3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 #111 electronic DRAFT R2-20xxxxx

17th – 28th August 2020

Online

**Source: NTT DOCOMO, INC. (Email discussion rapporteur)**

**Title: Report of email discussion [AT111-e][009][NR15] LTE SIB extension issue**

**Document for: Discussion and decision**

**Agenda Item: 5.4.2**

## Introduction

This paper is aimed at discussing the following topic.

***[AT111-e][009][NR15] LTE SIB extension issue (NTT DOCOMO)***

*Scope: Treat R2-2008083, R2-2008367, R2-2008107 (proponents to drive)*

*Part 1: Start after on-line initial discussion, Confirm severity/consequences of the issue, Try to find acceptable solutions, put solutions on the table, gather initial round of comments to understand which could be acceptable.*

*Deadline: Aug 20, 0900 UTC.*

*Part 2: TBD. Urgency might depend on Whether acceptable Workarounds are found or not*

*Deadline: EOM*

All of the relevant contributions were treated on-line at first. As a conclusion of the initial discussion, the following scopes were agreed to discuss by email:

**=> Continue by email, solutions with and without TS impact may be discussed. It is also interesting to understand better the magnitude of the problem.**

**=> We can attempt to have a solution at this meeting, need to put solutions on the table and understand the impacts to, we can assess the maturity towards the end of the meeting.**

The following discussions are conducted in accordance with the agreed scopes.

## Discussion

## Identifying the problematic scenarios

According to the contributions submitted to this meeting and the on-line comments in the initial discussion, the following two cases are the scenarios where some legacy UEs are unable to ignore the uncomprehending field.

**Case 1:** Only SIB24 is scheduled in a SI message;

Example: SI message #1 (SIB2), SI message #2 (SIB3, SIB5), SI message #3 (SIB24).

**Case 2:** An SI message schedules the other legacy SIBs as well as SIB24.

Example: SI message #1 (SIB2), SI message #2 (SIB3, SIB5, SIB24).

For both cases, some legacy UEs ignore the entire SIB1 and considers to fail in acquiring SIB1. As a consequence, the cell broadcasting SIB24 is considered as barred. The same problem could be envisaged when the eNB broadcasts the other SIBs than SIB24 which were introduced after the extension marker in the *SIB-Type* IE as shown below.

SIB-Type ::= ENUMERATED {

sibType3, sibType4, sibType5, sibType6,

sibType7, sibType8, sibType9, sibType10,

sibType11, sibType12-v920, sibType13-v920,

sibType14-v1130, sibType15-v1130,

sibType16-v1130, sibType17-v1250, sibType18-v1250,

..., sibType19-v1250, sibType20-v1310, sibType21-v1430,

sibType24-v1530, sibType25-v1530, sibType26-v1530,

sibType26a-v1610, sibType27-v1610, sibType28-v1610,

sibType29-v1610}

Thus, the follow scenario can be identified as problematic:

- When an eNB broadcasts SIB1 which includes scheduling information of SI messages including SIB19 and onwards, some legacy UEs are unable to acquire SIB1 and consider the cell as barred.

- It happens no matter whether SIB19 and onwards are scheduled separately from the other legacy SIBs (SIB2 to SIB18) via the different SI message, or SIB19 and onwards are scheduled together with the legacy SIBs in the same SI message.

First of all, the rapporteur would like to develop the common understanding of the problematic scenarios.

Companies are invited to provide their views if companies share the same understanding of the problematic scenario. If not, please share how you observe the problematic scenario.

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| Company name | Agree/Not agree | Comments (especially if not agree) |
| NTT DOCOMO | Agree | Although it has not been verified in the field whether any other extended SIBs than SIB19 have the same problem, it most likely exists, given the root cause of the SIB24 case. |
| Nokia | Agree | It is also our understanding that any SIB after the ellipsis marker in the ENUMERATED list will end up resulting in the same issue. |
| Ericsson | Agree, but | We also wonder if there are additional cases where the problem UEs encounter problems when an extension marker is used . |
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## Assumption of legacy UE

As discussed on-line, the standard itself is correct and there is no problem from the standard perspective. It is not compliant with the standard that the UE is unable to acquire SIB1 and consider the cell as barred, when SIB1 includes uncomprehending fields. Given that the test case has been introduced by RAN5 to check the handling of uncomprehending fields, the standard compliant UE works properly from now on.

