Reconfigurable Radio Systems (RRS);
Feasibility study of a Radio Interface Engine (RIE)
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Foreword

This Technical Report (TR) has been produced by ETSI Technical Committee Reconfigurable Radio Systems (RRS).

Modal verbs terminology

In the present document "should", "should not", "may", "need not", "will", "will not", "can" and "cannot" are to be interpreted as described in clause 3.2 of the ETSI Drafting Rules (Verbal forms for the expression of provisions).

"must" and "must not" are NOT allowed in ETSI deliverables except when used in direct citation.
1 Scope

The present document addresses the efficient acquisition and management of context information and suitable equipment configuration in a heterogeneous radio environment. In particular, an eco-system within the equipment is defined in order to achieve this objective.

NOTE: An eco-system may comprise entities such as Context Information Acquisition Entity, Context Management Entity, Configuration Management Entity, Flexible Modulation Entity, and others. Context information may typically comprise information on the heterogeneous radio environment (e.g. which RATs are available), location information, etc., including information gathered from sensors.

2 References

2.1 Normative references

Normative references are not applicable in the present document.

2.2 Informative references

References are either specific (identified by date of publication and/or edition number or version number) or non-specific. For specific references, only the cited version applies. For non-specific references, the latest version of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

NOTE: While any hyperlinks included in this clause were valid at the time of publication, ETSI cannot guarantee their long term validity.

The following referenced documents are not necessary for the application of the present document but they assist the user with regard to a particular subject area.


[i.2] 3GPP TR 22.891 (V14.2.0): "3rd Generation Partnership Project; Technical Specification Group Services and System Aspects; Feasibility Study on New Services and Markets Technology Enablers; Stage 1 (Release 14)".


NOTE: Available at http://www.flex5gware.eu/deliverables.


NOTE: Available at http://www.flex5gware.eu/deliverables.


NOTE: Available at http://elib.dlr.de/102900/2/The_5G_Localization_Waveform_AuthorVersion.pdf.
3 Definitions, symbols and abbreviations

3.1 Definitions

For the purposes of the present document, the following terms and definitions apply:

context information: any information that is used to describe:

- the characteristics of the radio signal at given circumstances such as time, frequency, location, and orientation by a measuring device;
- what impacts the characteristics of the radio signal by the measuring device at a given time, frequency, location, and orientation;
- the circumstances themselves, such as time frequency, location and orientation.

EXAMPLE 1: Received signal strength of the radio signal.

EXAMPLE 2: Awareness of a rain that hinders the radio signal reception under the potential circumstances.

correlated KPIs: performance indicators having correlation with each other

EXAMPLE: A high spectral efficiency results in a higher throughput of the system.

model based data set: statistical distribution describing a data set consisting of prior measurements e.g. by the mean and the variance.

EXAMPLE: Gaussian distribution \( N(\mu, \sigma^2) \) with the mean \( \mu \) and variance \( \sigma^2 \).

uncorrelated KPIs: performance indicators having no correlation with each other

EXAMPLE: The KPI delay of the transmission of a certain data package (latency) is uncorrelated with the KPI spectral efficiency of a dedicated waveform.

NOTE: The different KPIs could be correlated by considering constraints. Such constraints could be e.g. a certain SNR that may require repeated transmissions that will lead to a higher delay.

3.2 Symbols

For the purposes of the present document, the following symbols apply:

- \( BS_1 \): Base Station 1
- \( MT_1 \): Mobile Terminal 1

3.3 Abbreviations

For the purposes of the present document, the following abbreviations apply:

- D2D: Device-to-Device
- FEC: Forward Error Correction
- FPGA: Field Programmable Gate Array
- GPP: General Purpose Processors
- HW: Hardware
- KPI: Key Performance Indicator
- LAN: Local Area Network
- LOS: Line-of-Sight
4 Eco-System for a Radio Interface Engine (RIE)

4.0 General

The radio interface engine empowers a decision unit to operate in a heterogeneous environment. The unit can be either located at the mobile device or in the network. The decision relies on the eco-system that comprises multiple entities, such as a context information acquisition entity, context management entity, configuration management entity, flexible modulation entity and others. The radio interface engine enables the efficient acquisition and management of context information and suitable equipment configuration in a heterogeneous radio environment.

