3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #121bis-e draftR2-2304246

Elbonia, 17th – 26th of April 2023

**Agenda item: 7.7.4.1.1**

**Source: Nokia, Nokia Shanghai Bell**

**Title: Report from [AT121bis-e][106][NR NTN Enh] Signalling of TN coverage (Nokia)**

**WID/SID: NR\_NTN\_enh – Rel-18**

**Document for: Discussion and Decision**

# 1 Introduction

This is to discuss the following:

* [AT121bis-e][106][NR NTN Enh] Signaling of TN coverage (Nokia)

Initial scope: Continue the discussion on the signaling of TN coverage: signaling details for area center+radius (e.g. reuse of *Ellipsoid-PointWithUncertaintyCircle*?), which SIB to usse, whether additional information in dedicated signalling is needed, validity of the TN coverage area information, how to associate TN coverage info and frequency

Initial intended outcome: Summary of the offline discussion with e.g.:

* List of proposals for agreement (if any)
* List of proposals that require online discussions
* List of proposals that should not be pursued (if any)

Deadline for companies' feedback: Monday 2023-04-24 12:00 UTC  
Deadline for rapporteur's summary (in R2-2304246): Monday 2023-04-24 18:00 UTC

Proposals marked "for agreement" in R2-2304246 not challenged until Tuesday 2023-04-25 08:00 UTC will be declared as agreed via email by the session chair (for the rest the discussion might continue online in the Tuesday CB session).

In the next section we elaborate on TN coverage signaling and related matters.

# 2 Contact Information

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| Company | Contact: Name (E-mail) |
| CATT | Xiangdong Zhang (zhangxiangdong@catt.cn) |
| Transsion Holdings | Junwei Huang (junwei.huang@transsion.com) |
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# 3 Discussion

During the RAN2#121bis online discussion on 18th of April, the following agreements related to TN coverage were made [4]:

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| Agreements:  1. For signaling the TN coverage, the corresponding geographical area information is provided by broadcast signalling by the network via a list of (possibly overlapping) areas where each area is defined using center location coordinates + radius (where the area is meant to describe a group of cells, not just a single one). FFS on the SIB. FFS on whether additional information in dedicated signalling is needed/useful |

In this e-mail discussion we want to collect companies’ views regarding the aforementioned FFS points and other TN coverage related aspects listed in the e-mail discussion scope.

## 3.1 Signalling details – area center and radius

As stated in the agreement box above, the TN coverage information will be signalled in the form of a list of areas. Each area should be defined using center location and the radius. There were various proposals submitted to this meeting regarding which IE to apply for signaling the coordinates and the range of the radius. In [1] it is suggested to use *Ellipsoid-Point* which would consume 48 bits to provide the latitude and longitude. During the online discussion it was pointed out that *Ellipsoid-PointWithUncertaintyCircle* could be applied alternatively. A related topic is how to signal the radius and how accurate it shall be. Thus, companies are asked to share their view on how to signal area’s center location and its radius.

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| **Question 1: For TN coverage information, how to signal area center and its radius?**   1. **Ellipsoid-Point and radius separately** 2. **Ellipsoid-PointWithUncertaintyCircle** 3. **Other**   **In your response, please indicate how accurate that shall be and how many bits are jointly needed per single TN coverage area.** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | a) | In Rel-17, the reference location information introduced for serving cell and neighbour cells are defined by *Ellipsoid-Point*. The same format can be reused for providing TN coverage information. And the range of the radius can be defined directly by RRC.  If b) is used, how to define the range of the radius is complexity, due to the derivation of the radius is based on the following equation:  *r* = C\*(((1+x)K)-1)  it may not only involve the spec of TS38.331, it may also need to involve TS37.355 TS23.032, which make the work complexity. |
| Samsung | a) | Seems even for b) radius needs to be separately indicated. The uncertainty circle is used to describe the uncertainty of the area center location, which is not needed and the complexity should be avoided.  a) can be used as in R17. |
| vivo | a) | The same mechanism of *referencelocation* and *distanceThresh* provided in Rel-17 can be used. |
| Transsion | a) | The legacy Rel-17 means can be reused. Even the *Ellipsoid-PointWithUncertaintyCircl*e can provide less signaling overhead comare to *Ellipsoid-Point.* The major differnence between these two formats is the range to represent coveraged area, the former one provide shorter than later one, but from imlpelmentation perspective, the later one can provide more flexible. |
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Summary for Q1:

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## 3.2 Signaling details – frequency information

In [2] and [3] there are different approaches presented on how to signal the frequency information which has been agreed to be provided per TN coverage area. [2] suggests to use a list of frequencies under each TN area information (Option 1). [3] proposes to introduce TN coverage area identity and then use this identifier in SIB4 and SIB5 for all TN frequencies listed there (Option 2). It seems both approaches have some benefits, so it would be good to check what companies prefer.

