

Evolving Security in Cellular Networks:

Privacy Challenges, Device-Level Testing, and Autonomous Swarm Networking

Aanjhan Ranganathan

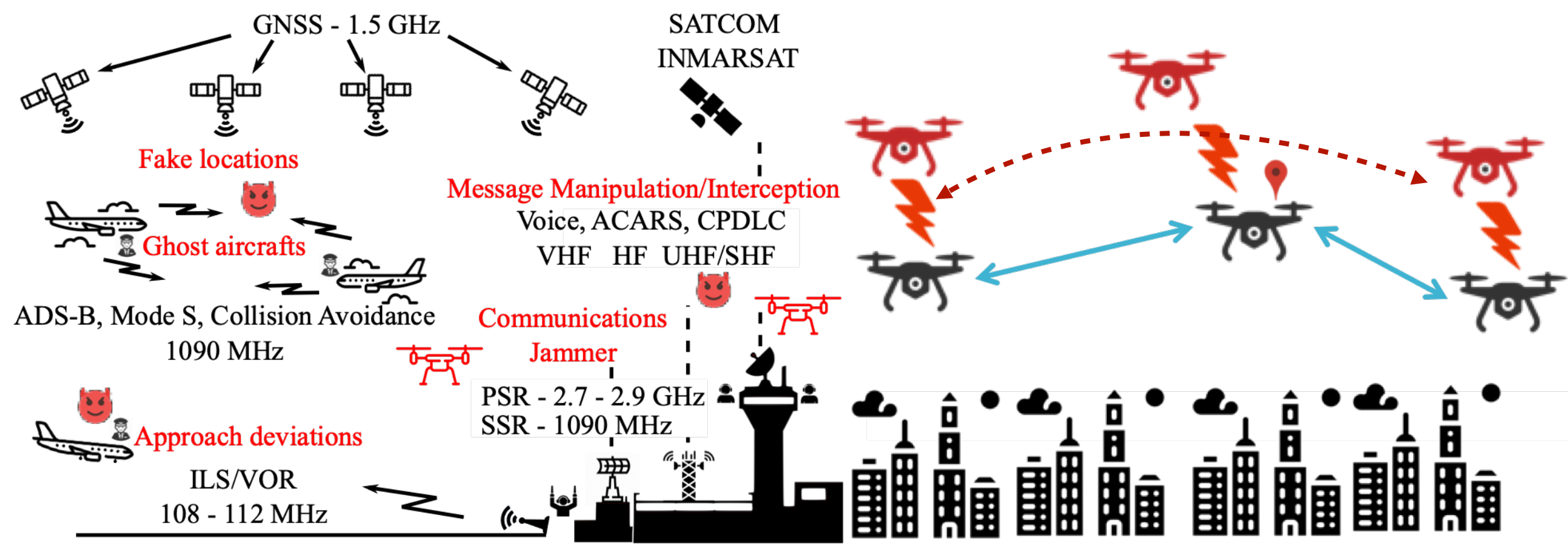
Signal Intelligence Lab @ Northeastern



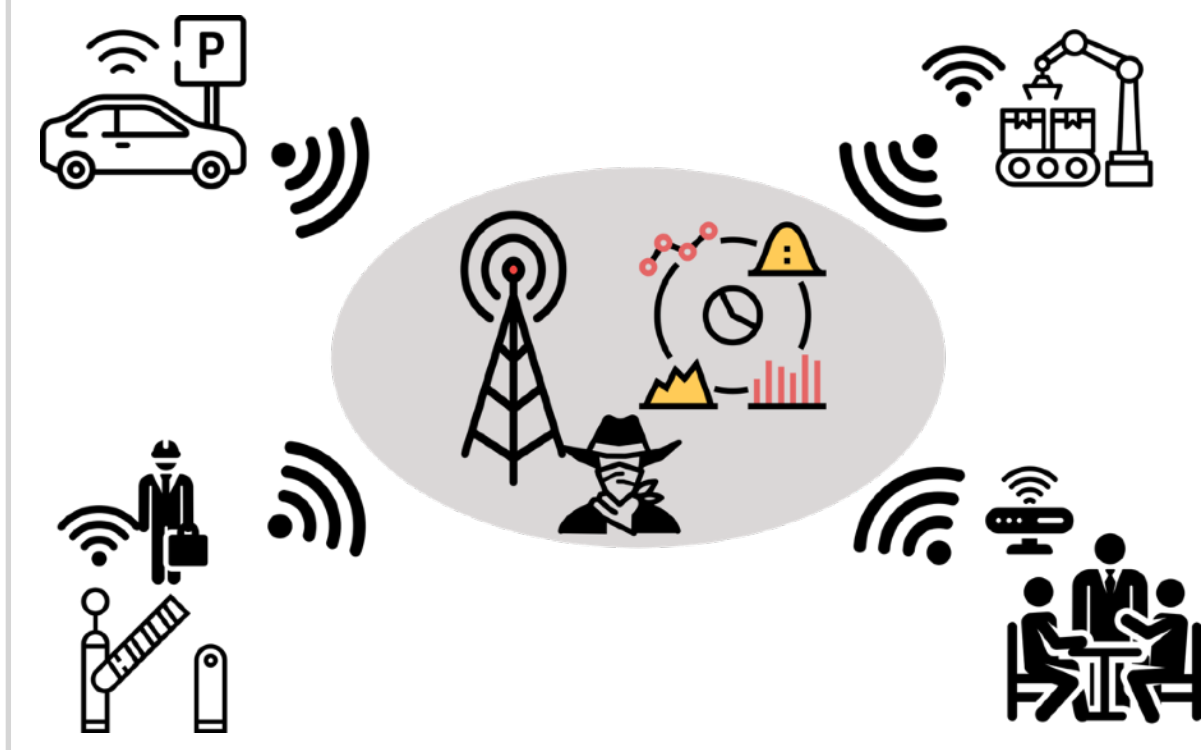
Security and privacy of wireless networks with a focus on *autonomous cyber-physical systems and smart ecosystems.*



Secure and Private
Wide-area Positioning



Aviation and Aerospace Security



Security and Privacy
of xIoT

Faculty



