



(51) International Patent Classification:

H04W 72/04 (2009.01) H04L 27/26 (2006.01)
H04W 28/16 (2009.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/CN2015/094304

(22) International Filing Date:

11 November 2015 (11.11.2015)

(25) Filing Language:

English

(26) Publication Language:

English

(30) Priority Data:

62/082,234 20 November 2014 (20.11.2014) US
14/869,411 29 September 2015 (29.09.2015) US

(71) Applicant: HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES CO., LTD.

[CN/CN]; Huawei Administration Building, Bantian, Long-
gang District, Shenzhen, Guangdong 518129 (CN).

(72) Inventors: RONG, Zhigang; 13565 Silver Ivy Ln., San

Diego, CA California 92129 (US). YANG, Yunsong; 4679
Torrey Circle, Apt. D304, San Diego, CA California 92130
(US).

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every

kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY,
BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM,

DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT,
HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IR, IS, JP, KE, KG, KN, KP, KR,
KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG,
MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM,
PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SA, SC,
SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN,
TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every

kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, ST, SZ,
TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, RU,
TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE,
DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU,
LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK,
SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ,
GW, KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Declarations under Rule 4.17:

- as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))
- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))

Published:

- with international search report (Art. 21(3))

(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SETTING CYCLIC PREFIX LENGTH

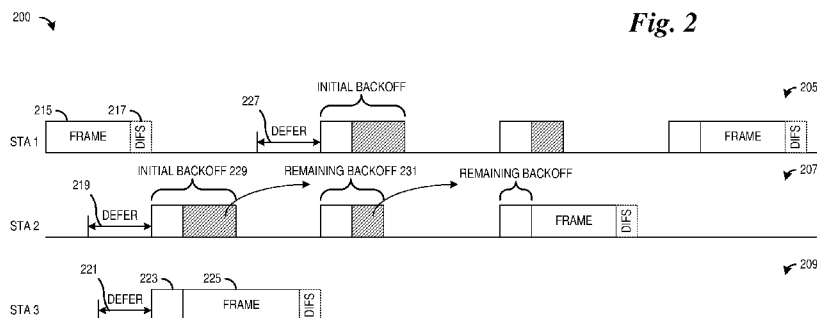


Fig. 2

(57) Abstract: A method for communicating in a wireless communications system includes receiving a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is received in accordance with the first cyclic prefix, determining a second length of a second cyclic prefix for a transmission in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator, and transmitting the transmission with the second cyclic prefix.

System and Method for Setting Cyclic Prefix Length

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. non-provisional patent application Serial No. 14/869,411, filed on September 29, 2015 and entitled "System and Method for Setting Cyclic Prefix Length," which in turn claims priority from U.S. provisional application Serial No. 62/082,234, filed on November 20, 2014 and entitled "System and Method for Setting Cyclic Prefix Length," both of which patent applications are incorporated herein by reference as if reproduced in its entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates to digital communications, and, in particular embodiments, to setting cyclic prefix (CP) length.

BACKGROUND

[0003] The number of devices using Wireless Local Area Networks (WLAN) continue to show dramatic growth. WLANs allow users the ability to connect to high-speed services without being tethered to wireline connections. WLANs are wireless communications systems that are based on the IEEE 802.11 series of technical standards. Typically, as the number of devices using WLANs increases, the density of devices in the WLANs (e.g., access points (APs) and stations (STA)) will also increase. High densities of APs (also commonly referred to as communications controller, controller, and the like) and stations (also commonly referred to as user, subscriber, terminal, and the like) tend to make WLANs less efficient, especially since the original WLANs were designed assuming a low density of APs and stations. As an example of inefficiency, a currently used enhanced distributed channel access (EDCA) based media access control (MAC) scheme generally does not work efficiently in an environment with high AP and station density.

[0004] A newly formed IEEE 802.11 Study Group named "High Efficiency WLAN (HEW)" has been formed to study, among other things, improving system performance in a high density environment. As a result of the study of the HEW Study Group, a Task Group called TGax was formed.

SUMMARY OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0005] Example embodiments of the present disclosure which provide a system and method for setting cyclic prefix length.

[0006] In accordance with another example embodiment of the present disclosure, a method for communicating in a wireless communications system is provided. The method includes receiving, by a station, a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is received in accordance with the first cyclic prefix, determining, by the station, a second length of a second cyclic prefix for a transmission in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator, and transmitting, by the station, the transmission with the second cyclic prefix.

[0007] In accordance with another example embodiment of the present disclosure, a method for communicating in a wireless communications system is provided. The method includes transmitting, by an access point, a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is transmitted in accordance with the first cyclic prefix, and wherein the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator is configured to prompt an adjustment to a second length of a second cyclic prefix, and receiving, by the access point, a first transmission from a station, the first transmission with the second length of the second cyclic prefix determined in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator.

[0008] In accordance with another example embodiment of the present disclosure, a station is provided. The station includes a receiver, a processor operatively coupled to the receiver, and a transmitter operatively coupled to the processor. The receiver receives a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is received in accordance with the first cyclic prefix. The processor determines a second length of a second cyclic prefix for a transmission in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator. The transmitter transmits the transmission with the second cyclic prefix.

[0009] In accordance with another example embodiment of the present disclosure, an access point is provided. The access point includes a transmitter, and a receiver operatively coupled to

the transmitter. The transmitter transmits a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is transmitted in accordance with the first cyclic prefix, and wherein the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator are configured to prompt an adjustment to a second length of a second cyclic prefix. The receiver receives a first transmission from a station, the first transmission with the second length of the second cyclic prefix determined in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator.

[0010] One advantage of an embodiment is that the cyclic prefix length is set in accordance with implicit or explicit indicators without requiring timing advance commands, therefore, communications overhead is reduced.

[0011] A further advantage of an embodiment is that the uplink cyclic prefix length is adjustable through adjusting the downlink cyclic prefix length, therefore, the signaling overhead of indicating the uplink cyclic prefix length is reduced by taking advantage of the existing indication of downlink CP length.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] For a more complete understanding of the present invention, and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following descriptions taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

[0013] Figure 1 illustrates wireless communications system in accordance with an embodiment;

[0014] Figure 2 illustrates a diagram of channel access timing in accordance with an embodiment;

[0015] Figure 3a illustrates a flow diagram of operations occurring in an AP as the AP transmits uplink scheduling information to stations in accordance with an embodiment;

[0016] Figure 3b illustrates a flow diagram of operations occurring in a station as the station transmits to its AP in accordance with an embodiment;

[0017] Figure 4 illustrates an example interaction between an AP and two stations (STA1 and STA2) in accordance with an embodiment;

[0018] Figure 5 illustrates a message exchange diagram highlighting messages exchanged between a station and its AP, where an indicator of the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is included in uplink scheduling information in accordance with an embodiment;

[0019] Figure 6 illustrates a message exchange diagram highlighting messages exchanged between a station and its AP, where the station determines if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used in accordance with an embodiment;

[0020] Figures 7a and 7b illustrate flow diagrams of example operations occurring in an AP as the AP transmits uplink scheduling information to stations and a station as the station transmits to its AP in accordance with an embodiment; and

[0021] Figure 8 illustrates a computing platform that may be used for implementing, for example, the devices and methods described herein, in accordance with an embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

[0022] The operating of the current example embodiments and the structure thereof are discussed in detail below. It should be appreciated, however, that the present disclosure provides many applicable inventive concepts that can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. The specific embodiments discussed are merely illustrative of specific structures of the disclosure and ways to operate the disclosure, and do not limit the scope of the disclosure.

[0023] The present disclosure will be described with respect to example embodiments in a specific context, namely communications systems that uses different length cyclic prefixes to help maintain signal orthogonality. The disclosure may be applied to standards compliant communications systems, such as those that are compliant with Third Generation Partnership Project (3GPP), IEEE 802.11, and the like, technical standards, and non-standards compliant communications systems, that uses different length cyclic prefixes to help maintain signal orthogonality.

[0024] Figure 1 illustrates an example wireless communications system 100. Wireless communications system 100 includes an access point (AP) 105 that serves one or more stations, such as stations (STA) 110 - 116, by receiving communications originating from the stations and then forwarding the communications to their intended destinations or receiving communications destined to the stations and then forwarding the communications to their intended stations. In addition to communicating through AP 105, some stations may directly communicate with one another. As an illustrative example, station 116 may transmit directly to station 118. While it is understood that communications systems may employ multiple APs capable of communicating with a number of stations, only one AP, and a number of stations are illustrated for simplicity.

