with MS 1002 and may support one or more cells. BSS 1004 is responsible for handling cellular traffic and signaling between MS 1002 and a core network 1010. Typically, BSS 1004 performs functions that include, but are not limited to, digital conversion of speech channels, allocation of channels to mobile devices, paging, or transmission/reception of cellular signals.

[0106] Additionally, MS 1002 may communicate wirelessly with RNS 1012. RNS 1012 contains a Radio Network Controller (RNC) 1014 and one or more Nodes B 1016. RNS 1012 may support one or more cells. RNS 1012 may also include one or more RNC 1014/Node B 1016 pairs or alternatively a single RNC 1014 may manage multiple Nodes B 1016. RNS 1012 is responsible for communicating with MS 1002 in its geographically defined area. RNC 1014 is responsible for controlling Nodes B 1016 that are connected to it and is a control element in a UMTS radio access network. RNC 1014 performs functions such as, but not limited to, load control, packet scheduling, handover control, security functions, or controlling MS 1002 access to core network 1010.

[0107] An E-UTRA Network (E-UTRAN) 1018 is a RAN that provides wireless data communications for MS 1002 and UE 1024. E-UTRAN 1018 provides higher data rates than traditional UMTS. It is part of the LTE upgrade for mobile networks, and later releases meet the requirements of the International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) Advanced and are commonly known as a 4G networks. E-UTRAN 1018 may include of series of logical network components such as E-UTRAN Node B (eNB) 1020 and E-UTRAN Node B (eNB) 1022. E-UTRAN 1018 may contain one or more eNBs. User equipment (UE) 1024 may be any mobile device capable of connecting to E-UTRAN 1018 including, but not limited to, a personal computer, laptop, mobile device, wireless router, or other device capable of wireless connectivity to E-UTRAN 1018. The improved performance of the E-UTRAN 1018 relative to a typical UMTS network allows for increased bandwidth, spectral efficiency, and functionality including, but not limited to, voice, high-speed applications, large data transfer or IPTV, while still allowing for full mobility.

[0108] Typically MS 1002 may communicate with any or all of BSS 1004, RNS 1012, or E-UTRAN 1018. In a illustrative system, each of BSS 1004, RNS 1012, and E-UTRAN 1018 may provide MS 1002 with access to core network 1010. Core network 1010 may include of a series of devices that route data and communications between end users. Core network 1010 may provide network service

functions to users in the circuit switched (CS) domain or the packet switched (PS) domain. The CS domain refers to connections in which dedicated network resources are allocated at the time of connection establishment and then released when the connection is terminated. The PS domain refers to communications and data transfers that make use of autonomous groupings of bits called packets. Each packet may be routed, manipulated, processed or handled independently of all other packets in the PS domain and does not require dedicated network resources.

[0109] The circuit-switched MGW function (CS-MGW) 1026 is part of core network 1010, and interacts with VLR/MSC server 1028 and GMSC server 1030 in order to facilitate core network 1010 resource control in the CS domain. Functions of CS-MGW 1026 include, but are not limited to, media conversion, bearer control, payload processing or other mobile network processing such as handover or anchoring. CS-MGW 1026 may receive connections to MS 1002 through BSS 1004 or RNS 1012.

[0110] SGSN 1032 stores subscriber data regarding MS 1002 in order to facilitate network functionality. SGSN 1032 may store subscription information such as, but not limited to, the IMSI, temporary identities, or PDP addresses. SGSN 1032 may also store location information such as, but not limited to, GGSN address for each GGSN 1034 where an active PDP exists. GGSN 1034 may implement a location register function to store subscriber data it receives from SGSN 1032 such as subscription or location information.

[0111] Serving gateway (S-GW) 1036 is an interface which provides connectivity between E-UTRAN 1018 and core network 1010. Functions of S-GW 1036 include, but are not limited to, packet routing, packet forwarding, transport level packet processing, or user plane mobility anchoring for inter-network mobility. PCRF 1038 uses information gathered from P-GW 1036, as well as other sources, to make applicable policy and charging decisions related to data flows, network resources or other network administration functions. PDN gateway (PDN-GW) 1040 may provide user-to-services connectivity functionality including, but not limited to, GPRS/EPC network anchoring, bearer session anchoring and control, or IP address allocation for PS domain connections.