4.1 General description and reference to past work

The present document will address the efficient acquisition and management of context information and suitable equipment configuration in a heterogeneous radio environment. In particular, an eco-system within the equipment will be defined in order to achieve this objective. Such an eco-system may comprise entities such as:

- Context Information Acquisition Entity.
- Context Management Entity.
- Configuration Management Entity.
- Flexible Modulation Entity.
- And others.

In [i.1] a set of four use cases is described together with actors and information flows for a proposed SDR Reference Architecture for MDs. In [i.2] several use cases are classified with potential requirements for future applications. In [i.3] and [i.8], radio link reliability key performance indicators are described as radio interface engine decision unit for flexible RAT management as well as flexible modulation entity.
4.2 Capabilities of a Radio Interface Engine

The purpose of the radio interface engine is to provide a defined method to interchange relevant context information to a decision unit. The Radio Interface Engine (RIE) provides a standard interface access to model based data that could represent historical data or relies on typical alternatively characterized scenarios. The predictive decision making relies on context information which serves as input to the RIE. The reliability of the data is improved by the RIE through iterative processing including a combination of multiple sources and KPI based decision making.

Figure 1 shows as an example to illustrate how an iterative process in a dynamic scenario using prior knowledge helps to improve various performance indicators. Assuming a UE moves from network A to network B, the performance of the vertical handover depends on an accurate location estimate. The location estimate itself relies on the chosen waveform, which consequently also defines the throughput in the given scenario. The overall throughput benefits from the current location estimate more than it loses by using a dedicated location waveform. The knowledge that the UE will remain in network A relieves the need on a precise location estimate and therefore a signal waveform can be chosen that is better for the communication throughput of a single link.

Figure 1: Example of an iterative procedure to improve various KPIs depending on the context information

NOTE: A decision unit can be internal and/or external to the RIE. The overall decision process comprises the internal and external decision units.

5 Key Scenarios

5.1 Overview

In the following key scenarios, identified in clauses 5.2 to 5.6, that will use the RIE are described. For each scenario, the following structure is used:

1) general scenario description;
2) usage example; and
3) role and usefulness of the engine.

The 1st proposed scenario relates to a mobile device and network centric decision making. This contribution is partly based on [i.1].

The 2nd proposed scenario is related to user circumstance context information management.
The 3rd scenario considers context information to download and install a different PHY/MAC protocol of wireless devices.

The 4th scenario studies the context to decide where the proper processing unit should be executed.

The 5th scenario relies on the available context information to adapt PHY and MAC to better estimate the position of the wireless devices. All the presented scenarios rely on context information, such as location information. In clause 5.6 the estimated location information as an input will be improved by adapting the wireless configuration and exploiting device-to-device exchanges between MDs themselves.

### 5.2 Scenario "Optimized Configuration selection in a Heterogeneous Radio Context"

#### 5.2.1 General Scenario Description

A Mobile Device (MD) is able to operate in a heterogeneous wireless framework, typically consisting of Cellular systems, Wireless LAN, Wireless Personal Area Networks, mmWave systems, proprietary communications systems, etc. Some of these systems may be integrated into a common framework or they may be managed independently. Based on its reconfiguration capabilities, the MD is maintaining link(s) to a single RAT or a set of multiple RATs simultaneously (i.e. a data-stream may be optimally split across multiple links), depending on the context in order to optimize the operational conditions (e.g. optimization of power consumption, interference mitigation and carrier aggregation, etc.). The final configuration is typically identified subject to network constraints (e.g. ensuring an overall efficient network configuration) as well as user requirements (e.g. meeting a minimum Quality of Service level at the best possible power consumption, etc.).

The acquisition of context information will be exploited in order to identify the best possible network configuration.

End users: End Users' MDs accessing internet and other similar mobile data services. Additional stakeholders may be considered as appropriate.

