3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #121 R2-230xxxx

Athens, Greece, 27 February – 03 March 2023

**Agenda item: 8.1.2**

**Source: Nokia, Nokia Shanghai Bell**

**Title: [AT121][706][NCR] Access Link (Nokia)**

**WID/SID: NR\_netcon\_repeater - Release 18**

**Document for: Discussion and Decision**

# 1 Introduction

This document is to kick off the following offline discussion:

* [AT121][706][NCR] Access Link (Nokia)

Scope:

* Discuss RAN2 issues of access link,
* discuss the proposal on RRCRelease from R2-2300900,
* discuss the proposals p1, p3 and p4 from R2-2300639

Intended outcome:

Deadline: Friday CB session

In first NCR session for RAN2#121 a number of items were left unresolved from AI 8.1.2 and AI 8.1.3. In this offline discussion companies are encouraged to provide feedback on these topics. Timely responses are encouraged, so that the discussion coordinator can summarize the company views ahead of the CB session on Friday, March 3.

# 2 Contact Information

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# 3 Discussion

## 3.1 RRC side control signalling for NCR-Fwd access beam configuration

RRC signalling related to configuring (a)periodic beam indications for the NCR-Fwd was discussed based on Nokia’s paper R2-2300303. It was proposed that the relevant RRC configurations for periodic and aperiodic beam indications should be provided in ServingCellConfig; however, companies had different views based on the assumption that NCR-MT does not need to receive the NCR-Fwd access beam configuration on a per-cell basis (e.g. some companies believe that NCR-MT should not support DC or CA, hence RRC-based side control signalling messages could be provided either directly within RRCReconfiguration or in an NCR-specific container within RRCReconfiguration).

**Please provide your preference among the below options.**

* **Option 1: Side control configuration for the NCR-Fwd is provided within ServingCellConfig**
* **Option 2: Side control configuration for the NCR-Fwd is not provided within ServingCellConfig, but some other/new message.**
* **Option 3: RAN2 should wait to decide until we have more details from RAN1.**
* **Option 4: In CellGroupConfig or SpCellConfig.**

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| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2,3)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 2 | We think option 2 is much clean for readability. Since side control information is so much independent from other serving cell configuration, it should be still workable when CA is introduced in future. |
| vivo | Option 3 | There is no conclusion that NCR-MT and NCR-Fwd must belong to the same cell. In fact, RAN1 has agreed to support separate beam indications for backhaul link and control link, which that NCR-MT and NCR-Fwd could be in different cells could be supported. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon |  | ServingCellConfig itself is not a message, but a per-cell configuration. If reusing existing message, it should be RRCReconfiguration and the configuration can be per-UE, not necessarily per-cell or per cell group, which is at least an acceptable way.  Another way can be a dedicated RRC message for NCR-fwd message as proposed by Intel. |
| Intel | Option 2 | Side control information is only used by NCR-Fwd for access link beam configuration. This is not related to NCR-MT (or UE) servingCellConfig. We prefer to keep the sidelink configuration sepearate to the UE configuration and not mix it up. Including this in servingCellConfig implies that everytime an update to the sidelink is provided, we have to consider the Need codes for the UE configuration and provide appropriate configuration where needed. Our preference is hence to keep them separate and not have to mix up the two unrelated configurations. |
| Kyocera | Option 2 | We think RRC Reconfiguration message should be used for Side control configuration, so we assume Option 2 can be interpreted as using some other/new IE rather than some other/new message. We think it’s also good from forward compatibility perspective as well.  We assume either option can work; but “*The IE ServingCellConfig is used to configure (add or modify) the UE with a serving cell*” as stated in TS38.331, which is different from Side control configuration. In addition, in IAB, the IAB configuration is provided outside of *ServingCellConfig*, i.e., *bap-Config* and *iab-IP-AddressConfigurationList*. In this sense, we slightly prefer Option 2 with a new IE within the existing RRC Reconfiguration message. |
| Samsung | Option 3 | RAN1 has made some related agreements that we should take into account. Thus we prefer to wait for RAN1 for more details. |
| Fujitsu | Option 1 | We think ServingCellConfig is the appropriate place.  For concrete parameters, we need to wait for input from RAN1 We think ServingCellConfig is the appropriate place.  For concrete parameters, we need to wait for input from RAN1 |
| Apple | No to Option 1 | We do not support Option 1. We agree with Huawei to have a new IE under RRCReconfiguration. |
| Ericsson | Option 2 (eventually 3) | Echoing Option’s 2 supporting companies views above. We see no related RAN1 discussion that could impact this, but if companies could bring such issues, then we are also OK to wait for further details. |
| ZTE | Option 1 | First, we think putting the configuration in ServingCellConfig does not mean we will support CA/DC for NCR-MT. We actually think in Rel-18, NCR-MT is not expected to support CA/DC. But option 1 allows easy extension in future release.  If company concerns, we can also accept to define the configuration in CellGroupConfig.  We don’t think Option 2/3 are feasible considering this is the last meeting in RAN2. Please note that the side control information configuration is expected to be generated by gNB-DU, not gNB-CU. So at least it should be configured within CellGroupConfig.  If we intend to define new RRC signalling, then it may have F1 interface impact, thus it is impossible to finish the work on time. |
| Qualcomm | Option 4 | This decision is up to RAN2, not RAN1.  We should NOT introduce a new message. This is normal configuration information. There is no need for a new message.  For those who feel conscience-challenged when sending a configuration to the MT that actually aims for the FWD: We could interpret the FWD-function as an enhanced feature of the NCR-MT. With such interpretation, using RRC Reconfiguration should be fine.  The assumption of this WI has been that there is one side control configuration for the NCR, NOT one side-control configuration per cell. If we assume cell-specific side control, the NCR-MT would have to support CA which we haven’t even discussed. Further, digital beam forming would be necessary on the access link, which is prohibitively expensive for a low-complexity device as the NCR.  All of this implies that the side-control configuration should be delivered on **cell-group level** or **SpCellConfig.** |