Nonetheless, the magnitude of this problem hinges on whether all of the concerning UEs already released into the market can be upgraded to fix the bug or not. Ideally, the problem could be ironed out, if it were possible. On the other hand, the real business seems not go well as ideal, according to the opinions expressed by operators, on-line. In that case, potential solutions or workarounds need to be analysed based on the assumption that not all of the concerning UEs can be upgraded and so there remains the UEs in the network which cannot handle the uncomprehending field in SIB1 properly.

**Assumption:** Not all of the concerning UEs can be upgraded, and so there remains the UE in the network which cannot handle the uncomprehending field in SIB1 properly.

Companies are invited to provide their views if the assumption is agreeable to investigate potential workarounds or solutions.

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| Company name | Agree/Not agree | Reason |
| NTT DOCOMO | Agree | For instance, due to expiry of warranty period, lack of software update functionality, it is not likely in reality to rely on the software update.  To answer to Nokia’s comment, the rest of normal UEs do not require upgrading their software. Currently, there are three types of UEs in the live network:  1) Legacy LTE UEs having this problem  2) Legacy LTE UEs w/o having this problem  3) NSA (EN-DC) capable UEs (w/o having this problem)  2) and 3) does not require updating their software, since they do not support NR SA. In our knowledge, the service of NR standalone has not been commercialised yet in most of the networks world-wide. So, even though the population of 1) is 1%, the rest of 99% of the UEs (i.e. 2) and 3)) does not have to update their software. |
| Nokia | Agree, but | In general, the understanding is that there may be a population of legacy devices that cannot be upgraded (e.g. device out of warranty or any other reason), but that cannot be a good enough reason to mandate specification changes. For example, if 1% devices on the field have an issue then it does not seem logical to force remaining 99% of UEs to be upgraded as a result of a specification change. For this to be even considered as a viable approach, we need to assume that all the non-problematic UEs can be upgraded to incorporate the new behaviour. As soon as more than 1% of the non-faulty UEs cannot be upgraded, this makes no difference in terms of population of problematic UEs to deal with. Which means we have just moved the problem around and not solved anything. Then the impact of the fix to existing network implementations and existing features are also non-trivial.  It would be good to understand the magnitude of the problem first in terms of what percentage of the UE population we are referring to. |
| Ericsson | - | It is not clear if problem UEs technically cannot be upgraded, or cannot be upgraded for other reasons. It seems clear that some problem UEs can be upgraded, and the question is what is the number of problem UEs that cannot or will not be upgraded in the end.  We think it is not reasonable to assume that the NW or the UE that made a correct implementation will fix the problem, until it is clear that a significant number of problem UEs cannot be upgraded and a solution is needed. |
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## Potential workarounds

With regards to potential workarounds (i.e. NW implementation solutions which do not require changing the standards), the following options were proposed:

**Option 1:** Broadcast SIB1 with/without SIB24 scheduling information, alternatively (Solution 1 in [1]);

**Option 2:** Do not broadcast SIB24, but relying on release with redirection from LTE to NR [2];

**Option 3:** Broadcast SIB24 only on a subset of LTE frequencies [3];

**Option 4:** Broadcast SIB24 without SI24 scheduling information in SIB1 [3].

All of the options have the advantage that it does not require the standard change and can be supported by NW implementation/configuration. On the other hand, there might exist limitation and drawback of each option. Furthermore, for future proofing, it should be assessed whether each option can be applied for the other SIBs than SIB24 which are defined after the extension marker (i.e. SIB19 and onwards). On these two points, the rapporteur would like to collect company views.