[0025] Transmissions to and/or from a station occur on a shared wireless channel. WLANs make use of carrier sense multiple access with collision avoidance (CSMA/CA), where a station desiring to transmit needs to contend for access to the wireless channel before it can transmit. A station may contend for access to the wireless channel using a network allocation vector (NAV). The NAV may be set to a first value to represent that the wireless channel is busy and to a second value to represent that the wireless channel is idle. The NAV may be set by station in accordance with physical carrier sensing and/or reception of transmissions from other stations and/or APs. Therefore, contending for access to the wireless channel may require the station to

expend a significant amount of time, thereby decreasing wireless channel utilization and overall efficiency. Furthermore, contending for access to the wireless channel may become difficult if not impossible as the number of stations contending for access increases.

[0026] Figure 2 illustrates a diagram 200 of example channel access timing. A first trace 205 represents channel access for a first station (STA 1), a second trace 207 represents channel access for a second station (STA 2), and a third trace 209 represents channel access for a third station (STA 3). A short inter-frame space (SIFS) has a duration of 16 microseconds, a point coordination function (PCF) inter-frame space (PIFS) has a duration of 25 microseconds, while a distributed inter-frame space (DIFS) may last longer than either the SIFS or the PIFS. A backoff period may be a random duration. Therefore, active scanning may not provide the best solution when there are large numbers of stations attempting to perform AP/network discovery.

[0027] In cellular communications systems, e.g., 3GPP LTE compliant communications systems, orthogonal frequency division multiple access (OFDMA) has been shown to be able to provide robust performance in high density environments. OFDMA has the ability to support multiple users simultaneously by carrying traffic from different users on different portions of the communications system bandwidth. In general, OFDMA can support a large number of users more efficiently, especially when data traffic from individual users is low. Specifically, OFDMA can avoid wasting frequency resources if traffic from one user cannot fill the entirety of the communications system bandwidth by utilizing the unused bandwidth to carry transmissions from other user(s). The ability to utilize unused bandwidth may become crucial as the communications system bandwidth continues to become wider.

[0028] Similarly, uplink multi-user multiple input multiple output (UL MU-MIMO) techniques have also been used in cellular communications systems, e.g., 3GPP LTE, to enhance communications system performance. UL MU-MIMO allows multiple users to simultaneously transmit on the same time-frequency resource(s) with the transmissions being separated in space (i.e., on different spatial streams).

[0029] In order to support OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO, it is generally required that the transmitted signals of the multiple users (stations) arrive at the receiver (AP) at substantially the same time, otherwise, orthogonality among the signals from the multiple users may be destroyed. For downlink transmissions, this is readily achieved since the downlink transmissions are from a

single AP (or from multiple APs that can easily be coordinated). For uplink transmissions, this typically becomes more difficult since the transmissions are from multiple users and the multiple users may be operating independently, making coordination difficult.

[0030] In 3GPP LTE compliant communications systems, uplink synchronization is achieved through an evolved NodeB (eNB) sending timing advance commands to user equipments (UE). eNBs are also commonly referred to as NodeBs, APs, base stations, controllers, communications controllers, and the like. UEs are also commonly referred to as stations, users, subscribers, mobile stations, mobiles, terminals, and the like.

[0031] The timing advance value controls the timing offset of a UE's transmission on the uplink. For UEs that are closer to the eNB (hence with shorter propagation delay), a smaller timing advance value may be used. For UEs that are farther away from the eNB (hence with greater propagation delay), a larger timing advance value may be used. By controlling the uplink transmission timing for different UEs, the eNB can make sure that the arrival time of signals originating from multiple UEs are aligned.

[0032] However, in a high density environment, sending timing advance commands to a large number of stations may not be feasible. Additionally, IEEE 802.11 compliant communications systems are asynchronous in nature, it is difficult for an AP to estimate the required timing offset for each station due to factors such as the existence of a random backoff interval. Additionally, sending timing advance commands to a large number of stations may consume a considerable amount of resources in the communications system, leading to a large communications system overhead.

[0033] According to an example embodiment, an indicator of the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO in the uplink is used to inform stations that OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used for uplink transmissions and to adjust their cyclic prefix (CP). The length of the cyclic prefix may be based on a value derived from a length of a cyclic prefix used in the transmission of the trigger frame. The length of the cyclic prefix used in the transmission of the trigger frame may be indicated in the trigger frame. As an illustrative example, a station receives uplink scheduling information from its AP. The uplink scheduling information may be carried in a trigger frame. An example of the trigger frame is a stand-alone downlink frame comprising control information such as the uplink scheduling information. Another example of the trigger

frame is a downlink frame where the control information such as the uplink scheduling information is sent together with other downlink data. The trigger frame can be in the form of a MAC frame. The trigger frame can also be in the form of a null data packet (NDP) frame. The uplink scheduling information may include an indicator of the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO. The indicator may be set to a first value (e.g., TRUE or ON) to indicate that OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used for this uplink transmission, and the indicator may be set to a second value (e.g., FALSE or OFF) to indicate that OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not being used for this uplink transmission. In other words, if the indicator is set to the first value, then multiple stations may be transmitting simultaneously on the uplink. The scheduling information may be transmitted from the AP to the station in a trigger message, for example, with a CP length of CP_{DL} (CP length value for the downlink, which may be signaled in the trigger message). The indicator may be an explicit indicator, meaning that it is present in the uplink scheduling information and the station receiving the uplink scheduling information may readily determine the value of the indicator included in the uplink scheduling information. The indicator may be an implicit indicator, meaning that the station receiving the scheduling information may infer the value of the indicator by examining the uplink scheduling information intended for the station and/or uplink scheduling information intended for other stations.

[0034] At the station, as the station receives the uplink scheduling information, the station may decide on the CP length value for the uplink (CP_{UL}) that it will use in its uplink transmission as informed by the uplink scheduling information. If the uplink scheduling information includes the indicator set to the second value (i.e., OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not being used) the station may set its CP_{UL} to a first CP length value (CP_1), while if the indicator is set to the first value (i.e., OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used) the station may set its CP_{UL} to a second CP length value (CP_2), which is derived from CP_{DL} .

[0035] In general, CP_1 may be the same value as CP_{DL} and CP_2 is larger than CP_{DL} (and hence CP_1) to help accommodate the different propagation delay between different stations and the AP when OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used. It is noted that CP_2 may be a default value specified by a technical standard, an operator of the communications system, and the like, and may not need to be signaled to the station. It is noted that other values for CP_1 and CP_2 are possible and that the described relationship of $CP_1 < CP_2$ may not hold in all situations.

[0036] According to an example embodiment, CP2 is derived from a set of possible CP length values. As an illustrative example, a set of possible CP length values is defined (e.g., by a technical standard, an operator of the communications system, and the like) and CP2 is selected from the set of possible CP length values as long as CP2 is larger than or equal to CP_{DL}. For discussion purposes, consider a situation where the set of possible CP length values includes 4 values: 0.4 us, 0.8 us, 1.6 us, and 3.2 us. The set of possible CP length values is indexed by a two-bit index: "00", "01", "10", and "11", respectively. Assume that CP_{DL} is 0.8 us (corresponding to index "01") is used for transmission of the trigger frame, so the two-bit index ("01") is indicated in the trigger frame. The station may derive an index for CP2 by incrementing an index for CP_{DL} by value K. The value of K may be a fixed value defined by a technical standard, an operator of the communications system, and the like. Alternatively, the value of K may be signaled by an AP in a system information message, e.g., in a Beacon frame. If the resulting index for CP2 is greater than a maximum index value (e.g., the total number of indices), the station sets the index for CP2 to the maximum index value. The value of CP2 may be determined from the index of CP2. As an illustrative example, consider a situation where K = 1, value of CP_{DL} = 0.8 us, and index of CP_{DL} = 1, the station may be able to derive the index for CP2 by

$$\begin{aligned}\text{index of CP2} &= \min(\text{index of CP}_{\text{DL}} + K, \text{maximum index value}) \\ &= \min(1+1, 3) = 2.\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the value of CP2 (when using the set of possible CP length values and corresponding indices as discussed above) = 1.6 us. As another illustrative example, consider a situation where K = 3, value of CP_{DL} = 0.8 us, and index of CP_{DL} = 1, the station may be able to derive the index for CP2 by

$$\begin{aligned}\text{index of CP2} &= \min(\text{index of CP}_{\text{DL}} + K, \text{maximum index value}) \\ &= \min(1+3, 3) = 3.\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the value of CP2 (when using the set of possible CP length values and corresponding indices as discussed above) = 3.2 us.

[0037] Figure 3a illustrates a flow diagram of example operations 300 occurring in an AP as the AP transmits uplink scheduling information to stations. The AP may perform a check to determine if it is using OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO for the uplink being scheduled (block 305). If it is, the AP may transmit the uplink scheduling information along with the indicator set

to indicate that OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is to be used for the scheduled uplink (block 310). If it is not, the AP may transmit the uplink scheduling information along with the indicator set to indicate that OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not to be used for the scheduled uplink (block 315). The uplink scheduling information may be carried in a trigger frame. In addition to the uplink scheduling information, the trigger frame may also comprise an indicator indicating the cyclic prefix length value for the downlink (e.g., CP_{DL}).