Nokia (R2-2300303) provided a text proposal for the periodic and aperiodic beam configuration IEs based on the existing agreements from RAN1. (These agreements and the proposed IEs are copied below in the Annex of this discussion.) ZTE provided a similar proposal for these IEs in their paper (R2-2301318). The IEs proposed by ZTE have also been copied into the Annex for comparison.

The proposed IEs include a number of constants which have dependencies on RAN1, however we wonder if RAN2 can at least discuss some basic features of the IEs based on the known agreements in RAN1, even if we may not be able to to agree on the exact details in this meeting.)

We observe one major difference between the IEs proposed by Nokia and ZTE:

* Nokia: (A)periodic beam configurations are provided for all resources at the same time and a new set of configurations overwrites all previous configured resources.
* ZTE: (A)periodic beam configurations may be provided for resources selectively. A configured resource may be added, modified, or removed.

Nokia’s proposal could be simpler to implement but is less flexible, whereas ZTE’s proposal could provide more flexibility.

**Companies are asked their preference between the general IE structure for periodic and aperiodic beam indications provided by Nokia and ZTE, or to indicate if they prefer to wait for RAN1 (please indicate what additional information you think is needed from RAN1, if possible):**

* **Option 1: (A)periodic beam configurations are provided for all resources at the same time and a new set of configurations overwrites all previous configured resources.**
* **Option 2: (A)periodic beam configurations may be provided for resources selectively. A configured resource may be added, modified, or removed.**
* **Option 3: Wait for RAN1.**
* **Option 4: In CellGroupConfig or SpCellConfig.**

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| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2,3)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 2 | We tend to agree with Option 2. It would be more flexible to be able to add/update/modify/delete individual beam configuration, e.g., when a new UE is connected through NCR, a new (A)periodic beam configuration might be added. |
| vivo | Option 3 | For us, neither Option 1 nor Option 2 can exactly match the existing RAN1 agreements. Better to wait for LS from RAN1. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 2 | Better to support delta configuration. |
| Intel | Option 2 | Both options work, we could provide more flexibility of beam configuration of NCR considering dynamic changes of forwarding link. |
| Kyocera | Option 2 | We think Option 2 has more forward compatibility. |
| Sasmung | Option 2 | Option 2 is how we usually do it and we do not see any reason to do things differently. |
| Fujitsu | Option 3 | RAN1 already agreed to send LS to RAN2. |
| Apple | Option 2 | Option 2 is the normal to design such configuration. But we can also follow majority view if Option 1 is perfereed |
| Ericsson | Option 2 | Agree with Intel’s comment. |
| ZTE | Option 2 | Using ToAddModList and ToReleaseList structures can support delta configuration which saves Uu signalling overhead. |
| Qualcomm | Option 2 or 3 | It seems we end up waiting for RAN1 and discuss this matter in next meeting. |

**Any other comments companies would like to make related to what configuration-related details they think are in scope of RAN2 to determine at this point and how we should proceed with this discussion (e.g. short offline discussion following RAN2#121). (Note: There is no need to comment “No Comment”.)**

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| **Company** | **Comment** |
| vivo | It is expected that there will be related LS from RAN1 after the ongoing RAN1 meeting. We can just discuss based on the LS in next RAN2 meeting. |
| Qualcomm | It would be wise to wait for RAN1 to complete and then spend time on discussion of configuration details.  **We suggest to the WI Rapporteur to capture this issue in the Status Report to RAN Plenary and to ask for TU allocation for the April meeting.** |
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## 3.2 NCR-support signalled per PLMN/NPN

In RAN2#120, we agreed that NCR-support would be indicated per PLMN; while it was left FFS whether this indication would also be provided per-NPN. This meeting, Qualcomm (R2-2300639) proposed:

RAN2-120 agreed that an NCR-support indication is included in SIB1 per PLMN to assist the NCR with selection of the parent cell. This is similar to the IAB approach for which the IAB-support indication is also included in SIB1 per NPN. Therefore, the NCR-support indication should also be included in SIB1 per NPN.

**Proposal: NCR-support indication is included in SIB1 per PLMN and per NPN.**

Some companies objected to this proposal. Intel expressed that the per-NPN indication is irrelevant since NCR is an operator-coordinated deployment and therefore the indication creates unnecessary overhead; while Huawei expressed concern that per-PLMN (and per-NPN) indication for NCR-support does not make sense since the NCR has no way to control which UEs access the gNB through the NCR anyway (NCR is transparent to the UEs).