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| Company name | Option 1 | |
| Limitation/drawback | Applicability to other SIBs |
| NTT DOCOMO | If the concerning UE receives SIB1 w/o SIB24 scheduling information by chance, the problem can be ironed out, In contrast, the problem exists if the concerning UE receives SIB1 with SIB24 scheduling information. Likewise, NR SA UE has the same problem that 50% of NR SA UEs can obtain SIB24, whilst the rest of 50% cannot. | Can be used for the other SIBs, but the same drawback as for SIB24 can be foreseen. |
| Nokia | Solution 1 in [1] does not provide full details but we consider at least the following limitations:   * Additional network functionality in SIB scheduling to multiplex and transmit Type 1 and Type 2 SIB content for legacy and upgraded UEs respectively * Wastage in broadcasting capacity * Network node interaction to keep track of percentage of legacy and upgraded UEs and take the percentage into account to schedule Type 1 and Type 2 SIB content * Type 1 and Type 2 SIB multiplexing solution will need to co-exist for a very long period of time * Needs additional checking for feature interworking issues e.g. with existing features like CMAS/ETWS.   Cost of implementing new solution in network and UE | Currently Rel-15 also has SIB19 (sidelink), SIB20 (SC-PTM), SIB21 (LTE V2X), SIB25 (UAC for LTE connected to 5GC) and SIB26 (more V2X), and if the problem is the same, those could never be broadcast. And for Rel-16, we added SIB26a (extended 5G indicator), SIB27 (inter-RAT NB-IoT), SIB28 (NR sidelink) and SIB29 (NR V2X coexistence), all of which would suffer from the same issue  Solution does not scale well i.e. Solution may be applied to other SIBs but the drawbacks indicated add up further limiting the system capacity for SIB broadcast |
| Ericsson | The problem UE and the NR UE may acquire the “wrong” SIB1, with a quite high probability, in which case the solution does not work. | Applicable to other SIBs |
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| Company name | Option 2 | |
| Limitation/drawback | Applicability to other SIBs |
| NTT DOCOMO | Once NR SA capable UEs camp on the LTE network, the UE will never reselect an NR cell (except if the UE returns back from out of coverage). For NR SA capable UEs in such a case, the terminal display cannot show “5G” since the UE camps on an LTE cell (except if the upper layer indication is used). Furthermore, every time when the NR SA capable UE transits to the connected start to originate or terminate a call, the LTE NW has to redirect the UE to an NR carrier. This is an extra burden for the LTE NW to offer NR SA services. It is also noted that redirection from LTE to NR involves the core network change (EPC to 5GC), unless LTE is connected to 5GC. | SIB19 (sidelink discovery):  SIB20 (SC-PTM):  SIB21 (V2X sidelink):  SIB25 (UAC):  SIB26/28 (V2X sidelink):  SIB26a (NR band list for EN-DC):  SIB27: cell selection for NB-IoT  SIB29: coexistence with NR  For all cases, the corresponding (LTE) functionality and service cannot be provided on the cell. |
| Nokia | Based on the discussion in [2] at least the following drawbacks are understood:   * Unless all of the UEs who cannot handle the uncomprehending value properly are upgraded to fix the bug, LTE NW cannot broadcast SIB24 for NR SA and has to redirect the UE to NR whenever the UE originates terminates a call * As long as the problematic UEs exist on the field the standard solution from specifications is useless   Cost of implementing solution in network (including testing) is a factor | Currently Rel-15 also has SIB19 (sidelink), SIB20 (SC-PTM), SIB21 (LTE V2X), SIB25 (UAC for LTE connected to 5GC) and SIB26 (more V2X), and if the problem is the same, those could never be broadcast. And for Rel-16, we added SIB26a (extended 5G indicator), SIB27 (inter-RAT NB-IoT), SIB28 (NR sidelink) and SIB29 (NR V2X coexistence), all of which would suffer from the same issue  Solution works for SIB24 and does not impact UE at all which is a good aspect but is non-optimal  Solution for other SIBs need to be evaluated for alternative solution on case by case basis |
| Ericsson | When the NR UE goes to connected mode, the NR UE will be redirected to NR, and then also stays there, as long as there is NR coverage. There is some additional delay, but this will diminish when the NR coverage grows, which can be expected. | Not applicable |
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| Company name | Option 3 | |
| Limitation/drawback | Applicability to other SIBs |
