**3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #128 R2-24xxxxx**

**Orlando, Florida, 18th – 22nd November 2024**

**Agenda Item: 8.13.3**

**Source: InterDigital**

**Title: Report of [POST127][402][Relay] Multi-hop relay control plane**

**Document for: Discussion and Decision**

# 1 Introduction

This contribution gives the discussion summary of following post email discussion.

* [Post127][402][Relay] Multi-hop relay control plane (InterDigital)

Scope:

- Describe different solutions (from company contributions) for multihop U2N relay UE by at least describing:

* + Connection establishment procedures
  + Assumptions on RRC state(s) of intermediate UEs and last relay UE
  + Assumptions on controlling gNB/cell of each relay UE
  + How the remote and intermediate relay UEs obtain their configurations in each solution
  + How to meet QoS requirement e2e

- Evaluate the feasibility and pros/cons of the different solutions towards downscoping to a single solution

Intended outcome: Report to RAN2#128

Deadline: Very long (for RAN2#128)

## Phasing of the Email Discussion

The email discussion has been divided into two phases, where phase 1 will correspond to describing the different solutions in each of the areas identified (connection establishment procedure, RRC state assumptions, assumptions on the controlling gNB/cell, configuration procedure, and E2E QoS). This will ensure that companies have a common understanding of each of the solutions.

In the second phase, the solutions will be evaluated in terms of their feasibility and pros and cons.

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# 2 Phase 1 Discussion

Based on company contributions, there seem to be two main approaches for implementing multipath U2N relays. A first approach is a fully U2N based approach. The network directly controls each of the intermediate relay UEs using dedicated Uu RRC signalling. The second approach is still U2N-based but with some elements of U2U. Only the last relay UE needs to be controlled using dedicated RRC signalling.

For the email discussion, approach 1 and approach 2 will be used as follows:

* Approach 1: The network needs to directly control each of the intermediate relay UEs via Uu RRC.
* Approach 2: Only the last relay UE requires control by the network via Uu RRC.

In each subsection, the procedures and assumptions for each approach will be discussed to get a common understanding of both approach 1 and approach 2 in the context of the following aspects:

* Connection establishment procedures
* Assumptions on RRC state(s) of intermediate relay UEs and last relay UE
* Assumptions on controlling gNB/cell of each relay UE
* How the remote and intermediate relay UEs obtain their configurations in each solution
* How to meet QoS requirement e2e for remote UE

## 2.1 Connection Establishment Procedure

In each subsection, the purpose is to agree on a baseline procedure for connection establishment and RRC state assumptions for both approaches (to serve as the basis for further feasibility and pro/con evaluation.

2.1.1 Approach 1

Using connection establishment procedure for single-hop relays as a baseline, the figure below illustrates rapporteur’s assumptions of the establishment procedure for multiple-hop relays in approach 1.



1. The U2N Remote UE, First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE perform discovery procedure, and establish a PC5-RRC connection between each adjacent UE (U2N Remote UE<->First Relay UE, First Relay UE <-> Intermediate Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE <-> Last Relay UE) using the NR sidelink PC5 unicast link establishment procedure. [FFS whether to support PC5-RRC connection establishment between some adjacent UEs after transmission of the first RRC message in step 2.]
2. The L2 U2N Remote UE sends the first RRC message (i.e., *RRCSetupRequest*) for its connection establishment with gNB via the First Relay UE, using a specified PC5 Relay RLC channel configuration. The first Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the First Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment via the Intermediate Relay UE (using similar actions as a U2N Remote UE) upon reception of a message from U2N Remote UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. The Intermediate Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the Intermediate Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment via the Last Relay UE (using similar actions as a U2N Remote UE) upon reception of a message from the First Relay UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. The Last Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the Last Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment upon reception of a message from the Intermediate Relay UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. In each of the previous sub-steps, if a given relay UE and its parent relay UE both need to enter RRC\_CONNECTED, the given relay UE cannot do so until the parent relay UE has completed its own RRC connection establishment. The Last Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the Intermediate Relay UE from gNB. The Intermediate Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Relay RLC channel configuration for the First Relay UE from gNB. The gNB configures SRB0 (for U2N Remote UE) relaying RLC channel to the first Relay UE. The gNB responds with an *RRCSetup* message to U2N Remote UE. The *RRCSetup* message is sent to the U2N Remote UE using SRB0 relaying Last Relay RLC channel over Uu and the specified PC5 Relay RLC channels over each of the PC5 links. [FFS whether the Last Relay UE can send SUI on behalf of all other relay UEs.]
3. The gNB, Last Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE and First Relay UE perform relaying channel setup procedure over Uu. According to the configuration from the gNB, the First Relay/U2N Remote UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the U2N Remote UE/First Relay UE over PC5, the Intermediate Relay/First Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the First Relay UE/Intermediate Relay UE over PC5 and the Last Relay UE/ Intermediate Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the Intermediate Relay UE/Last Relay UE over PC5. [FFS if each relay UE can establish RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 at the same time as its connection establishment in step 2].
4. The *RRCSetupComplete* message is sent by the U2N Remote UE to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE and the Last Relay UE using SRB1 relaying channels over PC5 and SRB1 relaying channel configured to the Last Relay UE over Uu. Then the U2N Remote UE is RRC\_CONNECTED with the gNB.
5. The L2 U2N Remote UE and gNB establish security following the Uu security mode procedure and the security messages are forwarded through the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE.
6. The gNB sends an *RRCReconfiguration* message to the U2N Remote UE via the Last Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and First Relay UE to setup the end-to-end SRB2/DRBs of the U2N Remote UE. The U2N Remote UE sends an *RRCReconfigurationComplete* message to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE as a response. In addition, the gNB may configure additional Uu Relay RLC channels between the gNB and Last Relay UE, and PC5 Relay RLC channels between each of the Intermediate Relay UE, First Relay UE, and U2N Remote UE for the relaying traffic.

Based on the above procedure, for gNB to control each relay UE by RRC, each relay UE needs to be in RRC connected. As a result, for connection establishment of the remote UE, each relay UE should trigger its own connection establishment. For the last relay UE, Uu connection establishment is performed. However, for the other relay UEs, upon reception of a message on SL-SLB0, they perform connection establishment as though they are acting as a remote UE.

Question 1: Do you agree that for approach 1

* + the remote UE connection establishment always triggers connection establishment in each of the relay UEs (if they are in IDLE/INACTIVE)
  + for all relay UE’s except the last relay UE, upon reception of a message on SL-SRB0, it triggers a remote UE connection establishment?
  + For all relay UE’s except the last relay UE, they need to be configured with a remote UE Uu DRB configuration and SRAP configuration to act as a remote UE (without having any Uu traffic per se).

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| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | See comments | We agree that all the relay UEs need to be in RRC connected state to serve a RRC connected remote UE, i.e., generally Yes for the first bullet.  While for the second and third bullet, we are confused on the intention:   * For the second bullet, what is the delta part compared to the first bullet? * For the third bullet, how to understand “configured with a remote UE Uu DRB configuration”? We understand the relay UE without having any Uu traffic doesn’t need to have DRB configuration (e.g., SDAP, PDCP configuration). |
| LG | Yes | We believe that reusing the legacy Rel-17 U2N scheme can be a straightforward way to implement a Rel-19 multi-hop U2N relay. The approach 1 can implement without big spec impact by reusing the legacy Rel-17 U2N procedure as much as possible. Therefore, we generally agree with the approach 1. But we have to clarify the details later. For example, the difference between 2nd and 3rd bullets. |
| Sharp | See comments | For the first bullet, if the “connection establishment” means Uu RRC connection establishment, bracket should be removed since relay UEs don’t need to trigger connection establishment procedure if these are in RRC\_CONNECTED.  For the second bullet, it is unclear what “a remote UE connection establishment” means. If it means that each relay UEs except the Last Relay UE should have PC5 RRC connection with the remote UE, we disagree with this analysis.  And for the “SL-SRB0”, it might be “SL-RLC0”.  For the third bullet, we understand that all Relay UEs except the Last Relay UE can act as Remote UEs. If the intension is that “all relay UEs are configured with SRAP/RLC configuration for the Remote UE’s Uu E2E DRB/SRB”, wording can be modified. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | See comments | We agree that the Relay UEs shall be in RRC\_CONNECTED state to perform relaying of unicast data to the remote UE. Hence agree with the first bullet.  However, we are unclear of the intention of the 2nd and 3rd bullet as Oppo has mentioned.  In step 2 it is mentioned “If the Last Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment upon reception of a message from the Intermediate Relay UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel.” Then we are not sure why bullet 2 mentions “ for all relay UE’s except the last relay UE, upon reception of a message on SL-SRB0, it triggers a remote UE connection establishment”  Similarly bullet 3 seems unclear why we need all relay UE’s except the last relay UE, configured with a remote UE Uu DRB configuration and SRAP configuration to act as a remote UE |
| Apple | Yes | We agree with the rapporteur’s analysis.  Bullet 1 is self-evident as this is the basic assumption of approach 1.  For Bulliet 2, our understanding is that this can be triggered either by SL-SRB0 or SL\_RLC0 (as defined in R17), so this needs to be further discussed. A more important point is that the intermediate relay UE’s RRC establishment is based on the triggering of a so-called “remote UE”, which the relay UE need to report to the NW. Whether this remote UE is the end remote UE or the adjacent “relay UE” also needs to be further discussed.  For Bullet 3, based on legacy design of U2N relay, when a relay UE reports its PC5-connection remote UE to the NW, NW will configure both the relay UE and the remote UE with SRAP mappings and Relay RLC channel configurations. So, when an intermediate relay UE or last relay UE reports another PC5-Connected “remote UE”, the NW will assume it need to provide all necessary configurations to support Uu SRB/DRBs reaching this “remote UE” via the reporting relay UE. So, if this PC5-connected remote UE is actually another intermediate relay UE (not the real remote UE), NW will configure Uu DRB SRAP configurations towards this intermediate relay UE instead, which may not be very useful. So, the Bullet 3 is a valid point. However, if approach 1 assume this PC5-conencted “remote UE” reported by the relay UE is actually the end remote UE, then we have to assume End Remote UE is somehow multi-hop U2U connected with an intermediate relay UE first before relay UE reports it. That seems against the principle of Approach 1. So, all this needs to be further discussed. |
| ZTE | Yes with comments (no for the second bullet) | We generally agree with the first bullet and think that a main point in approach 1 is that all the intermediate relays are connected to the same cell/gNB as the Last relay UE’s serving cell/gNB. For the second bullet, we think it is a complement to the first bullet that, all the intermediate relays enter into RRC\_CONNECTED via indirect path just as Rel-17 U2N remote UE, right?  For the third bullet, as above comments how to understand “configured with a remote UE Uu DRB configuration”? Does it mean that the relaying traffic are regarding as the intermediate relay’s(act as a remote UE) own traffic to transmit to the network, which seems like a L3 U2N relay? In our view, intermediate relays only need to be configured with SRAP configuration and PC5 RLC channel configuration to forward relaying traffic. |
| CATT | Yes | Same view as LG and the currnet skeleton build a good start point for further discussion. |
| TCL | Yes |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes |  |
| Kyocera | Yes | We agree the general idea of the steps are reasonable, although further discussion is needed regarding the contents of the configuration for the relay UEs. For example, in Step 2, it should also be clarified when the first relay UE should forward the remote UE’s RRC Setup Request to the intermediate relay UE in addition to sending its own Uu RRC Connection Establishment request to the intermediate relay UE. |
| Spreadtrum | See comments | We agree the approach 1 and first bullet, but second and third bullet are not clear and we do not support. |
| Ericsson | comments | We see additional design complexity for this approach (in addition to the two aspects in the above)  1. during relay discovery, relay (re)selection phase, first relay UE, intermediate relay are required to select the same last relay UE as the remote UE for their own relay connection, this would add additional design complexity/restrictions for RAN2 and SA2.  2. in above step 2, it would trigger/include subsequential connection establishment (for last relay UE, intermediate relay UEs), the procedure is not clear. A lot of details need to be studied, e.g., which UE is responsible for send SUI for remote UE.  In addition, this approach has below restrictions.  1.all relay UEs need to be served in the same cell.  2.significant signaling overhead and latency for remote UE’s E2E connection establishment.  Adding more comments for the second and the third bullet  We are yes for all three bullets.  For bullet 2), the delta part is that all relay UE’s except the last relay, will behave as remote UE during their connection setup procedure. But bullet 1) and 2) could be merged.  For bullet 3), we also agree with Apple and Interdigital. In the legacy framework and procedure (Uu and Rel-17 U2N), a UE (remote UE) can not setup a connection to the gNB, with only SRB, the UE needs to have at least one DRB (e.g., default DRB/best effort DRB), in order to establish a PDU session. In this case, all relay UE’s except the last relay would then need to have to establish at least one best effort DRB, although they don’t have any own traffic to the network. this would be wasteful for the resources. So, basically, RAN2 needs to study two options  Option 1: each relay UE except the last relay needs to establish at least a best effort DRB, although the relay UE has no own Uu traffic.  Option 2: each relay UE except the last relay UE only needs to establish SRBs with DRBs, which would need additional spec changes to allow this.  In addition, we also agree with Qualcomm on the additional issue. |
| Lenovo | Yes with comments | Both bullet#1 and #2 have the similar target. But last relay UE is excluded in bullet#2. Our understanding is that all relay UE including intermediate relay UE and last relay UE should transit into connected from idle/inactive after receiving SL-SRB0 message.  Regarding bullet#3, network will configure SRAP configuration and PC5 RLC channel to the relay UE if there is no its own traffic. |
| Samsung | Yes for first two items | For the third item, the DRB configuration is only needed at the remote UE side. While all relay UEs (incl. the last relay UE) only needs the SRAP configurations. Then, we would prefer to Sharp’s rewording, i.e., “all relay UEs are configured with SRAP/RLC configuration for the Remote UE’s Uu E2E DRB/SRB”. Meanwhile, for the last relay UE, both the PC5 RLC channel and Uu RLC channel configurations are needed, while for other relay UEs (except the last relay UE), PC5 RLC channel configuration is enough. |
| vivo | Yes |  |
| Qualcomm | Yes with comments | For the third bullet, if the intermediate Relay UE has no user plane traffic, then only SRB should be configured as acting as a Remote UE.  Additionally, we would like to add one more bullet:   * If the intermediate Relay UE is already in CONNECTED state connecting with a different cell or gNB with the Remote UE’s serving cell or gNB, solution is needed to address this issue. |
| InterDigital | Yes | We share the same view as Apple that in legacy U2N, the network configures the relay and remote UE, and if an intermediate relay acts as a remote UE and we re-use legacy, the network may configure it with remote UE SRAP, |

