Simulation of General Packet Radio Service Network

Session 1541 Case Studies:

Wireless Protocol Modeling and Analysis

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Road map

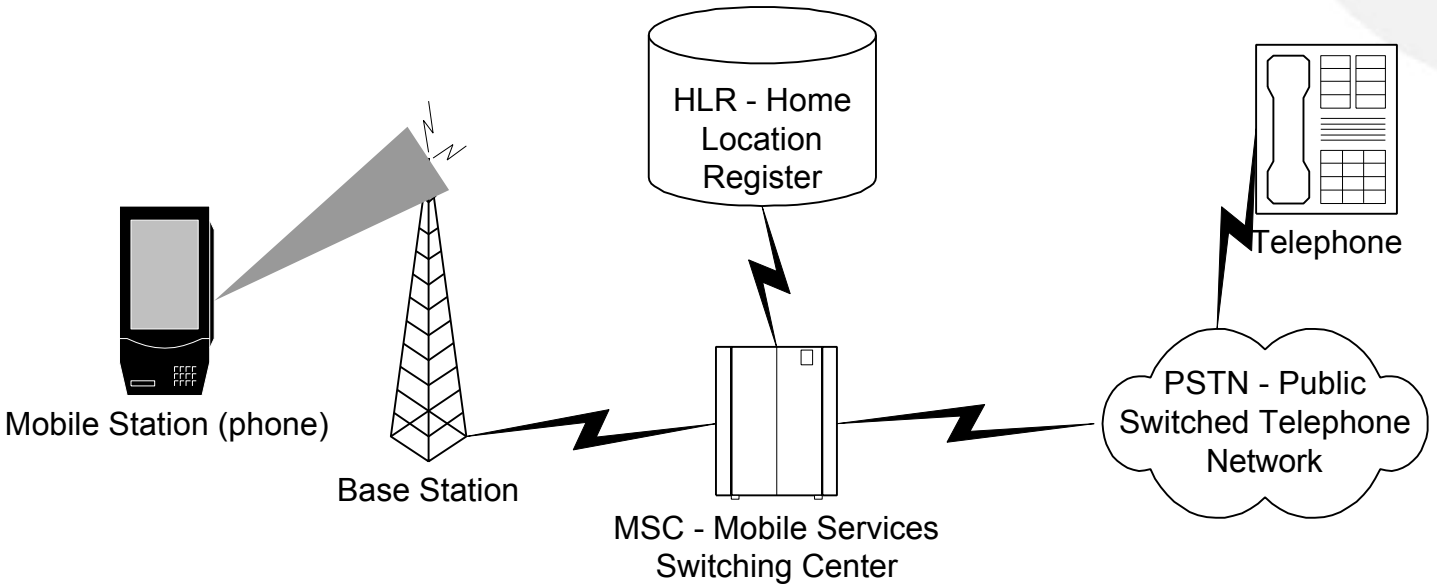
- Introduction to GSM and GPRS networks
- Project goals
- OPNET model implementation
- Simulation scenarios
- Simulation results
- Conclusions

What is GSM?

- Stands for Global System for Mobile communication
- Basic services was launched in 1992 to standardize cellular systems in Europe
- Basic bandwidth:
  - 900 MHz and 1800 MHz (Europe and Asia)
  - 1900 MHz (North America)
- Access technology: TDMA/FDMA

TDMA: Time Division Multiple Access
FDMA: Frequency Division Multiple Access

GSM network



Data over GSM

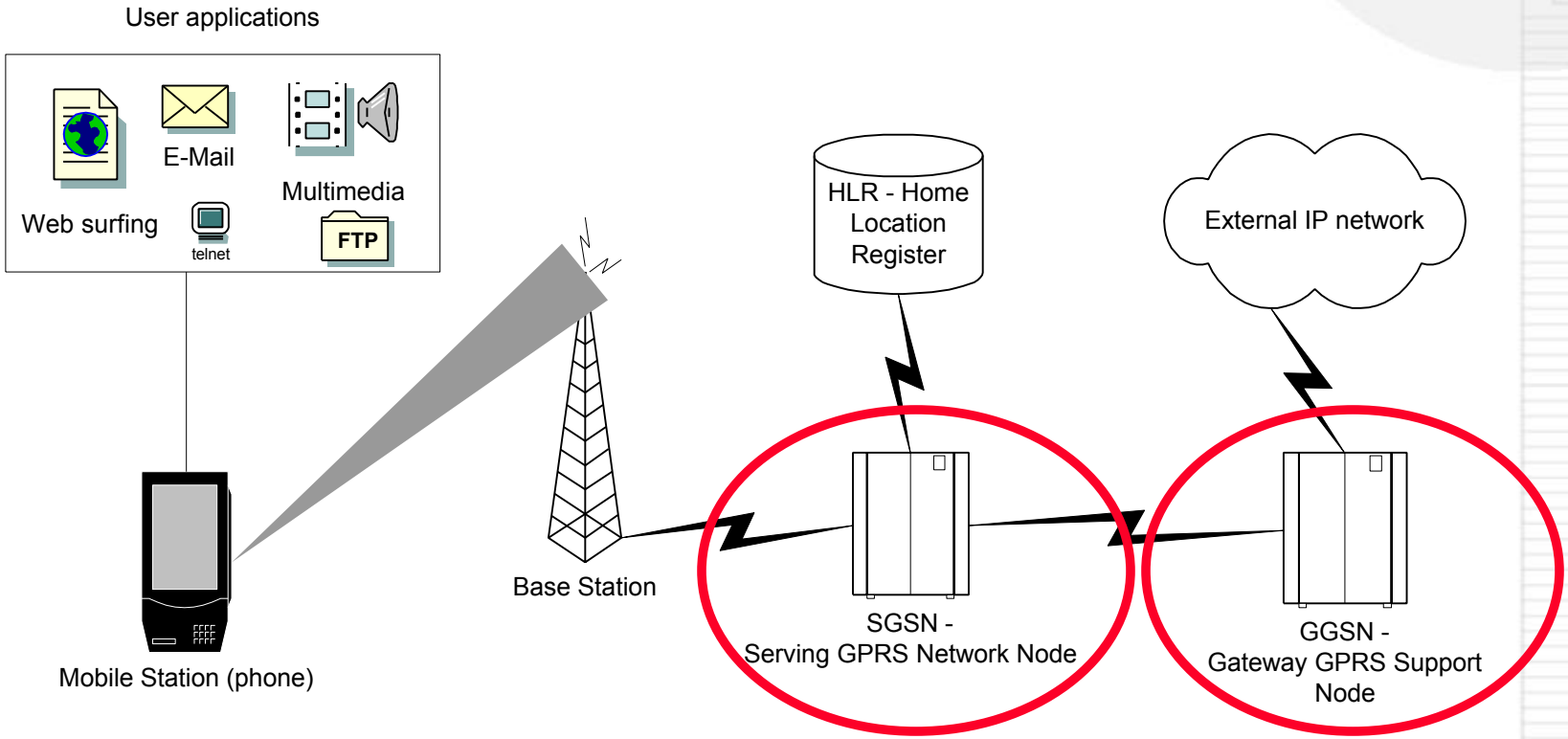
- Circuit-switched network good for voice service, but not for data transfers
- Billing is based on a connection time
- Entire radio channel dedicated to a single user
- Inefficient resource allocation for bursty data transmissions results in:
  - slow data transmission: 9.6 kbps

