**3GPP TSG RAN WG2 #118-e R2-220xxxx**

**Online, 9th – 20th May, 2022**

**Agenda Item: 7.2.4**

**Source: GateHouse**

**Title: [draft] Report of [AT118-e][057][IOT NTN] Discontinuous coverage (Gatehouse)**

**Document for: Discussion**

# Introduction

This document is the report from the following offline discussion:

* [AT118-e][057][IOT NTN] Discontinuous coverage (Gatehouse)

      Scope:

1. Based on Agreements related to R2-2205933, progress further to identify agreeable parts.

2. Treat R2-2206160, determine agreeable parts (and related TPs)

      Intended outcome: Report, agreeable parameters definitions (TP)

      Deadline: For Online CB W2 Tue

During the 1st round of discussion, the rapporteur invites companies to provide their comments before the deadline that is set to: **Monday, 16th of May – 1200 UTC.**

Hereafter the rapporteur will summarize, and the summary will be made available for the online session on Tuesday, 17th of May.

# Contact

Delegates are encouraged to provide their contact information in the following table:

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| **Company** | **Name** | **Email** |
| GateHouse | René Brandborg Sørensen | rbs@gatehouse.com |
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# Agreements

This document is intended for discussion and agreement of parameters related to the discontinuous coverage case. The discussion will be based on the [post-RAN2#117-e discussion](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205933.zip) and the proposals of [R2-2206160](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2206160.zip).

The following agreements, based on the [post-RAN2#117-e discussion](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205933.zip), were made during the [first NTN IoT online session](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Inbox/Chairs_Notes/R2_118-e%20Chair%20Notes%202022-05-10%200600%20UTC.docx) in RAN2#118-e:

* P2, P3, P4, P6 are agreed
* P1 is agreed (can explore during R2 118-e whether optimizations/removal of some info is possible, optionality etc).
* (based on P1) Go for a single format / type of mean parameters for prediction of coverage (overrides earlier agreement).
* Include Satellite footprint reference location (coordinates) and coverage radius (for earth-fixed cells).
* Discuss further during R2 118-e for earth moving beams, and also clarify details for earth fixed cells (if needed)

The post-RAN2#117-e proposals:

Proposal 1: RAN2 will use SGP4 mean elements (Type 4) for sharing mean ephemeris, to support discontinuous coverage in IoT-NTN.

Proposal 2: RAN2 will explicitly use the epoch for sharing the mean ephemeris elements (of serving satellite, as well as the neighbour satellites) in IoT-NTN. RAN2 will discuss the possible format of epoch time as part of the new SIB.

Proposal 3: RAN2 will not discuss use of dedicated RRC signalling to share neighbour satellites’ ephemeris information, required for discontinuous coverage of IoT-NTN, in Rel-17.

Proposal 4: RAN2 will not discuss any further details of AS-NAS interaction for Discontinuous Coverage in IoT-NTN.

Proposal 5: RAN2 will include Satellite footprint reference location (coordinates) and coverage radius for earth-fixed cells (besides already agreed coverage start and end-times). RAN2 will discuss if elevation angle needs to be included for earth-moving beams.

Proposal 6: Network is not needed to explicitly indicate support of Discontinuous Coverage per PLMN by SIB1.

Proposal 7: RAN2 will discuss and finalize the contents and format of the new SIB.

Color code: Agreed, to be discussed.

# SGP4 ephemeris and Satellite footprint parameters.

As agreed, the satellite assistance information (SAI) to be transmitted in SIB32 consists of coverage information. This may come in the form of ON-timestamps for the earth-fixed (EF) scenario or as an SGP4-ephemeris in the earth-moving (EM) scenario, satellite footprint parameters and possibly a satellite/beam number.

## SGP4 ephemeris

### SGP4 reference frame

The standard reference frame of SGP4-propagators is true equator, mean equinox (TEME) of the epoch.

Question 4.1: Do you agree to specify the reference frame of the SGP4 format as TEME at epoch?

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| **Company** | **Yes/No** | **Comments** |
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### SGP4 parameters

In[R2-2206160](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2206160.zip) it is proposed that the range and granularity of the orbital parameters needed for SGP4 propagation should be based on the ranges and granularity already defined for TLE since the TLE is a well-known and tried standard-format for SGP4 parameters in the satellite community.

However, the elements included in TLEs [2] go beyond the requirements for SGP4 so that some of them could be skipped. In particular, the derivatives of mean motion, both first and second order, are not needed for SGP4 propagation [7], but are part of the TLE for compatibility reasons. In addition, the international designation of the satellite is not necessary for orbit propagation.

