**3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #124R2-23xxxxx**

**Chicago, USA, November 2023**

**Agenda item:** 7.2.2

**Source:** Intel Corporation

**Title:** Report of [Post123bis][404][POS] SLPP forwarding (Intel)

**Document for:**  Discussion and decision

# Introduction

This is the summary of the following email discussion:

* [Post123bis][404][POS] SLPP forwarding (Intel)

Scope: Discuss proposals to RAN2#123bis on SLPP forwarding and conclude on whether the feature is needed; begin development of a TP towards next meeting if necessary.

Intended outcome: Report to next meeting and possible TP

Deadline: Long

Contact List

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# Phase 1 Discussion

There were several contributions to the last RAN2 meeting discussing the need and details of SLPP forwarding. The table below seeks to capture the proposals put forth by different companies, in order to facilitate the discussion.

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| **Company/Contribution** | **Proposal(s)** |
| Vivo (R2-2309668) | **Observation 1:** If it is required that anchor UEs must be in the coverage of both target UE and server UE, there are fewer (or even no) valid anchor UEs, which impacts the positioning accuracy or even the availability of positioning. If anchor UEs only need to be in the coverage of target UE, the valid anchor UEs are more but SLPP forwarding via target UE may need to be supported.  **Proposal 2:** For UE-only Operation, RAN2 to discuss whether the selected anchor UEs must be in the coverage of both target UE and server UE, or just be in the coverage of target UE.  **Proposal 3:** For UE-only Operation, if selected anchor UEs are only required in the coverage of target UE, discuss whether SLPP forwarding is supported. If supported, the TP in the Annex can be considered as the baseline for further discussion. |
| MediaTek (R2-2310195) | **Proposal 1:** The target UE is required to support transfer of SLPP information between the server (UE or LMF) and an anchor UE. FFS if anchor UEs have the same requirement.  **Proposal 2:** The Request Capabilities and Provide Capabilities messages can be forwarded.  **Proposal 3:** If assistance data model 1 is supported, the Request Assistance Data and Provide Assistance Data messages can be forwarded.  **Proposal 4:** RAN2 further discusses whether assistance data model 2 is supported, and if so, whether the Provide Assistance Data message can be forwarded.  **Proposal 5:** The Request Location Information and Provide Location Information messages can be forwarded.  **Proposal 6:** The Server UE Selection Indication and Server UE Selection Confirm messages cannot be forwarded.  **Proposal 7:** The Error message can be forwarded.  **Proposal 8:** RAN2 further discusses whether the Abort message can be forwarded.  **Proposal 9:** For SLPP messages that can be forwarded, the “-IEs” structure for each message contains a list of entries with forwarding information provided for each entry.  **Proposal 10:** RAN2 further discusses how to identify the source and destination of a forwarded SLPP message. |
| Intel (R2-2310217) | **Observation 1:** Based on updated RAN plenary guidance, the scenario when some of the involved UEs are not in the coverage of the same LMF is no longer valid.  **Proposal 9:** For both LMF involved and UE only based SL positioning operation, RAN2 discuss and agree that SLPP forwarding is not needed. |
| CEWiT (R2-2309741) | **Proposal 8:** For in-coverage scenarios, SLPP forwarding is not required if LMF communicates with each UE. SLPP forwarding shall be used only when LMF communicates to other UEs via the target UE. |
| LG (R2-2310429) | **Proposal 1.** RAN2 to deprioritize following features for R18 sidelink positioning:   1. SLPP groupcast/broadcast communication (i.e. SLPP unicast is only supported in R18) 2. SLPP groupcast reliable transport (i.e. SLPP unicast reliable transport is only supported in R18) 3. Multiple target UE and group positioning scenario (i.e. Single target UE scenario is only supported in R18) 4. Partial coverage scenario (i.e. SLPP groupcast is not supported in R18) 5. SLPP forwarding for OOC UE in partial coverage scenario (i.e. LMF is involved in in coverage scenario only in R18) 6. SLPP session-less operation (i.e. SLPP broadcast is not supported in R18) |

From the above contributions, it is clear that companies have different understanding on whether SLPP forwarding is necessary and the associated scenario(s) where it is essential to support. Given that there was not much discussion on the need and details of SLPP forwarding in the last RAN2 meeting, it would be a good idea to start by collecting company views on the need for SLPP forwarding and the motivation/scenarios where such forwarding would be essential to have. It is also worth mentioning the updated scope for the WI as per RAN plenary guidance, which is bound to have some impact on the necessity of SLPP forwarding:

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| * Specify unicast session-based signalling and procedures to facilitate support of SL positioning for single target UE (it is not precluded to apply the procedures to multiple target UEs but no signaling optimizations will be considered for this case) [RAN2, RAN3]:   + Specify the protocol and procedures for SL positioning between UEs (Protocol for Sidelink positioning procedures (SLPP)).   + Specify the protocol and procedures for SL positioning between UEs and a single LMF for in coverage scenario only, including joint PC5-Uu scenarios.     - NOTE: Assumes all involved UEs are served by same LMF.   + For SL-TDOA, RAN2 will not work on procedures for synchronization of the anchor UEs. RAN2 can discuss and implement agreed RAN1 parameters related to synchronization. |