Solution: GPRS

- A data service that provides:
  - packet switched routing infrastructure functionality
  - packet radio access for mobile stations
- Radio channels can be concurrently shared between several users
- Up to eight radio interface timeslots can be allocated per TDMA frame, supporting a speed up to 150 kbps
- Average transmission speeds: 28.8 kbps to 40 kbps
- Billing can be based on traffic volume

GPRS: General Packet Radio Service

GPRS network



GPRS introduces two new nodes

- Serving GPRS Support Node (SGSN)
  - at the same hierarchical level as the MSC
  - keeps track of the location of a mobile station and handles access control
  - connects to Base Station with Frame Relay
  - connects to HLR with a Signalling System no. 7 (SS7) network
- Gateway GPRS Support Node (GGSN)
  - provides interworking with external packet switched networks
  - connects to SGSN with an IP backbone

HLR: Home Location Register

Project goals

- To model and simulate a GPRS network that supports:
  - basic GPRS procedures:
    - attach and activation
    - user data transmission
    - detach and deactivation
  - two classes of QoS in data transmission rates
  - collection of network performance data

Why modeling and simulation?

- Easy to generate test scenarios
- Inexpensive in changing test setup and running test cases
- Data are available to evaluate network performance

OPNET tools

- Node model: specifies interface of a network component
- Packet format: defines protocols
- Process model: abstracts the behavior of a network component
- Project window: defines network topology and link connections
- Simulation window: captures and displays simulation results

New OPNET node model

- OPNET node models define the structure for:
  - Mobile Station
  - Serving GPRS Support Node
  - Gateway GPRS Support Node
  - Internal Home Location Register
  - Sink (external packet network)

New packet format

- OPNET packet formats define protocols between:
  - MS and SGSN
  - SGSN and GGSN
  - SGSN and the Internal HLR

New process model

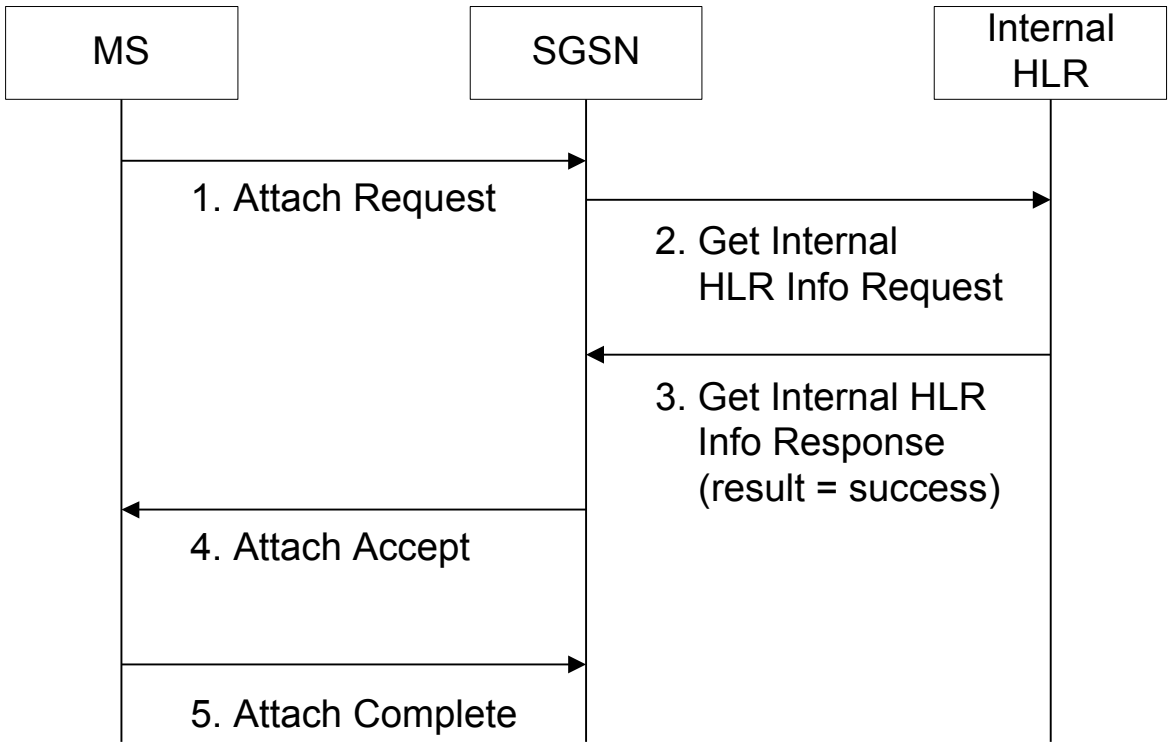
- OPNET process models capture the basic GPRS procedures:
  - –attach
  - –activation
  - –user data transmission
  - –deactivation
  - –detach

Attach procedure

- MS makes itself known to the GPRS network via Attach
- Once the MS is attached to the network, the network knows the location and capabilities of the MS