The necessary SGP4-based ephemeris parameters are further detailed in Table 2. The parameters in Table 2 are specified based on a conversion of the range/state-space covered by the character-encoded parameters in the TLE format (see Figure 2 and [9]) to state encoded parameters in Table 2.

**Table 2**. SGP4 parameters: Units, range, bit size and granularity.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Parameter | Unit | Range | Min states | Nearest Bit | States | Granularity |
| *Example* | *SI* | *X to Y* | *Smin* | *B =* ⌈log2*(Smin)*⌉ | *S = 2B* | *(Y-X)/(S-1)* |
| Inclination | Deg | 0 to 180.0000 | 1800001 | 21 | 221 | 8.583073616 e-5 |
| Arg of Perigee | Deg | 0 to 180.0000 | 1800001 | 21 | 221 | 8.583073616  e-5 |
| Right Ascension of the Node | Deg | 0 to 360.0000 | 3600001 | 22 | 222 | 8.5830712318e-5 |
| Mean Anomaly | Deg | 0 to 360.0000 | 3600001 | 22 | 222 | 8.5830712318e-5 |
| Eccentricity | - | 0 to .9999999 | 1e+7 | 24 | 224 | 5.96046388  e-8 |
| Mean Motion | rev/day | 0 to 99.99999999 | 1e+10 | 34 | 234 | 5.82076609 e-9 |
| Revolution Number at Epoch | rev | 0 to 131071 | 131072 | 17 | 217 | 1 |
| B\* | (earth radii)-1 | Nonlinear ∓.99999∓9 | - | 23 | - | - |
| Epoch\* | sec | -1048575 to 1048575 | 221 - 1 | 21 | 221 | 1 |

Notes:

1. B\* is defined in TLE format as the string “∓CCCCC∓E” - where ∓ is a binary sign, C is a value 0 through 9 and E is an exponent valued 0 through 9. The nearest bit is very close to the required number of bits (21.93) hence we keep the industry standard intact and do not attempt to improve the nonlinear granularity. A decimal point is assumed after the initial sign. To clarify the bitmask for the B\* term we provide the following:
   1. Bit 0: Determines the sign of the decimal.
   2. Bit 1-17: Determine the value of the decimal, range: .00000 to .99999, nBits = 17, granularity: .00001.
   3. Bit 18: Determines the sign of the exponent.
   4. Bit 19-22: Determine the value of the exponent, range: 0 to 9, B = 4, granularity: 1.
   5. For bit 1-17 and bit-19-22 they can represent more cases than required by the granularity. However, the extra cases shall be disregarded, i.e.. the integers beyond the range of 99999 and 9, respectively, are discarded.
2. The granularity of the number of revolutions should be the integer 1 so the range has been extended from the TLE formats maximum of 99999 to 131071.
3. The variables, ”*Inclination, Arg of Perigee, Right Ascension of the Node, Mean Anomaly, Eccentricity and Mean Motion*“ all have slightly improved granularities compared to TLEs due to “extra” states being introduced when per-parameter encoding is introduced in contrast to TLEs character encoding.

This is a total of 205 bits, or 25.625 Bytes.

Question 4.2: Do you agree to specify the range and granularity of the orbital parameters needed for SGP4 propagation ..

1. .. based on the ranges and granularity already defined for TLE parameters
2. .. and adopt the parameters specified in table 2 for the SGP4 format? Any suggestions in comments.

Epoch to be discussed in the next question

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The variable Epoch\* is a time offset between the beginning of the current week (Monday 00:00:00 UTC) of the SGP4 Epoch.

1. The Epoch time parameter within TLE is encoded as the last two digits of the Epoch year, and the Epoch day down to a granularity of ~1 microsecond and would need 44 bits. To reduce this size, Epoch\* defines the offset to the actual Epoch and is limited to a range of +/- 1048575 seconds (+/- ~12.1 days) referenced at the start of the current week. (This is considered a sufficient time to have a new TLE update).
2. It is reasonable that a new ephemeris is available before the old ephemeris (and any propagations) becomes too inaccurate. In the (unlikely) case that SGP4 ephemerides have Epochs that lay outside of this range, those can reasonably be propagated to the current week before being broadcast. Propagated ephemerides neither gain nor loose accuracy compared to the original ephemerides.
3. Since the SAI is for aiding UEs to predict coverage in the DC scenario a granularity of 1 sec is very reasonable as the added energy consumption for a UE to wake up approximately half a second in advance of predicted coverage (excluding prediction error over time) is negligible.

Question 4.3: Do you agree to specifying Epoch\* as a substitute for Epoch based on the above formulation?