Conclusion: Statement 1 is agreed by all companies, while there are some differences in opinion with regards to statements 2 and 3. Pros/cons and feasibility can be discussed in phase 2.

Proposal 1 – In one approach (“approach 1”) of U2N relays, each of the Intermediate Relay UEs must be in RRC\_CONNECTED when the U2N remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED. Connection establishment in the U2N remote UE first requires that each Intermediate Relay UE which is in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE first enters RRC\_CONNECTED. FFS whether connection establishment of an Intermediate Relay UE (other than the Last Relay UE) is captured in specification as connection establishment of a remote UE or a relay UE.

Question 2: Do you agree that the above figure and steps can serve as the baseline connection establishment procedure of approach 1 that can serve for further discussion of pros/cons?

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| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | See comments | We generally agree with the figure, and the detail wording in the steps can be further checked/discussed, e.g.:  In step-2, “*The Last Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the Intermediate Relay UE from gNB. The Intermediate Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the First Relay UE from gNB. The gNB configures SRB0 (for U2N Remote UE) relaying Uu Relay RLC channel to the first Relay UE.*” We understand gNB provides SRB0 configuration to each UE via RRC message, there is no need to say xx Relay UE relaying Uu relay RLC channel configuration for xx Relay.  [Rapp: The intent here is to make stage 1 description as close as possible to legacy, an so the same wording as Rel17 is used. Perhaps we can discuss enhancements to wording for Rel19 as a subsequent step and the comment from ZTE can also be addressed for now.] |
| LG | Yes | We agree the procedure as the basic procedure for the further pros/cons discussion. |
| Sharp | See comments | Generally, we agree with this figure and analysis. However, we wonder if the Intermediate Relay UEs and the Last Relay UE have to “send” *SidelinkUEInformationNR* since the NW can determine whether the reconfiguration is needed for each relay UEs upon receiving *SidelinkUEInformationNR* from the First Relay UE. (If the Intermediate UE is allowed to be in IDLE/INACTIVE state while the first relay UE is in CONNECTED state, it can be reconsidered.) And other wording can be further discussed.  Furthermore, some points should be discussed e.g.;   * Whether the First Relay UE and the Intermediate Relay UEs are in RRC\_CONNECTED state while the Remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED state.   [Rapp: The basic assumption for approach 1 is that all relay UE’s are in RRC\_CONNECTED and therefore transmit the SidelinkUEInformation.]  Whether the dedicated SRB0 configuration for the remote UE should be configured for each the relay UEs. In other words, whether the dedicated SRB0 configuration for multi-hop relaying can be commonly used for the path.  [Rapp: This probably goes beyond the scope of stage 2 description.] |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes | We can agree to take this procedure as the basic procedure for the phase 2 discussions. |
| Apple | Yes with comment | In general, we agree with the above analysis, with a few additional comments.  First, I think for approach 1, the step 2/3 is actually more complex than what has been drawn in the figure. As we can see, the description of step 2 is quite complex, and some necessary messages such as SidelinkUEinformation is not even shown in the figure above.  [Rapp: This is also the case (i.e., SidelinkUEInformation messages not shown in the figure) with Rel17 description so prefer to be consistent].  Moreover, we think an intermediate relay UE cannot enter CONNECTED state until its adjacent next relay UE enters CONNECTED state first.  [Rapp: I think this note can be added to the stage 2 description for clarity, without the need for a new figure.]  As a result, the latency for steps above are quite significant if the detailed steps are illustrated as “cascading” sequence below (instead of using a single end-to-end arrow):    So, we think RAN2 need to discuss this constraint of Approach 1 and related consequences/issues. |
| ZTE | Yes with comments | We are generally fine with the figure, but the details need further discussion/checking, e.g. about bearer mapping(SRAP) configuration at each Relay UE. For example, the Intermediate relay has no direct Uu with the gNB actually, we wonder why the Intermediate relay needs to be configured with SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the First Relay UE. Suggest to remove “The Intermediate Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration ...”(until to the last sentence in step 2), instead, a FFS can be captured for further discussion.  [Rapp: At least some RLC channel to relay SRB0 from the network is required at each relay and we can discuss enhancements to the naming later. So we can remove “Uu” from the description for now]. |
| CATT | Yes with comments | We agree with the procedure shown in the figure. But the description in Step 2 may needs to be clarified to reach common understanding. |
| TCL | Yes |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes |  |
| Kyocera | Yes |  |
| Spreadtrum | Yes |  |
| Ericsson |  | Agree with what Apple commented.  In addition, more details need to be included in the steps, to reflect below aspects   1. Each relay UE needs to ensure its own last relay UE when it also operates as a remote UE, is the same as the last relay UE of the remote UE 2. In step 2) below text   “The Last Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the Intermediate Relay UE from gNB. The Intermediate Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the First Relay UE from gNB. The gNB configures SRB0 (for U2N Remote UE) relaying Uu Relay RLC channel to the first Relay UE.”  The above text is valid only when the intermediate relay UE has direct Uu connection to the gNB, in case the intermediate relay UE is indirectly connected to the gNB, there will be no Uu RLC channel. In this case, the last relay UE may establish the same/common Uu RLC channel for the remote UE and each intermediate relay UE or different Uu RLC channels for the remote UE and each intermediate relay UE, this needs to be further discussed in RAN2.  [Rapp: This should be addressed by the change triggered from the ZTE comment.]   1. In step 2) whether each intermediate UE needs to send a SUI message to the gNB for requesting the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE, needs to be further discussed in RAN2. Alternatively, the last relay UE sends a SUI (including the path information) to the gNB for requesting the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE.   [Rapp: We can add this as an FFS for now (assuming this is a possible enhancement), and use the baseline procedure where each UE asks for the configuration.] |
| Lenovo | Yes | Details can be further discussed. |
| Samsung | Yes with comments | In general, we are fine to take the above flow chart as the starting point. However, we have some initial concerns (which may be addressed when developing the stage-2 flow chart):   * Step 1: discovery and PC5 connection for intermediate/last relay UE needn’t to be always at the beginning, e.g., whenever an intermediate/last relay UE receives the first RRC message (i.e., RRCSetupRequest) via a specified PC5 Relay RLC channel, it can trigger the discovery and PC5 connection procedures. So, Step 1 can be applied between remote UE and the first relay UE only. For other nodes, it can be addressed in Step 2.   [Rapp: This could be an enhancement discussed in later stages. For now, an FFS as to whether to support this case could be captured.]   * Step 2   + A better way may be to cite the legacy procedure (i.e., Section 16.12.5.1 in TS38.300) rather than list the procedures of each node.   [Rapp: May be difficult to do so since the procedure is changed quite a bit for multi-hop. Let’s try to spell out all steps for now].   * Step 3   + Except last relay UE, other relay UEs may not be in coverage of gNB so that it cannot perform the relaying channel setup procedure over Uu.   [Rapp: Addressed by the ZTE comment.]   * + The PC5 and Uu Relay RLC channel for SRB1 may be performed during step 2 since the intermediate node may be configured during its own connection establishment procedure.   [Rapp: Can add an FFS here for now.]   * + The PC5 relay RLC channel establishment between intermediate Relay UEs is missing.   [Rapp: Addressed by the ZTE comment.] |
| vivo | Yes | This figure can be seen as a guideline, but we also have questions about whether we can simplify it to start with only one additional hop, e.g., only contain first relay UE (which is also an intermediate relay UE) and last relay UE, to understand how the whole procedure works.  [Rapp: We see no need to limit the description at this time, since the target for the WI is 2 additional hops]. |
| Qualcomm | See comments | Agree with Apple’s comment, the current procedure only show how the Remote UE connection setup, but miss the part that intermediate Relay UE connection setup procedure. The whole procedure could be complex because each intermediate relay UE connection establishment should be after the successful parent relay UE connection establishment. If we want to capture something, it should be clarified.  [Rapp: Agree to capture a sentence or note to indicate this]. |
| InterDigital | Yes |  |

Conclusion: Most companies think that the above procedure can be used as the basis for the stage 2 of approach 1 and the following updates are made by the rapporteur in the text description (in track changes):

- Remove “Uu” from the relaying SRB0 RLC channel for all relays except the last relay

- Add FFS about whether SRB1 can be configured during the connection establishment of each relay in step 2.