[0038] Figure 3b illustrates a flow diagram of example operations 350 occurring in a station as the station transmits to its AP. The station may receive uplink scheduling information from its AP (block 355). The station may also receive the indicator of CP_{DL} from the trigger frame. The station may perform a check to determine if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is going to be used in the uplink (block 360). If OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is going to be used in the uplink, i.e., the indicator is set to the first value (TRUE or ON), the station sets the value of the UL cyclic prefix to CP_2 , which may be derived from CP_{DL} (block 365) and transmits to the AP (block 370). If OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not going to be used in the uplink, i.e., the indicator is set to the second value (FALSE or OFF), the station sets its cyclic prefix length to CP_1 or CP_{DL} (block 375) and transmits to the AP (block 370).

[0039] In the SIFS after the end of the received uplink scheduling information, the station may start its uplink transmission with cyclic prefix length of CP_{UL} on a resource as indicated in the uplink scheduling information. The technique as presented herein affords greater flexibility in setting UL cyclic prefix length when OFDMA and/or MU-MIMO is used in the UL since the station can derive the UL cyclic prefix length from the DL cyclic prefix length. Therefore, the orthogonality between signals from the different stations is maintained at the receiver (e.g., the AP).

[0040] As an illustrative example, assuming the AP coverage is 100 meters, then the maximum round-trip propagation delay is about 0.67 us. With the guard interval (i.e., CP length) of 0.8 us in current 802.11 WiFi system, there is only 0.13 us (0.8 - 0.67us) left for mitigating channel delay spread and station timing inaccuracy, which most likely will be inadequate. However, with a longer CP length value, for example, 1.6 us, for the UL when UL OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is used, after deducting the maximum round-trip delay of 0.67 us, there

still is about 0.93 us left for mitigating channel delay spread and STA timing inaccuracy, which most likely will be sufficient for most of the scenarios.

[0041] According to an example embodiment, low overhead associated with the use of shorter CPs is maintained when longer CPs are not needed. As an example, when OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not used, the longer CP is not necessary and a shorter CP may be employed, thus reducing the overhead arising from the CP. But when OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is used, although a longer CP is employed, the additional overhead from longer CP will be compensated for due to the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO. In fact, additional gain may be achieved due to the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO (e.g., supporting transmissions from multiple stations).

[0042] Figure 4 illustrates an example interaction 400 between an AP and two stations (STA1 and STA2). It is noted that for simplicity reasons, on both the uplink and the downlink, only one OFDM symbol is shown. In reality, actual downlink and uplink transmissions may occur over a plurality of OFDM symbols. The AP transmits uplink scheduling information 405 to STA1 and STA2 on the downlink, with a CP length of CP_{DL} 407. The uplink scheduling information includes the indicator that OFDMA is to be used on the scheduled uplink transmissions. Due to propagation delay, after T_{Delay1} , STA1 receives the uplink scheduling information (shown as uplink scheduling information 409). Similarly, after T_{Delay2} , STA2 receives the uplink scheduling information (shown as uplink scheduling information 411). In this example, the distance between STA2 and AP is larger than the distance between STA1 and AP, therefore, $T_{Delay2} > T_{Delay1}$. STA1 and STA2 check their uplink scheduling information, find their resource allocation information, and also find that OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is to be used in the scheduled uplink transmission, so the stations set the CP length of UL transmission CP_{UL} to CP_2 , which is larger than CP_{DL} . The use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO may be determined from an implicit indicator or an explicit indicator.

[0043] At a time SIFS after the end of their received uplink scheduling information, STA1 and STA2 transmit their uplink traffic on their allocated resource, respectively (uplink traffic 413 for STA1 and uplink traffic 415 for STA2), with a CP length of $CP_{UL} = CP_2$, which is larger than CP_{DL} . Similarly, due to propagation delay, STA1 and STA2's uplink transmissions arrive at the AP after a delay of T_{Delay1} and T_{Delay2} , respectively. Considering the round trip delay (e.g., from

AP to station, and from station to AP), the difference of the arrival time of STA1 and STA2's uplink signal at AP receiver is $2*(T_{\text{Delay2}} - T_{\text{Delay1}})$. Since the CP length on the uplink is set to $CP_{\text{UL}} = CP_2$, which is larger than $2*(T_{\text{Delay2}} - T_{\text{Delay1}})$ with sufficient margin, the arrival time difference between STA1 and STA2 can be well accommodated by CP_{UL} , and the orthogonality between the uplink signals of STA1 and STA2 at the AP is maintained. The AP receives the uplink transmissions from STA1 and STA2 and performs additional operations accordingly.

[0044] Figure 5 illustrates a message exchange diagram 500 highlighting messages exchanged between a station and its AP, where an indicator of the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is included in uplink scheduling information.

[0045] The AP may determine resource allocations for stations, as well as determine if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is to be used by the stations in transmissions in the resource allocations (block 505). The AP may send UL scheduling information in a trigger frame (shown as event 510). The UL scheduling information is sent with a CP length of CP_{DL} . The indication of CP_{DL} may also be sent in the trigger frame. The station receives the UL scheduling information. The station may also receive the indicator of CP_{DL} from the trigger frame. From the UL scheduling information, the station may be able to determine resource allocation information, as well as an indicator if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO are being used in the UL transmission (block 515). If OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used, the station may set $CP_{\text{UL}} = CP_2$ (which is derived from CP_{DL}), while if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not being used, the station may set $CP_{\text{UL}} = CP_1 = CP_{\text{DL}}$. The station may send an UL transmission in a resource(s) allocated for it (shown as event 520). The UL transmission is sent with a CP length of CP_{UL} .

[0046] According to an example embodiment, to further reduce communications overhead, it is not necessary to carry the indication of whether OFDMA and/or MU-MIMO is to be used in the scheduled UL transmission. Upon receiving the UL scheduling information, the station may determine whether the UL scheduling information includes scheduling information for more than one station. If the scheduling information is for more than one station, the station may determine that OFDM and/or MU-MIMO is to be used in the scheduled UL transmission. The station may set its CP_{UL} to CP_2 , which is derived from CP_{DL} . If the scheduling information is not for more than one station, the station may set its CP_{UL} to CP_1 . In general, CP_2 is larger than CP_1 .

[0047] Figure 6 illustrates a message exchange diagram 500 highlighting messages exchanged between a station and its AP, where the station determines if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used from the scheduling information.

[0048] The AP may determine resource allocations for stations, as well as determine if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is to be used by the stations in transmissions in the resource allocations (block 605). The AP may send UL scheduling information in a trigger frame (shown as event 610). The UL scheduling information is sent with a CP length of CP_{DL} . The indication of CP_{DL} may also be sent in the trigger frame. The station receives the UL scheduling information. From the UL scheduling information, the station may be able to determine resource allocation information, as well if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used in the UL transmission (block 615). If OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is being used (i.e., if the UL scheduling information is for more than one station), the station may set $CP_{UL} = CP_2$ (which is derived from CP_{DL}), while if OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is not being used, the station may set $CP_{UL} = CP_1 = CP_{DL}$. The station may send an UL transmission in a resource(s) allocated for it (shown as event 620). The UL transmission is sent with a CP length of CP_{UL} .

[0049] Figure 7a illustrates a flow diagram of example operations 700 occurring in an AP as the AP transmits UL scheduling information. Operations 700 may begin with the AP determining resource allocations for stations. The AP may transmit UL scheduling information in a trigger frame (block 705). In addition to the uplink scheduling information, the trigger frame may also comprise an indicator indicating the cyclic prefix length value for the downlink (e.g., CP_{DL}).

[0050] Figure 7b illustrates a flow diagram of example operations 750 occurring in a station as the station transmits on an uplink. Operations 750 may begin with the station receiving UL scheduling information (block 755). The station may also receive the indicator of CP_{DL} from the trigger frame. The UL scheduling information may include information about a resource(s) scheduled for the station. The station may perform a test to determine if the UL scheduling information is intended for more than one station (block 760). If the UL scheduling information is intended for more than one station, the station may adjust its CP_{UL} in accordance with CP_2 , which is derived from CP_{DL} (block 765). While if the UL scheduling information is not intended for more than one station, the station adjust its CP_{UL} in accordance with CP_1 (block 770). The station may make the UL transmission with CP value as indicated (block 775).