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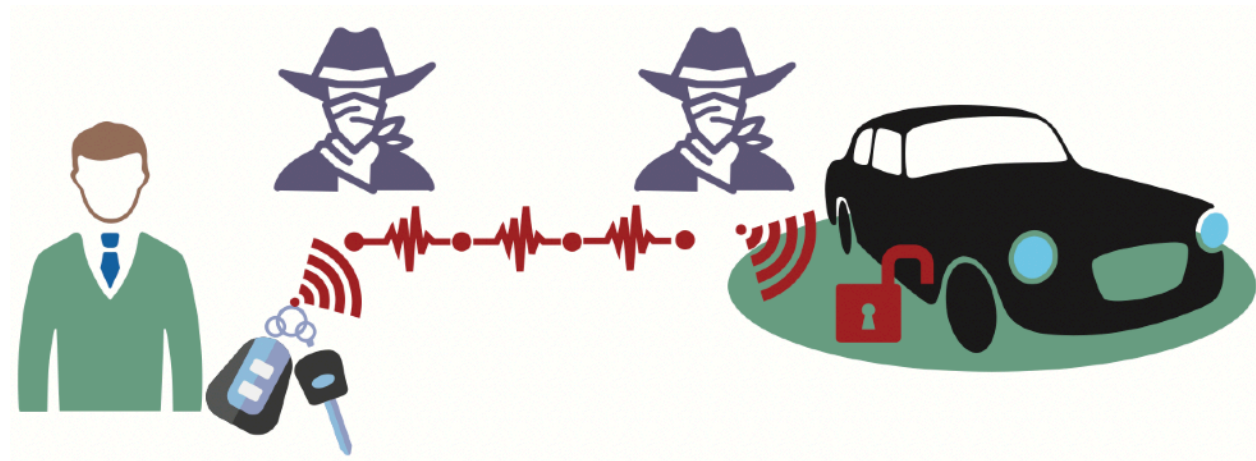
Group Members



Secure Proximity and Location Verification

Towards Secure and Private Wide-area Positioning

Attacks on Location



The Telegraph

Home Video News World Sport Business Money Comment Culture Travel Life
Apple iPhone Technology News Technology Companies Technology Reviews Video Games

HOME > TECHNOLOGY > TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Researchers commandeer £50m superyacht with GPS-spoofing