- Add a clarification that a given relay UE, if it needs to enter RRC\_CONNECTED, cannot do so until the parent relay enters RRC\_CONNECTED

- Add an FFS on whether to support PC5 connection establishment between some of the UEs after transmission by the remote UE of the first Uu RRC message

- Add an FFS on whether the last relay UE can send SUI message on behalf of all other relay UEs.

Proposal 2 – The figure and description above serves as a baseline connection establishment procedure for multi-hop U2N Relays if Approach 1 (all relay UEs must be in RRC\_CONNECTED when the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED) is adopted.

2.1.2 Approach 2

Using connection establishment procedure for single-hop relays as a baseline, the figure below illustrates rapporteur’s assumptions of the establishment procedure for multiple-hop relays in approach 2.



1. The U2N Remote UE, First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE perform discovery procedure, and establish a PC5-RRC connection between each adjacent UE (U2N Remote UE<->First Relay UE, First Relay UE <-> Intermediate Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE <-> Last Relay UE) using the NR sidelink PC5 unicast link establishment procedure.
2. The L2 U2N Remote UE sends the first RRC message (i.e., *RRCSetupRequest*) for its connection establishment with gNB via the First Relay UE, using a specified PC5 Relay RLC channel configuration. If the First Relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, it sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. Otherwise, it obtains the configuration from SIB or preconfiguration, or from the remote UE’s serving gNB. If the Intermediate Relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, it sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. Otherwise, it obtains the configuration from SIB or preconfiguration. The Last Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the Last Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment upon reception of a message on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. After the Last Relay UE's RRC connection establishment procedure and sending the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message, gNB configures SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel to the Last Relay UE. The gNB responds with an *RRCSetup* message to U2N Remote UE. The *RRCSetup* message is sent to the U2N Remote UE using SRB0 relaying Last Relay RLC channel over Uu and the specified/preconfigured PC5 Relay RLC channels over each of the PC5 links. FFS which option to obtain the relaying configuration (SIB/preconfiguration or the remote UE’s serving gNB) is used by relay UEs which remain in IDLE/INACTIVE while the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED.
3. According to (pre)configuration, the First Relay/U2N Remote UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the U2N Remote UE/First Relay UE over PC5, the Intermediate Relay/First Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the First Relay UE/Intermediate Relay UE over PC5 and the Last Relay UE/ Intermediate Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the Intermediate Relay UE/Last Relay UE over PC5.
4. The *RRCSetupComplete* message is sent by the U2N Remote UE to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE and the Last Relay UE using SRB1 relaying channels over PC5 and SRB1 relaying channel configured to the Last Relay UE over Uu. Then the U2N Remote UE is RRC\_CONNECTED with the gNB.
5. The L2 U2N Remote UE and gNB establish security following the Uu security mode procedure and the security messages are forwarded through the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE.
6. The gNB sends an *RRCReconfiguration* message to the U2N Remote UE via the Last Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and First Relay UE to setup the end-to-end SRB2/DRBs of the U2N Remote UE. The U2N Remote UE sends an *RRCReconfigurationComplete* message to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE as a response. In addition, the gNB may configure additional Uu Relay RLC channels between the gNB and Last Relay UE, and PC5 Relay RLC channels between each of the Intermediate Relay UE, First Relay UE, and U2N Remote UE for the relaying traffic.

The main difference in the procedure with approach 1 is that a relay UE (other than the Last Relay) in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE is not required to trigger an RRC connection as a result of the remote UE’s RRC connection. Also, rapporteur has assumed (as was done for SL in Rel16, as well as for U2U relays in Rel18) that for a relay UE that is already in RRC\_CONNECTED, the relay UE obtains its configuration using dedicated RRC signaling. For the case of the relay UE in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE, how the relay UE obtains its configuration is further discussed in section 2.2.

Question 3: Do you agree that for approach 2

* + a relay UE in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE (other than the Last Relay UE) is not required to trigger its own RRC Connection upon RRC connection establishment of the U2N Remote UE.
  + similar to legacy (Rel16 SL, and Rel18 U2U), if a relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, it obtains its relaying RLC channel configuration in dedicated signaling.

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| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | Yes |  |
| LG | Yes | Approach 2 introduces new concepts compared to the legacy Rel-17 U2N; however, the benefits are not understood when the intermediate Relay UE is in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE. The intermediate Relay UE has to serve relay functionality while communication is ongoing between the remote UE and gNB regardless of its RRC state. We believe that management by the gNB can be performed efficiently when the intermediate Relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED.  In step 4, it’s not clear how to deliver the *RRCSetup* message to the remote UE without local ID assignment. The intermediate Relay UE which doesn’t have the local ID of the Remote UE may not deliver the message to the correct Remote UE among multiple other Remote UEs.  The local ID assignment scheme may be different from the scheme used in the Rel-18 U2U. In the case of Rel-18 U2U, the relay UE easily assigns the local ID to the source Remote UE and target Remote UE because there are only two hops. When discussing multi-hop extension in Rel-19, a new local ID assignment mechanism should be considered for when the intermediate Relay UE assigns the local ID of the Remote UE. In terms of local ID assignment or QoS split, we may not be able to inherit the legacy Rel-18 U2U relay. |
| Sharp | Yes |  |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes | Legacy U2U mechanisms can be reused. Bullet 1 and 2 seems to follow these principles |
| Apple | Yes |  |
| ZTE | See comments | For the second bullet, if an intermediate relay is in RRC CONNECTED, it is not clear if the intermediate relay needs to connect to the same gNB as the Last relay UE or can be connected to a gNB different from the Last relay UE. For the latter case, we wonder the intention/benefits of the scenario, i.e. the intermediate relay has a direct Uu connection but act as a multi-hop intermediate relay.  In addition, we echo LG’s comments about the concerns on approach 2. |
| CATT | Yes |  |
| TCL | YES |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes |  |
| Kyocera | Yes | We share similar view as LG. |
| Spreadtrum | Yes |  |
| Ericsson | Yes | Compared to approach 1, approach 2 has bebefits   1. less design complexity for RAN2 2. lower signaling overhead and lower latency for E2E Remote UE connection establishment   less restriction to the intermediate relay UE, which no need to belong to the same cell as last relay UE.  In addition, regarding LG’s concern on local ID, we agree with Qualcomm. Which can be allocated by the gNB of the last relay UE. How to inform the local ID of the remote UE to intermediate relay UEs can be FFS. |
| Lenovo | Yes | In approach#2, the relay UEs in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE are not required to transit connected state. That means the intermediate relay will leave but gNB is not aware of it. |
| Samsung | Yes with comments | Technically, the above approach 2 may be workable. However, we share the concern from LG. Moreover, we are wondering if there is security issue, i.e., how to ensure the packets to/from remote UE can be well protected when conveying via the relay UE (except last relay UE) in idle/inactive state. |
| vivo | Yes |  |
| Qualcomm | Yes with comments | For LG’s comments, agree this has some difference with Rel-18 U2U. The difference is there is anchor node (gNB), and gNB can assign the local ID for the Remote UE and there should no collision on local ID assignment.  For the second bullet, it can be discussed whether the PC5 configuration can always come from the Remote UE’s serving gNB. That means in step 2, it should be further discussed on how the first UE and the intermediate relay UE obtains the PC5 configuration. |
| InterDigital | Yes | We think the ability of the intermediate relay UE to stay in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE if necessary is a significant advantage of approach 2 and a limitation of approach 1. The trigger of each relay to RRC\_CONNECTED introduces significant delay which limits scalability of multihop. Also, having to maintain all relays in RRC\_CONNECTED impacts the network as it needs to maintain context for UEs which have no traffic. |

Conclusion: No company questions the two bullets. As with approach 1, pros/cons and feasibility can be discussed in phase 2.

Proposal 3 – In one approach (“approach 2”) of U2N relays, Intermediate Relay UEs (other than the Last Relay UE) can be in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE when the U2N remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED.

Proposal 4 – In approach 2, any relay UE which happens to be in RRC\_CONNECTED can obtain its relaying RLC channel configuration in dedicated signalling.

Question 4: Do you agree that the above figure and steps can serve as the baseline connection establishment procedure of approach 2 that can serve as further discussion of pros/cons?

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | Yes |  |
| LG | Yes |  |
| Sharp | Yes |  |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes |  |
| Apple | Yes with comment | As explained in the rapporteur, the transmission of SUI message(s) by the intermediate relay UE is optional in Approach 2, because those UEs are not required to enter RRC\_CONNECTED. Also, there is no need for each intermediate relay UE to trigger RRC messages for its own RRC connection setup. So, it would be better to highlight those differences in the signaling diagrams. |
| CATT | Yes |  |
| TCL | Yes |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes |  |
| Kyocera | Yes |  |
| Spreadtrum | Yes |  |
| Ericsson | Yes | Agree with Apple |
| Lenovo | Yes |  |
| Samsung | Yes |  |
| vivo | Yes |  |
| Qualcomm | See comments | In step 2, would like to remove the details on how the first Relay UE and the intermediate Relay UE obtain PC5 configuration. It could be possible the configuration comes from the Remote UE’s serving gNB. This could make approach more easy.  [Rapp: We can leave this question FFS for now as from subsequent question, companies think both options are possible.] |
| InterDigital | Yes |  |

Conclusion: All companies agree that the provided description can serve as baseline connection establishment procedure for approach 2, with the change (in track changes) that there are two options for obtaining the configuration for the relay UEs which remain in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE.

Proposal 5 – The figure and description above serves as a baseline connection establishment procedure for multi-hop U2N Relays if Approach 2 (relays other than the Last Relay may/may not remain in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE when the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED) is adopted.

## 2.2 Assumptions on the Controlling cell/gNB

The controlling cell/gNB of the remote UE and associated relay UEs may depend on the RRC state of the remote UE and the coverage situation of the relay UE.

For a remote UE in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE, the U2N remote UE acquires SIB of a cell that may eventually provide network connectivity. As with the single-hop case, it’s assumed this is the SIB read by Last Relay UE that would eventually be the cell controlling the U2N Remote UE.

Question 5: Do you agree (for both approach 1 and approach 2) that the U2N Remote UE in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE gets its SI from the Last Relay UE?