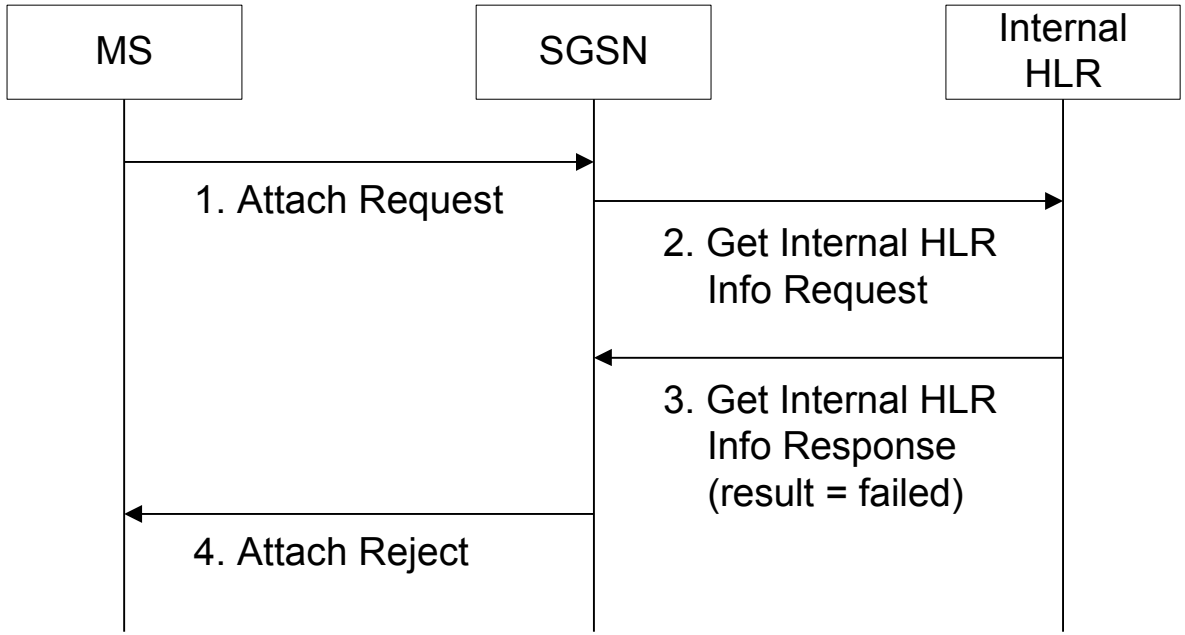
Attach procedure: accepted

Message sequence chart



Attach procedure: rejected

Message sequence chart

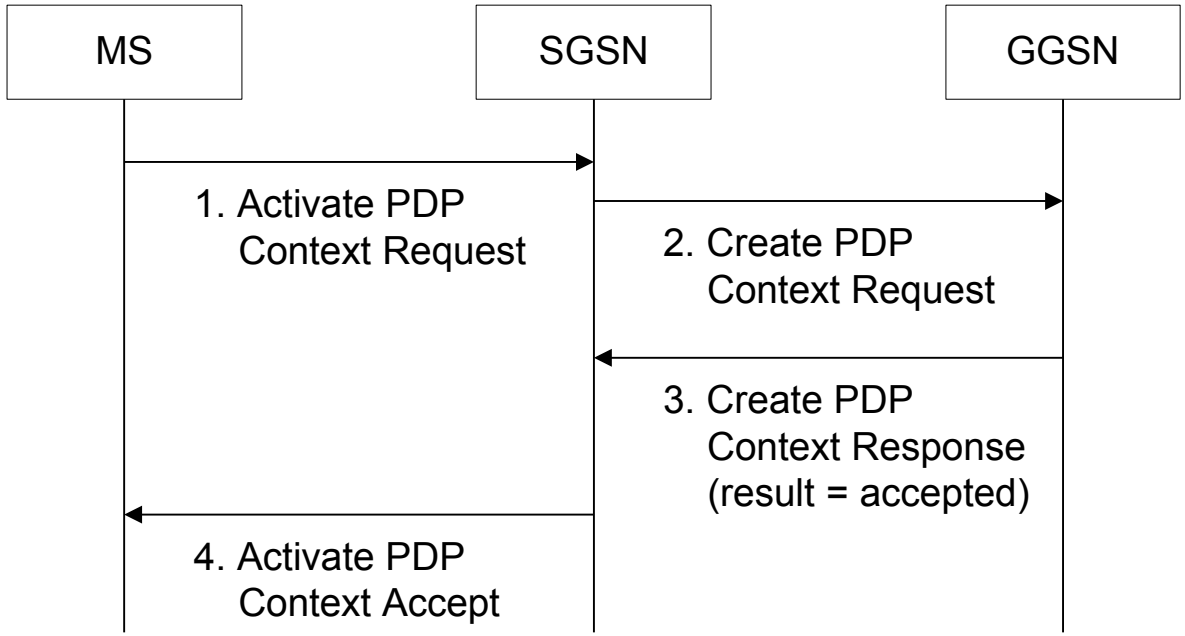


Activation procedure

- Before MS can communicate with sink, the Packet Data Protocol (PDP) context must be activated
- PDP context describes the characteristics of the connection to the sink:
  - requested QoS
  - data session identifier
  - type of external network to which it is connected
- MS can start sending user data once a data session is activated