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| **Question 2: How the frequency information for TN coverage area should be signalled? Please choose from the options below.**   1. **Option 1: use a list of frequencies under each TN area information** 2. **Option 2: introduce TN coverage area identity and the use this identifier in SIB4 and SIB5 for all TN frequencies listed there** 3. **Other** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | a) | Option 1 is direct and clear.  For option 2, when the TN coverage data is changed, the network should also update SIB4/5, and the behaviour of UE acquiring updated system information is complete. And an area may relate to serval frequency points, and a frequency may presence in many areas, option 2 will be very cumbersome. |
| Samsung | a) |  |
| vivo | Option 1 | There may be multiple TN cells of multiple frequencies in an area, only one area is needed to be provided in order to save signaling overhead, option 1 is simpler to let UE know which frequencies are associated with the area. |
| Transsion | a) | The TN coverage is relative fixed compare to NTN. Option 1 can dirtectly indicate carrier frequency(ies) in a certain area, when UE is closeing to one of area, it can measures for those frequencies. |
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Summary for Q2:

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## 3.3 Signaling details – the size of TN coverage list

A somewhat related question to the issues discussed already above would be: how many TN coverage areas do we actually need? Please provide the justification on your preferred size of TN coverage list.

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| **Question 3: What shall be the size of TN coverage list?** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | See the comment | The amount of TN coverage areas is up to the actually geographic location and network deployment.  From our perspective, the amount of TN coverage areas may in level of tens. Hence, the signalling overhead is up to thousands of bits. |
| vivo | 16 | NTN cells can broadcast up to eight NR neighboring frequencies and eight E-UTRA neighboring frequencies, considering each frequency may be associated with one TN coverage, up to sixteen TN coverage needs to be provided. |
| Transsion |  | Same view with CATT |
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Summary for Q3:

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## 3.4 Signaling details – which SIB to use

It remains to be decided where TN coverage area information list is sent. Obviously, the final answer may depend on the ultimate design of this list (e.g. how many bits are consumed to signal a single TN coverage area information). However, companies are already encouraged to express their opinions.

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| **Question 4: Where TN coverage area list should be broadcast? Please select from the options below:**   1. **SIB19** 2. **Other SIB** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | b)  Introduce a new SIB | 1) no enough space to contain TN coverage info in SIB19  Based on our answer in Q3, the signalling overhead to provide TN coverage may up to thousands of bits. In Rel-17, the SIB19 was designed to contain at most 8 neighbour cells (with ephemeris), based on the maximum capacity of SIB. Hence, SIB19 has not enough space to contain the TN coverage information.  2) different periodicity and update requirement between TN coverage information and SIB19  The character of the TN coverage area information is different with the SIB19, e.g. the update mechanism, periodicity. Once UE acquire the TN coverage information, the UE may not acquire the TN coverage information repetitively if it doesn’t move far away (under this situation the TN coverage around the UE is unchanged). However, UE need to acquire SIB19 very frequently. And from the NW side, the NW doesn’t need to broadcast the TN coverage with short periodicity, due to it is not necessary for UE access, but SIB19 is essential for UE access, so the periodicity requirement is different between SIB19 and TN coverage area information. If TN coverage information is broadcast in SIB19, UE has to acquire the TN coverage again and again, which bring unnecessary data reception and corresponding energy consumption.  Since TN coverage data has different valid characteristics. Introduce TN coverage data in the other existing SIBs make update mechanism complex. We prefer to introduce a new SIB to broadcast the TN coverage information. |
| Samsung | b)  Use SIB4/3 | SIB4/3 includes inter-frequency and/or intra-frequency information cell reselection information. |
| vivo | a) | Since information on the TN coverage area is NTN-specific cell reselection information, same as location-based and time-based cell reselection related information, the information on the TN coverage area can be included in SIB19. Considering the capacity of SIB19, in addition to the information currently in SIB19, there are still more than one thousand bits left that can be used to provide TN coverage information. |
| Transsion | b) | Introduce new SIB to indicate neighbor TN cells, which less spec impact. |
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Summary for Q4:

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## 3.5 Signaling details – need for dedicated signaling

Another aspect that still needs to be concluded is whether there is a necessity for dedicated signaling to provide the UE with TN coverage area information. In some of the papers submitted to RAN2#121bis it was pointed out that SIB may provide just a coarse information, while more details shall be given using dedicated signaling. On the other hand, during the online discussion it was rather clear to RAN2 that TN coverage area information does not need to be very accurate/detailed, and it needs to work for the UEs in IDLE mode.