Selected Research

Breaking the Formation: The Impact of GNSS Spoofing on UAV Swarms, Aanjhan Ranganathan, Adam Belfki, Pau Closas (InsideGNSS Magazine 2024)

An Experimental Study of GPS Spoofing and Takeover Attacks on UAVs, Harshad Sathaye, Martin Strohmeier, Vincent Lenders, Aanjhan Ranganathan (USENIX Security 2022)

VRange: Enabling Secure Ranging in 5G-NR Wireless Networks, Mridula Singh, Marc Roeschlin, Aanjhan Ranganathan, Srdjan Capkun (NDSS 2022)

SemperFi: Anti-spoofing GPS receiver for UAVs, Harshad Sathaye, Gerald LaMountain, Pau Closas, Aanjhan Ranganathan (NDSS 2022)

Swarm Takeover through GPS Spoofing



Swarm Takeover through GPS Spoofing



Security and Privacy in xIoT

Validating and Building Trustworthy Smart Ecosystems



Mon(lot)Or Lab at Northeastern University

Selected Research

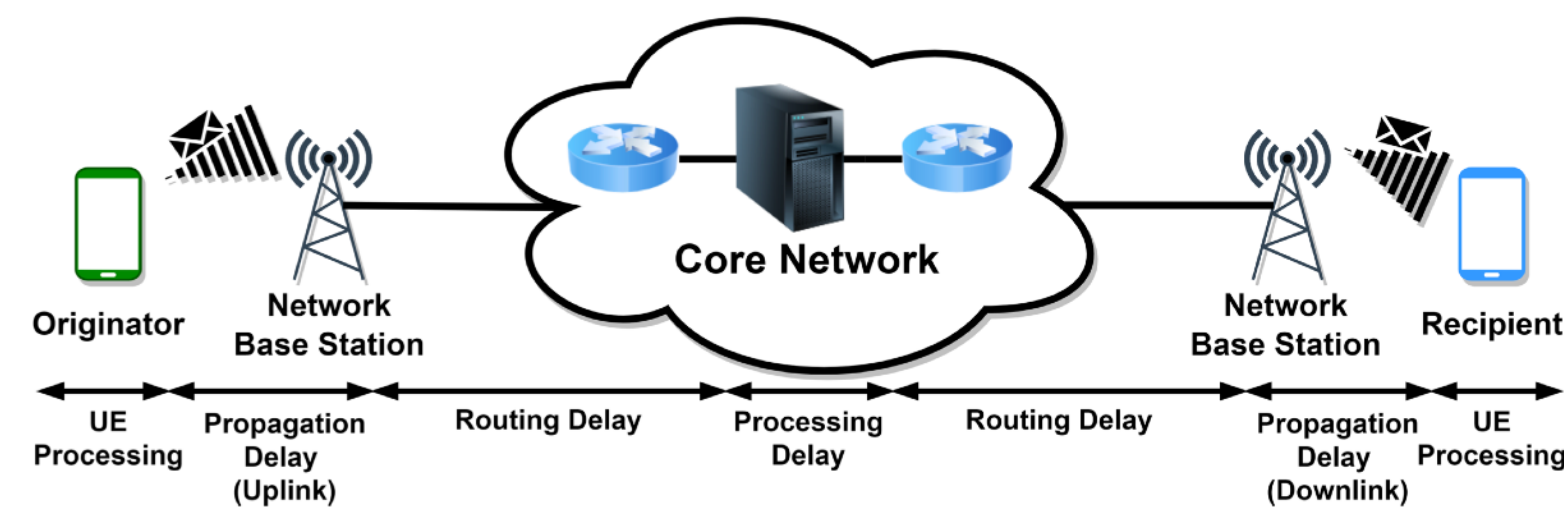
MakeShift: Security Analysis of <redacted> Wireless Gear Shifting in Bicycles, Maryam Motallebighomi, Earlence Fernandes, Aanjhan Ranganathan (Usenix WOOT 2024)

Track You: A Deep Dive into Safety Alerts for Apple AirTags, Narmeen Shafqat, Nicole Gerzon, Maggie Von Nortwick, Victor Sun, Alan Mislove, Aanjhan Ranganathan (PETS 2023)