Based on the above guidance, the rapporteur thinks that (at least for the in-coverage scenario) the key assumption is that all UEs engaged in SL positioning (including joint PC5-Uu positioning) are under coverage of and being served by the same LMF. One can further surmise that the intention of the note is to say that the LMF can communicate with all UEs engaged in SL positioning. However based on last meeting’s contributions, it seems companies have different understanding on this. With this in mind, companies are invited to share their understanding on the following:

**Q1: Do companies agree that for LMF based operation, the target UE should always be able to directly communicate with LMF (i.e. no forwarding is needed to the target UE)?**

1. **Yes**
2. **No (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Apple | Yes | Direct connectivity to LMF is sufficient in this release. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes |  |
| vivo | Yes | We think that it is rare case that target UE is out of coverage since one goal of network deployment is to eliminate this as much as possible. Also, if target UE is out of coverage, the network does not know where target UE is and the paging will fail. In this case, the positioning will fail. |

**Q2: Do companies agree that for LMF based operation, the anchor UEs should always be able to directly communicate with the LMF (i.e. no forwarding is needed between LMF and the anchor UEs)?**

1. **Yes**
2. **No (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Apple | Yes | Direct connectivity to LMF is sufficient in this release. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes |  |
| vivo | No | If forwarding is not supported and anchor UEs should always directly communicate with the LMF, SA2 needs to discuss how **LMF** triggers selected anchor UEs **in idle/inactive state** to enter to connected state, which is not supported by current SA2 spec.  Also, it is possible that multiple AMFs connect to one same LMF. If target UE and anchor UEs connect to different AMF with same LMF, SA2 needs to discuss and address, e.g., how does LMF communicates with multiple AMFs, including LMF allocating new correlation IDs between LMF and anchor UEs?  If forwarding is supported, LMF can communicate with anchor UEs via target UE. SA2 may not need to discuss the above issues any more.  Forwarding procedure is quite simple, see our TP in R2-2309668. |

**Q3: Based on the above questions, do companies think that SLPP forwarding needs to be supported for the case of LMF based positioning?**

1. **No, target and anchor UEs are assumed to be able to directly communicate with the LMF**
2. **Yes, SLPP forwarding by the target UE is necessary to transfer SLPP information between the LMF and the anchor UE(s)**
3. **Other (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Apple | No | Direct connectivity to LMF is sufficient in this release. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon |  | Not sure about what is “SLPP forwarding” in the first place. does it mean forwarding in sidelink relay, or just decode the SLPP message between the UE first and then re-compile it in another message and sent it to the LMF?  There is no spec impacts for us either way. But before the discussion, we need to be clear about what is “SLPP forwarding” |
| vivo | Yes with comments | See our comments in Q2.  Note that we think SLPP messages are between LMF and UEs from the perspective of protocol, and “SLPP forwarding” is some like the thing of transfer layer and be transparent forwarding, i.e., target UE does not decode the forwarded SLPP message since the SLPP message is between LMF and an anchor UE. |

The other scenario to consider is for the **UE-only operation**, whereby the server UE is involved. For this scenario, the downscoping in RAN is not so clear, so the basic premise of whether the target UE and the anchor UE(s) are able to communicate directly over PC5 interface or whether SLPP forwarding is needed. The rapporteur assumes that the target UE should at least be able to communicate directly with the anchor UE(s), since they need to perform SL-PRS measurements over the PC5 interface.

**Q4: Do companies agree that for UE only operation, the target UE should always be able to directly communicate with the server UE (i.e. no forwarding is needed to the target UE)?**

1. **Yes**
2. **No (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Apple | Yes | Direct connectivity to the server UE is sufficient in this release. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon |  | This might be fine for SL-TDOA. For SL-TOA, each anchor UE should send their me |
| vivo | Yes |  |

For the communication between the server and the anchor UE, RAN2 has following agreements:

The SL-PRS sequence ID can be provided to the TX UE by the LMF/Server UE (via SLPP signalling). If the Tx UE does not receive a sequence ID via SLPP message from the server, the Tx UE is expected to select one by itself. FFS exact SLPP signalling.

Reuse the Request/Provide Assistance Data messages for server to get the assistance data from Anchor UEs. FFS on how to capture.

The above seems to imply that the server can communicate with anchor UE. So, it would be good to get company confirmation on this aspect.