* 1. Epoch\* as an offset to Epoch
  2. Epoch\* with reference to the beginning of the current week, Monday 00:00:00 UTC
  3. Epoch\* with granularity of 1 sec and a range of seconds (~12.1 days) around the reference time.0
  4. It is up to the network to appropriately propagate the SGP4-parameters if they fall outside this range

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| **Company** | **Yes/No** | **Comments** |
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## Quasi earth fixed parameters

From [R2-2206160](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2206160.zip):

“The service start time, or “t-Service-r17” in [TS 36.311v17.0.0] is intended for quasi-earth-fixed cells. We have made the following observations:

1. TimeUTC-r17 is a 39 bits parameter than ranges over ~1700 years starting from Jan 1 1900 with a granularity of 10 ms. We believe this is excessive for scheduling MO-traffic opportunities between paging opportunities and the parameter range could be reduced to a range of one week with a granularity of one second to significantly reduce the ASN.1 parameter size.
2. We suggest transmitting a list of timestamps, instead of just one, that can be up to X long to match the bit size of the ephemeris parameters (X=10 for the proposed range/granularity). This will allow for several MO-traffic opportunities to be scheduled for UEs in quasi-earth-fixed cells between scheduled paging opportunities (MT-traffic).
3. The parameter name “t-Service-r17” causes some confusion with regards to the purpose of the parameter, e.g. it seems to indicate a service period, so we suggest renaming it in some way to include “Start” – for example “tServiceStart-r17”.
4. If the Quasi-Earth-fixed cell scenario is extended with additional parameters that are specific to the scenario in future Release, it would be advantageous to gather the related parameters, eg. tServiceStart-r17 in a SEQUENCE that can be extended in future releases.

**…**

ASN.1 coding example for 2, 3, 4 above:

|  |
| --- |
| -- ASN1START  SatelliteInfo-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  satelliteSAI-r17 CHOICE {  ephemerisOrbitalParameters-r17 EphemerisOrbitalParameters-r17  sgp4EphemerisParameters-r17 SGP4EphemerisParameters-r17   earthFixedCellParameters-r17 EarthFixedCellParameters-r17  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {}   }  satelliteID-r17 INTEGER (0..255) OPTIONAL,  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {} OPTIONAL,  ... }  EarthFixedCellParameters-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  t-ServiceStart-r17 SEQUENCE( SIZE (1..10)) OF INTEGER (0..1048575)  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {} }  -- ASN1STOP |

“

**Question 4.4: Do you agree to specifying the above “EarthFixedParameters-r17” type - for the earth-fixed scenario?**

Rapporteur’s notes: This specification makes three changes:

1. It embeds “t-ServiceStart-r17” in a “EarthFixedParameters-r17” type along with a empty SEQUENCE “noncritical extensions”, which allows for extensibility to this type for earth-fixed cells in future releases.
2. It redefines “t-ServiceStart-r17” from the type “TimeUTC-r17” an “INTEGER (0..1048575)” This defines a time difference ranging from 0 to ~12.1 days from the beginning of the current week (Mon, 00:00:00 UTC with a granularity of 1 sec) to the time that coverage starts.   
   This proposed type is 20-bits instead of the 39-bit TimeUTC-r17.
3. It allows for the transmission of a list of several “t-ServiceStart-r17” instead of allowing only a single “t-ServiceStart-r17” to be informed. This allows for more opportunities to transmit mobile-originating traffic. To match the size of the proposed ASN.1 type for SGP4 ephemeris then up to 10 such timestamps can be allowed per “EarthFixedParameters-r17”.

Additional: This does NOT exclude footprint parameters or beamID from being included in SIB32. Specific questions on footprint parameters and satellite / beam ID follow.

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## Satellite footprint parameters

RAN2#118-e agreement:

* RAN2 will include Satellite footprint reference location (coordinates) and coverage radius for earth-fixed cells (besides already agreed coverage start and end-times). RAN2 will discuss if elevation angle needs to be included for earth-moving beams.

This is in line with proposals made in [R2-2205598](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205598.zip) and [R2-2206160](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2206160.zip). The following will discuss the schemes and parameterisation for satellite footprint parameters for the cases of earth-fixed (EF) cells and earth-moving (EM) cells.

### Reference point and radius (EF+EM)

In this scheme a reference point as a set of coordinates and a radius will define the edge of a beam (EF) or a cell (EM)

**Rapporteur’s proposal:**

Reference frame: WGS 84

Reference coordinates: Longitude and Latitude  
 Range: 180.000 to 180.000

Granularity: 0.00068664681 Deg (< 100 meter on Earth’s surface)  
 Bits: 19 x2

Radius:

Range 10 to 2560 km

Granularity: 10 km.  
 Bits: 8

So 46 bits in total, or 5.75 Bytes.