ZLeaks: Passive Inference Attacks on Zigbee based Smart Homes, Narmeen Shafqat, Daniel Dubois, Dave Choffnes, Aaron Schulman, Dinesh Bharadia, Aanjhan Ranganathan (ACNS 2022, *Best Student Paper Award*)

Privacy-Preserving Positioning in Wi-Fi Fine Timing Measurements, Domien Schepers, Aanjhan Ranganathan (PETS 2022)

Wi-Fi and Cellular Security



Selected Research

Framing Frames: Bypassing Wi-Fi Encryption by Manipulating Transmit Queues

Domien Schepers, Aanjhan Ranganathan, Mathy Vanhoef (USENIX Security 2023)

Freaky Leaky SMS: Extracting User Locations by Analyzing SMS Timings

Evangelos Bitsikas, Theo Schnitzler, Christina Poepper, Aanjhan Ranganathan (USENIX Security 2023)

On the Robustness of Wi-Fi Deauthentication

Countermeasures, Domien Schepers, *Aanjhan Ranganathan*, Mathy Vanhoef (Wisec 2022)

Broader Impact Repositories

dom1enschepers / README.md

Welcome

Here you will find useful tools and information for Wi-Fi (IEEE 802.11) security and privacy research:

- [Wi-Fi Framework](#) for creating proof-of-concepts, automated experiments, test suites, fuzzers, and more.
- [Wi-Fi Fine Timing Measurement](#): tutorials, hardware support, adoption rates, security and privacy research, and more.
- [Wi-Fi Surveying](#): datasets and statistics for 271,700+ unique networks, tools, and more.
- [Wi-Fi Wardriving for macOS](#) operating systems.

Pinned

[wifi-framework](#) Public

Wi-Fi Framework for creating proof-of-concepts, automated experiments, test suites, fuzzers, and more.

Python ☆ 46 🍴 8

[wifi-surveying](#) Public

Wi-Fi Surveying: wardriving, datasets, statistics, tools, and more.

Shell ☆ 1

[wifi-ftm](#) Public

Wi-Fi Fine Timing Measurement: tutorials, hardware support, adoption rates, security and privacy research, and more.

C 🍴 1

[wifi-wardriving-macos](#) Public

Wi-Fi Wardriving tool for macOS.

Shell



CVE Identifiers

CVE Identifier	Description
CVE-2020-11270	Possible denial of service due to RTT responder consistently rejects all FTMR by transmitting FTM1 with failure status in the FTM parameter IE.
CVE-2020-11280	Denial of service while processing fine timing measurement request (FTMR) frame with reserved bits set in the FTM parameter IE due to improper error handling.
CVE-2020-11281	Allowing RTT frames to be linked with non randomized MAC address by comparing the sequence numbers can lead to information disclosure.
CVE-2020-11287	Allowing RTT frames to be linked with non randomized MAC address by comparing the sequence numbers can lead to information disclosure.
CVE-2021-0053	Improper initialization in firmware for some Intel(R) PROSet/Wireless WiFi and Killer(TM) WiFi in Windows 10 may allow an authenticated user to potentially enable information disclosure via adjacent access.

Overview of Known Security Updates

- [Intel Security Advisory](#) of November 2021.
- [Qualcomm Security Bulletin](#) of February 2021.
- [Android Security Bulletin](#) of February 2021, including the Qualcomm mitigations.
- [ASUS RT-AC58U](#) and [ASUS RT-ACRH13](#) firmware updates mitigate their denial-of-service vulnerability.



Warning: Your wireless networks may leak data thanks to Wi-Fi spec ambiguity

How someone can nab buffered info, by hook or by kr00k

Thomas Claburn



STICKY WEB Millions warned over Wi-Fi hack that can leak data as FBI warns against using public networks

Millie Turner
Published: 12:13, 13 Apr 2023 | Updated: 12:13, 13 Apr 2023

Security

The plane, it's 'splained, falls mainly without the brain: We chat to boffins who've found a way to disrupt landings using off-the-shelf radio kit

DoS cyber-attacks are not just for websites, they may also be for aircraft ILS

By Thomas Claburn in San Francisco 16 May 2019 at 21:03 36 🗨️ SHARE ▼

ars TECHNICA

BIZ & IT TECH SCIENCE POLICY CARS GAMING & CULTURE

HACKING LANDING SYSTEMS —

The radio navigation planes use to land safely is insecure and can be hacked

Radios that sell for \$600 can spoof signals planes use to find runways.

