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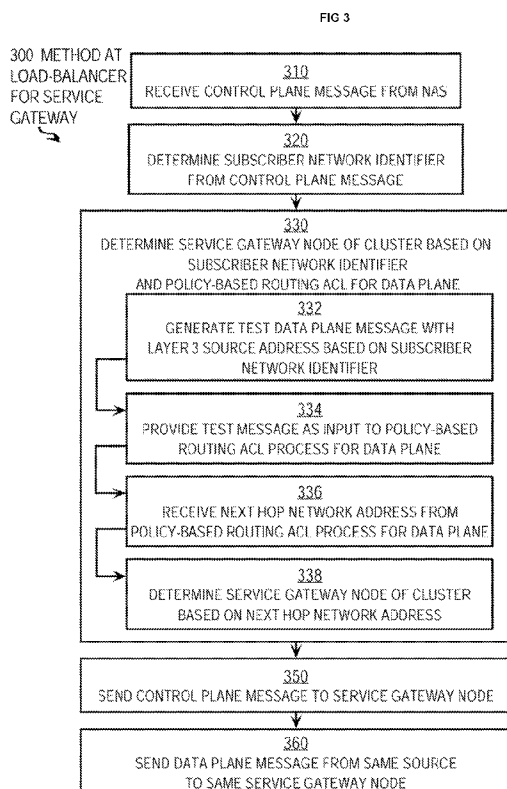
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(54) Title: TECHNIQUES FOR LOAD BALANCING OVER A CLUSTER OF SUBSCRIBER-AWARE APPLICATION SERVERS



(57) Abstract: Techniques for distributing control plane traffic, from an end node to a cluster of service gateway nodes that host subscriber aware application servers, include receiving a control plane message for supporting data plane traffic from a particular subscriber. A particular service gateway node is determined among the cluster of service gateway nodes based on policy based routing (PBR) for the data plane traffic from the particular subscriber. A message based on the control plane message is sent to a control plane process on the particular service gateway node. Thereby, data plane traffic and control plane traffic from the same subscriber are directed to the same gateway node, or otherwise related gateway nodes, of the cluster of service gateway nodes. This approach allows currently available, hardware accelerated PBR to be used with clusters of subscriber aware service gateways that must also monitor control plane traffic from the same subscriber.

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- *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))*

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

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USPC: 709/224

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 709/224

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X,E	US Patent No. 7,095,732 (Watson, Jr.), 22 August 2006 (22.08.2006)col. 5 lines 32-65	1-2, 7-12, 16-20
A,E	US Patent 7,277,945 (Shah et al.), 02 October 2007 (02.10.2007) col. 3 lines 1-59	1-2, 7-12, 16-20



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