**Q5: Do companies agree that UE only operation, the anchor UEs should always be able to directly communicate with the server UE (i.e. no forwarding is needed between server UE and the anchor UEs)?**

1. **Yes**
2. **No (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Apple | Yes | Direct connectivity to the server UE is sufficient in this release. |
| Huawei, HiSllicon |  |  |
| vivo | No | We agree the server can communicate with anchor UEs from the perspective of protocol. But it does not mean direct communication.  Anchor UEs are required to be able to directly communicate with target UE (i.e., in the coverage of target UE). If server UE and target UE are different UE, the valid anchor UEs are likely to be less or even zero if anchor UEs are also required to be able to directly communicate with server UE, which will greatly decrease positioning accuracy or even the availability of positioning. |

**Q6: Based on the above questions, do companies think that SLPP forwarding needs to be supported for the case of UE-only operation?**

1. **No, target and anchor UEs are assumed to be able to directly communicate with the server UE**
2. **Yes, SLPP forwarding by the target UE is necessary to transfer SLPP information between the server UE and the anchor UE(s)**
3. **Yes, SLPP forwarding by the anchor UE is necessary to transfer SLPP information between the server UE and other anchor UE(s)**
4. **Other (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Apple | No | Direct connectivity to the server UE is sufficient in this release. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | No | Noting needs to be changed for the UE-only scenario |
| vivo | 2) Yes, SLPP forwarding by the target UE | If SLPP forwarding is not supported, valid anchor UEs are likely to be less or even zero, which will greatly decrease positioning accuracy or even the availability of positioning. See our comments in Q5.  Note that we think SLPP messages are between LMF and UEs from the perspective of protocol, and “SLPP forwarding” is some like the thing of transfer layer and be transparent forwarding, i.e., target UE does not decode the forwarded SLPP message since the SLPP message is between LMF and an anchor UE.  Forwarding procedure is quite simple, see our TP in R2-2309668. |

If the need for SLPP forwarding is established, the next aspects for discussion pertain to the approach used for forwarding and which SLPP information needs to be forwarded. For the former question, different approaches can be considered and companies are invited to comment on the following question.

**Q7: Which approach do companies prefer for the SLPP forwarding (if supported)?**

1. **Regenerate SLPP message approach, i.e. the "forwarding node" receives the message (which indicates a different destination ID) from the server, and then generates the corresponding SLPP message to the destination UE;**
2. **SLPP container-based approach, i.e. the "forwarding node" receives the message (which indicates a different destination ID) from the server, and then encapsulates it within an SLPP message as a container and sends to the destination UE;**
3. **Others (please comment)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 1) | The UE will regenerate a new SLPP message containing the originating UE’s Application layer ID and send it in an SLPP message to the LMF/server UE  The use of the application layer id has been clear in SA2 spec |
| vivo | 2) with comments | Approach 1) needs the "forwarding node" deeply participating in the positioning, i.e., completely decode the information related to detail positioning information and then regenerate the SLPP message, which will greatly increase the implementation complexity of "forwarding node", and also consume the resource of CPU memory, but it is unnecessary.  For Approach 2), we want to make it clearer, see the following (extracted from R2-2309668):    Figure 5.6.2-1: SLPP Message Forwarding procedure  1. Endpoint A needs to send an SLPP message to Endpoint B, but Endpoint A cannot directly communicate with Endpoint B. Endpoint A sends a *MessageForwarding* message to target UE. In the *MessageForwarding* message, the SLPP message is included as a container and the destination is set to Endpoint B.  2. Target UE decodes the *MessageForwarding* message and gets to know that the destination is Endpoint B. If Endpoint B is an UE and there is no sidelink unicast connection between Target UE and Endpoint B, target UE initiates the sidelink unicast connection setup procedure with Endpoint B.  3. Target UE sends a *MessageForwarding* message to Endpoint B. In the *MessageForwarding* message, the SLPP message is included as a container and the destination is set to Endpoint B. Endpoint B decodes the *MessageForwarding* message and gets to know that the destination is itself. Endpoint B decodes the SLPP message. |
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Secondly, as per discussion in R2-2310195, the different SLPP information which may require forwarding should be discussed. Company views are invited for the following question:

**Q8: Which of the SLPP information needs to be forwarded between the LMF/Server UE and the anchor UE(s)?**

1. **SL positioning capability information (SLPP Request/Provide Capabilities msg)**
2. **SL positioning assistance data information (SLPP Request/Provide AD msgs)**
3. **SL positioning location information (SLPP Request/Provide Location Information msgs)**
4. **Others (e.g. Abort, Error)**

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| **Company’s name** | **Selected Option** | **Comments** |
| Huawei, HiSilicon |  | Not sure about what are the spec impacts. If SLPP can be forwarded, all the SLPP information can be forwarded from stage3’s perspective. No sure whether description in stage2 level is needed dependent on different scenarios. |
| vivo | All | We think that SLPP forwarding is a common function, i.e., it is message forwarding, not information forwarding (actually, information forwarding is a quite strange term). In principle, any SLPP message can be forwarded via forwarding function. We think that the specification should not make the restriction of which SLPP messages can be forwarded. Actually, which SLPP messages are forwarded depends on the sender of SLPP message. |
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Based on the responses to the above questions, the stage 3 details to enable such forwarding (if supported) need to be discussed. The rapporteur intends to provide more details (including possibly a TP) once company views to the above questions are received and compiled, as part of Phase 2 for this discussion.

# Phase 2 Discussion

[TBF]

# Summary/Conclusion

[TBF]

# References

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| [1] | RAN2#123bis meeting, Chariman Notes. |