[0112] HSS 1042 is a database for user information and stores subscription data regarding MS 1002 or UE 1024 for handling calls or data sessions. Networks may contain one HSS 1042 or more if additional resources are required. Example data stored by HSS 1042 include, but is not limited to, user identification, numbering or addressing information, security information, or location information. HSS 1042 may also provide call or session establishment procedures in both the PS and CS domains.

[0113] VLR/MSC Server 1028 provides user location functionality. When MS 1002 enters a new network location, it begins a registration procedure. A MSC server for that location transfers the location information to the VLR for the area. A VLR and MSC server may be located in the same computing environment, as is shown by VLR/MSC server 1028, or alternatively may be located in separate computing environments. A VLR may contain, but is not limited to, user information such as the IMSI, the Temporary Mobile Station Identity (TMSI), the Local Mobile Station Identity (LMSI), the last known location of the mobile station, or the SGSN where the mobile station was previously registered. The MSC server may contain information such as, but not

limited to, procedures for MS **1002** registration or procedures for handover of MS **1002** to a different section of core network **1010**. GMSC server **1030** may serve as a connection to alternate GMSC servers for other MSs in larger networks.

[0114] EIR **1044** is a logical element which may store the IMEI for MS **1002**. User equipment may be classified as either “white listed” or “black listed” depending on its status in the network. If MS **1002** is stolen and put to use by an unauthorized user, it may be registered as “black listed” in EIR **1044**, preventing its use on the network. A MME **1046** is a control node which may track MS **1002** or UE **1024** if the devices are idle. Additional functionality may include the ability of MME **1046** to contact idle MS **1002** or UE **1024** if retransmission of a previous session is required.

[0115] As described herein, a telecommunications system wherein management and control utilizing a software designed network (SDN) and a simple IP are based, at least in part, on user equipment, may provide a wireless management and control framework that enables common wireless management and control, such as mobility management, radio resource management, QoS, load balancing, etc., across many wireless technologies, e.g. LTE, Wi-Fi, and future 5G access technologies; decoupling the mobility control from data planes to let them evolve and scale independently; reducing network state maintained in the network based on user equipment types to reduce network cost and allow massive scale; shortening cycle time and improving network upgradability; flexibility in creating end-to-end services based on types of user equipment and applications, thus improve customer experience; or improving user equipment power efficiency and battery life—especially for simple M2M devices—through enhanced wireless management.

[0116] While examples of a telecommunications system in which emergency alerts can be processed and managed have been described in connection with various computing devices/processors, the underlying concepts may be applied to any computing device, processor, or system capable of facilitating a telecommunications system. The various techniques described herein may be implemented in connection with hardware or software or, where appropriate, with a combination of both. Thus, the methods and devices may take the form of program code (i.e., instructions) embodied in concrete, tangible, storage media having a concrete, tangible, physical structure. Examples of tangible storage media include floppy diskettes, CD-ROMs, DVDs, hard drives, or any other tangible machine-readable storage medium (computer-readable storage medium). Thus, a computer-readable storage medium is not a signal. A computer-readable storage medium is not a transient signal. Further, a computer-readable storage medium is not a propagating signal. A computer-readable storage medium as described herein is an article of manufacture. When the program code is loaded into and executed by a machine, such as a computer, the machine becomes an device for telecommunications. In the case of program code execution on programmable computers, the computing device will generally include a processor, a storage medium readable by the processor (including volatile or nonvolatile memory or storage elements), at least one input device, and at least one output device. The program(s) can be implemented in assembly or machine language, if desired. The language can

be a compiled or interpreted language, and may be combined with hardware implementations.

[0117] The methods and devices associated with a telecommunications system as described herein also may be practiced via communications embodied in the form of program code that is transmitted over some transmission medium, such as over electrical wiring or cabling, through fiber optics, or via any other form of transmission, wherein, when the program code is received and loaded into and executed by a machine, such as an EPROM, a gate array, a programmable logic device (PLD), a client computer, or the like, the machine becomes a device for implementing telecommunications as described herein. When implemented on a general-purpose processor, the program code combines with the processor to provide a unique device that operates to invoke the functionality of a telecommunications system.