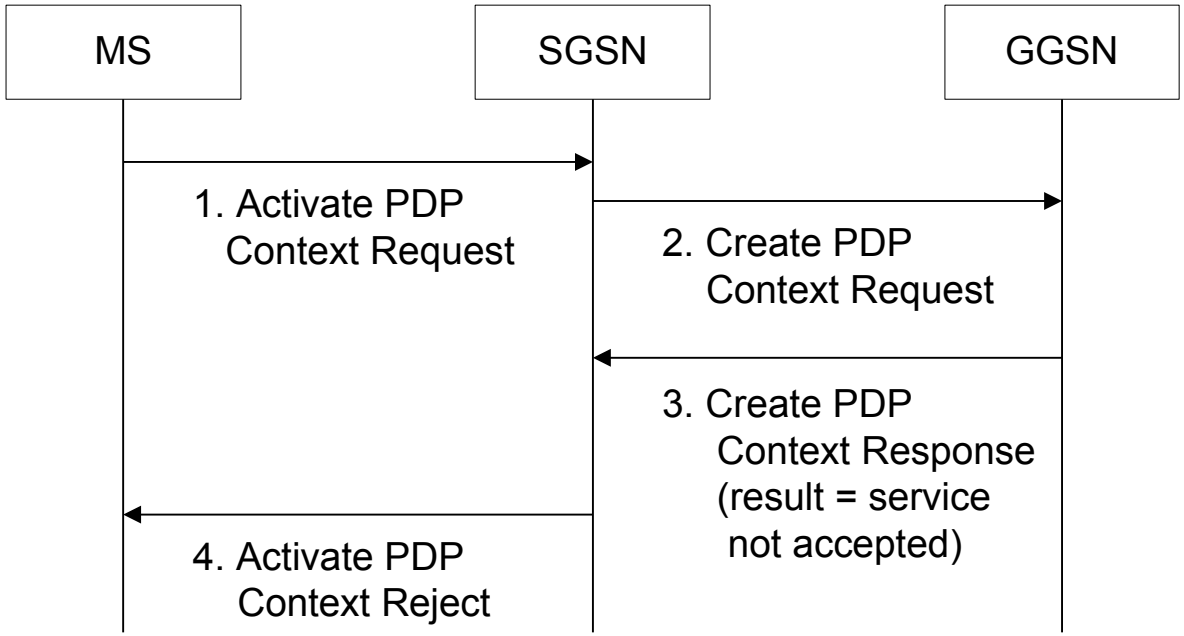
Activation procedure: accepted

Message sequence chart

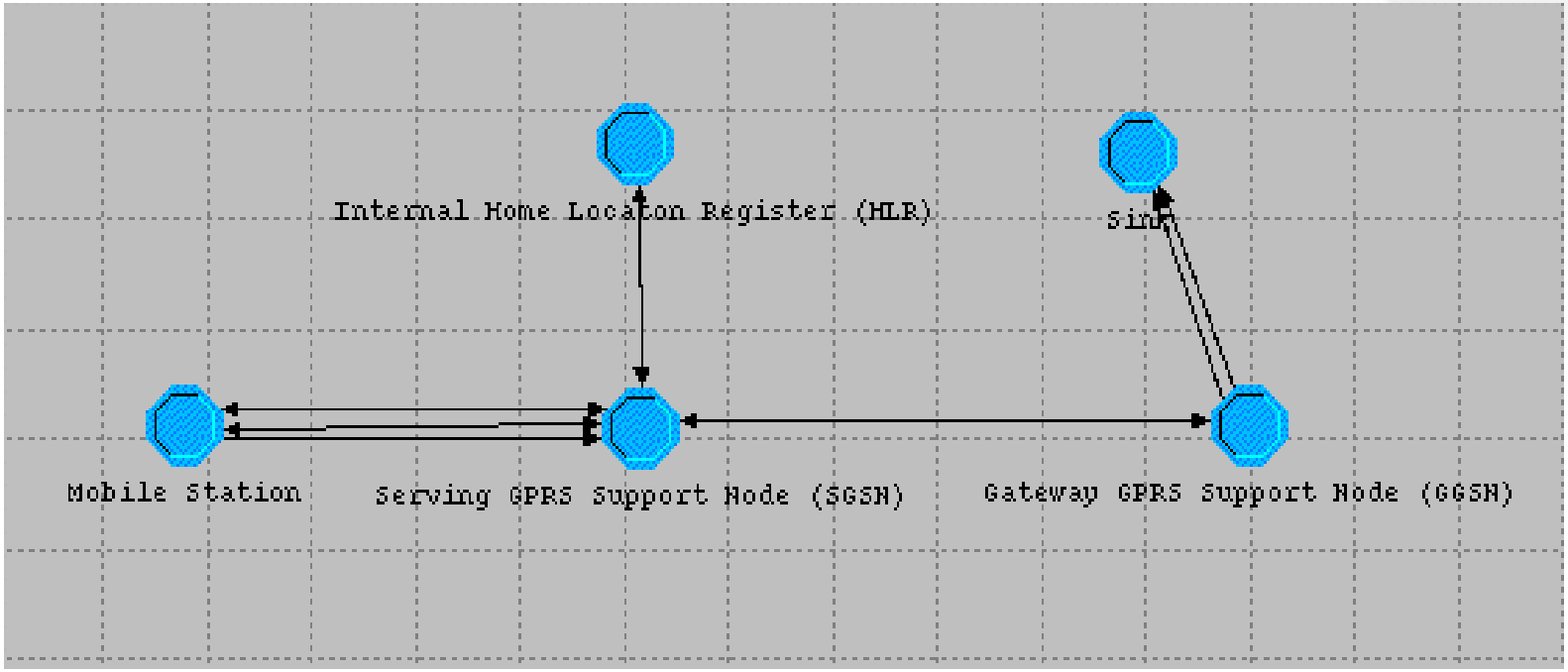


Activation procedure: rejected

Message sequence chart



GPRS model project view



Network configuration

- MS node simulates GPRS users whose MS identifiers range from 0 to 14
- GGSN node supports two (mean) throughput rates:
  - 20,000 octets/hour
  - 10,000 octets/hour
- GGSN node offers two connection speeds to the sink, based on the requested QoS in activation

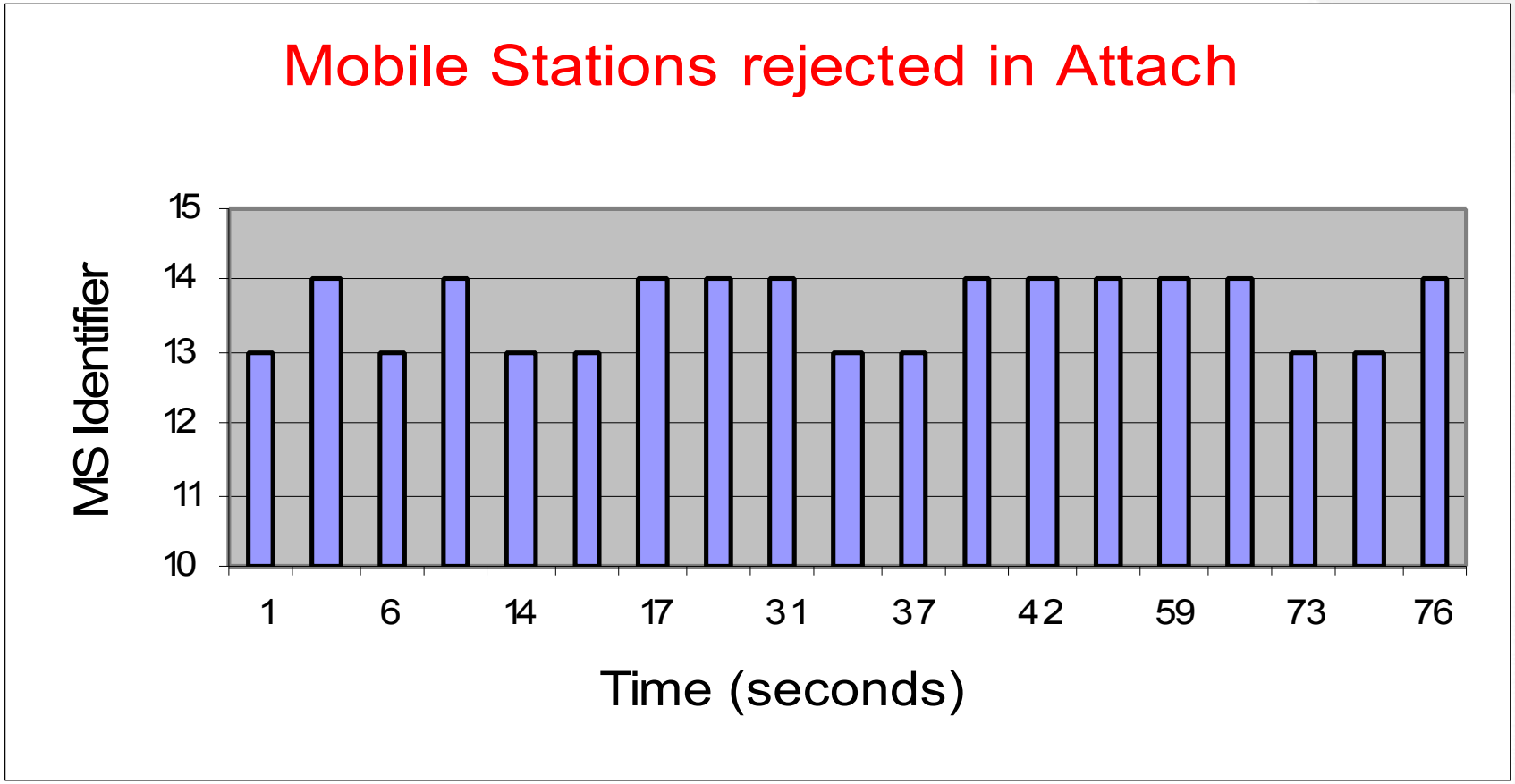
Network configuration (cont.)