| NTT DOCOMO | It works only if there exists the frequency bands which the concerning UE does not support, but the other normal UE supports. Different operators may have different spectrum holding, and so it is not always true if such a frequency band exists. Even so, the coverage of such a band is limited. For instance, the legacy UE is likely to support lower frequency bands (e.g. Band 1, 3), since the nation-wide coverage is quite important when a new service is launched. After that, when new spectrum is available, the new may supports both the legacy band and the new frequency band. Nevertheless, the new band seems to be higher frequency band, e.g. Band 42. In that case, the coverage where SIB24 can be broadcasted would be quite limited. | The corresponding (LTE) functionality and service can be provided only on a subset of LTE frequencies. So, the service availability is restricted to those subset frequencies. |
| Nokia | Based on the discussion in [3] at least the following drawbacks are understood:   * Requires additional frequencies to isolate legacy and Rel-15 UEs i.e. reserve some low band LTE carrier (e.g. 700M, or 900/1800M) without SIB24 broadcast, to guarantee service availability of those problematic old UEs which may not be efficient spectrum usage * May require additional effort on radio network planning * As long as the problematic UEs exist on the field the standard solution from specifications is useless   Cost of implementing solution in network (including testing) is a factor | Currently Rel-15 also has SIB19 (sidelink), SIB20 (SC-PTM), SIB21 (LTE V2X), SIB25 (UAC for LTE connected to 5GC) and SIB26 (more V2X), and if the problem is the same, those could never be broadcast. And for Rel-16, we added SIB26a (extended 5G indicator), SIB27 (inter-RAT NB-IoT), SIB28 (NR sidelink) and SIB29 (NR V2X coexistence), all of which would suffer from the same issue  Solution works for SIB24 and does not impact UE at all which is a good aspect but is non-optimal  Solution for other SIBs need to be evaluated for alternative solution on case by case basis |
| Ericsson | This solution requires additional effort to separate the problem UEs and NR UEs on different frequencies, e.g. via redirection or dedicated priorities. A perfect separation may in practice not be achievable, i.e. UEs may end up on the “wrong” frequency, dependent on the deployment scenario (i.e. available frequencies to separate the UEs and their coverage conditions). This may result in poor spectrum usage. | Only applicable on the frequencies where SIB24 is broadcasted. |
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| Company name | Option 4 | |
| Limitation/drawback | Applicability to other SIBs |
| NTT DOCOMO | Given that the specification does not guarantee the UE behaviour that UE is able to acquire SIBs even without scheduling information, it is doubtful if all of the UEs across different vendors can do so. We believe that it is neither solution nor workaround. | The same drawback as for SIB24 can be foreseen. |
| Nokia | Based on the discussion in [3] at least the following drawbacks are understood:   * Not transmitting SIB24 in the scheduling list but only directly transmitting the SIB24 might not be 3GPP compliant and even probably not work well on some UEs as they may still ignore the SIB24. * As long as the problematic UEs exist on the field the standard solution from specifications is useless   Cost of implementing solution in network (including testing) is a factor | Currently Rel-15 also has SIB19 (sidelink), SIB20 (SC-PTM), SIB21 (LTE V2X), SIB25 (UAC for LTE connected to 5GC) and SIB26 (more V2X), and if the problem is the same, those could never be broadcast. And for Rel-16, we added SIB26a (extended 5G indicator), SIB27 (inter-RAT NB-IoT), SIB28 (NR sidelink) and SIB29 (NR V2X coexistence), all of which would suffer from the same issue  Solution works for SIB24 but may not work for all UEs as this is might be non-compliant to 3GPP specifications  Solution for other SIBs need to be evaluated for alternative solution on case by case basis |
| Ericsson | In our understanding this solution is not standard compliant, and for that reason it is also not guaranteed that the UE will receive SIB24 when SIB24 is not scheduled, i.e. whether the solution works. | It is not clear if this solutions works, i.e. thus also not clear if it would work for other SIBs. |
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Finally, the rapporteur would like to collect company views on whether the above options are enough to address the problematic issue **for all concerning SIBs (i.e. SIB19 and onwards)** as workarounds.