[0118] While a telecommunications system has been described in connection with the various examples of the various figures, it is to be understood that other similar implementations may be used or modifications and additions may be made to the described examples of a telecommunications system without deviating therefrom. For example, one skilled in the art will recognize that a telecommunications system as described in the instant application may apply to any environment, whether wired or wireless, and may be applied to any number of such devices connected via a communications network and interacting across the network. Therefore, a telecommunications system as described herein should not be limited to any single example, but rather should be construed in breadth and scope in accordance with the appended claims.

1. A system comprising:

A software-defined wide area network having a software-defined wide area network control plane and a software-defined wide area network user plane; wherein the wide area network control plane is configured to operate in a first network and the wide area network user plane is configured to operate in a second network and further configured to communicate with the wide area network control plane;

A serving gateway user plane in communication with the software-defined wide area network user plane, wherein the serving gateway user plane is configured to operate in the second network and further configured to communicate wirelessly with a device; and

wherein the wide area network user plane is configured to route a communication between the device and a destination.

2. The system of claim **1** wherein the first network is a carrier network and wherein the second network is an enterprise network.

3. The system of claim **1** wherein the first network is a carrier network and the second network is an edge of the first network.

4. The system of claim **1** wherein the software-defined wide area network user plane routes the communication based on a policy received from the software-defined wide area network control plane.

5. The system of claim **1** wherein the software-defined wide area network user plane is configured to instantiate one or more virtual network functions therein wherein the one or

more virtual network functions receive data packets from the serving gateway user plane and route the data packets to the destination.

6. The system of claim 5 further comprising a plurality of devices and wherein the one or more virtual network functions are configured to serve a subset of the plurality of devices.

7. The system of claim 1 wherein the software-defined wide area network user plane is configured to communication with a second software-defined wide area user plane.

8. The system of claim 7 wherein the second software-defined wide area user plane is configured to operate in a second location of the first network.

9. The system of claim 1 wherein the communication is routed wirelessly to a destination on the internet.

10. The system of claim 1 wherein the communication is routed to a wide area network portion of the second network.

11. A method comprising:

Establishing a session between a device and a first network and the device and a user plane of a serving gateway, wherein the user plane of the serving gateway operates in a second network;

Instantiating one or more virtual network functions in a user plane of a software-defined wide area network, wherein the user plane of the software-defined wide area network operates in the second network and is in communication with the user plane of a serving gateway and is managed by a control plane of the software-defined wide area network operating in the first network;

Forwarding data packets from the user plane of the serving gateway to the one or more virtual network functions; and

Routing the data packets to a destination.

12. The method of claim 11 further comprising receiving policies from a control plane of the software-defined network operating in the first network and the routing step is performed based on the policies.

13. The method of claim 11 wherein the device is in wireless communication with the user plane of a serving gateway.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the destination is the internet or a wide area network in the second network.

15. The method of claim 11 wherein the one or more virtual network functions are operable to service a subset of a plurality of devices and wherein the policies associated with each of the one or more virtual network functions are different.

16. The method of claim 11 wherein the session is authenticated by control planes in an evolved packet core in the first network.

17. An apparatus comprising:

An input-output interface;

A processor coupled to the input-output interface wherein the processor is further coupled to a memory the memory having stored thereon executable instructions that when executed by the processor cause the processor to effectuate operations comprising:

Establishing a session with a control plane of a software-defined wide area network operating in a first network;

Receiving a policy from the control plane of the software-defined wide area network;

Instantiating a virtual network function operable to act as a user plane of the software-defined wide area network; and

Routing data packets by the virtual network function to a destination based on the policy.

18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the data packets are received from a user plane of a software-defined serving gateway.

19. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the instantiating step includes instantiating a plurality of virtual network functions and wherein there are a plurality of policies and each of the plurality of policies is assigned to each of the virtual network functions.

20. The apparatus of claim 19 wherein data packets received from a device are routed by one of the plurality of the virtual network functions and data packets received from a second device are routed by a second of the plurality of the virtual network functions.

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