- Internal HLR input file consists of records for MS with identifiers ranging from 0 to 12
- MS with identifiers 10, 11, and 12 have a mean throughput >= 50,000 octets/hour
- MS with even identifiers 0, 2, 4, 6, and 8 have a mean throughput 20,000 octets/hour
- MS with odd identifiers 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 have a mean throughput 10,000 octets/hour

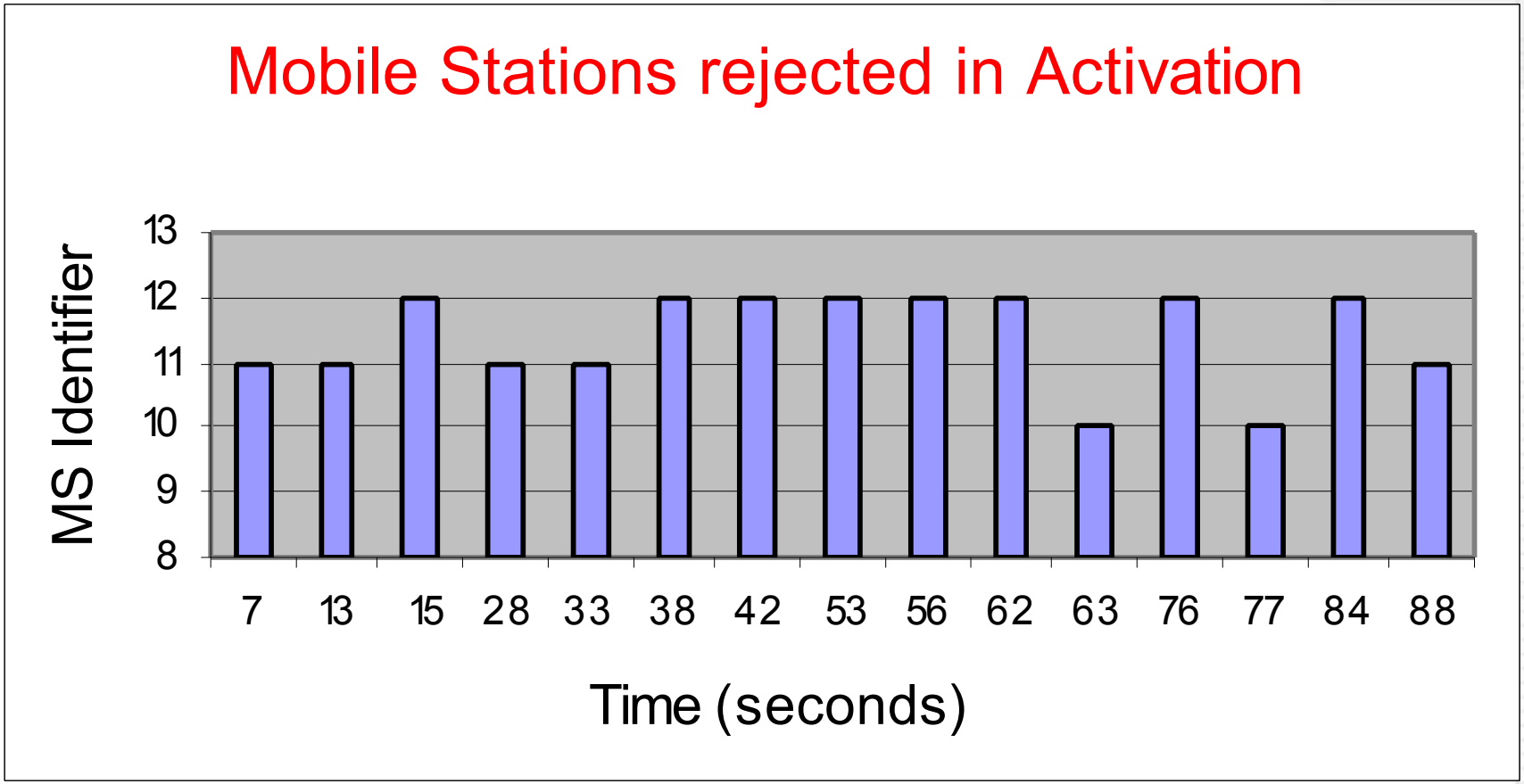
Simulation Scenario 1

User input attribute	Setting
MS node: Attach Request inter-arrival rate	Constant (mean 0.5)
MS node: Detach Request inter-arrival rate	Constant (mean 2)
MS node: Activation Request inter-arrival rate	Constant (mean 1)
MS node: Deactivation Request inter-arrival rate	Constant (mean 1.5)
MS node: User data inter-arrival rate	Constant (mean 0.5)
Simulation time	15 minutes