[0051] According to an example embodiment, a table is used to derive CP2 from CP_{DL}. A table (which may be stored in memory of the station) may provide a mapping between DL cyclic prefix length values and UL cyclic prefix length values for UL transmissions. The station may select the value of CP2 from CP_{DL}, which is indicated in the trigger message. An example table is shown below:

DL CP Length (us)	UL CP Length for UL MU (us)
0.4	1.6
0.8	1.6
1.6	3.2
3.2	3.2

As an illustrative example, assume that CP_{DL} is 0.8 us. From the table shown above, the station may be able to determine that CP2 should be 1.6 us. As another illustrative example, assume that CP_{DL} is 0.4 us. From the table shown above, the station may be able to determine that CP2 should be 1.6 us. The table may be defined by a technical standard, an operator of the communications system, and the like. The table may also be signaled to the station in system information, e.g., in a Beacon frame.

[0052] According to an example embodiment, the value of CP2 may be derived from CP_{DL} using a mathematical expression. As an illustrative example, consider a situation wherein a station receives a trigger frame including a CP_{DL} indicator. The station may add a value (CP_{delta}) to CP_{DL} to obtain CP2, where CP_{delta} represents a difference between UL CP length value for UL transmission and DL CP length value. An example mathematical expression may be

$$CP2 = CP_{DL} + CP_{delta}$$

If, for example, CP_{DL} = 0.8 us and CP_{delta} = 1.6 us, then CP2 = 0.8 + 1.6 us = 2.4 us. CP_{delta} may be defined in a technical standard, an operator of the communications system, and the like. CP_{delta} may be signaled to the station as system information, e.g., in a Beacon frame.

[0053] According to an example embodiment, the value of CP2 may be derived from CP_{DL} using a mathematical expression. As an illustrative example, consider a situation wherein a

station receives a trigger frame including a CP_{DL} indicator. The station may multiply a scaling factor (CP_{scale}) to CP_{DL} to obtain $CP2$, where CP_{scale} represents the ratio of UL CP length value for UL transmission to DL CP length value. CP_{scale} may be an integer value or a non-integer (i.e., a real number) value. CP_{scale} is generally larger than 1. An example mathematical expression may be

$$CP2 = \min (CP_{DL} * CP_{scale}, CP_{max}),$$

where CP_{max} is the maximum CP length value. If, for example, $CP_{DL} = 0.8$ us, $CP_{scale} = 2$ and $CP_{max} = 3.2$ us, then $CP2 = \min(0.8*2, 3.2) = 1.6$ us. CP_{scale} may be defined in a technical standard, an operator of the communications system, and the like. CP_{scale} may be signaled to the station as system information, e.g., in a Beacon frame.

[0054] The example embodiments presented herein enable the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO, making resource usage more efficient. A cyclic prefix for the uplink (CP_{UL}) is longer than the cyclic prefix for the downlink (CP_{DL}), which may help to accommodate different propagation delays between different stations and the AP, thereby maintaining the orthogonality among signals from the different stations at the AP. Adaptive cyclic prefix length also helps to maintain low overhead. When OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO are not used, longer cyclic prefixes are not necessary and a shorter cyclic prefix may be used, therefore reducing overhead. When OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO is used, longer cyclic prefixes are used, but the increased overhead may be compensated for by the additional gain achieved through the use of OFDMA and/or UL MU-MIMO. The example embodiments presented herein also afford greater flexibility in setting UL cyclic prefix length when OFDMA and/or MU-MIMO is used in the UL since the station can derive the UL cyclic prefix length from the DL cyclic prefix length.

[0055] Figure 8 is a block diagram of a processing system 800 that may be used for implementing the devices and methods disclosed herein. In some embodiments, the processing system 800 comprises a UE. Specific devices may utilize all of the components shown, or only a subset of the components, and levels of integration may vary from device to device. Furthermore, a device may contain multiple instances of a component, such as multiple processing units, processors, memories, transmitters, receivers, etc. The processing system may comprise a processing unit 805 equipped with one or more input/output devices, such as a human interface 815 (including speaker, microphone, mouse, touchscreen, keypad, keyboard, printer, and the like), display 810, and so on. The processing unit may include a central processing unit (CPU)

820, memory 825, a mass storage device 830, a video adapter 835, and an I/O interface 840 connected to a bus 845.

[0056] The bus 845 may be one or more of any type of several bus architectures including a memory bus or memory controller, a peripheral bus, video bus, or the like. The CPU 820 may comprise any type of electronic data processor. The memory 825 may comprise any type of system memory such as static random access memory (SRAM), dynamic random access memory (DRAM), synchronous DRAM (SDRAM), read-only memory (ROM), a combination thereof, or the like. In an embodiment, the memory 825 may include ROM for use at boot-up, and DRAM for program and data storage for use while executing programs.

[0057] The mass storage device 830 may comprise any type of storage device configured to store data, programs, and other information and to make the data, programs, and other information accessible via the bus 845. The mass storage device 830 may comprise, for example, one or more of a solid state drive, hard disk drive, a magnetic disk drive, an optical disk drive, or the like.

[0058] The video adapter 835 and the I/O interface 840 provide interfaces to couple external input and output devices to the processing unit 800. As illustrated, examples of input and output devices include the display 810 coupled to the video adapter 835 and the mouse/keyboard/printer 815 coupled to the I/O interface 840. Other devices may be coupled to the processing unit 800, and additional or fewer interface devices may be utilized. For example, a serial interface such as Universal Serial Bus (USB) (not shown) may be used to provide an interface for a printer.

[0059] The processing unit 800 also includes one or more network interfaces 850, which may comprise wired links, such as an Ethernet cable or the like, and/or wireless links to access nodes or different networks 855. The network interface 850 allows the processing unit 800 to communicate with remote units via the networks 855. For example, the network interface 850 may provide wireless communication via one or more transmitters/transmit antennas and one or more receivers/receive antennas. In an embodiment, the processing unit 800 is coupled to a local-area network or a wide-area network 855 for data processing and communications with remote devices, such as other processing units, the Internet, remote storage facilities, or the like.

[0060] Although the present disclosure and its advantages have been described in detail, it should be understood that various changes, substitutions and alterations can be made herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the disclosure as defined by the appended claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method for communicating in a wireless communications system, the method
2 comprising:
3 receiving, by a station, a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic
4 prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is
5 received in accordance with the first cyclic prefix;
6 determining, by the station, a second length of a second cyclic prefix for a transmission in
7 accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator; and
8 transmitting, by the station, the transmission with the second cyclic prefix.
- 1 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the scheduling information comprises information for an
2 uplink transmission scheduled for the station.
- 1 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the scheduling information comprises a multiple access
2 technique usage indicator indicating if at least one multiple access technique is to be used, and
3 wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix comprises determining the
4 second length of the second cyclic prefix in accordance with the multiple access technique usage
5 indicator.
- 1 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the multiple access techniques include orthogonal
2 frequency division multiple access (OFDMA) and multi-user multiple input multiple output
3 (MU-MIMO).
- 1 5. The method of Claim 3, wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic
2 prefix in accordance with the multiple access technique usage indicator comprises:
3 setting the second length of the second cyclic prefix to a first value if the multiple access
4 technique usage indicator indicates that no multiple access technique is to be used; or
5 setting the second length of the second cyclic prefix to a second value if the multiple
6 access technique usage indicator indicates that at least one multiple access technique is to be
7 used.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix for the transmission comprises:

setting the second length of the second cyclic prefix to a first value in response to determining that the scheduling information includes information intended for only the station; or

setting the second length of the second cyclic prefix to a second value in response to determining that the scheduling information includes information intended for more stations than just the station.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix for the transmission comprises:

determining a first index in accordance with the first length of the first cyclic prefix;

determining a second index in accordance with the first index; and

setting the second length of the second cyclic prefix in accordance with the second index.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein determining the second index in accordance with the first index is expressible as

$\text{Index of CP}_2 = \min(\text{Index of CP}_{\text{DL}} + K, \text{Maximum Index Value}),$

where “Index of CP₂” is the second index, “Index of CP_{DL}” is the first index, “K” is an integer number, “Maximum Index Value” is a maximum index value, and min() is a minimum function which returns a minimum value of its input elements.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix for the transmission comprises determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix in accordance with the first length of the first cyclic prefix and a mapping table.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix for the transmission is expressible as

$\text{CP}_2 = \text{CP}_{\text{DL}} + \text{CP}_{\text{Delta}},$

where “CP₂” is the second length of the second cyclic prefix, “CP_{DL}” is the first length of the first cyclic prefix, and “CP_{Delta}” is a positive number.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the second length of the second cyclic prefix for the transmission is expressible as

$$CP2 = \min (CP_{DL} * CP_{scale}, CP_{max}),$$

where "CP2" is the second length of the second cyclic prefix, "CP_{DL}" is the first length of the first cyclic prefix, "CP_{max}" is a maximum CP length value, and "CP_{scale}" is a ratio of the second length of the second cyclic prefix to the first length of the first cyclic prefix, and min() is a minimum function which returns a minimum value of its input elements.