**Companies should indicate their preference among the following options for NCR-support indication:**

* **Option 1: NCR-support indication is included in SIB1 per PLMN and per NPN.**
* **Option 2: NCR-support indication is included in SIB1 per PLMN and no NCR-support indication is provided for NPN.**
* **Option 3: One NCR-support indication is included in SIB1 which is applied for all PLMN/NPN.**

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| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2,3)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 3 | Agree with Huawei that NCR is simply to do cell coverage extension, cannot do PLMN selective forwarding. |
| vivo | Option 1 | Better to align with IAB-MT |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 1 (more considerations needed) or 3 | If we confirm the previous agreement (option 1), we may need to see how to support per-PLMN/NPN NCR deployment, i.e. NCR deployed by a specific PLMN/NPN should be only serving the UEs of its own operators. Otherwise, option 3 can be considered.  We don’t see a need to differentiate PLMN and NPN. |
| Intel | Option 3 | There doesn’t seem to be a strong motivation to indicate separate control bits per PLMN/NPN. The sidecontrol is applicable for all the PLMNs/NPN. The NCR-MT can only access the PLMN that it is its HPLMN and the operator has to ensure that the HPLMN supports NCR for NCR to work at all. Hence we prefer not to have to provide unnecessary bits in SIB1. |
| Kyocera | Option 3 | We’re fine with either Option 1 or Option 3, but we slightly prefer Option 3 since we share the comment from Huawei in the online discussion.  We don’t agree with Option 2. We don’t think such an artificial restriction is needed. |
| Sasmung | Option 1 | We prefer to keep it the same as IAB. We do not see any problems with “SIB1” overload in this case. |
| Fujitsu | Option 3 | Not a strong view. But Option 3 seems simple. |
| Apple | Option 3 | We ae fine to reverse the previous agreement. It is OK to make NCR support PLMN-agnostic. |
| KDDI | Option3 | Same understanding as Huawei and NEC. |
| Ericsson | Option 1 or 3 | Following the previous agreement and adding a SIB1 per PLMN seems straightforward. But as raised by HW, this could have some other implications.  Given the above, the time constrains and apparent lack of motivations, Option 3 appears reasonable to us. |
| ZTE | Option 1 |  |
| Qualcomm | Option 1 | NCR operation should be supported for NPN. This precludes option 2.  Option 3 is not possible for the following reason: The NCR needs to be authorized by a CN. If the RAN supports access to multiple PLMNs and/or NPNs (e.g. RAN sharing), only one of these PLMNs and/or NPNs may be able to authorize the NCR. When integrating to the network, the NCR-MT has to know if gNB supports NCR operation of the PLMN or NPN it has configured on NAS layer. |
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## 3.3 NCR-Fwd behaviour after NCR-MT cell reselection

Qualcomm presented the following proposal related to NCR-Fwd behaviour from R2-2300639. The first proposal, relates to NCR-Fwd during cell reselection when NCR-MT is in RRC\_INACTIVE:

The NCR-FWD follows the last side control configuration received from the gNB.

However, this behavior by the NCR-FWD should only apply while the NCR-MT camps on the last serving cell before the NCR-MT was released. Otherwise, the NCR-FWD should switch OFF until the NCR-MT reconnects and receives new side control configuration.

**Proposal: The NCR-FWD is switched OFF if the NCR-MT in RRC\_INACTIVE state reselects a different cell than the last serving cell on which side control configuration was received.**

This proposal was not really discussed in the first online discussion due to limited time.

**Companies are encouraged to provide their view on the following options for NCR-MT cell reselection in RRC\_INACTIVE. Other directly related comments can also be provided.**

* **Option 1: The NCR-FWD is switched OFF if the NCR-MT in RRC\_INACTIVE state reselects a different cell than the last serving cell on which side control configuration was received.**
* **Option 2: The NCR-FWD may stay ON if the NCR-MT in RRC\_INACTIVE state reselects a different cell than the last serving cell on which side control configuration was received.**