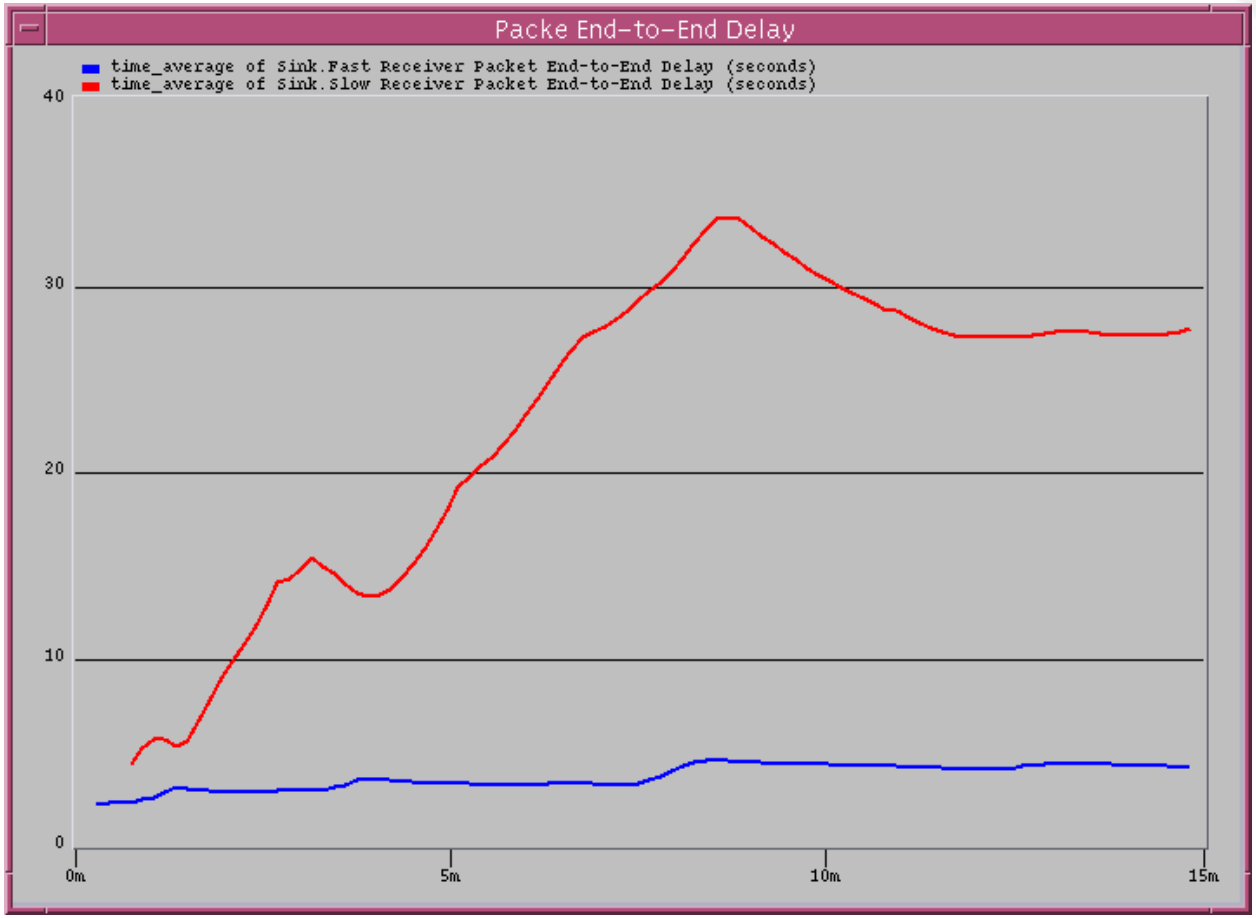
Rejection in Attach



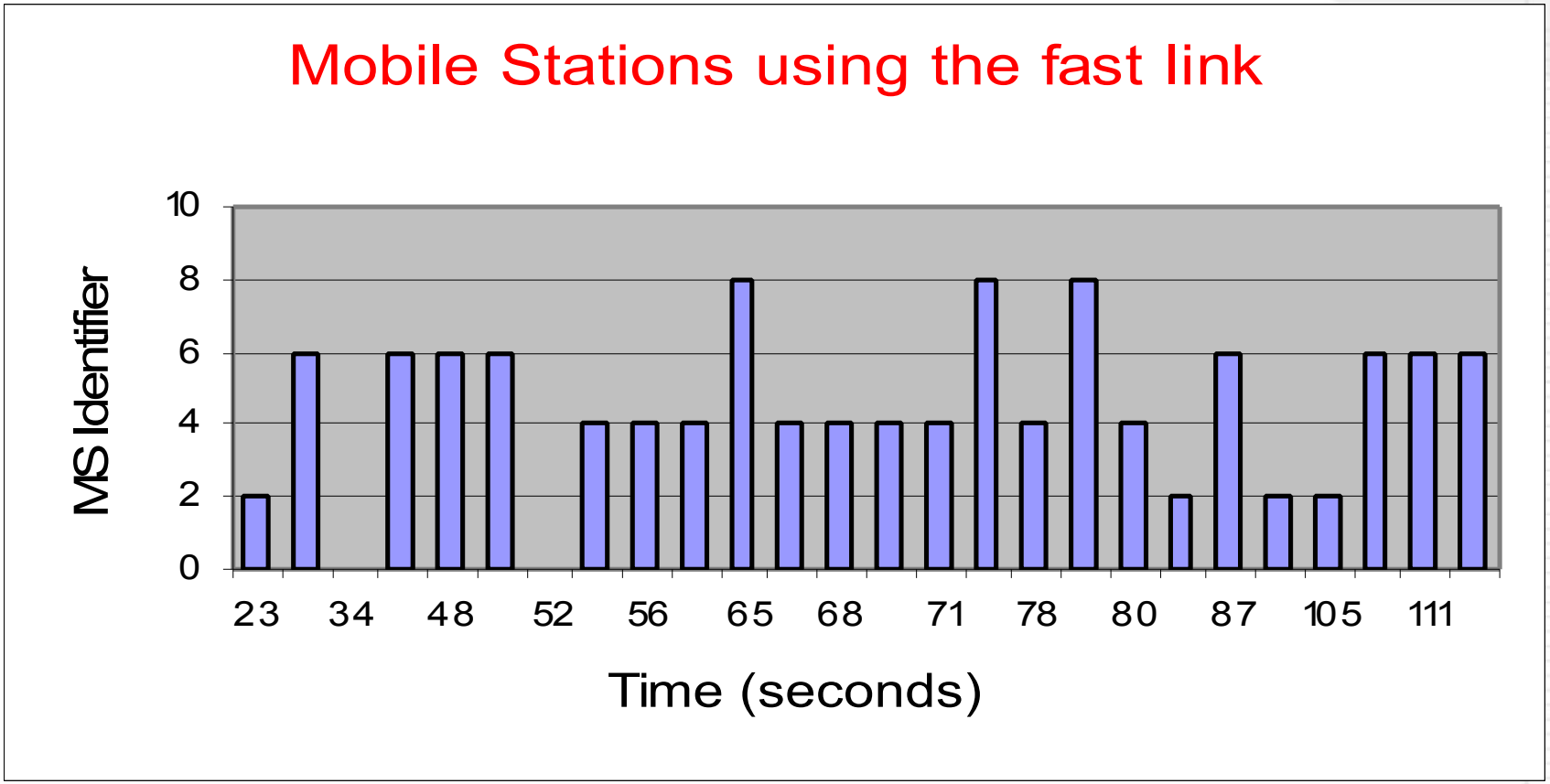
Rejection in Activation



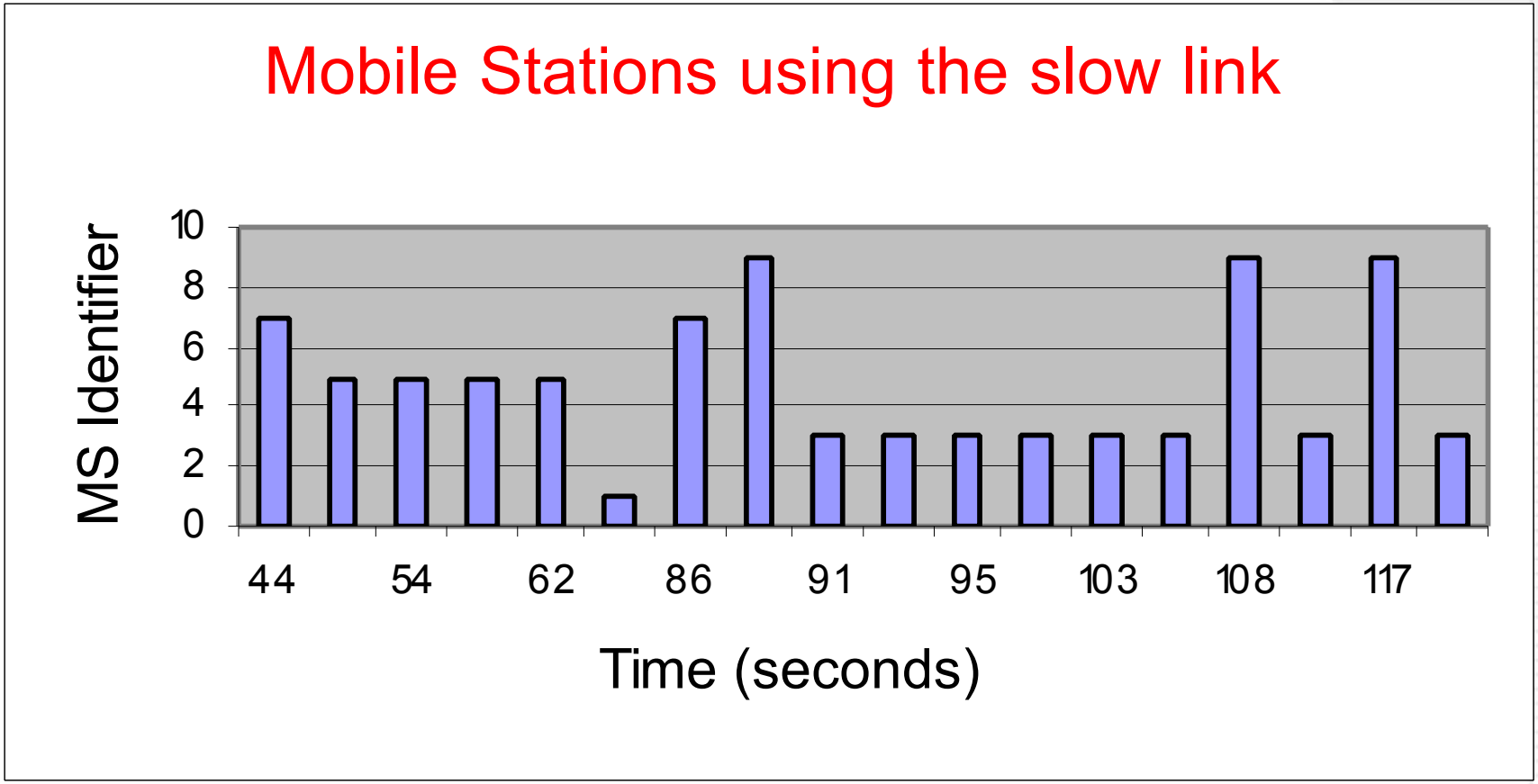