12. A method for communicating in a wireless communications system, the method comprising:

transmitting, by an access point, a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is transmitted in accordance with the first cyclic prefix, and wherein the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator are configured to prompt an adjustment to a second length of a second cyclic prefix; and

receiving, by the access point, a first transmission from a station, the first transmission with the second length of the second cyclic prefix determined in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator.

13. The method of Claim 12, wherein the scheduling information comprises a multiple access technique usage indicator indicating if at least one multiple access technique is to be used, wherein the second length of the second cyclic prefix is equal to a first value if the multiple access technique usage indicator indicates that at least one multiple access technique is to be used, and wherein the second length of the second cyclic prefix is equal to a second value if the multiple access technique usage indicator indicates that no multiple access technique is to be used.

14. The method of Claim 12, wherein the scheduling information is transmitted only to the station, and wherein the second length of the second cyclic prefix is equal to the first length of the first cyclic prefix.

1 15. The method of Claim 12, wherein the scheduling information is transmitted to a plurality
2 of stations, which includes the station, and wherein the second length of the second cyclic prefix
3 is greater than or equal to the first length of the first cyclic prefix.

4 16. A station comprising:

5 a receiver configured to receive a trigger frame comprising scheduling information and a
6 cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger frame is
7 received in accordance with the first cyclic prefix;

8 a processor operatively coupled to the receiver, the processor configured to determine a
9 second length of a second cyclic prefix for a transmission in accordance with the scheduling
10 information and the cyclic prefix indicator; and

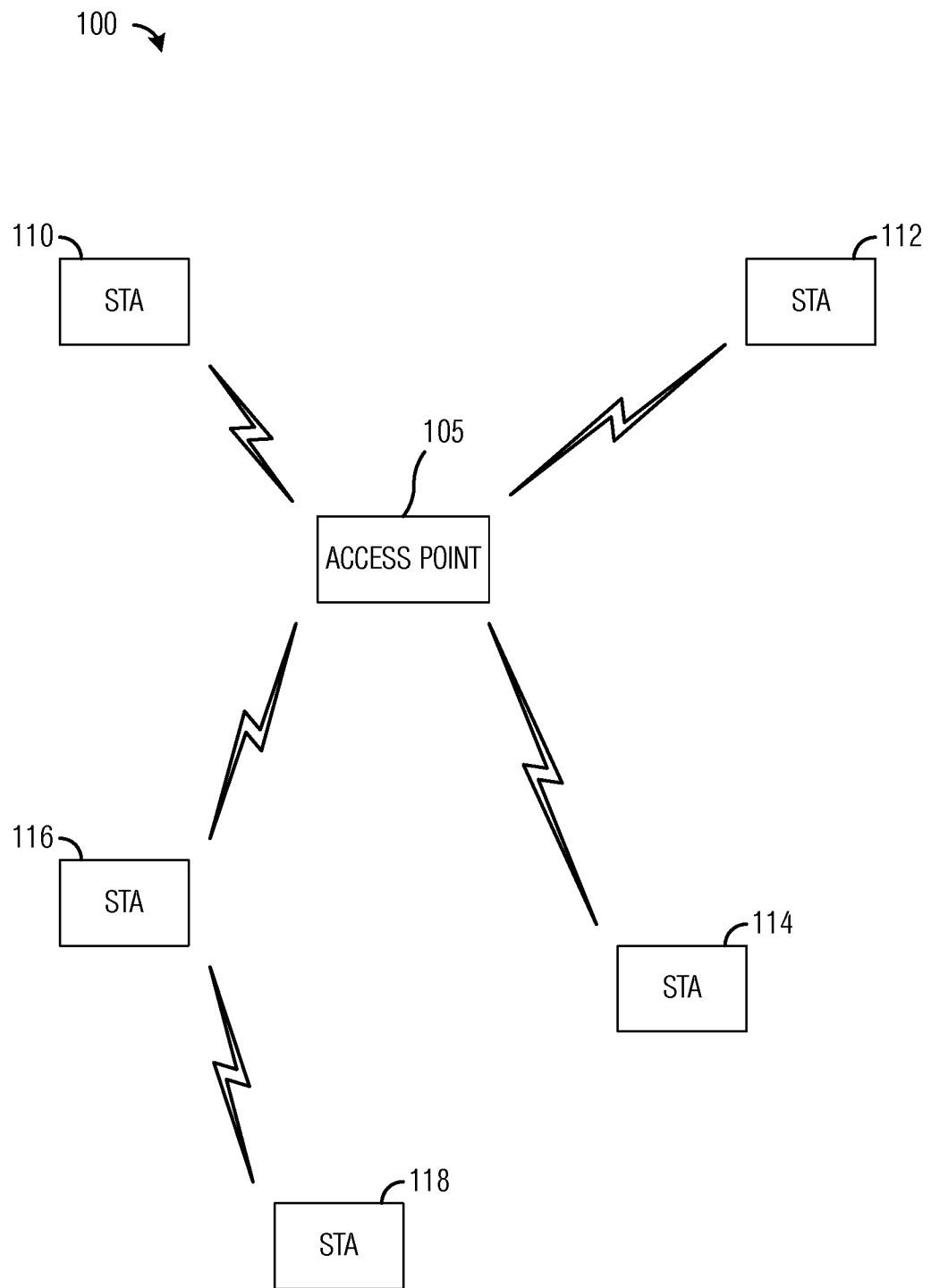
11 a transmitter operatively coupled to the processor, the transmitter configured to transmit
12 the transmission with the second cyclic prefix.

1 17. The station of claim 16, wherein the scheduling information comprises a multiple access
2 technique usage indicator indicating if at least one multiple access technique is to be used, and
3 wherein the processor is configured to determine the second length of the second cyclic prefix in
4 accordance with the multiple access technique usage indicator.

1 18. The station of claim 17, wherein the processor is configured to set the second length of
2 the second cyclic prefix to a first value if the multiple access technique usage indicator indicates
3 that no multiple access technique is to be used, and to set the second length of the second cyclic
4 prefix to a second value if the multiple access technique usage indicator indicates that at least
5 one multiple access technique is to be used.

1 19. The station of claim 16, wherein the processor is configured to set the second length of
2 the second cyclic prefix to a first value in response to determining that the scheduling
3 information includes information intended for only the station, to set the second length of the
4 second cyclic prefix to a second value in response to determining that the scheduling information
5 includes information intended for more stations than just the station.

- 1 20. An access point comprising:
2 a transmitter configured to transmit a trigger frame comprising scheduling information
3 and a cyclic prefix indicator indicating a first length of a first cyclic prefix, wherein the trigger
4 frame is transmitted in accordance with the first cyclic prefix, and wherein the scheduling
5 information and the cyclic prefix indicator are configured to prompt an adjustment to a second
6 length of a second cyclic prefix; and
7 a receiver operatively coupled to the transmitter, the receiver configured to receive a first
8 transmission from a station, the first transmission with the second length of the second cyclic
9 prefix determined in accordance with the scheduling information and the cyclic prefix indicator.
- 1 21. The access point of claim 20, wherein the transmitter is configured to transmit the
2 scheduling information only to the station, and wherein the second length of the second cyclic
3 prefix is equal to the first length of the first cyclic prefix.
- 1 22. The access point of claim 20, wherein the transmitter is configured to transmit the
2 scheduling information to a plurality of stations, which includes the station, and wherein the
3 second length of the second cyclic prefix is greater than or equal to the first length of the first
4 cyclic prefix.