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| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 1 | RAN2#120 agreed that “gNB cell that NCR-Fwd is forwarding is the same cell the NCT-MT is connected to”, so our understanding is that the received side control configuration becomes invalid when NCR-MT in RRC\_INACTIVE state reselects a different cell than the last serving cell on which side control configuration was received.  Then based on the RAN1#110 agreement (The NCR-Fwd is always expected to be “OFF” unless otherwise explicitly or implicitly indicated by gNB), the NCR-Fwd should switch off. |
| vivo | Option 2 | Two issues may need to be resolved before answering this question: 1) whether NCR-MT and NCR-Fwd must belong to the same cell and 2) whether cell reselection by NCR-MT means that the original cell that the NCR-Fwd is working for is too bad.  The NCR-MT may reselect to a high priority cell meanwhile the original cell for which the NCR-Fwd is working could still be OK. If the NCR-Fwd turn OFF, the users served via may be impacted since the original cell still assume the NCR-Fwd is ON in scheduling.  The safe way is that the NCR-MT can resume the RRC connection with the NW and let the NW decide the NCR-Fwd ON-OFF. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 1 | We may need to discuss together what would be MT’s behaviors in this case. We assume NCR-MT should perform RRC Resume so it can receive side control from the new serving cell. |
| Intel | Option 2 | As discussed during last meeting, NCR is a wide-band device. Hence, even after cell reselection, the previous side control information that received from the last serving cell may still be valid/useful after NCR-MT reselects another cell. Hence, we think NCR-Fwd can still be ON regardless of NCR-MT’s cell reselection. If a new cell cannot provide side control for this NCR-MT, the network can configure the RANAC to be just one cell if needed to force the NCRMT to resume on reselecting another cell. |
| Kyocera | Option 1 | RAN2 agreed that “*gNB cell that NCR-Fwd is forwarding is the same cell the NCT-MT is connected to.*” We think this principle is also applied to NCR-MT in INACTIVE. The reselected cell is different from the original cell which provided the NCR configuration, which means the cells that the NCR-Fwd is forwarding and the NCR-MT is camping on are different. So, we think the NCR-Fwd should be switched OFF when the NCR-MT reselects a different cell. |
| Samsung | 1 | If the NCR-MT selects another cell, then the donor gNB loses reachability to control the NCR-Fwd, so for us it is very clear that the NCR-Fwd should be switched OFF. Otherwise the network actions would not be well-controlled.  Agree with the others that NCR-MT should resume to the new cell after having selected a new cell. |
| Fujitsu | Option 1 | When cell reselection happens, the NCR-Fwd could not work as gNB expected. It should be OFF. |
| Apple | 1 | We think cell reselection is a corner case which does not occur in a properly deployed NCR device. There is no need to optimize this case. |
| Ericsson | Option 1 | In case of a new cell, it seems more reasonable to be off and receive a new configuration. RAN2 agreed that only the MT cell is forwarded (because one cell should not configure another cell). For which we shouldn’t go for Option 2. |
| ZTE | Option 1 with comments | We agree when UE camps on a different cell, the previous configuration may not be applicable, so NCR-Fwd can be OFF.  But we don’t think the NCR-MT should discard the configuration (if received) upon cell reselection. Since NCR may be deployed at the cell edge, it is likely ping-pong cell reselection may happen, so when the NCR-MT reselects back to the releasing cell, the old configuration should still work. |
| Qualcomm | Option 1 | The gNB may send the NCR-MT to inactive in the expectation that it can wake it up to reconfigure side control. This may not be possible after the NCR-MT has reselected another cell. In fact, the NCR-MT should resume after re-selection so as to obtain an updated configuration for side-control.  **Proposal: After cell reselection, the NCR-MT to resume so that it can receive side-control configuration from the new gNB.** |
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## 3.4 NCR-MT and NCR-Fwd behaviour related to RRCRelease to RRC\_IDLE

NCR-Fwd behaviour during RRCRelease to RRC\_IDLE was left FFS in RAN2#120. Based on contributions to this meeting, a small number of companies were concerned over the idea of NCR-MT getting released to RRC\_IDLE by the network, for example, due to there being no natural trigger for the core network to page an NCR-MT (except possibly due to OAM). We think some of these concerns are more related to “when/how often” or “why” the network would release the NCR-MT to RRC\_IDLE, which is likely outside the scope of what we should be discussing. We think there is at least a common understanding that in some instances (possibly rarely) the NCR-MT could be sent to RRC\_IDLE through RRCRelease (one example being if the NCR is powered down/sent to a low power mode via OAM, in which case the paging is not an issue).

Assuming that the network can indeed release the NCR-MT to RRC\_IDLE we have the following proposal from Qualcomm in R2-2300639 to discuss.

The behavior of the NCR-FWD if the NCR-MT is released to RRC\_IDLE still needs to be determined. Ideally, the NCR-FWD should have similar operation whether the NCR-MT is RRC\_IDLE or RRC\_INACTIVE. The only issue is when the gNB wants to update the side control configuration of the NCR:

* If the NCR-MT is RRC\_INACTIVE, the gNB can page the NCR-MT and provide new side control configuration.
* If the NCR-MT is RRC\_IDLE, RAN-based paging of the NCR-MT is not supported, so side control configuration cannot be updated.

**Proposal: RAN2 to discuss the following options for NCR operation upon releasing the NCR-MT to RRC-IDLE:**

* **Option 1: The gNB provides a wake-up timer to the NCR-MT when released to RRC\_IDLE. The NCR-FWD follows the last side control configuration from the gNB until the timer expires. The NCR-MT may proactively reconnect to the network upon timer expiry to receive updated side control configuration.**
* **Option 2: The NCR-FWD switches OFF.**