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| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | See comments | We agree that the U2N Remote UE should use the SI of the cell that the Last Relay camps, while it is a little confusing to say “gets its SI from the Last Relay UE” since it relates to SI forwarding mechanism. |
| LG | See comments | If the intermediate Relay UE is connected, the serving cell of the intermediate Relay UE is the same as the last Relay UE’s cell. We believe that the U2N Remote UE in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE can receive its SI from the directly connected intermediate Relay UE.  [Rapporteur Comment: If the intermediate relay UE is directly connected to Uu, it should not be an intermediate UE to begin with.] |
| Sharp | See comments | Same view with OPPO. If it means that Last Relay UE delivers SIB(s) to the remote UE, it implies supporting of multi-hop U2U relay. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes | Similar views as Oppo |
| Apple | Yes | As intermediate relay UE(s), with high probability, are OOC, then intermediate relay UE will not be able to get SI by itself. Remote UE, and those intermediate relay UE need to get SI from the last relay UE.  Regarding OPPO’s comment, I assume Approach 1 intends to exclude L2 U2U relay mechamism is used for SI forwarding, then something equivalent to L3 U2U relay mechanism would be introduced for SI and Paging forwarding. One way or the other, some sort of U2U relay is inevitable, in regardless of whether Approach 1 or Approach 2 is chosen. |
| ZTE | See comments | Same view with OPPO, we think the U2N Remote UE should use the SIBs of the cell that the Last Relay camps. It is better to reword the sentence/Question5.  In our view, R17 L2 U2N remote UE SI request/forwarding over PC5 hop can be reused for MH remote UE and each intermediate relay UE to get the SIBs over each PC5 hop, this is not some sort of U2U relay. |
| CATT | Yes with comments | Similar view as OPPO. |
| TCL | Yes | Similar views as Oppo |
| Xiaomi | Comments | This is related to whether there is E2E connection between remote UE and intermediate relay UE. But we can confirm remote UE and last relay UE applies the same SI. |
| Kyocera | Yes | We share similar view as OPPO. |
| Spreadtrum | Yes | Same view as OPPO |
| Ericsson | Yes | Agree with Apple |
| Lenovo | See comments | We agree that the remote UE should use the system information same as the serving of last relay UE. If the first relay UE can get the system information, e.g first relay UE is connected or in-coverage, the first relay UE can monitor SI for the remote UE. |
| Samsung | Comments | Precisely speaking, **the SI information obtained by the remote UE should be the same as the one obtained by the last rely UE**. Thus, the last relay UE should forward the SI information via the intermediate relay UEs. How to perform such forwarding may need further discussion. |
| vivo | See comments | Generally speaking, the UEs should be able to directly obtain the SIB from its ‘parent’ node, which means that e.g. the U2N remote UE can acquire the SIB1 from First relay UE.  However as there are multiple relay UEs on the path, it is possible that the relay UEs (first relay UE and intermediate relay UE) may acquire the SIBs either in the similar way as a legacy U2N Remote UE or acquire the requested SIBs in its Uu interface. Those details should be discussed further. |
| Qualcomm | See comments | This makes confusion, it implies we need to support E2E PC5 connection between the Remote UE and the last Relay UE. I understand this not the intention.  Maybe it can be changed to: the last Relay UE forwards the required SI(s) to the Remote UE via the intermediate Relay UE(s). |
| InterDigital | Yes | The SI should be obtained from the last relay UE and mechanisms similar to legacy (i.e., SIB forwarding via each hop) can be used. We may also consider the remote UE receiving the SI directly from an intermediate relay UE as long as that intermediate relay UE is RRC\_CONNECTED (this can be further discussed).  For an intermediate relay UE that is not RRC\_CONNECTED, we don’t think this should be supported. For example, if an intermediate relay UE in coverage receives SIB from a cell that is different than the last relay UE, this SIB is of no use for the remote UE. |

Conclusion: With a rewording to address the concern from OPPO, most companies have a common view of which SI the remote UE will use when it is in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE (specifically, the SI of the Last Relay UE).

Proposal 6 – In multi-hop, the U2N Remote UE uses the SI of the cell of the Last Relay UE, which is forwarded via the Intermediate Relay UE(s). FFS on how to perform the forwarding.

In single-hop relaying, the U2N Relay is in coverage and connected via Uu. The remote UE is assumed to be out of coverage, and therefore, the control is assumed to come from the same cell as the cell to which the U2N Relay is connected. In approach 1, a relay UE (other than the Last Relay UE) acts as a remote UE. As a result, if a relay UE (other than the Last Relay UE) is out of coverage, its control should come from the same cell to which a parent relay UE is connected to. This is illustrated below and should also apply for approach 2.



Question 6: Do you agree (for both approach 1 and approach 2) that the control/configuration of an out of coverage relay UE connected to only one parent, when it is RRC\_CONNECTED and the U2N Remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, comes from the same cell controlling/configuring the remote UE and the Last Relay UE?

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| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | Yes |  |
| LG | Yes |  |
| Sharp | Yes |  |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes for approach 1 | For approach 1, each UE connects to the same cell of its parent relay UE, thus all the UEs are in the same cell.  For approach 2, if we follow the legacy U2U relay mechanism, all the U2U relay UEs, namely the intermediate relay UEs and the first relay UE can be in a different cell compared to the last relay UE and the remote UE. |
| Apple | Yes for Approach 1. FFS for Approach 2 | For approach 2, an OOC intermediate relay UE is not required to enter RRC\_CONNECTED, so we are not sure under what circumstances that this relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED.   1. If relay UE is connected via the next-hop relay UE (for its own traffic), then we agree it would under NW control of the last relay UE’s cell. But if the relay UE does not have its own traffic, then we are not sure why this relay UE wants to be connected to gNB via a relay UE in Approach 2. 2. If Relay UE is connected to its serving cell directly, but the serving cell does not support relay operation, then it will still act as OOC UE and use pre-configuration, which is not under dedicated NW control. 3. Also, for IDLE/INACTIVE relay UE, the intermediate relay UE may camp on a cell, but acting as an intermediate relay for a remote UE because the remote UE is not allowed to access the cell the relay UE is camped on.   So, we need some further discussion on Approach 2. |
| ZTE | Yes |  |
| CATT | Yes |  |
| TCL | Yes |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes for approach 1 |  |
| Kyocera | Yes |  |
| Spreadtrum | Yes |  |
| Ericsson | Yes for approach 1 | Intermediate relay UE in approach 1 will obtain the control information from the same cell configuring the remote UE and the last relay UE. However, in approach 2, the intermediate relay UE can get control information from a different cell than the cell configuring the remote UE and the last relay UE. |
| Lenovo | Yes for approach#1 | If the relay UE is idle/inactive and in-coverage, the relay UE could be served by a cell which is different from the serving cell of last relay UE. Once the relay UE is expected to connected state due to remote UE, the relay UE can access the network via the last relay UE.  [Rapp: Then I assume that for the question, which pertains to the relay in RRC\_CONNECTED, you agree for both approaches] |
| Samsung | Yes for approach 1 | The question assumes that both relay UE(s) and remote UE are in the RRC connected state, which is only applicable for the approach 1.  [Rapp: There are cases (e.g., intermediate relay has its own traffic) where the intermediate relay is also in RRC\_CONNECTED. This is what the question is referring to] |
| vivo | Yes for approach 1 | We understand for approach 2 the case is more complicated because the OOC intermediate relay UE may not need to be seen by network and may just use pre-configuration. We need further discussions about that. |
| Qualcomm | Yes for approach 1 |  |
| InterDigital | Yes | We think that if we limit this discussion to the case where the intermediate relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, the statement is valid. We see cases in approach 2 where the intermediate relay is in RRC\_CONNECTED (e.g., it has its own traffic), even though we don’t mandate this state. |

Conclusion: Rapporteur understands that this is the common understanding for approach 1, while for approach 2, the companies which indicate it is FFS or is not the case at all are mostly referring to the case where the Intermediate Relay UE is itself in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE (with the exception of at least Apple, and possibly some other companies that did not specify). In essence, for both approaches, we can therefore assume that when both remote UE and any Intermediate Relay UE are RRC\_CONNECTED, they can be RRC\_CONNECTED to the same cell. For the companies which mentioned that connection to different cells is supported for approach 2, we can leave this as FFS and study the case further if we decide to support approach 2. The common understanding is that this scenario (i.e. RRC connection to different cells) is only supported in approach 2.

Proposal 7 – The scenario of the remote UE RRC\_CONNECTED to one cell while an Intermediate Relay UE is RRC\_CONNECTED to a different cell is supported only in approach 2. FFS whether the scenario needs to be supported.

In the previous case, a relay UE (other than the Last Relay UE) could potentially be RRC connected to a different cell. This would be the case, for example, if the relay UE is in coverage, or if it has two PC5 links with two different parent relays (connected to two different cells). In this case, it could obtain its relaying configuration from a cell which is different than the cell from which the remote UE is obtaining its end-to-end configuration. This is shown in the figure below. The same situation would arise for a relay UE connected to two different parent relays, and also applies to both approach 1 and approach 2.



Question 7: Should we support the case (for both approach 1 and approach 2) the relay UE (other than the last relay UE) is RRC connected to (and obtains its configuration from) a different cell than the remote UE and parent relay UE for that remote UE?

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| **Companies** | **Yes or No** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | No | Firstly, this is out of R19 multi-hop U2N relay scope since for the relay UE it has two legs towards different NWs (i.e., multipath topology).  And we are wondering what the use case of this scenario is, i.e., a relay UE has direct connection to the network (can support single hop U2N Relay) but chose to act a multi-hop U2N intermediate relay. |
| LG | No | In this case, the intermediate Relay UE has two paths. One is a direct path and the other is an indirect path. It looks out of the scope in Rel-19. |
| Sharp | No | In this case, the Intermediate Relay UE should act as a Last Relay UE. If the Intermediate Relay UE is configured with multi-path, PCell should be on a direct path. And the PCell should be indicated as a serving cell in RRC container within a discovery message. Therefore, there is no use case of this scenario. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | No | In approach1, a UE always connects to one parent relay UE.  To limit the scope and keep the mult hop relay mechanism simpler, we should not support multi-path relay in multi-hop relay scenario in R19. Otherwise it will be very complicated.  For approach 2, the situation is different, since in current U2U relay mechanism, the U2U relay UE can be in a different cell with each remote UE. |
| Apple | No for approach 1,  FFS for approach 2 | For approach 1, the relay UE has to use the same NW control as its parent relay UE.  But for approach 2, even in RRC\_CONNECTED, the relay UE can still acting as OOC mode and use pre-configuration, as I explained in Q6. |
| ZTE | No | Agree with above comments that the relay UE has direct path and indirect path towards different gNBs is not in the scope of Rel-19. It is not clear how to coordinate the multi-hop related configuration from the two different gNBs.  Not understand why “and parent relay UE for that remote UE” is included in the Q7. The parent relay of the remote UE is the first intermediate relay. We think the intention is to discuss whether the relay UE could connect to a different cell than the Last relay UE/remote UE (In Q5 the intention is to discuss that the remote UE is controlled by the same cell as the Last relay.). |
| CATT | No |  |
| TCL | No |  |
| Xiaomi | No for approach 1  FFS for approach 2 | In approach 2, intermediate relay UE acts similar as U2U relay. In U2U, relay UE and remote UE can be in different cells. |
| Kyocera | No | We agree with LG that this is essentially a multipath configuration which isn’t in the Rel-19 scope.  We also agree with OPPO and Sharp that such an Intermediate Relay UE should just serve as a Last Relay UE, similar to the Rel-17 U2N Relay UE. |
| Spreadtrum | No |  |
| Ericsson | No for Approach 1 and yes for Approach 2 | We think this would be good to provide flexibility for intermediate relay UEs. It is too restrict if intermediate relay UEs need to be served in the same cell as the cell configuring remote UE and the last relay UE |
| Lenovo | No | If the relay UE is located in other cell different from last relay UE, the relay UE should access the serving cell via the last relay UE and detach its direct path. This case may occur when the relay UE is located at the cell edge which can not meet the condition of being a ‘last relay UE’. |
| Samsung | No | This results in multi-path, which is out of WID scope. |
| vivo | No | We think this case should not be supported, similar reason as other companies mentioned that this is out of R19 WID scope.  We also shared the view with OPPO that the scenario itself is quite confusing when a Relay UE would act as an intermediate relay UE while connecting to NW directly. |
| Qualcomm | See comments | For approach 1, no. For approach 2, yes.  We think this is benefit of approach 2 compared to approach 1. It should be included in the part of evaluation of approach 1 and approach 2 instead of this part.  Also, this is the additional issue for approach 1, i.e. if the intermediate relay UE is already in connected state, how to ensure it’s serving cell/gNB is same as Remote UE’ serving cell/gNB? |
| InterDigital | No, see comments | We see some advantages of supporting this scenario in approach 2. However, for simplicity, we can down-prioritize it if needed and assume that the remote UE can connect to the network via a relay UE which is not RRC connected to a different cell. |

Conclusion: The same conclusion from the previous question can be applied here.