***Fig. 1***

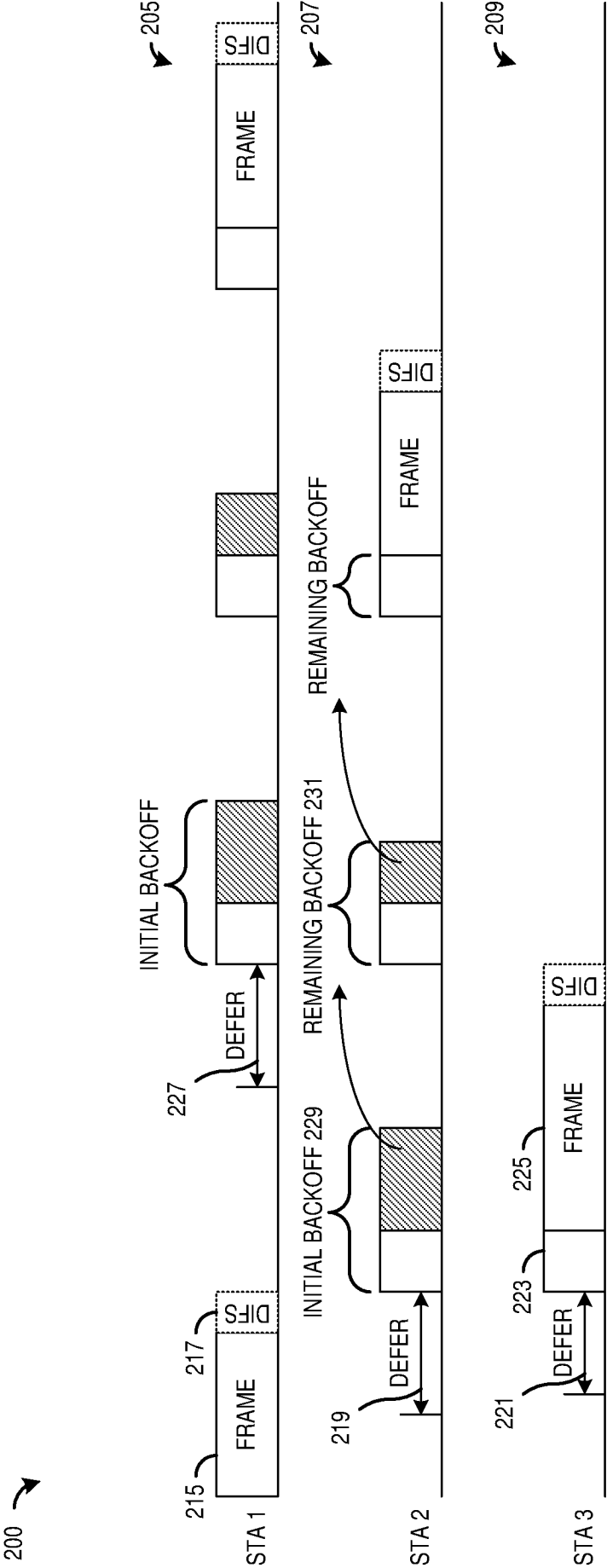
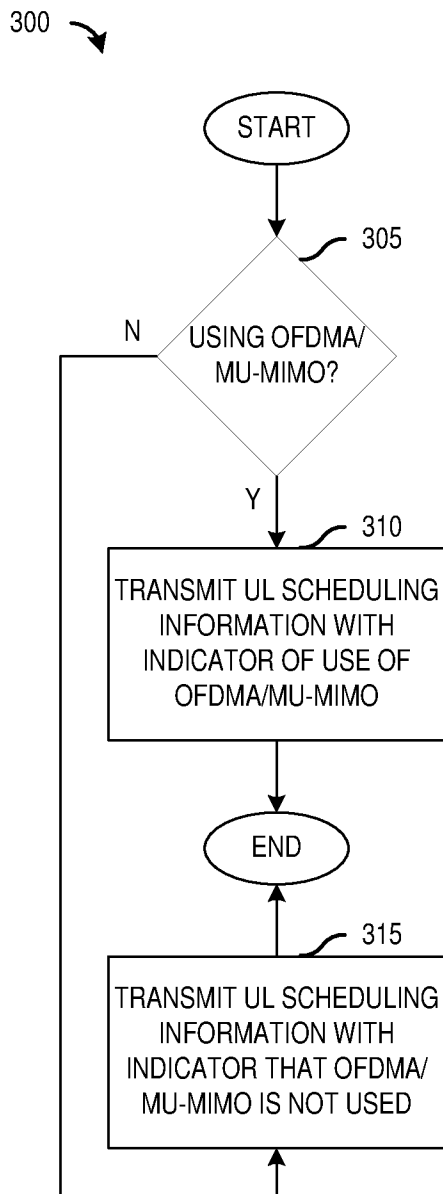
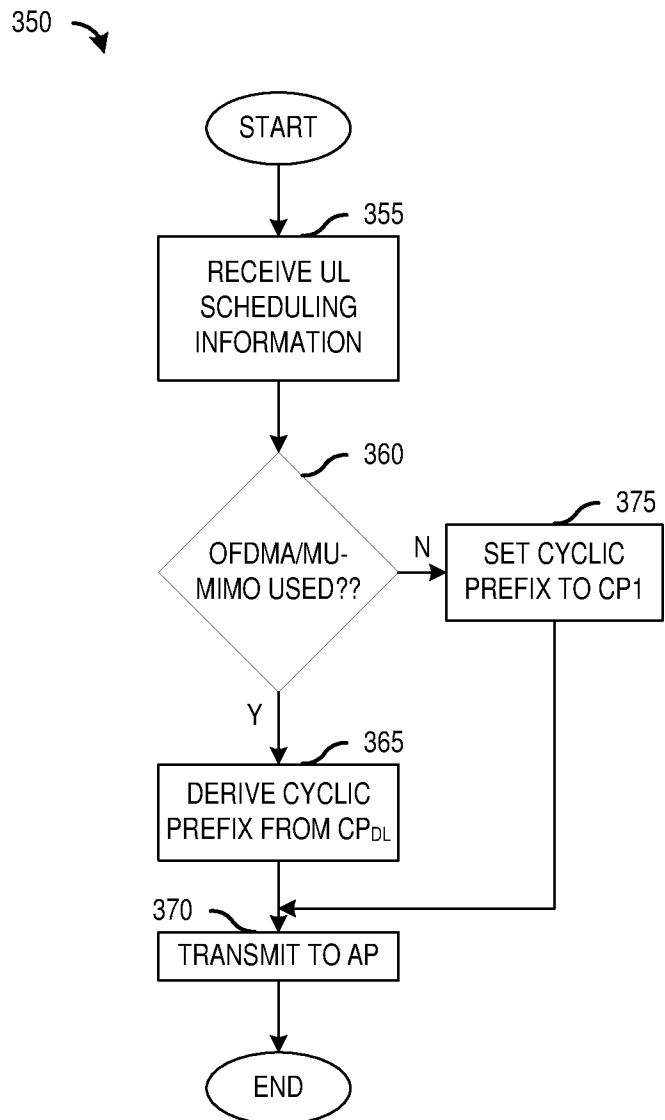