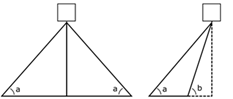
Question 4.5: Do you agree to the rapporteur’s proposal for refencepoint+radius signalling? And do you agree to allowing this footprint parameter to be sent in both the Earth-moving and Earth-fixed scenarios?

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### Elevation angles (EM only)

In this scheme two elevation angles, define the cross-track (axis orthogonal to the direction of the satellite) footprint coverage width. In this scheme the elevation angles are given with regards to the satellite position. In [R2-2206160](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2206160.zip) the following description is made:

If a single value is given, the “Right-” and “Left minimum elevation angles” are assumed equivalent. That is, the footprint is even around the satellite track. To describe a footprint coverage that is offset from the satellite track, two minimum elevation angle thresholds can be specified. The right minimum elevation angle is the rightmost (with reference to the satellite direction) elevation angle. The left being the leftmost. Both angles can be given from -70 to 70 allowing a leftmost elevation angle to be placed on the right side of the reference satellite. A “left minimum elevation angle” that is located to the right of the reference satellite is indicated by a negative sign on the elevation angle and equivalently for a “right minimum elevation angle” to the left of the reference satellite. See Figure Y.



**Figure Y**. Satellites travelling “into the paper”. The left satellite depicts the case of a footprint cross-section that is even around the nadir and so a single elevation angle “a” is necessary to describe the case. In this case a UE will be within the footprint if the minimum elevation angle the UE will experience during a satellite pass is greater than “a”. The satellite to the right projects a footprint to the left of the satellite: the “right minimum elevation angle”, “b”, is on the left of the satellite - it is measured as any other elevation angle, but assigned a negative sign. In this case a UE will be within the footprint if the minimum elevation angle the UE will experience during a satellite pass is greater than “a”, less than “b” and the UE is located on the left of the satellite pass.

**Rapporteur’s proposal:**

Reference point: Associated SGP4 satellite

Elevation angles:

Range -70 to 70 Deg

Granularity: 10 Deg  
 Bits: 4 x2

So 8 bits in total.

**Question 4.6:** Do you agree to the rapporteur’s proposal for elevation angle as a footprint parameter? – to be allowed strictly for the earth-moving case.

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## Other

### Satellite/Beam ID

A Satellite / Beam ID is suggested in R2-2206160. A satellite ID is suggested in [R2-2205143](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205143.zip).

**Rapporteur’s proposal:**

Include an **optional** satellite / beam ID

ID:

Range 0 to 255

Granularity: 1   
 Bits: 8

So, 8 bits or 1 byte in total.

UE behaviour on receiving a list of non-ID’d SAI:

1. Discard all prior SAI (both non-ID’d and ID’d) and only keep the new non-ID’d SAI.
2. Discard all prior non-ID’d SAI and keep the new non-ID’d SAI along with any ID’d SAI.
3. Add the new non-ID’d SAI to the set of known SAI. It is up to UE implementation to discard old SAI.

UE behaviour on receiving ID’d SAI:

1. Discard all prior SAI (both non-ID’d and ID’d) and only keep the new ID’d SAI.
2. Discard all prior non-ID’d SAI and keep the new non-ID’d SAI along with any ID’d SAI.
3. Add the new non-ID’d SAI to the set of known SAI. It is up to UE implementation to discard old SAI.

**Question 4.7: Do you support an optional ID for satellites / beams as specified above? Please list your prioritization of the associated UE behaviour.**

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| **Company** | **Yes/No** | **Comments** |
| Example | Yes | We support an optional ID for both satellites (earth-moving scenario) and beams (earth-fixed scenario).  Priorities: (C, B, A) and (F, E, D) |
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### Validity duration for satellite Epoch

[R2-2205143](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205143.zip) suggests to have a validity duration for the earth-moving case in the order of minutes.

“… Moreover, during email discussion, companies mentioned the observation that the epoch times of the ephemeris information sent for different satellites is unlikely to coincide. Each advertised satellite will come with its own epoch time, which only indicates the time at which the TLE was determined.”

The rapporteur points out that the EPOCH is not the time at which a TLE is determined – it is the time at which the TLE was determined for, i.e., the EPOCH can lie in the future. The TLE is most accurate around the EPOCH. Creating and assessing TLEs with EPOCHs in the future involves sampling the future orbit of the satellite using numerical integration methods, which are extremely accurate.