#### 5.2.2 Usage example

As illustrated in Figure 2, the acquired context information is exploited in order to identify the best possible working point for a concerned MD, typically taking network and user requirements into account. Depending on the choice of the decision making entity (e.g. Network centric decision making, MD centric decision making, hybrid decision making split between Network and MD), the context information needs to be transported (and accumulated from various sources) to the decision making entity.
Figure 2: Scenario Illustration "Optimized Configuration selection in a Heterogeneous Radio Context" - the best combination is identified comprising of a single link or multiple links being operated simultaneously

While Figure 2 illustrates the configuration options from a MD perspective, a similar exercise can be performed for the network side. In particular, the most appropriate combination of Base Stations is identified for a target MD with multiple links possibly being operated simultaneously as illustrated in Figure 3. Signalling headers and mixed data and signalling information may be exploited to evaluate associated link reliability metrics (power consumption, QoS, link budget based key performance indicators) in order to make the decision entity for station selection and single:multiple transmission link.
Figure 3: Selection of base station and radio link simultaneously in a time-variant and MD moving configuration

In this scenario, the most appropriate (combination of) base station(s)/access point(s) may be selected for a MD for establishing a link, depending on MD and base station locations and associated radio link reliability based on available transmission interfaces and dedicated link reliability metrics.

When Line-of-Sight (LOS) and Non-Line-of-Sight (NLOS) transitions affect the MD in a mobile environment, the access point switching may provide higher link reliability in connection with environment transitions. The selection is combined with transmission link and Modulation-and-Coding-Scheme (MCS) selection. As an example, MCS 16-QAM ¾ and 64-QAM ½ exhibit equivalent information data rate. In NLOS, the 64-QAM ½ is more performant than 16-QAM ¾ due to robust FEC coding rate. During the transitions, the MCS switching involves gains up to 3-4 dB on link budget. In LOS, the 16-QAM ¾ MCS provides better performance, following a lower modulation order compared to 64-QAM. Examples are detailed in [i.3], using a link budget based link reliability metric.

Furthermore, dynamic PHY/MAC processing and link selection may be applied for each RAT: by computing link reliability metrics, the MD may modify transmission link based on dynamic carrier/sub-carrier aggregation and Binary Interleaving Code Modulation process to limit power consumption. Dynamic carrier/sub carrier aggregation may be simply computed using several interleaving patterns to aggregate carriers in a logical channel.

5.2.3 Role and Usefulness of the Engine

The Radio Interface Engine is supporting the upper reconfiguration framework. In particular, the following features are provided by the Radio Interface Engine in a unified way:

- Standardized acquisition of context information, depending on the available sensors, such as location determination, characterization of radio links, interference environment, etc.
- Standardization distribution (and possibly aggregation) of context information provided by one (or multiple) sources. Provide (processed) context information to decision making entity.
- Link reliability metric definition.
- Procedure to compute link reliability metrics and station/MD location using available information to the MD and base station.
- HW accelerators for multiple link transmission solutions composed of different processing components.
5.3 Scenario "User Circumstance Context Information Management"

5.3.1 General Scenario Description

Wireless Equipment, such as mobile devices, vehicle-to-X communication equipment, Internet-of-Things Devices, etc. is typically used in various circumstances which are either unique - e.g. a User is for a one-time visit in a foreign city - or which may occur again (in cycles) - e.g. a User is driving from his home to work, takes kids to schools, etc. This scenario addresses the case, in which an equipment user finds itself repeatedly in similar User Circumstances. In such a case, it is proposed to store (averaged) observation of the Context Information, e.g. availability of specific RATs, link quality metrics, the type of applications being used, etc. in a database. When the concerned User is identified to be in similar User Circumstances again, the historic information is exploited - typically in combination with instantaneous context measurements - in order to implement predictive decision making. I.e. future changes in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are anticipated and corresponding configuration changes are implemented well in advance, e.g. in order to avoid call drops occurring repeatedly in a given area or similar.

**End users:** End users' wireless equipment accessing internet and other similar mobile data services. Additional stakeholders may be considered as appropriate.