Fig. 2

**Fig. 3a****Fig. 3b**

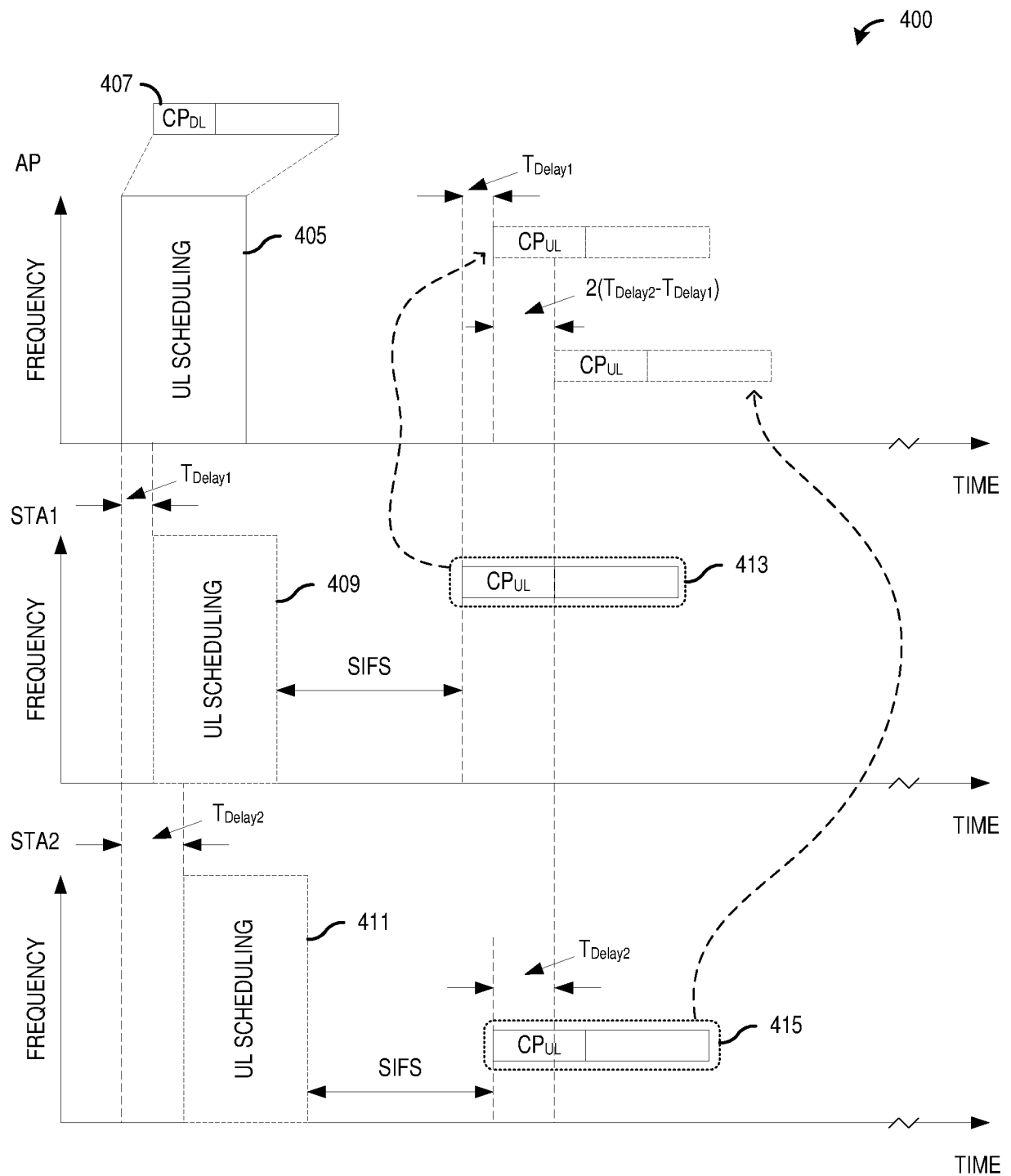


Fig. 4

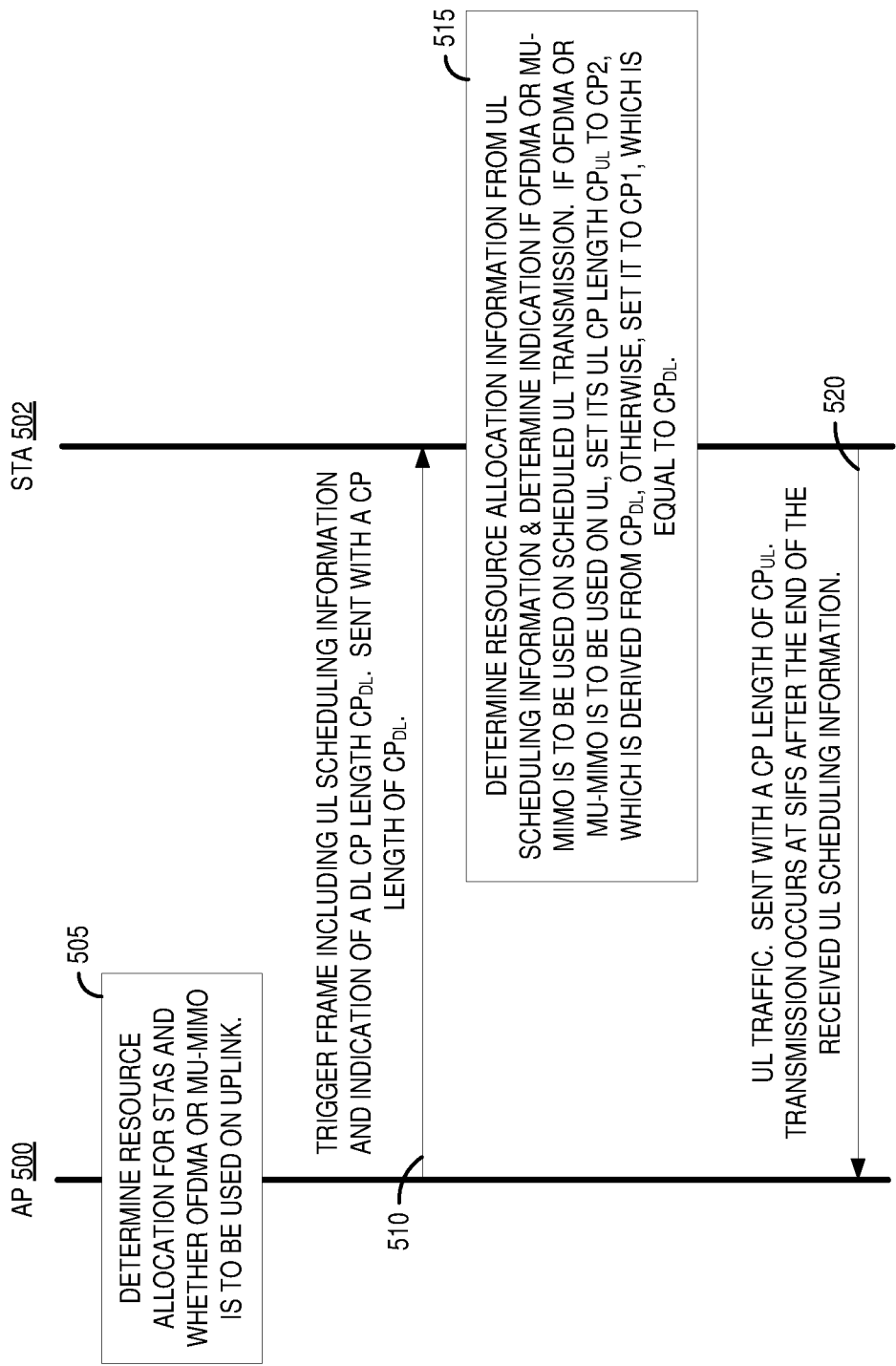


Fig. 5

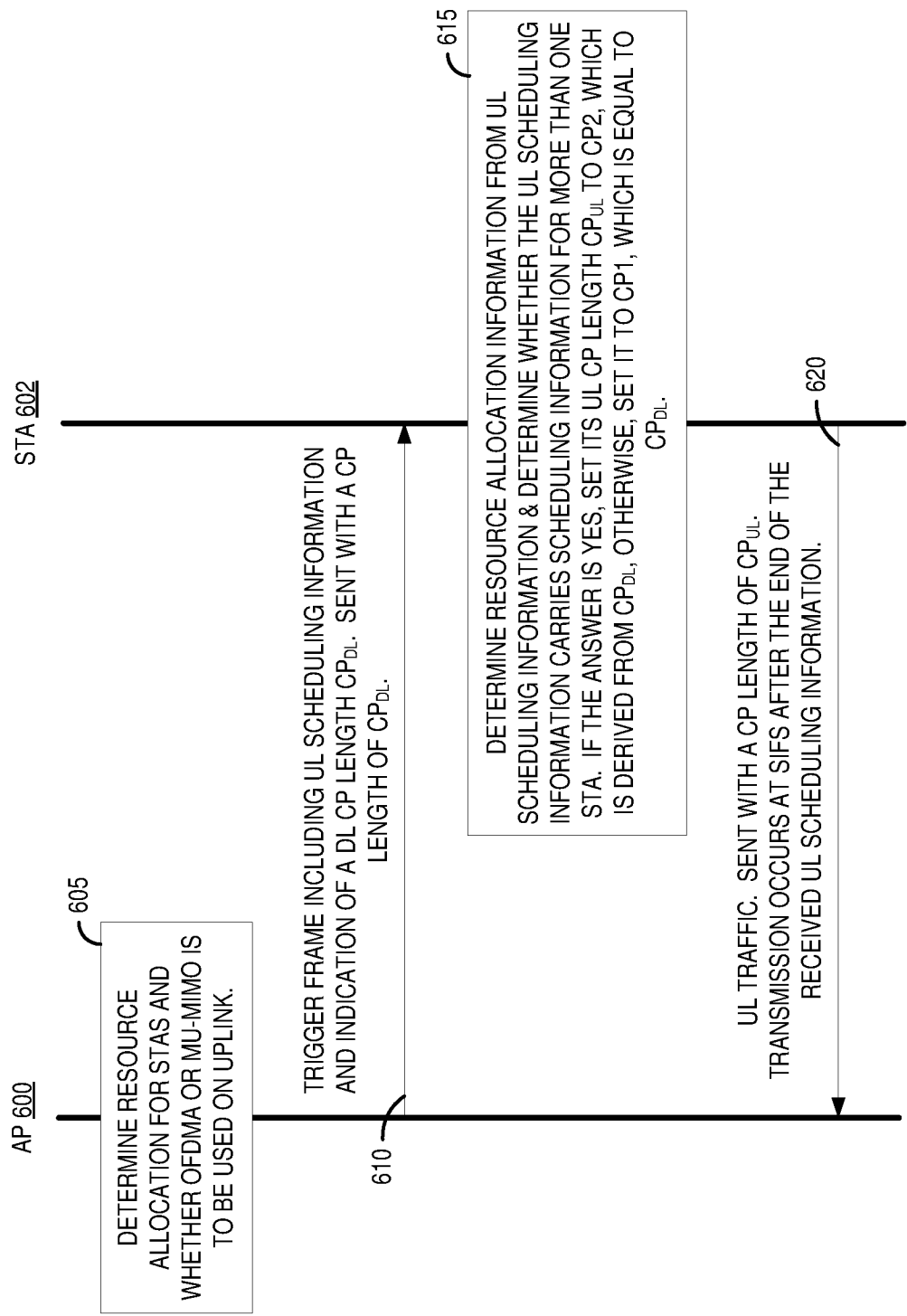
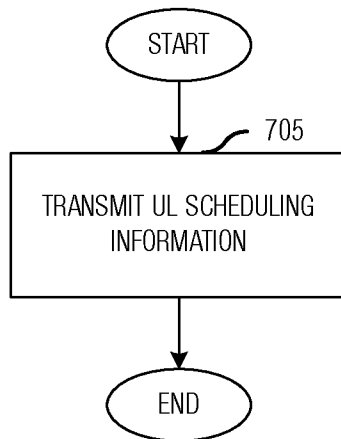
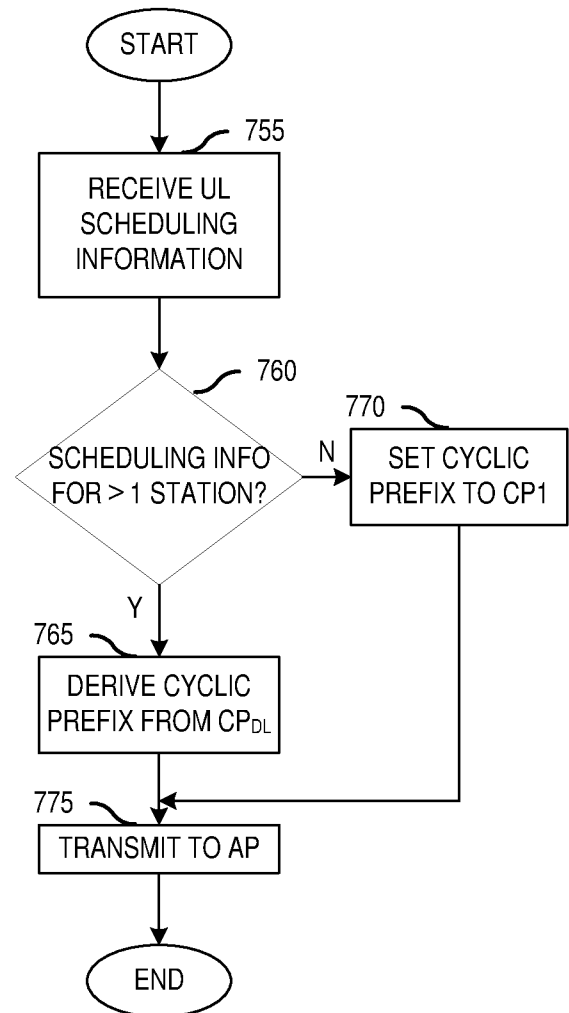