One remaining case for an RRC\_CONNECTED remote UE that is specific to approach 2 is when one or more of the relay UE’s are in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE/OOC during active relaying for the U2N Remote UE. If we use rules which are consistent with previous releases of SL and relays, the relay UE may obtain its configuration from SIB/preconfiguration. The remaining question would then be to determine which SIB to use in the case where there are multiple cells involved. Alternatively (and deviating from previous release assumptions), it could obtain its configuration from a parent relay UE (e.g., the Last Relay UE) that obtains its configuration via dedicated RRC signaling.

Question 8: In approach 2, when the remote UE is RRC\_CONNECTED and the relay UE (other than the Last Relay UE) is in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE/OOC, where does this relay UE get its configuration?

1. From its camping cell, when IDLE/INACTIVE, or from preconfiguration, when OOC.
2. From SIB of the cell of a parent relay UE that receives it on Uu
3. From a parent relay UE (e.g., the Last Relay UE) that obtains it via dedicated signaling.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Companies** | **Response** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | Do not see the need to support approach-2 | We understand each option has some further issues to resolve:   * How to configure UE ID to avoid collision in the multi-hop link. * For Option A and Option B, how for the relay UE to derive the bearer configuration from SIB/Pre-configuration based on per-QoS flow or per-bearer Uu QoS information. * For Option C, how for the Last Relay UE to report sidelink UE information for the whole link   Therefore, the complexity by supporting this approach is not justified by the gain if any. |
| LG | See the comments | It can be different depending on the topology scenario. If the intermediate Relay UE is allowed to have two different parent Relay UEs, the way in which the intermediate Relay UE receives its configuration will be different depending on whether the parent Relay UE belongs to the same cell or not. So, we think it is better to discuss this issue after deciding on the topology scenario. |
| Sharp | See comments | Similar view with OPPO. If some relay UEs are in RRC\_CONNECTED and other relay UEs are not in RRC\_CONNECTED, since some of them obtain configuration itself from SIB/pre-configuration and some of them obtain configuration by dedicated RRC signaling, the signaling order for each relay UE’s configuration and the information to be informed to the gNB should be complex. Therefore, it is difficult to determine QoS related configuration (e.g. bearer configuration) from UE/gNB perspective. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | See comment | A is the legacy mechanism in U2U relay. However, as Oppo mentioned, we also do not see a need to support approach 2 due to the complexity it brings with probably no gains. |
| Apple | Option A | I think Option A is the most-straight forward choice for Approach 2 |
| ZTE | See comments | It is not clear how to allocate Local ID in approach 2, and how intermediate relay UE identify different remote UEs and how to perform the right bearer mapping/routing.  Not sure what’s the difference for Option B and Option C. If the parent relay is in RRC connected, this question may have relation to Question 7. If the case in Q7 is not supported, i.e. the parent relay can only connect to the same gNB as the Last relay, then it means all intermediate relays use the SIBs of the cell of the Last relay. Only if the case in Q7 is supported, we then discuss whether the SIBs of the cell of direct path is used or the SIBs of the cell of the indirect path is used. As commented in Q7, we do not see the benefits to support the case. |
| CATT | See comments | For approach2, Option A is the basic solution as in U2U relay. But we only support approach 1. |
| TCL | Option A | Option A is the only feasible solution. |
| Xiaomi | A or B |  |
| Kyocera | Option A | Even with Option A, some coordination may still be needed between the cells, including the resources to be used for its transmission. |
| Spreadtrum | Option A |  |
| Ericsson | A  Or C | We think A is most preferred, which gives the best flexibility  But we are also fine with option c, as Qualcomm suggested. |
| Lenovo | Option A | But don’t see the need to support approach#2. |
| Samsung | See comments | Share the view of OPPO and Huawei |
| vivo | Option A | If we are going to support approach 2 then we think option-A should be adopted with least complexity. However we kind of echo some companies’ view that we should further discuss whether to support approach 2 considering the complexity it brings. |
| Qualcomm | Option C, Option A can also be acceptable. | Option A reuses existing U2U mechanism, but QoS split needs to be further enhancement.  Option C is more simple way that the Remote UE’s serving gNB provide PC5 configuration for all PC5 links, as well as local ID assignment. In this way, there is no local ID assignment and configuration collision. |
| InterDigital | Option C is preferred, however, A is also possible. | Agree with QC. |

Conclusion: The issue was already addressed by an FFS in the stage 2 of approach 2 (in a previous question) and no new proposal is needed here.

## 2.3 E2E QoS

End-to-end QoS is guaranteed in relaying by splitting the QoS requirements (i.e., latency) between the different hops. In approach 1, each relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED when the U2N Remote UE is RRC\_CONNECTED. It is therefore natural that the gNB performs the QoS splitting for each hop, considering this was done for single hop U2N relays where the L2 U2N relay also needed to be RRC\_CONNECTED.

Question 9: Do you agree that for approach 1, the QoS split is performed by the network?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Companies** | **Yes or no** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | Yes |  |
| LG | Yes |  |
| Sharp | Yes |  |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes | The network can guarantee the QoS during multi hop operation |
| Apple | Yes |  |
| ZTE | Yes |  |
| CATT | Yes |  |
| TCL | Yes |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes |  |
| Kyocera | Yes |  |
| Spreadtrum | Yes |  |
| Ericsson | Yes |  |
| Lenovo | Yes |  |
| Samsung | Yes |  |
| vivo | Yes |  |
| Qualcomm | Yes with comment | It is understood there is no QoS split concept in U2N relay. Maybe it is more accurate that gNB guarantees QoS requirement. |
| InterDigital | Yes |  |

Conclusion: All companies have common understanding for this question.

Proposal 8 – For approach 1, QoS split for each hop is performed by the network.

In approach 2, only the Last Relay UE needs to be in RRC\_CONNECTED. Since the Uu hop is managed by the network, it should be the network to determine the QoS split (i.e., the portion of the latency) associated with the Uu hop.

Question 10: Do you agree that for approach 2, the QoS split on the Uu hop is determined by the network?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Companies** | **Yes or no** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | Yes |  |
| LG | Yes |  |
| Sharp | Yes |  |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | Yes |  |
| Apple | Yes |  |
| CATT | Yes |  |
| TC; | Yes |  |
| Xiaomi | Yes |  |
| Kyocera | Yes |  |
| Spreadtrum | Yes |  |
| Ericsson | Yes |  |
| Lenovo | Yes |  |
| Samsung | Yes with comments | There is no QoS split over Uu hop since Uu hop is a single hop. Precisely speaking, it may be “**the network determines the QoS on the Uu hop for multi-hop sidelink relay**.” |
| vivo | Yes |  |
| Qualcomm | Yes |  |
| InterDigital | Yes |  |

Conclusion: All companies have common understanding for this question. For the next question, it requires further discussion as to whether the network can perform the split, a relay UE performs the split, or both are acceptable.

Proposal 9 – For approach 2, QoS split between the Uu hop and all remaining hops is performed by the network. FFS how to split the QoS over each of the individual remaining hops.

The remaining question is how to perform the splitting over the path between the Last Relay UE and the U2N Remote UE. If the relays are all in RRC\_CONNECTED, the situation is the same as the assumption for approach 1, and the network can perform the splitting. On the other hand, if the relays are in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE/OOC, it would be possible to use the U2U mechanism in Rel18 and leave the splitting to the relay UE implementation.

Question 11: For approach 2, which entity should perform the QoS split of each link of the path between the Last Relay UE and the U2N Remote UE?

1. Network.
2. Relay UE serving that link

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Companies** | **Response** | **Comments** |
| OPPO | See comments | We understand for Option-B, the further clarification is needed on which relay UE to do the splitting when there are 2 relays serving the same link (i.e., the link between 2 relays). |
| LG | See comment | We need to discuss this issue further. In the case of Rel-18 U2U, it was easy for the relay UE to split the QoS, because there were only two links on both sides of the relay UE. However, as the multi-hop count increases, a single relay UE cannot know the quality of the entire link between hops. Before determining how the intermediate Relay UE knows the overall link quality, we cannot make any decisions.  For Approach 2, both option A and option B have the same problem. That is, how the network or Relay UE serving that link can know the overall hop link quality. |
| Sharp | See comments | Same view with OPPO. Option B may not align with the previous agreement “RAN2 intend to minimize the impact of hop count on the multi-hop relay mechanisms.” To achieve this, all relay UEs must always know the remaining number of hops and the remaining QoS. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | See comments | Following the Rel-18 mechanism Option B seems to be the way to do it but it will be complex for the Relay to perform the split with muti hops |
| Apple | Option B | We do not see much complexity to let relay UE to split QoS as the mechanism in L2 U2U relay design can be reused.  On the contrary, we think Approach 1 has its own complexity issue in regards of signalling overhead, delay and scalability concerns, |
| ZTE | See comments | It is better to clarify how the NW or relay UE to perform the QoS split (considering at least two intermediate relays are supported) and the potential spec impacts, so to evaluate the complexity of different solutions for approach 2. |
| CATT | See comments | Agree with OPPO, option B needs to be clarified if selected. |
| TCL | Option A |  |
| Xiaomi | B | Since intermediate relay UE may be in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE, NW may not be aware of the intermediate relay UE’s PC5 channel condition and is not able to split the QoS. Relay UE is the only option. |
| Kyocera | Option B | Details on which relay to perform the QoS split can be further discussed, if approach 2 is adopted. |
| Spreadtrum | Option B |  |
| Ericsson | B, but we are also fine with Option A | Agree with Qualcomm and Interdigital |
| Lenovo | Option B |  |
| Samsung | Need clarification for both options | Option A: since the intermediate relay UE are not in RRC connected state, the NW control becomes meaningless. Specifically, the NW cannot derive any information on the PC5 link between two relay UEs.  Option B: the E2E QoS needs to be satisfied along the whole path. A relay UE cannot determine the QoS split among other links since it cannot know the PC5 link quality of other links. |
| vivo | Option A with comments | We slightly prefer to make gNB generally responsible for performing QoS split even for approach 2, especially consider that there may be more than one relay UE and the Rel-18 U2U mechanism cannot be inherited directly. However, it may not be possible that every hop can be known well by the gNB in approach 2 especially the intermediate relay UE may not be controlled/seen by network, so e.g. the network may only be able to assign a QoS between U2N remote UE and last relay (including more than one hop).  This may also be discussed in SA2 in 23.700 where they mentioned:  *End-to-end QoS management for multi-hop U2N Relays is done similarly to the end-to-end QoS management for single hop L3 U2N Relay as defined in TS 23.304 [4], with enhancement to handle QoS split over multiple legs of the PC5 interface.*  Anyway, we think further discussion is needed for approach 2 and we can further conclude on that. |
| Qualcomm | Option A, Option B can also be feasible. | Option A is more simple way, and Remote UE’s serving gNB should be an anchor node, it can provide PC5 RLC Channel directly and forwarded to the intermediate Relay UE. Option A is more like with approach 1, the only difference is how to provide configuration to the intermediate relay UE, using Uu RRC connection or PC5 RRC connection.  Option B is extended by existing U2U relay. Actually, SA2 already agreed Option B for L3 based multi-hop U2N relay, it can be reused for L2 relay. |
| InterDigital | Both are feasible | Since the network decides the QoS on the Uu hop, either option can work for the remaining split. |

Conclusion: See conclusion from previous question.