**Companies should state their preference among the two options above and provide any additional comments.**

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| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 2 | We are not sure how to determine/configure a proper wake-up timer? And if the proactively reconnect is not enforced, then upon timer expiring, NCR-Fwd will still switch OFF. Therefore, we prefer to go with Option 2. |
| vivo | Option 1 with comments | The introduction of wake-up timer is to make the NCR-MT to reconnect the gNB (so as to conquer the defect that there is CN paging for NCR-MT). However, there seems no enough motivation to use it to restrict the NCR-Fwd behaviour. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 2 or  Option-3: Assume that before gNB releases NCR-MT, the NCR-Fwd has already been switched off by OAM | The case we assume the gNB may switch the NCR-MT to RRC\_IDLE is that OAM has switched off the NCR-Fwd, and in this case for power saving, the gNB may release the NCR-MT.  We need to discuss the use case first why gNB releases NCR-MT to RRC\_IDLE. |
| Intel | Option 2 | NCR-Fwd can be kept ON as per configuration (explicit or implicit) when NCR-MT is moved to IDLE. The NCR may also maintain a timer or have other implementation methods to wake up and start reconnection to the network. |
| Kyocera | Option 1,  And, Option 2 if the timer is not configured | We see there are many/different reasons that the NCR-MT is released to IDLE, To support these cases, we think the flexibility of gNB configuration should be ensured.  We think Option 1 can resolve the concern that is related to the paging. We think it’s not desirable that the gNB cannot manage the NCR-MT in IDLE, so the timer is useful for the controllability.  We think the timer is configured optionally, i.e., up to the gNB. So, the NCR behaviour when the timer is not configured should be considered. In this case, since the NCR-MT in IDLE is not reachable from the gNB, we think the NCR-MT should be switched OFF. Otherwise, the NCR may follow the outdated NCR configuration forever, in the worst case. |
| Samsung | 1 | For us, NCR should be a simple and easily reconfigurable repeater. In most of the cases, the NCR-MT should not be in connected state when NCR is forwarding as the reconfigurability is not required to be very often.  We partly have RRC inactive to enable this behaviour, but the issue is that RRC inactive is optional for both NCR-MT and network. This means that if we can only rely on RRC inactive, this puts a much higher implementation threshold to enable the most likely way that an NCR is to be operated.  Regarding the timer, we in our paper suggested to enable RAN-based paging and we think that it is solvable, but given that we were the only company to suggest this, we suggest to go with Option 1. This timer could be quite coarse as we do not think that updates should happen very often. |
| Fujitsu | Option 2 | RAN2 already agreed when RLF is detected NCR-Fwd is OFF, and during RRC re-establishment procedure NCR-Fwd is also off. And if the NCR-MT fail to find any suitable cell the NCR-MT enters RRC\_IDLE. So it is natural to NCR-Fwd is off  Also, we strongly object to support the network release the NCR-MT to RRC\_IDLE in Rel-18 because: - CN paging cannot be used to make the NCR-MT go back to RRC\_CONNECTED - NCR-MT initiated RRC connection setup procedure cannot be used because release cause “other” is in this case (going to RRC\_IDLE by receiving RRCRelease). To initiate RRCSetupRequest, indication from NAS is necessary, but in NAS spec (TS 24.501) there is no NAS message initiation case when “other” is received from lower layer.  In case NCR-MT goes to RRC\_IDLE because of no suitable cell is found during RRC re-establishment procedure, the NCR-Fwd is already OFF and there is no need to switch it back to ON. Since release cause “RRC connection failure” is used in this case, NAS will trigger NAS registration procedure and NCR-MT can initiate RRC connection procedure. After NCR-MT does back to RRC\_CONNECTED, NCR-Fwd can be ON or OFF by the network. |
| Apple | 1 | We think Option 1 is more reasonable so that a NCR-MT does not need always stay CONNECTED or keep trying to reconnect. |
| Ericsson | See comment | As discussed in our paper, we wouldn’t be discussing this if RAN2 would decide not to support the release of NCRs to RRC IDLE and instead, only rely on RRC INACTIVE. This appears to be the most suitable approach.  However, as captured by the Rapporteur and if RAN2 prefers to support IDLE the most straightforward and feasible to do given the short time remaining for this work item is to introduce a new timer in RRCRelease message. |
| ZTE | Option 1 | There is use case to switch off the NCR, while asking the NCR to reconnect after a given period, so we are supportive of Option 1. |
| Qualcomm | Option 2 | Multiple reasons:   * 1. NCR is a low-complexity node. No need to add more features that are pretty much useless.   2. RAN2 is out of time to discuss new features and functionality.   Sending the NCR-MT to RRC IDLE can be regarded as erroneous behaviour which can be avoided by implementation. |

## 3.5 Configuring side control via RRCRelease

Vivo’s paper R2-2300900 presented different options for how an NCR-MT in RRC\_INACTIVE could be configured with SCI. This prompted a debate in the online discussion over whether an NCR-MT should be able to receive side control information in an RRCRelease message. For the case of NCR-MT being released to RRC\_INACTIVE, this would apply to the case of RRCRelease with suspension.

**Companies are asked to provide their preference between the following two options.**

* **Option 1: An NCR-MT may be configured with new SCI when released to RRC\_INACTIVE (i.e., new SCI may be provided in an RRCRelease with suspension).**
* **Option 2: An NCR-MT may only be configured with new SCI through RRCReconfiguration.**