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| **Question 5: Is there a need to support dedicated signaling for providing the TN coverage information?** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | Yes | Considering the signalling overhead, the network may not configure enough precise TN coverage data to UE via SI. Based on the TN coverage information broadcast in SI, UE couldn’t get the accurate TN location information. However, NW could get the UE position information in connected state, so NW could give accurate TN coverage information. With the more accurate TN coverage information, UE could make more smart decision on whether and on which TN frequency to perform TN measurement, it bring benefit on UE power saving. |
| Samsung | No | How can dedicated signalling work for idle UE?  Even if UE receives more accurate TN information in connected mode and enters idle mode to use it, UE can move to a new area in idle mode and the stored information will become inaccurate without NW nor UE awareness. Then how to update this information for the UE in idle mode? If this idle UE acquires new TN area information in SIB from a new serving cell, how does UE deal with the two sets of different TN information? If the new TN area information in SIB overrides the TN area information from the dedicated signalling, then we doubt the benefit to support dedicated signalling with large specs impact. |
| vivo | No | The TN coverage information is used for UE power-saving, coarse area information is sufficient and is useful for all IDLE/INACTIVE mode UEs in the cell. Furthermore, for the purpose of reducing signaling overhead, providing this information through dedicated signaling is not expected. |
| Transsion | No | UE is in Idle mode and peroforms NTN-NT cell reselection, no need to go beck to CONNECT mode to get dedicate information. |
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Summary for Q5:

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## 3.6 Signaling details – validity of TN coverage information

Eventually, we need to discuss how long such TN coverage information shall remain valid and how to realize that. As this information is expected to be rather static, it would be good to allow the UE to store it, once acquired. On the other hand, we need to think of the triggers which should make the UE acquire new TN coverage information.

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| **Question 6: How long the UE should consider the acquired TN coverage information remains valid?** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | See the comment | We think we can follow the legacy mechanism for SI, i.e. 3 hours. |
| Samsung | Follow legacy SI update mechanism | UE can reacquires the SIB if it becomes invalide. |
| vivo | Until the SIB carrying TN coverage information is reacquired. | If the NW wants to provide TN coverage information for a given frequency, this information should be provided together with the frequency information in SIB4. If the NW wants to update the frequency information in SIB4, the SIB4 and the SIB which carrying TN coverage information should be updated together. The existing SI modification procedure can be used and no additional spec work is needed. |
| Transsion | See the comment | TN coverage information is relative static, RAN2 can further discuss on UE based solutions. |
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Summary for Q6:

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And a related question:

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| **Question 7: Do we need to define any triggers making the UE reacquire the TN coverage information? Please share the details on those triggers or explain why there is no such need.** | | |
| **Company** | **Answer** | **Comments** |
| CATT | Yes | Due to TN coverage information of the surrounding of the UE is varied with the UE location. So a distance-based solution can be introduced. E.g. when UE movement exceeds a distance threshold, UE needs to reacquire new TN coverage information.  Additionally, we would like to propose that, the update of TN coverage info will neither result in SI change notifications nor in a modification of valueTag in SIB1. Especially for earth-moving cell, the TN cell under coverage of NTN cell keeps changing. NW has to frequently update the TN coverage info to ensure fresh TN coverage info for the newly covered UE. However, for UE who already acquire the surrounding TN coverage info should not be triggered to re-acquire the updated TN coverage data. |
| Samsung | No | An NTN serving cell should provide enough TN area information relevant to a certain area in an area-specific SIB, or enough TN area information relevant to the cell in a cell-specific SIB. Since TN coverage information is static, legacy SI update mechanism is sufficient. When moving to a new area/cell, UE checks the validity of SIB and reacquires the SIB if the stored SIB is not valid. |
| vivo | No | The existing SI modification procedure can be used, no other trigger condition is needed. |
| Transsion | Yes | UE based tirggers. |
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Summary for Q7:

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# 4 Conclusion

This paper discussed TN coverage information details. The following proposals are made:

For agreement:

**Proposal x:**

For discussion:

**Proposal y:**

# References

1. R2-2303168 On TN Coverage Area Information - signaling, validity and definition aspects 3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #121bis-e Elbonia, 17th – 26th of April 2023
2. R2-2303100 Discussion on the NTN-TN cell reselection enhancements 3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #121bis-e Elbonia, 17th – 26th of April 2023
3. R2-2303037 TN cell coverage info and measurement relaxation 3GPP TSG-RAN WG2 Meeting #121bis-e Elbonia, 17th – 26th of April 2023
4. Report from Break-out session on NR-NTN and IoT-NTN