3 Phase 2 Discussion

Following discussion in Phase 1 to agree on the high-level details of the different solutions, Phase 2 will discuss feasibility and pros/cons of the different solutions.

For phase 2 discussion, rapporteur suggests that discussion focuses on the key issues associated with each approach which were mentioned by companies during phase 1. Specifically, companies should have a common understanding of whether each mentioned issue can be resolved with reasonable specification/design effort. More importantly, whether an issue is limited to design complexity, or affects performance or extendibility of multi-hop should be better understood based on company inputs.

Rapporteur has listed each of the issues identified with approach 1, and the issues identified with approach 2 in the following table, along with his understanding of the relevant consequences or details (based on the company inputs).

**Approach 1 Issues**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Issue Summary | Details and Consequences (based on company inputs) |
| **A1.1**: All Relay UEs need to be in RRC\_CONNECTED when the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED. | * Network needs to maintain CONNECTED mode context for relay UEs which themselves do not have any data to transmit. * Scenario where two different remote UEs connect to different cells (e.g., due to PLMN restrictions) via the same Intermediate relay UE cannot be supported because an Intermediate Relay UE cannot have two RRC connections. |
| **A1.2**: Connection establishment by the remote UE must wait for connection establishment of each intermediate relay UE, and in sequence (i.e., Last relay UE triggers and completes connection establishment, then Intermediate relay UE completes connection establishment, and so on). | * Latency of remote UE connection establishment increases as the number of hops increases. * Increase of Uu signalling as the number of hops increases (connection establishment signalling, SUI transmission, for each relay UE, etc). |
| **A1.3**: The scenario of a remote UE RRC\_CONNECTED to a cell which is different than the cell that an Intermediate UE is RRC\_CONNECTED to **cannot** be supported.  (Note: This is different than multipath, because from the remote UE perspective, there is still only 1 path to the network via the last Relay UE for that remote UE.) | * Restriction may have impacts to discovery and (re)selection procedures in RAN2 and/or SA2 when we consider discovery and (re)selection of Intermediate relays which are already serving other remote UEs. * If an RRC\_CONNECTED UE is connected to a cell which does not support U2N relay, it cannot serve as an Intermediate relay via another Last Relay UE. * RRC\_CONNECTED intermediate Relay UE path switching from its serving cell to the relay cell may be needed, and new event needs to be introduced for this kind of path switching. The performance of intermediate Relay UE’s service could be degraded due to switching to multi-hop relay path from direct path. There could also be issue that the relay cell may not support intermediate Relay UE’s service, so that how to handle this is still a problem. |
| **A1.4**: An intermediate relay UE needs to be configured with Uu SRAP configuration (at least for the default DRB) and SRB. | * Configuration at the Intermediate UE may not be useful and resources may be consumed. |
| Al.5: Remote UE or an intermediate relay UE may fail to set up its RRC\_CONNECTION, due to its parent relay UE (s) take too long time to setup it/their RRC\_CONNECTIONS. With more hops on the path, the issue may occur more often. | * In such case, T300 would expire, which further triggers PC5 links to be released. RAN2 needs to further study how to handle such failure cases. |
| AI.6: How to handle Uu RLF case | * Whether all the UEs need to perform RRC reestablishment in case that Uu RLF, and what’s the sequence for the RRC reestablishment |
| AI.7: How to handle intermediate Relay UE mobility in case that intermediate Relay UE has its service ongoing | * If intermediate Relay UE moves and event X/Y/Z is triggered, there could be procedure collision between intermediate Relay UE service and the Remote UE service, how to handle this case. |
| AI.8: For those scenarios identified in discovery and (re)selection email discussion which cannot by supported by approach 1 (due to multi-path is not in scope), how to identify and exclude those scenarios | * Solutions are needed to identify and exclude all the scenarios that approach 1 cannot support. |

**Approach 2 Issues**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Issue Summary | Details and Consequences (based on company inputs) |
| **A2.1**: How to configure the local UE ID for the remote UE in order to deliver the RRCSetup message. | * If the local UE ID is configured by the relay UE, collision may occur. * If the local ID is configured by the gNB, how to trigger the last relay UE to RRC CONNECTED state and how to report all the UE information to the network. * With the intermediate relay UEs in different cells and controlled by different gNB, the allocation of local ID will be extremely complex * The RRCSetup message of the remote UE has to wait until local UE ID coordination is done at the PC5 hop, which increase the latency of RRC establishment procedure. |
| **A2.2:** How to configure the RLC channel configuration for a relay UE that is in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE | * How does a relay UE derice the bearer configuration from SIB/Pre-configuration based on Uu QoS information. * Which SIB/Pre-configuration should be used for each relay UE if they are in different cells/coverage with the remote UE(s). |
| **A2.3:** How to perform the QoS split on the hops other than the Uu hop. | * It will be complex for the relay to perform the split with multiple hops because a single relay cannot know the quality of the entire link. * The modification of split QoS at one hop will trigger the re-splitting procedure at the whole link. |
| **A2.4** Security of E2E traffic | * Is there a security issue? i.e., how to ensure the packets to/from remote UE can be well protected when conveyed via a relay UE in IDLE/INACTIVE |
| **A2.5 Heavy/complex control procedure at PC5 link** | * The relay UE configures local UE ID or do the QoS splitting needs to maintain the UE context of each UE/each link of the muti-hop U2N link. Even if there is no PC5 RRC connection between the relay UE and the non-adjacent other UEs. * There will be PC5 signaling overhead for coordination/configuration/collision resolution, especially considering there is no E2E PC5 connection between non-adjacent UEs. |
| **A2.6 Alternative 2 cannot support the agreed WI Objective for supporting Scenario C and D (see the highlighted part)** | * The WI objective states that  1. Specify the following intra-gNB service continuity scenarios for multi-hop U2N relay based on Rel-17/18 procedures (for remote UE):   **First Priority:**   1. Intra-gNB multi-hop indirect to direct path switching using existing framework 2. Intra-gNB multi-hop indirect to single-hop indirect path switching using existing framework   **Second Priority in order of importance:**   1. Intra-gNB direct to multi-hop indirect path switching 2. Intra-gNB single-hop indirect to multi-hop indirect path switching   The scenarios C and D are limited to path switching to a target indirect path consisting of the last relay UE in “direct” RRC Connected mode and all the other intermediate relay(s) in “indirect” RRC Connected mode to the same cell.  A serious limitation of approach 2 is that Scenario C and D cannot be supported with approach 2 as relay UEs can be in different cell/ different gNB and bringing them to connected state will be extremely complex. |
| **A 2.7 SRAP PDU format design complexity** | * To send the data from remote UE to last relay UE, U2U SRAP PDU format may be used, but there also needs a U2N SRAP format considering the e2e link between remote UE and gNB. Therefore, the last relay UE may need some transformation for different SRAP format which may increase complexity. |

Question 12: For each of the issues in the above tables A1.1-A1.4 and A2.1-A2.3, comment on the following:

* A) Whether each of the details and consequences listed in the second column can be resolved.
* B) Whether/how each of the details and consequences listed in the second column impacts the performance or extendibility of the relay solution.
* C) Whether/how each of the details and consequences listed in the second column can be addressed in the solution (possible specification impacts).

E.g.:

Company X: Issue A1.1 – text responding to each of A, B, C;

Issue A.1.2 – text responding to each of A, B, C;

….