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| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 2 | There is no motivation to do Option 1. In our understanding, RRC\_Inactive mode is mainly used for energy saving when the SCI does not need to be updated frequently, otherwise the NCR-MT should be in RRC\_Connected mode. Therefore, we think option 2 is sufficient. |
| Vivo | Option 1 | This seems the easiest way for side control information providing applicable for NCR-Fwd when NCR-MT is in RRC\_INACTIVE. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 2 | The NCR-MT can just use the existing configuration in RRCReconfiguration. |
| Intel | Option 2 with comments | It may also be a new message instead of RRCReconfiguration depending on the outcome of the previous question. |
| Kyocera | Option 1 | We think it’s useful that the SCI is configured via RRC Release (Option 1), considering Option 2 needs the two RRC messages (i.e., RRC Reconfiguration, then RRC Release) in case the gNB wants to configure an SCI specific to be applied in INACTIVE.  We just wonder what SCI meant here, i.e., RRC configuration, L1/L2 signalling or both. |
| Samsung | 1 | We think that this would be a neat addition that is not very complicated. A subset of this that that is crucial is that the NCR-Fwd can be turned OFF in a release message. Some contributions explained for instance if an NCR-MT is redirected, due to the fact that we do not have any handovers, then this would be crucial.  Also note that depending on the above agreements, this may need to apply for RRC idle as well. |
| Fujitsu | Option 1 | Option 1 seems to be simple |
| Apple | 2 | Option 1 is an optimization. We need focus on the basic functions needed to complete the WI in time. |
| KDDI |  | 1. We think that NCR-Fwd should not be switched in RRC\_IDLE, but we are not sure whether proposed timer is the best solution to make NCR-Fwd connected. Because, it seems require NAS impact as Fujitsu commented online, not sure it’s feasible. From our perspective, considering this is the last meeting, it’s better to postpone the decision to next release. 2. We should take care OAM solution, it means that even if NCR-MT enters RRC\_IDLE, still have upper layer connection, and OAM can trigger paging to access NCR-Fwd. So, if we go with option2, we should make it clear in specs that with OAM solution it’s not applied, exceptionally. |
| Ericsson | Option 2 | As captured by others, no need to discuss optimizations. |
| ZTE | Option 2 | We think Option 2 is sufficient for Rel-18. |
| Qualcomm | Option 2 | This is just on optimization. The NCR is a low-complexity device. There is hardly anything gained through this optimization. |

## 3.6 Explicit NCR-Fwd OFF indication provided to NCR-MT

Some of the comments and papers have been using the terminology “ON-OFF configuration”. Our (Nokia) understanding, based on agreements in RAN1, is that ON-OFF indication is implicitly indicated based on the beam configuration:

*For FR2, the “ON” state of NCR-Fwd is indicated:*

*Alt-2: Implicit indication via the beam indication (i.e., if there is beam indication, the NCR is assumed to be ON over the indicated time domain resource associated with corresponding beam(s))*

*For FR1, the “ON” state of NCR-Fwd is indicated:*

*Alt-2: Indication via the beam indication (i.e., if there is beam indication, the NCR is assumed to be ON over the indicated time domain resource associated with corresponding beam(s))*

* *When there is only one beam, the sole purpose of the beam indication is for indicating “ON” state of NCR-Fwd*

In other words, it may not be necessary to explicitly indicate the NCR-Fwd to turn OFF since there would already be a way to provide NCR-MT with the beam configuration. We wonder however, based on today’s discussion if other companies have different interpretations and that an explicit indication is required to turn the NCR-Fwd OFF.

(Note: Whether the OFF indication can be provided in RRCRelease might also depend on the previous proposal related to receiving side control with RRCRelease.)

**Companies are asked to provide their preference between the following two options.**

* **Option 1: To turn the NCR-Fwd OFF, an explicit OFF indication is provided by RRC signalling.**
* **Option 2: To turn the NCR-Fwd OFF, the NCR-Fwd beam configuration framework is re-used.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Preferred Option (1,2)** | **Further comments (if necessary)** |
| NEC | Option 2 | Since RAN1#110 agreed that “The NCR-Fwd is always expected to be “OFF” unless otherwise explicitly or implicitly indicated by gNB”, we don’t see there is a need to have an explicit OFF indication. The NCR-Fwd On/OFF can be controlled via the NCR-Fwd beam configuration framework. |
| vivo | Option 2 | Explicit ON-OFF indication means decoupled beam indication and NCR-Fwd ON-OFF indication. This should be handled in RAN1. Given the time budget, there is no enough time budget for RAN1. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 2 | We assume option 2 (implicit way) is what RAN1 agreed, as Rapporteur said. |
| Intel | Option 2 | We just need to follow RAN1 agreement. The on/off status of NCR-Fwd can just implicitly follow beam configuration in side control information. If no beam configuration is provided, it is sufficient to turn off the NCR-Fwd and no need to have an explicit off indication in this case. |
| Kyocera | Slightly prefer Option 1 | We agree with the rapporteur’s analysis that this question depends on the previous question, but we think Option 2 is better from the simplicity point of view. |
| Samsung | 1 | Actually, to our understanding RAN1 is currently discussing this.  To our understanding, what is on the table is that either there is an explicit OFF indication, or there is a null-beam configuration.  In RAN2, the notion of turning off the NCR-Fwd based on a “null-beam” configuration is not good signalling design. For some of our RAN2-purposes, we think that an explicit OFF indication is useful. This is also useful for our specification purposes, as we already have some cases where NCR-Fwd should be turned OFF. |
| Fujitsu | Option 2 | Option 2 is feasible based on RAN1’s agreement on release/deactivation of periodic/semi-persistent beam indication. But Option 2 is also fine. |
| Apple | 2 | We do not see the need of Option 1. |
| KDDI | Option2 | Share the view with NEC and others. |
| Ericsson | No strong view | Our understanding is RAN1 has no agreement on explicit “OFF” indication. And we are also unaware of any potential agreement along those lines. Hence, we are OK to follow option 2, as the implicit method is feasible.   However, as highlighted by Samsung, having an explicit OFF indication via RRC could be cleaner/easier to interpret. |
| ZTE | See comments | The question is unclear to us, for Option 2, does it mean the network need to remove all beam indication related RRC configuration, so it can implicitly imply “OFF”? |
| Qualcomm | Option 2 | We should follow RAN1. Presently, this precludes Option 1. If RAN1 changes their mind we can rediscuss. |

# 4 Summary

[This section will be updated once company views have bee Option 2 is feasible based on n collected.]