DAN GOODIN - 5/15/2019, 6:00 AM

Evolution of Cellular Networks

From Analog to 5G

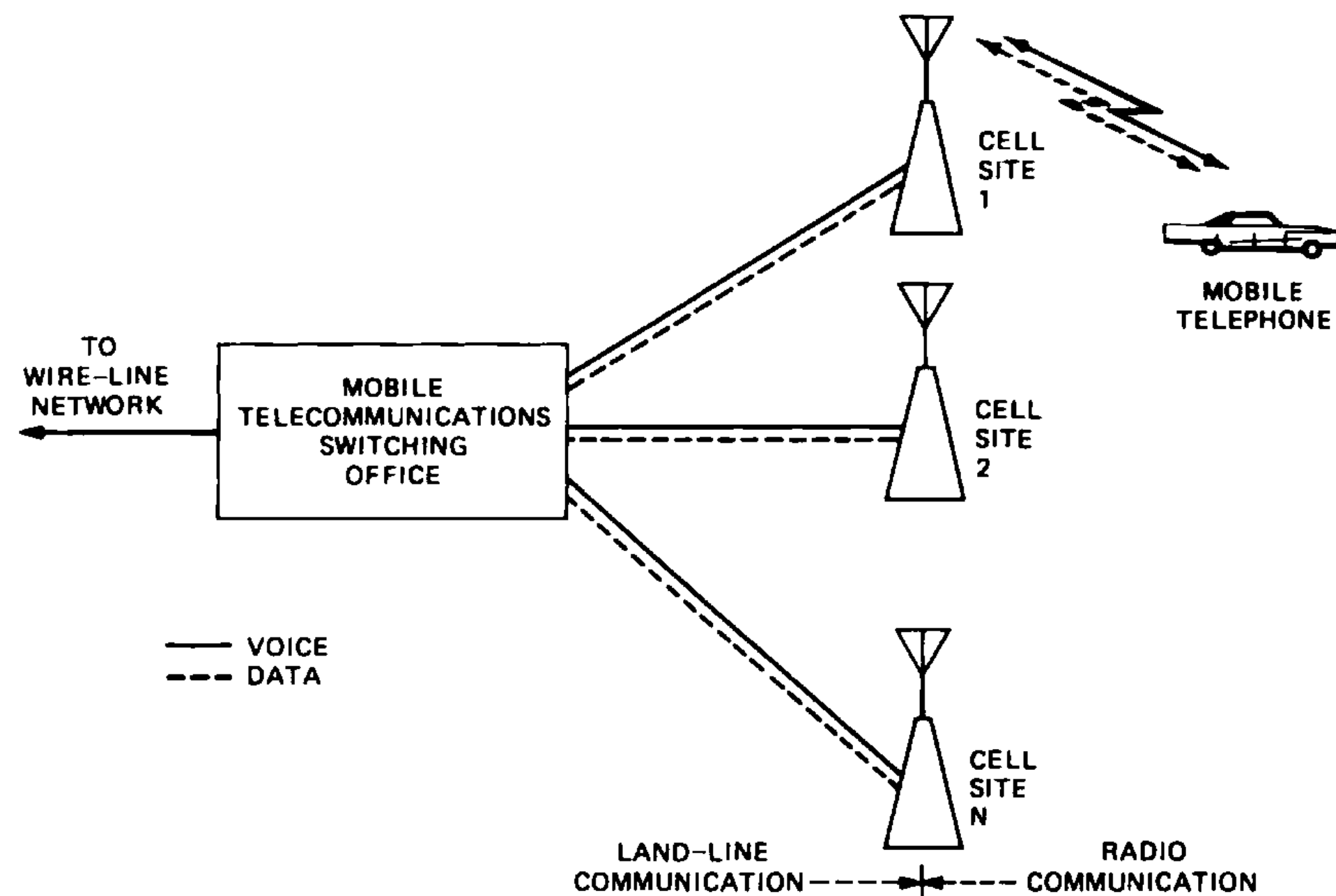
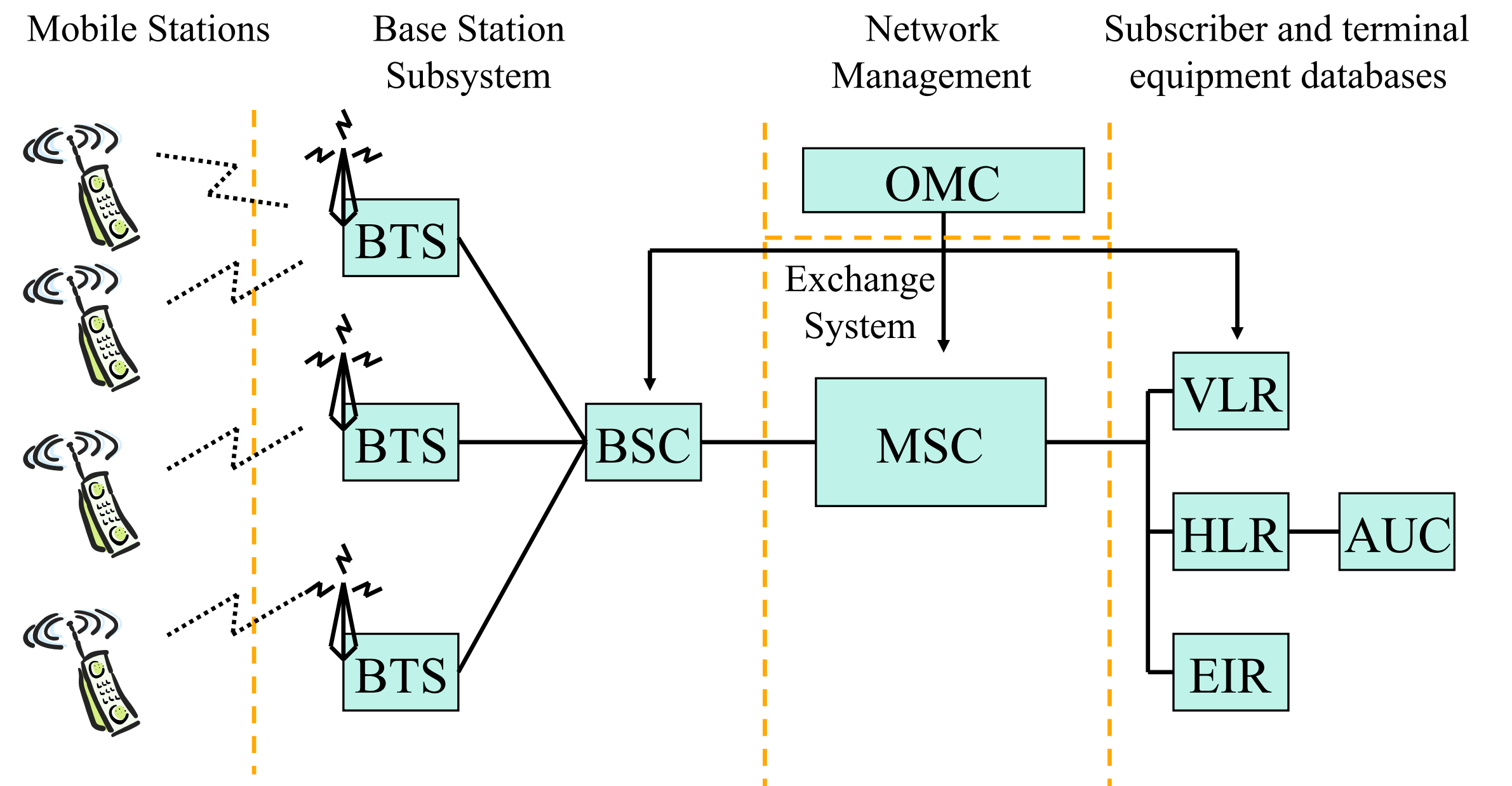


Fig. 3—AMPS system control elements.