5.3.2 Usage example

As illustrated in Figure 4, the acquired context information is exploited in order to identify the best possible working point for a concerned Wireless Equipment. For this purpose a combination of instantaneous observations together with historical (averaged) data is used in order to enable predictive decision making. Depending on the choice of the decision making entity (e.g. Network centric decision making, Wireless Equipment centric decision making, hybrid decision making split between Network and Wireless Equipment), the context information needs to be transported (and accumulated from various sources) to the decision making entity.
5.3.3 Role and Usefulness of the Engine

The Radio Interface Engine, typically within a given Wireless Equipment, is supporting the upper reconfiguration framework. In particular, the following features are provided by the Radio Interface Engine in a unified way:

- Standardized acquisition of instantaneous context information, depending on the available sensors, such as location determination, characterization of radio links, interference environment, etc.
- Transfer of instantaneous context information to processing entity for:
  i) deriving historical (averaged) database entries; and
  ii) deriving a machine readable representation of the User Circumstances.
- Standardized access to historical (averaged) information for supporting predictive decision making.

5.4 Scenario "Protocol download and installation in Wireless Equipment depending on the context"

5.4.1 General Scenario Description

Wireless Equipment (WE), such as mobile devices, vehicle-to-X communication equipment, Internet-of-Things Devices, etc., is able to operate in a heterogeneous wireless framework, typically consisting of Cellular systems, Wireless LAN, Wireless Personal Area Networks, mmWave systems, proprietary communications systems, etc. Some of these systems may be integrated into a common framework (e.g. integration of WiFi and cellular technologies) or they may be managed independently.
Based on its reconfiguration capabilities, new software components are installed in the WE replacing protocols on the appropriate OSI layers (e.g. PHY, MAC, etc.) on the context (e.g. Context Information) in order to optimize the operational conditions (e.g. interference mitigation). The protocol is typically identified subject to network constraints (e.g. ensuring an overall efficient network configuration) as well as user requirements (e.g. meeting a minimum Quality of Service level at the best possible power consumption, etc.).

The acquisition of context information will be exploited in order to identify the best possible communications protocol [i.4] and [i.5].

End users: End users' wireless equipment accessing internet and other similar mobile data services. Additional stakeholders may be considered as appropriate.

5.4.2 Usage example

As illustrated in Figure 5, the acquired context information is exploited in order to identify the best possible communication PHY/MAC protocol for a concerned WE, typically taking network and user requirements into account. The chosen PHY/MAC protocol is installed in the WE. Depending on the choice of the decision making entity (e.g. Network centric decision making, WE centric decision making, hybrid decision making split between Network and WE), the context information needs to be transported (and accumulated from various sources) to the decision making entity.

![Figure 5: Scenario Illustration "Protocol download and installation in Wireless Equipment depending on the context" - a wireless equipment downloads and installs the two lower OSI layers (PHY/MAC) based on a decision taken according to the available context](image)

EXAMPLE: MAC protocol download in the presence of structured interference.

A given WE, e.g. a WiFi node, is using a certain MAC protocol, which provides a certain QoS under the current environment conditions. However, at a certain point in time, an external structured quasi-periodic and impulsive interference appears, e.g. due to an LTE-U transmission in the same band, which decreases the achievable QoS. Since the interference is impulsive and quasi-periodic, it can be easily predicted and, if known, it would be trivially avoided by MAC protocol operation. Rather than a priori designing a MAC protocol so as to integrate support for avoidance of such structured interference, which would create a significant overhead in situations where there is no interference, the WiFi node can use the context information to detect if, in the current environment, there is an active interference and which is its pattern, and then download and switch to a MAC protocol specifically designed for avoiding that specific pattern.

5.4.3 Potential supporting functionalities of a Radio Interface Engine

The Radio Interface Engine, typically within a given WE, is supporting the upper reconfiguration framework. In particular, the following features are provided by the Radio Interface Engine in a unified way:

- Standardized acquisition of context information, depending on the available sensors, such as location determination, characterization of radio links, interference environment, etc.
Standardization distribution (and possibly aggregation) of context information provided by one (or multiple) sources. Provide (processed) context information to decision making entity.