**Question 4.8: Do you support a validity duration parameter should be included as an optional parameter in SIB32?**

1. If so, please remark on the range and granularity of the validity duration?

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Furthermore, R2-2205143 suggests using legacy notification procedure to signal changes in SIB32.

**Question 4.9: Should we define a, b, c or d?**

1. **UEs to only read SIB32 if changes are signalled by legacy procedure ie. in MIB. to save power?**
2. **UEs read SIB32 upon wake-up, but otherwise only if changes are signalled by legacy procedure**
3. **Up to UE implementation. Changes to SIB32 can be signalled by legacy procedure.**
4. **Nothing.**

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### Other

**Question 4.9: Feel free to raise any other points – any additional parameters or behaviour that is essential for discontinuous coverage in Rel-17 that has not been considered.**

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# ASN1 proposals (TN)

The following structure is based on an acceptance of all proposals of R2-2206160.

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| --- |
| -- ASN1START  SystemInformationBlockType32-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  satelliteInfoList-r17 SatelliteInfoList-r17 OPTIONAL, -- Need OR  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {} OPTIONAL,  ... }  SatelliteInfoList-r17 ::= SEQUENCE (SIZE (1..maxSat-r17)) OF SatelliteInfo-r17  SatelliteInfo-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  satelliteSAI-r17 CHOICE {  sgp4EphemerisParameters-r17 SGP4EphemerisParameters-r17   earthFixedCellParameters-r17 EarthFixedCellParameters-r17  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {}   }  satelliteID-r17 INTEGER (0..255) OPTIONAL,  satelliteFootprintParameters-r17 SatelliteFootprintParameters-r17 OPTIONAL,  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {} OPTIONAL, }  EarthFixedCellParameters-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  t-ServiceStart-r17 SEQUENCE( SIZE (1..10)) OF INTEGER (0..1048575)  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {} }  SGP4EphemerisParameters-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  inclination-r17 INTEGER (0..2097151)  periapsis-r17 INTEGER (0..2097151)  longitude-r17 INTEGER (0..4194303)  anomaly-r17 INTEGER (0..4194303)  eccentricity-r17 INTEGER (0..16777215)  meanMotion-r17 INTEGER (0..17179869183)  revNoEpoch-r17 INTEGER (0..131071)  bStar-r17 BIT STRING (23)  epochStar-r17 INTEGER (-1048575..1048575) }  SatelliteFootprintParameters-r17 ::= SEQUENCE {  elevationAngleR-r17 INTEGER (-7..7) OPTIONAL,  elevationAngleL-r17 INTEGER (-7..7) OPTIONAL,  refPointX-r17 INTEGER (X1..X2) OPTIONAL,  refPointY-r17 INTEGER (Y1..-Y2) OPTIONAL,  refRadius-r17 INTEGER (1..200) OPTIONAL,  nonCriticalExtension SEQUENCE {} OPTIONAL, }  -- ASN1STOP |

**Question 5.1: Please provide views on the above ASN.1 specifications structure without regard to the parameters, which are to be discussed in section 4. Are you okay with:**

1. SAI type as a CHOICE per satellite/beam.
2. earthFixedParameters-r17 SEQUENCE to hold parameters for the EF scenario – to ensure extensibility.
3. EF parameters as a list of parameters (timestamps) instead of a single instance (single timestamp).

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# Conclusion

TBD, TP for CR to be written based on replies. TPs (ASN.1 code) in section 5 are currently based on all proposals being agreeable.

# References

1. [R2-2205933](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205933.zip) "Email Discussion Report [Post117-e][906][IoT-NTN] Non-Continuous Converge”, MediaTek Inc.

1. [R2-2206160](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2206160.zip) “ASN.1 proposal for satellite assistance information for prediction of discontinuous coverage”, Sateliot, GateHouse, Mediatek, ESA, Eutelsat, Hispasat, Hughes/Echostar, Inmarsat, Ligado, Novamint, Omnispace,
2. [R2-2205598](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205598.zip) “Assistance Information for Predicting the Discontinuous Coverage”, Google Inc.
3. [R2-2205143](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Docs/R2-2205143.zip) “FFS and RILZ302, H000, O302 etc for SIB32”, ZTE Corporation, Sanechips

1. [R2#118-e](https://www.3gpp.org/ftp/tsg_ran/WG2_RL2/TSGR2_118-e/Inbox/Chairs_Notes/R2_118-e%20Chair%20Notes%202022-05-10%200600%20UTC.docx) “Monday online seesion, chair’s notes”