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| Company name | Yes/No | Comments (reason of your opinion) |
| NTT DOCOMO | No | All of the options have considerable drawback and limitation, not only for SIB24, but also for the other concerning SIBs. It is a serious pitfall to launch NR SA services, as well as deploying any other functionalities using SIB19 and onwards. |
| Nokia | Yes, but there was one more | There was an option also from [2] on the lines of “SIB24 is scheduled via the additional SI scheduling information list, whilst the legacy SI scheduling information list is untouched and kept as it is”. As mentioned in [2], one drawback of this solution is that this can work only if all NR SA capable UEs support the additional SI scheduling information list and this requires to invalidate current specification and implement new solution in UE and network. |
| Ericsson | - | In our view ALL solutions have certain drawbacks, including the solutions with 3GPP changes.  Before we agree on a solution, we need to know what the population size of problem UEs is that cannot or will not be upgraded. In selecting a solution we may also want to consider how urgent the problem is, and if certain solutions can be deployed to all UEs more quickly then others. |
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## Potential solutions

With regards to potential solutions (i.e. solutions which require changing the standard), the followings were proposed:

**Solution 1:** Introduce an additional scheduling information for SIB24 in SIB1 [2] or SIB3 (Solution 5 in [1]);

**Solution 2:** Broadcast two variants of SIB1 (with/without SIB24 scheduling information) in time domain or frequency domain (Solution 2, 3 in [1]);

**Solution 3:** Deliver SIB24 via RRC connection reconfiguration or RRC connection release (Solution 4 in [1]).

All of the solutions can iron out the problematic scenario. On the other hand, the amount of standard changes is different amongst the solutions. In addition, the other impacts (e.g. increased broadcast overhead) need to be analysed. Applicability to the other SIBs (SIB19 and onwards) has to be investigates, as well. In the light of these viewpoints, the rapporteur would like to seek company views on which solution is preferred, if the standard change is deemed as necessary to iron out the problem. If companies prefer Solution 1 or Solution 2, please also share your preferred sub-option.

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| Company name | Preferred solution | Reason of your opinion) |
| NTT DOCOMO | Solution 1 with the additional scheduling info in SIB1 | Solution 2 requires twofold radio resources to broadcast two variants of SIB1. Increased broadcast overhead is larger than Solution 1. Solution 3 requires the UE to connect the LTE cell at first. One could imagine that the validity time is defined for SIB24. Every time when the validity timer is expired, the NW has to deliver the SIB24 again. It is not clear how the NW knows if the timer is expired or not for each UE. Furthermore, it is not clear how to update SIB24, when the content is modified.  With regards to the solution variant of Solution 1, we prefer to introduce the additional scheduling information in SIB1. The reason and benefit of defining SI scheduling information into the other SIB is not clear to us. |
| Nokia | Solution 3 but would prefer network being able to broadcast SIB24 in the future. | All solutions have pros and cons and it is rather difficult to make a choice as this means new network and/or UE implementation and invalidating correctly specified behavior. If we now introduce a solution that will cause new UEs to rely only on the new signalling, then that signalling cannot be removed in the future because it would again create a legacy UE problem (for the “new UEs” using that, which will become “legacy UEs” in the future). In this case we are just moving the problem around and not really solving anything.  We also agree to the following and quoting from [3], “*3GPP has claimed Rel-15 ASN.1 freeze for quite a long time. At this stage, NBC change on Rel-15 specification is not acceptable to us. The Rel-15 UE with correct implementation should NOT be mandated to use another solution due to wrong implementation of some legacy UEs. This is really a bad practice if 3GPP decides to favor the wrongly implemented UEs and add additional effort to the UEs with correct implementation*”.  In the end, no matter which standardized solution is adopted, it will penalize UEs that were correctly implemented. We have to figure out means to handle this (in the network) but the only real way to solve this problem will be to phase out the faulty UEs or upgrade them. |
| Ericsson | Our preferred solution is a NW workaround, i.e. option 2, but only in case a solution is justified. 3GPP does not need to discuss further NW workarounds that do not impact 3GPP. | We do not prefer a 3GPP change, but we think that solution 1 is the most direct solution to the actual problem. We think solution 2 wastes resources, which is not needed. We think that solution 3 does not directly solve the problem, i.e. NR UE not receiving SIB24 in Idle mode, but requires the UE to go to connected mode, which introduces some delay before the UE re-selects to NR. |
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## Summary and proposal

*Editor’s note: To be added later.*

## References

[1] [R2-2008367](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_111-e/Docs/R2-2008367.zip), “Discussion on SIB24 issue,” CMCC.

[2] [R2-2008083](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_111-e/Docs/R2-2008083.zip), “Problem on SI scheduling via an extended field,” NTT DOCOMO, INC.

[3] [R2-2008107](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_111-e/Docs/R2-2008107.zip),” Workaround for LTE SIB24 issue,” MediaTek

[4] [R5-202138](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG5_Test_ex-T1/TSGR5_87_Electronic/Docs/R5-202138.zip), “Discussion paper on the need for testing UE handling of extended and spare fields in SI,” NTT DOCOMO, INC.

[5] [R5-203060](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG5_Test_ex-T1/TSGR5_87_Electronic/Docs/R5-203060.zip), “Addition of new RRC TC for checking extended / spare field handling in SI,” Rel-16 CR to 36.523-1, NTT DOCOMO, INC.

[6] [R5-203067](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG5_Test_ex-T1/TSGR5_87_Electronic/Docs/R5-203067.zip), “Addition of new NB-IoT RRC TC for checking extended / spare field handling in SI”, Rel-16 CR to 36.523-1, NTT DOCOMO, INC.