Fig. 6

700 ↗

**Fig. 7a**

↖ 750

**Fig. 7b**

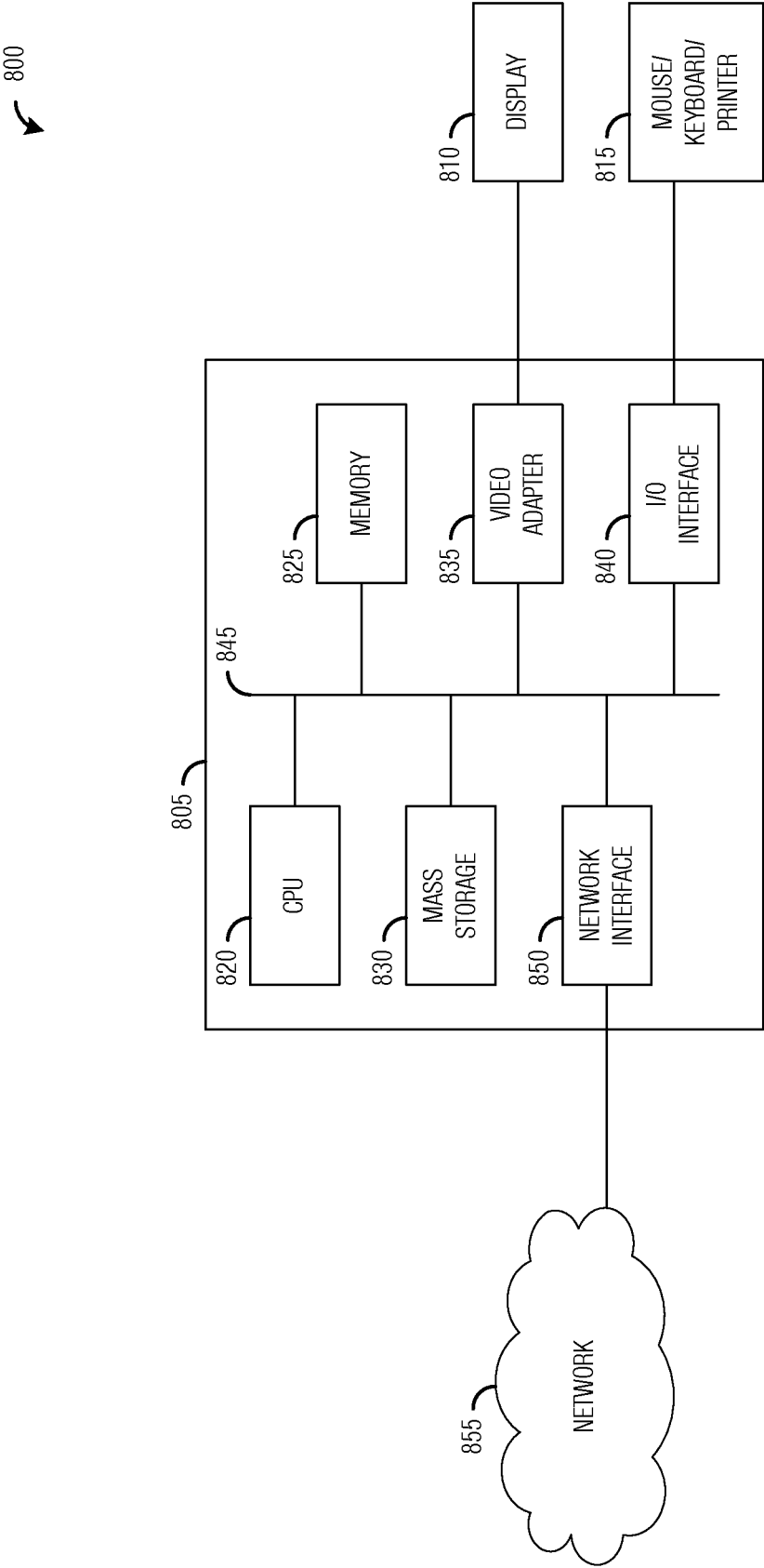


Fig. 8

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CN2015/094304

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

H04W 72/04(2009.01)i; H04W 28/16(2009.01)i; H04L 27/26(2006.01)n

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)

H04W, H04L, H04J

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)

CPRSABS,CNABS,CNXTX,CNKI,VEN,IEEE,3GPP:cyclic w prefix,CP,length, different,variable,frame,indicat+,schemul+, first,second

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	CN 101790202 A (DATANG MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT CO., LTD.) 28 July 2010 (2010-07-28) the whole document	1-22
A	US 2013272435 A1 (QUALCOMM INC.) 17 October 2013 (2013-10-17) the whole document	1-22
A	US 2009125363 A1 (NOKIA SIEMENS NETWORKS OY.) 14 May 2009 (2009-05-14) the whole document	1-22
A	WO 2009072171 A1 (FUJITSU LTD.) 11 June 2009 (2009-06-11) the whole document	1-22
A	NEC Group. "Remaining details on EPDCCH in MBSFN subframes" 3GPP TSG-RAN WG1 #71 R1-124853, 16 November 2012 (2012-11-16), the whole document	1-22



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

“A” document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

“E” earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

“L” document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

“O” document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

“P” document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

“T” later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

“X” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

“Y” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

“&” document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

29 January 2016

Date of mailing of the international search report

16 February 2016

Name and mailing address of the ISA/CN

STATE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF THE
P.R.CHINA
6, Xitucheng Rd., Jimen Bridge, Haidian District, Beijing
100088, China

Authorized officer

LI,Wei

Facsimile No. (86-10)62019451

Telephone No. (86-10)62089544

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/CN2015/094304

Patent document cited in search report			Publication date (day/month/year)	Patent family member(s)			Publication date (day/month/year)
CN	101790202	A	28 July 2010	CN	101790202	B	10 July 2013
US	2013272435	A1	17 October 2013	JP	5823648	B2	25 November 2015
				WO	2013158417	A1	24 October 2013
				JP	2015518332	A	25 June 2015
				US	8867638	B2	21 October 2014
				EP	2839618	A1	25 February 2015
				CN	104221342	A	17 December 2014
US	2009125363	A1	14 May 2009	None			
WO	2009072171	A1	11 June 2009	None			