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Companies** | **Comments** |
| Ericsson | A1.1 – the issue cannot be resolved. it would limit the performance or extendibility of the relay solution.  A1.2 – the issue cannot be resolved, it would limit the performance or extendibility of the relay solution.  A1.3 – the issue/limitation cannot be resolved. the restriction put on discovery and relay selection incurs more design complexity to RAN2 and SA2, and of course, it would limit the performance or extendibility of relay solution.  A1.4- the issue/limitation can be resolved, RAN2 would then need to discuss  Option 1: each relay UE except the last relay needs to establish at least a best effort/default DRB, although the relay UE has no own Uu traffic. In the legacy, it is not allowed to have a UE (remote UE) to setup a RRC\_CONNECTION to its serving gNB, without any own DRB established towards the gNB.  Option 2: each relay UE except the last relay UE only needs to establish SRBs without DRBs, which would need additional spec changes to allow this. In addition, RAN2 needs to check this with other work groups e.g., SA2, to see if it is feasible to support this option.  Al.5 – RAN2 needs to study how to handle the case where the remote UE or intermediate relay UE fails to setup its RRC\_CONNECTION. This adds more design complexity, meanwhile, remote UE’s performance would be negatively affected.  A2.1 – the issue can be resolved/avoided if let the gNB to allocate the local ID for the remote UE. Whether and how the local ID is signalled to each intermediate relay UE is FFS. the spec change is small.  A2.3 – the issue can be resolved. QoS of PC5 links can be split by the gNB. The gNB may just do an equal split among all hops (including PC5 hops and the Uu hop). Alternatively, the gNB may perform split considering PC5 link measurements (e.g., PC5 links measurements may be forwarded to the last relay UE by intermediate relay UE. The last relay UE reports to the gNB). QoS of PC5 links can be alternatively split by the relay UE. Similarly, PC5 link measurements can be forwarded to the relay UE in a hop by hop manner. Alternatively, E2E QoS can be just equally split among all hops, given that, each PC5 hop may have similar radio channel quality as other PC5 hop, since each hop needs to fulfil the RSRP threshold.  A2.4 – we don’t think there is security issue. There is E2E security between remote UE and the gNB. On each hop, there is per hop security. |
| OPPO | A1.1: We don’t think it is a valid issue for multi-hop relay approach 1.  • For the maintain of UE context without own data, this is same as single hop relay, i.e., no additional issue for multi-hop case.  • For the supporting of two different remote UEs connect to different cells (e.g., due to PLMN restrictions) via the same Intermediate relay UE. We are not sure whether this is a valid scenario, i.e., the PLMNs can be supported via the same intermediate relay UE.  A1.2: Both approach 1 and approach 2 have latency/signaling overhead issue, considering network is more capable than the UE, the issue for approach 2 may be serious than approach 1. The data transmission from the remote UE needs to wait after the UE ID allocation/QoS split/bearer configuration no matter approach 1 or 2, approach 1 requires more procedure at Uu with is controlled by the network but approach 2 requires more coordination/procedures at PC5 which is controlled by the UE.  A1.3: This is the same issue as A1.1.  A1.4: We are confused why the SRAP configuration at the intermediate relay UE is a waste of resource, isn’t SRAP configuration for relay operation a must in either approach?  A1.5: This is the same issue as A1.1.  A2.1: This issue cannot be resolved easily.  • If relies on gNB to allocate UE ID, the allocation of UE ID requires at least the last get into RRC connected state and reports all the UE context to the network. So the further questions are:   * How to trigger the last relay UE’s RRC connection, new trigger condition is needed since there is no RRCsetup message from the intermediate relay. * How for the last relay UE to get all the UE information (e.g., L2 ID) and report to network especially considering there is no E2E PC5 RRC connection between non-adjacent UEs.   • If relies on relay UE to allocate UE ID, how to resolve the collision issue. And the Relay who allocates UE ID needs to get all the UE information on the multi-hop link, which causes additional burden to the relay UE.  A2.2: This cannot be resolved easily. How to get the configuration needs to be discussed in different cases and requires different solution, i.e.,:   * The different RRC/coverage states needs to be discussed/captured separately; * The remote/relay UEs in same/different cell needs to be discussed/captured separately;   We can imagine the complexity since in R18 U2U Relay, with only one hop and U2U service the specification is already very complex.  A2.3: This issue cannot be resolved easily, no matter split by gNB or relay UE, the coordination at PC5 link, reporting at Uu link causes signaling overhead and additional burden to the relay UE. Which impacts the performance or extendibility of the relay solution.  A2.5: This issue cannot be resolved and impacts the performance or extendibility of the relay solution. Since it move the control function from the network to the UE side.  A2.6: The service continuity issue cannot be solved since there is no service continuity support in U2U Relay. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | A1.1: We don’t think this is a valid issue for multi-hop relay approach 1.  • For the maintaining of UE context without own data, this is same as single hop relay in R17. The Relay UE can be in RRC CONNECTED state to Serve the remote UE while not having any of its own DRB. Maintain CONNECTED mode context for relay UEs was never considered as a issue in R17 so the network can very well handle this for multipath .  • For the supporting of two different remote UEs connect to different cells (e.g., due to PLMN restrictions) via the same Intermediate relay UE would never be the case for Approach 1 and is not a valid scenario.  A1.2:. The major objective of the work item is the single hop U2N relays that have been developed in Rel-17 have limited applicability because of the range limitation of a single hop sidelink relay and Multi hop relay will provide better range or coverage extension compared to single hop for the first responders and for the public safety. Latency is seconday issue and can be resolved once approach 1 is selected as the way to go  A1.3: This is not a valid scenario for Approach 1 as indicated in A1.1. Please see our response in 1.1  A1.4: This is not a valid issue. We don’t need any DRBs or default DRB for the relay UE to be in RRC connected State. These relay UEs can be in RRC connected state just to server the remote UE without having any of their own data to be transferred. Alternatively in other scenario intermediate relay UE can first get connected to transfer their own data via the last relay UE and at the same time serve any remote or other intermediate relay UE after getting connected.  We don’t see any issues with these two alternatives  A1.5: The failures can be resolved with extended timers for multi hop.  Extending the coverage is the main aim of the Multihop relays and the latency is not major issue with approach 1 and can be addressed if needed later.  A2.1: This issue cannot be resolved easily.  • Agree with analysis from OPPO. Considering such serious issues with the basic procedure it is recommended to go ahead with approach 1  A2.2: This cannot be resolved easily. Agree with OPPO on how to get the configuration needs to be discussed in different cases and requires different solution which will be extremely complex and still may not work in actual practice. Applying already complex single hop U2U mechanisms for multi hop does not make much sense when there are U2N mechanism available and can work well providing a simple system with the natural extension of single hop U2N mechanism  A2.3: This issue cannot be resolved easily, no matter which entity performs the QoS split whether its gNB or relay UE. The signaling will be complex with no benefits. Sticking to Approach 1 has clear advantage.  A2.4:This is a very serious concern as the relay UEs will not be in control of the network entity It is very easy for the intruder to setup some fake relay UEs in idle state and inspect the packet or stop forwarding the packets altogether  A2.5: Agree with Oppo.  A2,6 Path switching to a target indirect path consisting of the last relay UE in “direct” RRC Connected mode and all the other intermediate relay(s) in “indirect” RRC Connected mode to the same cell cannot be achieved by Approach 2 as the gNB has no control over the relay UE which might be connected to different gNB |
| Kyocera | A1.1 – We don’t think there should be an issue for the NW to keep the context of all the UEs in RRC CONN, and the support of multihop relay (including the number of hops) can also be determined by the NW. For Rel-19, which should limit the intermediate relay UE’s connection to a single cell.  A1.2 – We wonder if this means the remote UE cannot send RRC Setup Request to the first relay UE until the first relay UE is in RRC CONN, which is an unnecessary restriction. We also wonder if this means the relay UE will indicate to its RRC state.  A1.3 – We agree with the scenario that the intermediate relay UE cannot be connected to a different cell than the cell the remote UE is connected to. We think the intermediate relay UE should be connected to the same cell as the cell serving the last relay UE, which will resolve the issue.  A1.4 – It’s not clear to us why default DRB is needed for the intermediate relay UE when it’s only acting as a relay UE.  A1.5 – We agree it will take longer to establish connection with the gNB. It can be discussed in Stage 3 what timer(s) may be needed. We do agree that connection failure needs to be addressed, which may lead to discussions on how relay reselection should work.  A2.1 – With Approach 2, if the intermediate relay UE is allowed to be served by a different cell than that of the last relay UE, then it may be necessary for the relay UE to coordinate the assignment of Local ID. |
| LG | **A1.1 It doesn’t seem to be a valid issue**.  - It’s the same phenomenon when using single hop U2N relay (Rel-17 U2N). It doesn't seem to be an additional issue for the multi-hop Relay.  - We don’t think the scenario on the detail is not main scenario. It’s not reasonable to discuss for this specific design. Also, it’s unclear how to operate when the intermediate Relay UE operates as a remote UE.  **A1.2 It will be the same issue for both approach 1 and 2,**  - The latency increases as the number of hops increases. However, we think it’s the same in case of the approach 2.  - We think that increased Uu signals in approach 1 as the hop count increased will be similar in approach 2. In approach 2, as the hop count is increased, we expect that the SL signals among last/intermediate Relay UE and the Remote UE will be increased due to local ID assignment and QoS split.  - It’s hard to say simply which approach will be better in terms of latency or signalling overhead. To compare two approaches, the more specific control procedure is needed in the case of approach 2. The approach 2 is not clear procedure in terms of local ID assignment and QoS split. We don’t want to spend too much time for comparing with non-clear procedure.  **A1.3 It’s not a valid scenario.**  - Why does the intermediate Relay UE in RRC\_CONNECTED in other cell from the last Relay UE support multi-hop relay? If the connected cell of the intermediate Relay UE does not support multi-hop relay, the intermediate Relay UE should not operate as an intermediate Relay UE. We don’t understand why we should consider this scenario.  **A1.4 Whichever approach we choose, the SRAP configuration is needed.**  - We don’t understand why SRAP configuration at the intermediate Relay UE can be a waste of resources? Whichever approach we choose, the SRAP configuration at the intermediate Relay UE should be configured.  **A1.5 It’s the same issue for both approaches 1 and 2,**  - If the connection failure is happened due to signalling quality, it can happen in both approach 1 and 2.  - whichever approach is applied, a proper timer setting will be required. As the T400 was expanded for the Rel-18 U2U relay operation, T300 may be increased for multi-hop U2N operation. If the T300 timer sets longer depending on the hop count, the failure can be properly handled.  **A2.1 We believe it’s not easy resolved/avoided issue,**  - If each Relay UE assigns the local UE ID, the relay UE may replace it at every hop. It causes a burden on the relay UE and may increase latency.  - If the last Relay UE assigns the local ID, the remote UE may send a local ID request message to the last Relay UE because the last Remote UE does not know if the remote UE is attached. After receiving the local ID request message, the last Relay UE sends message to assign local ID for the Remote UE. However, before sending these messages (the message for local ID request, the message to deliver an assigned local ID), each intermediate Relay UE should be configured with the RLC channel mapped to the local ID. It’s not clear how to configure the mapping between local ID and RLC channel at the intermediate Relay UE before configuring local ID. It looks quite complicated.  - If gNB assigns the local ID of the Remote UE, we are unsure how to configure the SRAP for each intermediate Relay UE in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE toward the Remote UE. It will be totally new complex scheme.  **A2.2 Approach 2 is not clear about the scheme of local ID assignment and QoS split**  - We think there are problems how to deliver RLC configuration to the intermediate Relay UE. We believe if the last Relay UE perform RLC configuration for each intermediate Relay UE, it has a problem in terms of signalling overhead. We cannot compare the signalling overhead reasonably because approach 2 was not specified.  **A2.3 Even for the Uu hop QoS split, the gNB should be aware of the entire link quality. Because the QoS split cannot be performed based on the absolute Uu link quality.**  - The question is different from our understanding. Even for the Uu hop QoS split, the gNB should be aware of the entire link quality. When the gNB only knows the Uu link quality, the gNB cannot perform Uu hop QoS split. We guess that QoS split will be performed based on the relative link quality. The QoS split may not be determined solely based on the absolute quality of the Uu link quality alone. For example, if the Uu link quality and SL quality are very good, the split PDB value can be distributed evenly. However, if the Uu link quality is quite similarly good as in the example just before and the SL quality is poor, the Uu PDB should be assigned a shorter period, and SL PDB should be assigned a longer period compared to the first example.  - For the Uu hop QoS split, the gNB should know the entire link quality. Also, whichever intermediate (including the last Relay UE) performs QoS split, the intermediate Relay UE (including the last Relay UE) should be aware of the entire link quality.  **A 2.4 In some case, there could be a security problem.**  We can ask the security issue to the SA3. However, before asking to the SA2, we need further detail signalling procedure about approach 2.  **2.5 We believe that the PC5 link signalling overhead can be a problem in approach 2 similar to Uu link signalling overhead in approach 1**.  We believe that as the Uu signalling is reduced, the SL signalling will increase at the approach 2. As you can see our response in the other question related to the local ID and QoS split, we think that some roles of gNB is assigned to each intermediate/last Relay UE in the approach 2. This will increase the complexity of the intermediate/last Relay UE. We are not sure what the benefits of approach 2 are.  **2.6 We believe approach 2 will reduce the candidate path to support service continuity in case C and D.**  In the case C and D, if the remote UE reports the candidate intermediate Relay UE to the gNB, the gNB may exclude the path among the candidate if the intermediate Relay UE is in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE, or the gNB may trigger the intermediate Relay UEs in RRC\_IDLE/INACTIVE to be in RRC\_CONNECTED. How the gNB triggers the intermediate Relay UE can be another issue. Because gNB does not know the existence of the IDLE/INACTIVE intermediate Relay UEs. This method will increase the latency for the path switching.  Meanwhile, in approach 1, it’s much easier to support fast service continuity and reliable management. |
| CATT | A1.1: Not a valid issue for approach 1.  For CONNECTED mode maintain, compared to Rel-17 U2N relay, there is no delta part needs to be furhter handled forseen. For the scenario raised, it is corner case.  A1.2: Not a valid issue for approach 1.  With the introduction of multi-hop, it is reasonable that the remote UE connection establishment time increases. Multi-hop is introduced to cater the requirement for public safty area which is not sensative in connection establishment delay, take one step back, even the approach2 has less connection time, it is hard to prove that the saved time can fit the requirement.  A1.3: Not a valid issue for approach 1.  The raised case is out of scope. In the current RAN2 WID, it is clear captured that the intermediate relay UE should have “indirect” RRC Connected mode to the same cell.  “The scenarios C and D are limited to path switching to a target indirect path consisting of the last relay UE in “direct” RRC Connected mode and all the other intermediate relay(s) in “indirect” RRC Connected mode to the same cell.”  A1.4: Not a valid issue for approach 1.  Same concern from OPPO and Huawei.  A1.5: A valid issue needs to be addressed for approach 1  With the introduction of multi-hop, it is natural the connection setup time is longer than legacy. Hence, how to reduce the failure probability can be further discussed.  A1.6: A valid issue need to be addressed for appraoch 1. We don’t think this issue is a block to approach 1.  A1.7: Not a valid issue. Out of scope under service continuity discussion according to current WID.  A1.8: Not a valid issue. We prefer to leave it to SA2.  A2.1/A2.2/A2.3/A2.5: Valid issues need to be addressed for approach 2 and cannot be resolved easily  Agree with OPPO and Huawei. Since many issues exist and cannot be easily resolved easily, Approach 1 is preferred compared with Approach 2.  A2.4: Valid issue needs to be addressed for approach 2  Since the intermediate relay UE can be in IDLE/INACTIVE and out of NW control, It is doubtable whether the security can be ensured. It had better send LS to SA3.  A2.6: Valid issue needs to be addressed for approach 2 and cannot be resolved.  Besides the difficulty to support scenario C/D, even with scenario A/B, it should also discuss how to release the source link since some of the intermediate relay UE is out of NW control. |
| vivo | A1.1  -we don’t think to maintain the context for relay UEs is a real problem because it is likely that all relay UEs entering RRC CONNECTED for ongoing services, otherwise they may be in RRC IDLE state.  - for different PLMN case to restrict two remote UE connect to different cell via a same intermediate relay UE, we also have doubt on the validity of this scenario. And event this exists, the remote UE can just select a different intermediate relay UE. don’t see real problem here.  Could describe the specification impact as e.g. ‘how to guarantee that the remote UE and all Relay UEs on the multi-hop relay path are controlled by the same cell’.  A1.2  - this issue may exist but we understand this can be solved e.g. by intermediate relay UE selection, e.g. the RRC CONNECTED intermediate relay UE may be selected first.  A1.3  - as the note mentioned, from remote UE perspective there is only 1 path, so don’t think there is really any problem. And we also do not see real restriction on intermediate relay UE selection.  A1.4  - Agree with companies that it can be further discussed whether default DRB is needed if it only serves as intermediate relay UE. our answer is ‘no’.  A1.5  - similar issue as A1.2. we understand this case can be easily solved with a reasonable longer time value, up to network implementation, if needed. So don’t see real issues here.  A2.1  - yes, different than approach 1, the relay UEs are not controlled by the same gNB, which makes the local ID assignment complicated, it needs a lot of effort and R18 U2U cannot be reused here.  A2.2  - agree with OPPO that if we are going to specify all cases (i.e. consider the coverage scenario for different relay UEs on this link), it would be much complicated. So we prefer to go for approach 1.  Also, this issue is may be related to A2.3 as the RLC channel configuration may need to consider QoS on each hop.  A2.3  - as the gNB does not have enough information, we need to somehow pick one relay UE on the link to do this QoS split. Question would be, e.g. how to select this UE? how does one relay UE negotiate with another relay UE on this QoS split?  There seems much work and thus we prefer a single node to do this split, which is gNB. So approach 1 seems better.  A2.4  - The security issue is not clear now and needs more clarification. SA3 may be involved if we support approach 2, but we prefer no LS at least for now.  A2.5  - covered by previous issues (e.g. local ID assignment negotiation, QoS split negotiation).  A2.6  - we share the same view that by adopting approach 2 the path switch scenario C and D may not be supported. This should be further confirmed by companies whether this is the common understanding, and if so, we should better just go approach 1.  A2.7  To send the data from remote UE to last relay UE, U2U SRAP PDU format may be used, but there also needs a U2N SRAP format considering the e2e link between remote UE and gNB. Therefore, the last relay UE may need some transformation for different SRAP format which may increase complexity.  At last, event if the intermediate relay UE is in IDLE, some TAU procedure may be performed and there will still be RRC signaling between intermediate relay UE and gNB, making the benefit of approach 2 less. |