Two classes of QoS: packet end-to-end delays



Two classes of QoS: Mobile Stations using the fast link



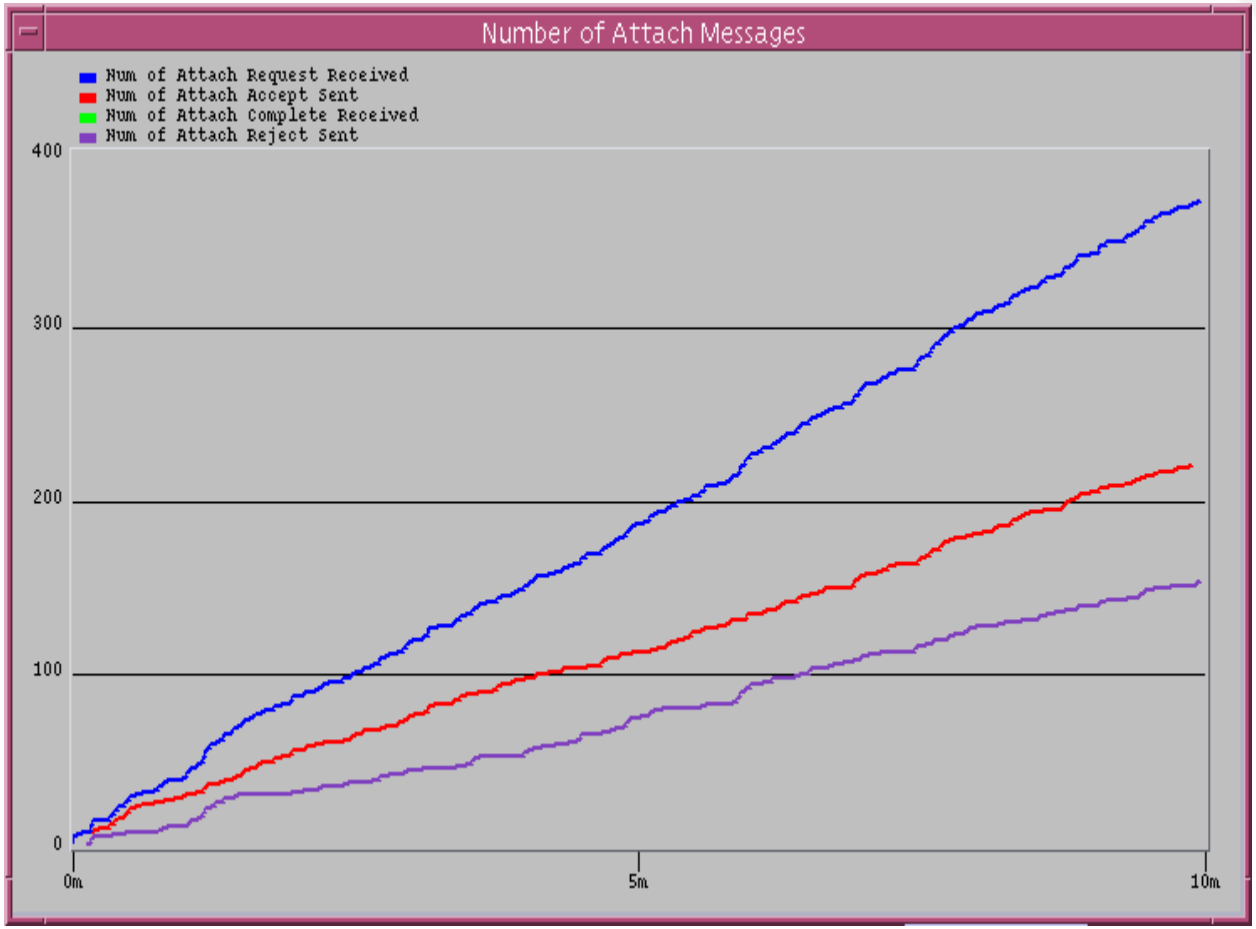
Two classes of QoS: Mobile Stations using the slow link