# Annex: Relevant RAN1#111 agreements and IEs proposed by Nokia and ZTE

## A.1 Periodic beam configuration

For periodic beam indications, RAN1 agreed to the following:

**Agreement**

*For each periodic beam indication for access link, one RRC signalling is used with the information defined by the following:*

*Option-2:*

* *A list of X() forwarding resource, each is defined as {Beam index, time resource}*
* *FFS: The value of*

*Each time resource is defined by {Starting slot defined as the slot offset in one period, starting symbol defined by symbol offset within the slot, duration defined by the number of symbols} with dedicated field.*

* *The periodicity is configured as part of the RRC signaling for periodic beam indication*
  + *The same periodicity is assumed for all time resource(s) in one periodic beam indication.*
* *The reference SCS is configured as part of the RRC signaling for periodic beam indication*
  + *The same reference SCS is assumed for all time resource(s) in one periodic beam indication.*

#### – *PeriodicBeamConfig-NCR (IE proposed by Nokia)*

The IE PeriodicBeamConfig-NCR determines the NCR-specific periodic beam indication configuration for the NCR-Fwd access link.

*PeriodicBeamConfig-NCR information element*

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-PERIODICBEAMCONFIG-NCR-START

PeriodicBeamConfig-NCR ::= SEQUENCE {

periodicBeamConfigList SEQUENCE (SIZE(1..maxPeriodicBeamConfigs) OF PeriodicBeamConfig

}

PeriodicBeamConfig ::= SEQUENCE {

periodicBeamConfigIndex INTEGER (0..maxPeriodicBeamConfigs-1),

referenceSCS SubcarrierSpacing,

periodicity ENUMERATED {periodicity1, periodicity2,..,periodicityMax},

forwardingResourceList SEQUENCE (SIZE(1..maxFwdResourcesNCR)) OF ForwardingResource

}

ForwardingResource ::= SEQUENCE {

beamIndex INTEGER (0..maxNrofBeams-1),

timeResource SEQUENCE {

slotOffset INTEGER (0..maxNrofSlots-1),

symbolOffset INTEGER (0..maxNrofSymbols-1),

durationSymbols INTEGER (1..maxNrofSymbols)

}

}

-- TAG-PERIODICBEAMCONFIG-NCR-STOP

-- ASN1STOP

*– NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSet (IE proposed by ZTE)*

The IE *NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSet* is used to configure a list of periodic forwarding resources for NCR-Fwd access link.

***NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSet* information element**

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-NCR-PERIODICFWDRESOURCESET-START

NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSet-r18 ::= SEQUENCE {

ncr-periodicFwdResourceSetId-r18 NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSetId-r18

ncr-periodicFwdResourceToAdddModList-r18 SEQUENCE (SIZE (1..maxNrofPeriodicFwdResource-r18)) OF NCR-PeriodicFwdResource-r18 OPTIONAL, -- Need N

ncr-periodicFwdResourceToRemoveList-r18 SEQUENCE (SIZE (1..maxNrofPeriodicFwdResource-r18)) OF NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceId-r18 OPTIONAL, -- Need N

periodicity-r18 ENUMERATED {ffs},

referenceSCS-r18 SubcarrierSpacing,

...

}

NCR-PeriodicFwdResource-r18 ::= SEQUENCE {

ncr-periodicFwdResourceId-r18 NCR-PeriodicwdResourceId-r18

beamIndex-r18 INTEGER (0..ffs)

TimeResource-r18 ::= SEQUENCE {

slotOffset-r18 INTEGER (0..ffs),

symbolOffset-r18 INTEGER (0..maxNrofSymbols-1),

durationInSymbols-r18 INTEGER (0..ffs)

}

...

}

-- TAG-NCR-PERIODICFWDRESOURCESET-STOP

-- ASN1STOP

|  |
| --- |
| ***NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSet field descriptions*** |
| ***durationInSymbols***  Indicates the time duration in number of symbols. |
| ***beamIndex***  Indicates logical beam index for NCR-Fwd access link. NCR-Fwd is assumed to be ON over the indicated time domain resource if there is beam indication. |
| ***ncr-PeriodicFwdResourceSet***  Each periodic forwarding configuration includes a list of periodic forwarding resource, a common periodicity and a common reference SCS |
| ***ncr-PeriodicFwdResourceToAdddModList***  List of periodic forwarding resources to add and/or modify. |
| ***ncr-PeriodicFwdResourceToRemoveList***  List of periodic forwarding resources to remove. |
| ***ncr-PeriodicFwdResource***  Indicates the periodic forwarding resource. |
| ***periodicity***  Indicates the periodicity for the list of forwarding resource in slot |
| ***referenceSCS***  Indicates the reference subcarrier spacing for all the time resource in the list |
| ***slotOffset***  Indicates slot offset in one period. |
| ***symbolOffset***  Indicates symbol offset in one slot. |

– *NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSetId (IE proposed by ZTE)*

The IE *NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSetId* is used to identify one *NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSet*.

***NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSetId* information element**

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-NCR-PERIODICFWDRESOURCESETID-START

NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceSetId-r18 ::= INTEGER (1..maxNrofPeriodicFwdResourceSet-r18)

-- TAG-NCR-PERIODICFWDRESOURCESETID-STOP

-- ASN1STOP

*– NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceId (IE proposed by ZTE)*

The IE *NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceId* is used to identify one *NCR-PeriodicFwdResource.*

***NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceId* information element**

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-NCR-PERIODICFWDRESOURCEID-START

NCR-PeriodicFwdResourceId-r18 ::= INTEGER (1..maxNrofPeriodicFwdResource-r18)

-- TAG-NCR-PERIODICFWDRESOURCEID-STOP

-- ASN1STOP

## A.2 Aperiodic beam configuration

For aperiodic beam indications, RAN1 agreed to the following:

**Agreement**

*For each aperiodic beam indication for access link, one DCI is used with the information defined by*

*Option-1:*

* *fields are used to indicate the beam information and each field refers to one beam index ;* 
  + *Note: The bitwidth of this field is determined by the number of beams used for access link.*
* *fields to indicate the time resource;*
  + *Note: A list of time resource is pre-defined by RRC signalling. The bitwidth of this field for time resource indication is determined by the length of list.*
* *FFS: The value of* 
  + *Down-select between or .*
* *FFS: How to define the association between time indication and beam indication*

*Each time resource is defined by {Starting slot defined as the slot offset, starting symbol defined by symbol offset within the slot, duration defined by the number of symbols} with dedicated field.*

#### – *AperiodicBeamConfig-NCR (IE proposed by Nokia)*

The IE *AperiodicBeamConfig-NCR* determines the NCR-specific aperiodic beam indication configuration for the NCR-Fwd access link.

*AperiodicBeamConfig-NCR information element*

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-APERIODICBEAMCONFIG-NCR-START

AperiodicBeamConfig-NCR ::= SEQUENCE {

aperiodicTimeResourceList SEQUENCE (SIZE (1..maxAperiodicTimeResourcesNCR)) OF AperiodicTimeResourceConfig

}

AperiodicTimeResourceConfig SEQUENCE {

aperiodicTimeResourceIndex INTEGER (0..maxAperiodicTimeResourcesNCR-1)

timeResource ::= SEQUENCE {

slotOffset INTEGER (0..maxNrofSlots-1),

symbolOffset INTEGER (0..maxNrofSymbols-1),

durationSymbols INTEGER (1..maxNrofSymbols)

}

}

-- TAG-APERIODICBEAMCONFIG-NCR-STOP

-- ASN1STOP

– *NCR-AperiodicFwdConfig (IE proposed by ZTE)*

The IE *NCR-AperiodicFwdConfig* is used to configure a list of aperiodic forwarding time resources for NCR-Fwd access link.

***NCR-AperiodicFwdConfig* information element**

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-NCR-APEIODICFWDCONFIG-START

NCR-AperiodicFwdConfig-r18 ::= SEQUENCE {

ncr-aperiodicFwdTimeResourceToAddModList-r18 SEQUENCE (SIZE (1..maxNrofAperiodicFwdTimeResource-r18)) OF NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResource-r18 OPTIONAL, -- Need N

ncr-aperiodicFwdTimeResourceToRemoveList-r18 SEQUENCE (SIZE (1..maxNrofAperiodicFwdTimeResource-r18)) OF NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceId-r18 OPTIONAL, -- Need N

...

}

NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResource-r18 ::= SEQUENCE {

ncr-aperiodicFwdTimeResourceId-r18 NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceId-r18

slotOffsetAperiodic-r18 INTEGER (0..ffs)

symbolOffset-r18 INTEGER (0..maxNrofSymbols-1)

durationInSymbols-r18 INTEGER (1..ffs)

...

}

-- TAG-NCR-APEIODICFWDCONFIG-STOP

-- ASN1STOP

|  |
| --- |
| ***NCR-AperiodicFwdConfig field descriptions*** |
| ***durationInSymbols***  Indicates the time duration in number of symbols. |
| ***ncr-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceToAddModList***  List of aperiodic forwarding time resources to add and/or modify. |
| ***ncr-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceToRemoveList***  List of aperiodic forwarding time resources to remove. |
| ***slotOffsetAperiodic***  Indicates slot offset between the slot when NCR receives the side control information and the start slot of aperiodic time resource. |
| ***symbolOffset***  Indicates symbol offset in one slot. |

– *NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceId (IE proposed by ZTE)*

The IE *NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceId* is used to identify one *NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResource*.

***NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceId* information element**

-- ASN1START

-- TAG-NCR-APERIODICFWDTIMERESOURCEID-START

NCR-AperiodicFwdTimeResourceId-r18 ::= INTEGER (1..maxNrofAperiodicFwdTimeResource-r18)

-- TAG-NCR-APERIODICFWDTIMERESOURCEID-STOP

-- ASN1STOP