4 Conclusion

This contribution makes the following proposals:

Phase 1 Conclusions

Proposal 1 – In one approach (“approach 1”) of U2N relays, each of the Intermediate Relay UEs must be in RRC\_CONNECTED when the U2N remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED. Connection establishment in the U2N remote UE first requires that each Intermediate Relay UE which is in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE first enters RRC\_CONNECTED. FFS whether connection establishment of an Intermediate Relay UE (other than the Last Relay UE) is captured in specification as connection establishment of a remote UE or a relay UE.



1. The U2N Remote UE, First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE perform discovery procedure, and establish a PC5-RRC connection between each adjacent UE (U2N Remote UE<->First Relay UE, First Relay UE <-> Intermediate Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE <-> Last Relay UE) using the NR sidelink PC5 unicast link establishment procedure. [FFS whether to support PC5-RRC connection establishment between some adjacent UEs after transmission of the first RRC message in step 2.]
2. The L2 U2N Remote UE sends the first RRC message (i.e., *RRCSetupRequest*) for its connection establishment with gNB via the First Relay UE, using a specified PC5 Relay RLC channel configuration. The first Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the First Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment via the Intermediate Relay UE (using similar actions as a U2N Remote UE) upon reception of a message from U2N Remote UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. The Intermediate Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the Intermediate Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment via the Last Relay UE (using similar actions as a U2N Remote UE) upon reception of a message from the First Relay UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. The Last Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the Last Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment upon reception of a message from the Intermediate Relay UE on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. In each of the previous sub-steps, if a given relay UE and its parent relay UE both need to enter RRC\_CONNECTED, the given relay UE cannot do so until the parent relay UE has completed its own RRC connection establishment. The Last Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel configuration for the Intermediate Relay UE from gNB. The Intermediate Relay UE receives SRB0 relaying Relay RLC channel configuration for the First Relay UE from gNB. The gNB configures SRB0 (for U2N Remote UE) relaying RLC channel to the first Relay UE. The gNB responds with an *RRCSetup* message to U2N Remote UE. The *RRCSetup* message is sent to the U2N Remote UE using SRB0 relaying Last Relay RLC channel over Uu and the specified PC5 Relay RLC channels over each of the PC5 links. [FFS whether the Last Relay UE can send SUI on behalf of all other relay UEs.]
3. The gNB, Last Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE and First Relay UE perform relaying channel setup procedure over Uu. According to the configuration from the gNB, the First Relay/U2N Remote UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the U2N Remote UE/First Relay UE over PC5, the Intermediate Relay/First Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the First Relay UE/Intermediate Relay UE over PC5 and the Last Relay UE/ Intermediate Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the Intermediate Relay UE/Last Relay UE over PC5. [FFS if each relay UE can establish RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 at the same time as its connection establishment in step 2].
4. The *RRCSetupComplete* message is sent by the U2N Remote UE to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE and the Last Relay UE using SRB1 relaying channels over PC5 and SRB1 relaying channel configured to the Last Relay UE over Uu. Then the U2N Remote UE is RRC\_CONNECTED with the gNB.
5. The L2 U2N Remote UE and gNB establish security following the Uu security mode procedure and the security messages are forwarded through the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE.
6. The gNB sends an *RRCReconfiguration* message to the U2N Remote UE via the Last Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and First Relay UE to setup the end-to-end SRB2/DRBs of the U2N Remote UE. The U2N Remote UE sends an *RRCReconfigurationComplete* message to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE as a response. In addition, the gNB may configure additional Uu Relay RLC channels between the gNB and Last Relay UE, and PC5 Relay RLC channels between each of the Intermediate Relay UE, First Relay UE, and U2N Remote UE for the relaying traffic.

Based on the above procedure, for gNB to control each relay UE by RRC, each relay UE needs to be in RRC connected. As a result, for connection establishment of the remote UE, each relay UE should trigger its own connection establishment. For the last relay UE, Uu connection establishment is performed. However, for the other relay UEs, upon reception of a message on SL-SLB0, they perform connection establishment as though they are acting as a remote UE.

Proposal 2 – The figure and description above serves as a baseline connection establishment procedure for multi-hop U2N Relays if Approach 1 (all relay UEs must be in RRC\_CONNECTED when the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED) is adopted.

Proposal 3 – In one approach (“approach 2”) of U2N relays, Intermediate Relay UEs (other than the Last Relay UE) can be in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE when the U2N remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED.

Proposal 4 – In approach 2, any relay UE which happens to be in RRC\_CONNECTED can obtain its relaying RLC channel configuration in dedicated signalling.



1. The U2N Remote UE, First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE perform discovery procedure, and establish a PC5-RRC connection between each adjacent UE (U2N Remote UE<->First Relay UE, First Relay UE <-> Intermediate Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE <-> Last Relay UE) using the NR sidelink PC5 unicast link establishment procedure.
2. The L2 U2N Remote UE sends the first RRC message (i.e., *RRCSetupRequest*) for its connection establishment with gNB via the First Relay UE, using a specified PC5 Relay RLC channel configuration. If the First Relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, it sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. Otherwise, it obtains the configuration from SIB or preconfiguration, or from the remote UE’s serving gNB. If the Intermediate Relay UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED, it sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the multi-hop relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. Otherwise, it obtains the configuration from SIB or preconfiguration. The Last Relay UE sends the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message to request for the dedicated configurations required to support the relay operation for the U2N Remote UE. If the Last Relay UE is not in RRC\_CONNECTED, it needs to do its own Uu RRC connection establishment upon reception of a message on the specified PC5 Relay RLC channel. After the Last Relay UE's RRC connection establishment procedure and sending the *SidelinkUEInformationNR* message, gNB configures SRB0 relaying Uu Relay RLC channel to the Last Relay UE. The gNB responds with an *RRCSetup* message to U2N Remote UE. The *RRCSetup* message is sent to the U2N Remote UE using SRB0 relaying Last Relay RLC channel over Uu and the specified/preconfigured PC5 Relay RLC channels over each of the PC5 links. FFS which option to obtain the relaying configuration (SIB/preconfiguration or the remote UE’s serving gNB) is used by relay UEs which remain in IDLE/INACTIVE while the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED.
3. According to (pre)configuration, the First Relay/U2N Remote UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the U2N Remote UE/First Relay UE over PC5, the Intermediate Relay/First Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the First Relay UE/Intermediate Relay UE over PC5 and the Last Relay UE/ Intermediate Relay UE establishes a PC5 Relay RLC channel for relaying of SRB1 towards the Intermediate Relay UE/Last Relay UE over PC5.
4. The *RRCSetupComplete* message is sent by the U2N Remote UE to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE and the Last Relay UE using SRB1 relaying channels over PC5 and SRB1 relaying channel configured to the Last Relay UE over Uu. Then the U2N Remote UE is RRC\_CONNECTED with the gNB.
5. The L2 U2N Remote UE and gNB establish security following the Uu security mode procedure and the security messages are forwarded through the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE.
6. The gNB sends an *RRCReconfiguration* message to the U2N Remote UE via the Last Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and First Relay UE to setup the end-to-end SRB2/DRBs of the U2N Remote UE. The U2N Remote UE sends an *RRCReconfigurationComplete* message to the gNB via the First Relay UE, Intermediate Relay UE, and Last Relay UE as a response. In addition, the gNB may configure additional Uu Relay RLC channels between the gNB and Last Relay UE, and PC5 Relay RLC channels between each of the Intermediate Relay UE, First Relay UE, and U2N Remote UE for the relaying traffic.

Proposal 5 – The figure and description above serves as a baseline connection establishment procedure for multi-hop U2N Relays if Approach 2 (relays other than the Last Relay may/may not remain in RRC\_IDLE/RRC\_INACTIVE when the remote UE is in RRC\_CONNECTED) is adopted.

Proposal 6 – In multi-hop, the U2N Remote UE uses the SI of the cell of the Last Relay UE, which is forwarded via the Intermediate Relay UE(s). FFS on how to perform the forwarding.

Proposal 7 – The scenario of the remote UE RRC\_CONNECTED to one cell while an Intermediate Relay UE is RRC\_CONNECTED to a different cell is supported only in approach 2. FFS whether the scenario needs to be supported.

Proposal 8 – For approach 1, QoS split for each hop is performed by the network.

Proposal 9 – For approach 2, QoS split between the Uu hop and all remaining hops is performed by the network. FFS how to split the QoS over each of the individual remaining hops.

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