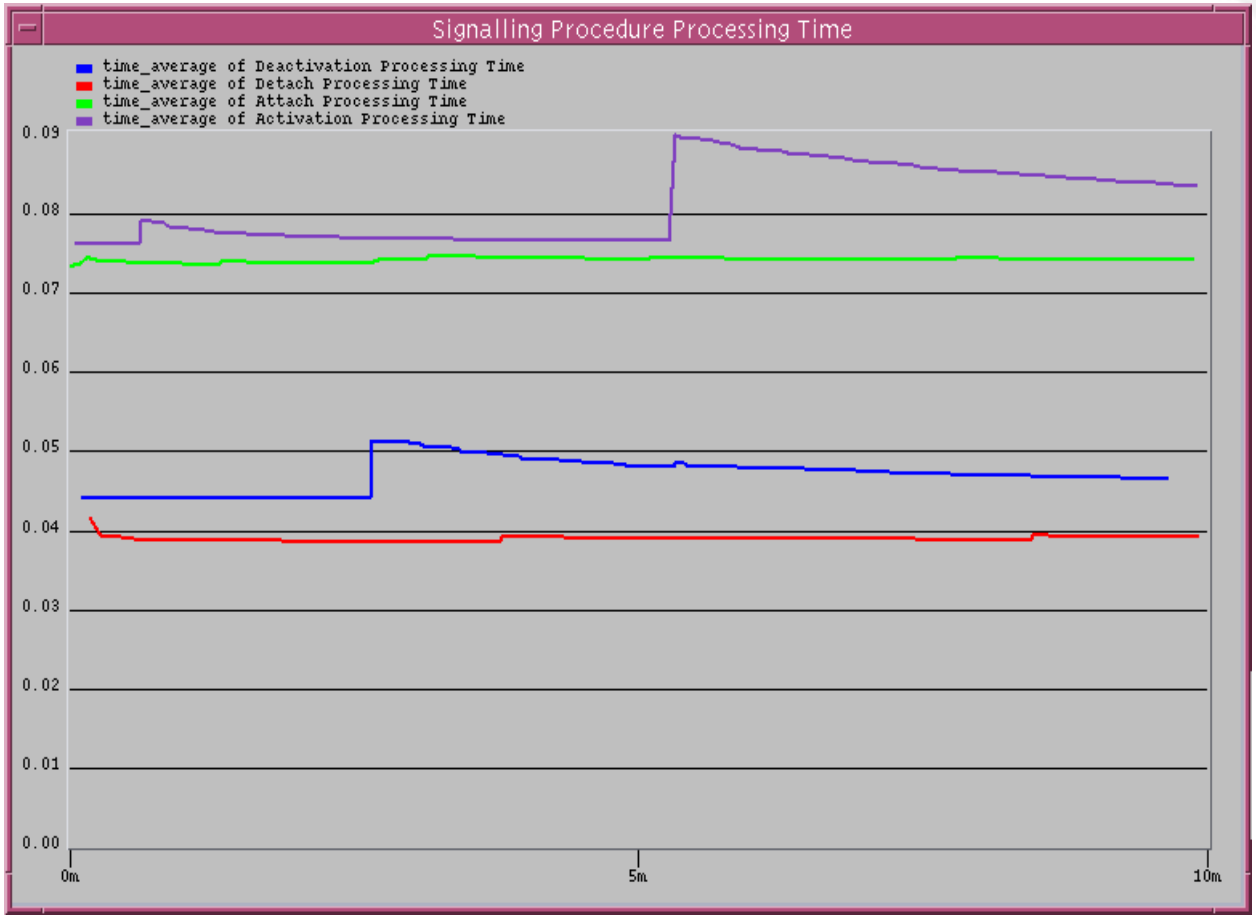
Simulation Scenario 2

User Input Attribute	Setting
MS node: Attach Request inter-arrival rate	Exponential (mean 0.5)
MS node: Detach Request inter-arrival rate	Exponential (mean 2)
MS node: Activation Request inter-arrival rate	Exponential (mean 1)
MS node: Deactivation Request inter-arrival rate	Exponential (mean 1.5)
MS node: User data inter-arrival rate	Exponential (mean 0.5)
Simulation time	10 minutes

Number of Attach messages



Signaling procedures processing time



Improvements

- Use genuine network data to model GPRS network components to identify bottlenecks
- Use genuine traffic data and trace-driven OPNET simulations to evaluate performance
- Platform for prototyping: prove of concept
- Evaluate performance impact due to new service features

Conclusions

- GPRS addresses the growing demand for faster data transmission for mobile stations
- To deploy GPRS, existing GSM network operation requires two new network nodes:
  - SGSN and
  - GGSN
- OPNET implementation of a GPRS network includes:
  - node model: interface
  - packet format: protocol
  - process model: behavior
  - project window: simulation

GSM: Global System for Mobile communication
SGSN: Serving GPRS Support Node
GGSN: Gateway GPRS Support

Conclusions (cont.)

- It models basic GPRS procedures:
  - attach and activation
  - user data transmission
  - detach and deactivation
- Simulation scenarios demonstrate:
  - implementation of basic GPRS procedures
  - two classes of QoS in data transmission
  - capability of collecting network performance data
- Improvements:
  - incorporate genuine traffic data to identify bottlenecks and measure network performance

References

- OPNET Technology Inc., Washington DC, OPNET documentation, v8.0.
- 3rd Generation Partnership Project, GSM 03.60 v6.8.0, General Packet Radio Service (GPRS), Service Description.
- R. J. Bates, *GPRS: General Packet Radio Service.* New York, McGraw-Hill, 2001.
- H. Granbohm and J. Wiklund, “GPRS-general packet radio service,” *Ericsson Review*, no. 2, 1999, pp. 82-88.