5.5 Scenario "Processing device selection for execution of protocols in a Wireless Equipment depending on the context"

5.5.1 General Scenario Description

Wireless Equipment (WE), such as mobile devices, vehicle-to-X communication equipment, Internet-of-Things Devices, etc., is able to operate in a heterogeneous wireless framework, typically consisting of Cellular systems, Wireless LAN, Wireless Personal Area Networks, mmWave systems, proprietary communications systems, etc. Some of these systems may be integrated into a common framework (e.g. integration of WiFi and cellular technologies) or they may be managed independently.

Based on its reconfiguration capabilities, the execution of some components of the appropriate OSI layers (e.g. channel estimation in PHY) is moved from a certain processing device (e.g. FPGA) to another one (e.g. GPP) depending on the (e.g. Context Information) in order to optimize the operational conditions (e.g. energy consumption). The target processing device is typically identified subject to network constraints (e.g. ensuring an overall efficient network configuration) as well as user requirements (e.g. meeting a minimum Quality of Service level, etc.).

The acquisition of context information will be exploited in order to identify the best possible target processing device.

**End users:** End users' wireless equipment accessing internet and other similar mobile data services. Additional stakeholders may be considered as appropriate.

As illustrated in Figure 6, the acquired context information is exploited in order to identify the best possible execution device for the components of the appropriate communications protocol of a concerned WE, typically taking network and user requirements into account. Depending on the choice of the decision making entity (e.g. Network centric decision making, WE centric decision making, hybrid decision making split between Network and WE), the context information needs to be transported (and accumulated from various sources) to the decision making entity.

![Figure 6: Scenario Illustration "Processing device selection for execution of protocols in Wireless Equipment depending on the context" - a wireless equipment changes the processing device where the channel estimation function is executed based on a decision taken according to the available context](image-url)
5.5.2 Usage Example: Energy aware selection of processing device

A given WE, e.g. a cellular base station, may be operating under different load conditions depending on environmental conditions [i.6]. For example, if the base station is serving an outdoor park, the cell load will be directly related to the weather conditions. For situations where the load is high (good weather conditions) and many users need to be served, the most time consuming operations of the protocol stack (e.g. PHY processing) are executed in high performance devices (like FPGAs). In the situation where the weather is likely to change, as predicted by humidity, temperature, and pressure sensors, which provide the context information, the cell load will tend to decrease rapidly. Thus, under the new circumstance of low cell load, the decision making entity selects a less performant less energy consuming processing device (e.g. GPP) to perform the PHY processing, with the purpose of serving the reduced number of users at lower energy consumption and power radiation with a QoS target.

5.5.3 Potential supporting functionalities of a Radio Interface Engine

The Radio Interface Engine, typically within a given WE, is supporting the upper reconfiguration framework. In particular, the following features are provided by the Radio Interface Engine in a unified way:

- Standardized acquisition of context information, depending on the available sensors, such as location determination, characterization of radio links, energy consumption metrics, etc.
- Standardization distribution (and possibly aggregation) of context information provided by one (or multiple) sources. Provide (processed) context information to decision making entity.

5.6 Scenario "Improving Location Information"

5.6.1 General Scenario Description

In this scenario the wireless device (WD) is in range of multiple other devices to support the determination of the location by different means. The radio behaviour is reconfigured and additional sensor information is gathered to fulfil the requirements for applications that need details about the whereabouts and the route of the Wireless Device (WD).

The applications that require precise location information are for example communication improvements such as improved synchronization, handover between different networks, or higher layer location based services. The dynamic details can be enriched with mobility information of the WD from non-radio sensors as well as with context information, such as detailed 3D-maps of static or dynamic objects in the surroundings.

The requirements are regularly assessed and the location performance itself is evaluated. Depending on both criteria the following options are foreseen:

- Option 1) adapts the communication signal to improve the ranging estimation by e.g. changing the waveform [i.7], the bandwidth or the signal power.
- Option 2) requests information from surrounding WDs about their available context information such as other radios, or environmental information.
- Option 3) requests location relevant information such as location and its reliability information of the location estimation to determine the own location according to its performance requirements.

Figure 7 sets up a scenario of multiple mobile WDs that have peer-to-peer links with one WD (MT$_{x}$) that has no direct connectivity to the core network. Through these wireless links themselves or by exchanging relevant information (own information or from the network through the base stations) the location performance is improved. Location based techniques may exploit channel state information resulting from the multipath distribution of the channel impulse response estimation of the propagation channel between two reference transmitter and receiver to estimate the location of the WD.
The location information delivers details about the whereabouts and future locations of the wireless device. The main concept is to abstract the resources of the wireless device regardless of the specific internal architecture, by exposing simple programming interfaces able to read the state of the resources and to apply the selected configuration, according to decisions taken by a local SW agent interacting with controller that either adapts resources or initiates the exchange of information. A graphical representation of this concept can be found in Figure 8.

To this purpose, different types of resources are considered:

i) multiple programmable radio interfaces, with heterogeneous technologies (e.g. typically consisting of Cellular systems, Wireless LAN, Wireless Personal Area Networks, VLC, plus out band or inband device-to-device), exposing a common set of APIs for configuring the physical channels and the medium access rules;

ii) sensors, such as those commonly available in commodity smartphones, including barometers, gyroscopes, cameras, accelerometers, etc., as well as specific other sensors that are also available in base stations (temperature, humidity, pressure, etc.) available in monitoring or metering devices.
This scenario considers the following relevant operation modes, in which location information of higher precision is required and accomplished:

i) selecting the RAT technology to connect to according to the geometrical constellation of all entities, the link quality or activating new resources;

ii) configuration of device medium access and PHY rules.

The stakeholders in this scenario would be:

- End users: mobile devices accessing internet and other similar mobile data services.
- A single or multiple Network operators: operate(s) and maintain(s) the required infrastructure; may operate other networks in other frequency bands.

5.6.2 Usage example

In the following, an example is provided:

1) To adapt the RAT technology like the waveform to improve the ranging quality between radio entities to improve the location information of the radio entity itself. This topic is especially relevant for:

   i) dynamic resource allocations for estimating the time-varying and location-dependent interference; and

   ii) D2D communication, as detecting a potential D2D partner nearby.

2) Multiple links from several RATs exist, and some of them have Line-of-sight and some have Non-line-of-sight conditions to the receiver. The software agent adapts its resources according to the decision unit that evaluates the condition of each link. Such resources can be e.g. adaptive transmit power, available bandwidth, or differently structured pilot signals. The benefit is improved estimated location information based on the supported RATs.

5.6.3 Role and Usefulness of the Engine

In this scenario the role of the engine is to select and adapt the RAT technology, configure its PHY/MAC rules and perform dynamic resource allocations to improve the available estimated location and environment information. The Engine would therefore gather improved location and environment information to further improve the operational radio communication scope of the engine, such as throughput, delay and other application-level figures, as well as low-level channel figures, such as collision probability, channel occupancy, etc. This is an important ingredient to all prior scenarios in clauses 5.2 to 5.5.

6 Conclusion

In the present document five scenarios are presented to improve communication KPIs, such as throughput, energy consumption and reliability of the wireless link as well as the location accuracy. The RIE that is responsible to execute the appropriate action distributes or collects the required context information. Not all KPIs are correlated with each other, and therefore the RIE could also iteratively initiate action based on additional context information to improve an uncorrelated KPI. The resulting KPI could then contain enriched or improved context information to further improve KPIs. For example context information comprises out of location information, the characterization of the wireless link, and the interference reception. In scenario 5.6 the RIE is used to improve the quality of context information, which is the location information, and therefore, all subsequent metrics that are location dependent are noted with higher reliability in conjunction with the estimate of the location.

The next step following these outlined scenario descriptions will include system requirements, the definition of the system architecture and the description of the defined interface of the engine and the required methods to transfer the required context information either instantaneously, or relying on cached historical data or model based data sets, i.e. by a dedicated distribution.
### History

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