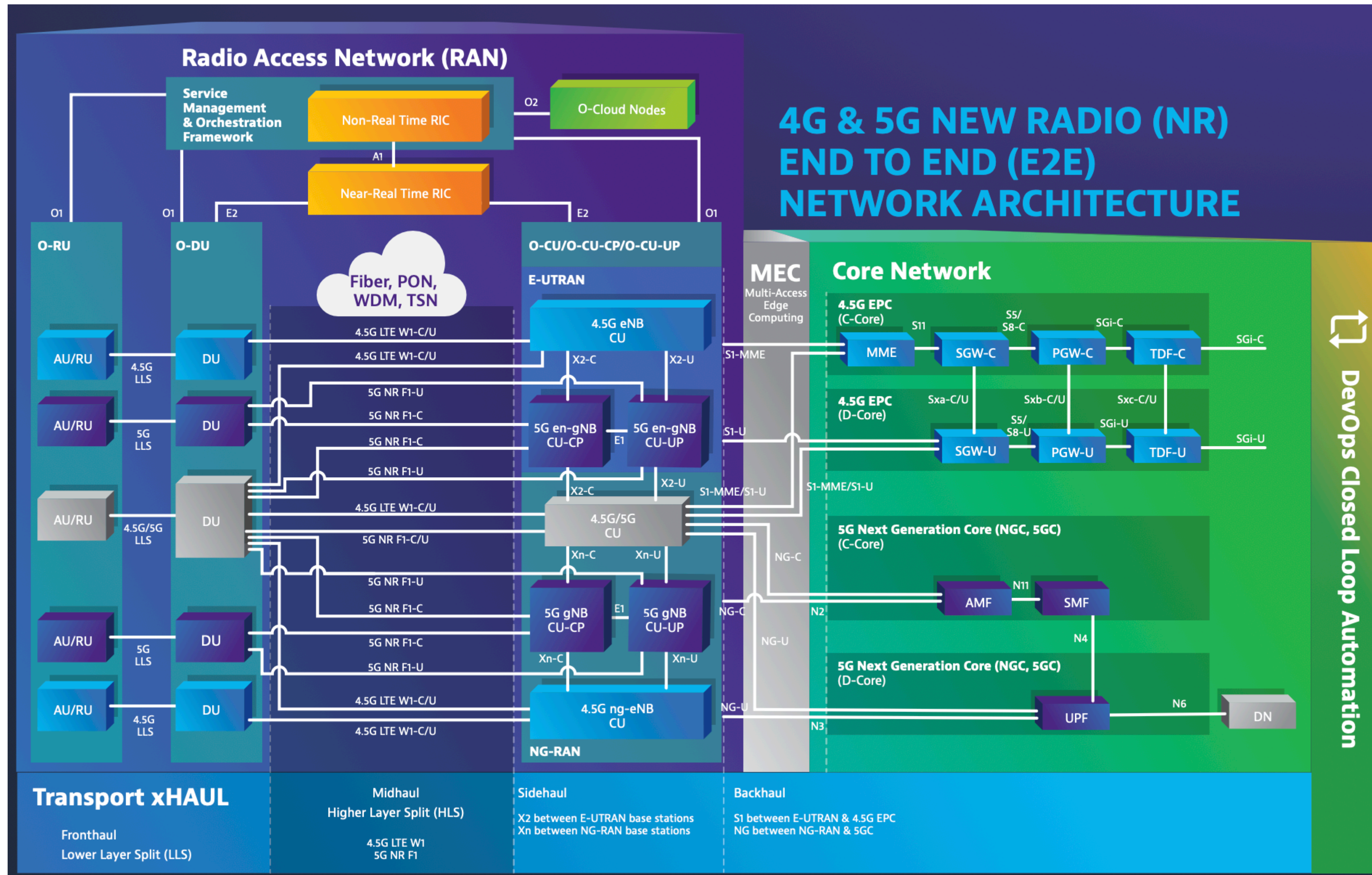
HLR = Home Location Register

AC = Authentication center

VLR = Visitor Location Register

EIR - Equipment Identity Register

Today's 5G networks..



SMS-based Location Inference

Freaky Leaky SMS: Extracting User Locations by Analyzing SMS Timings

Evangelos Bitsikas, Theodor Schnitzler, Christina Pöpper, Aanjhan Ranganathan (Usenix Security 2023)

SMS Insecurity



What Is Smishing? Definition, Examples & Protection Tips

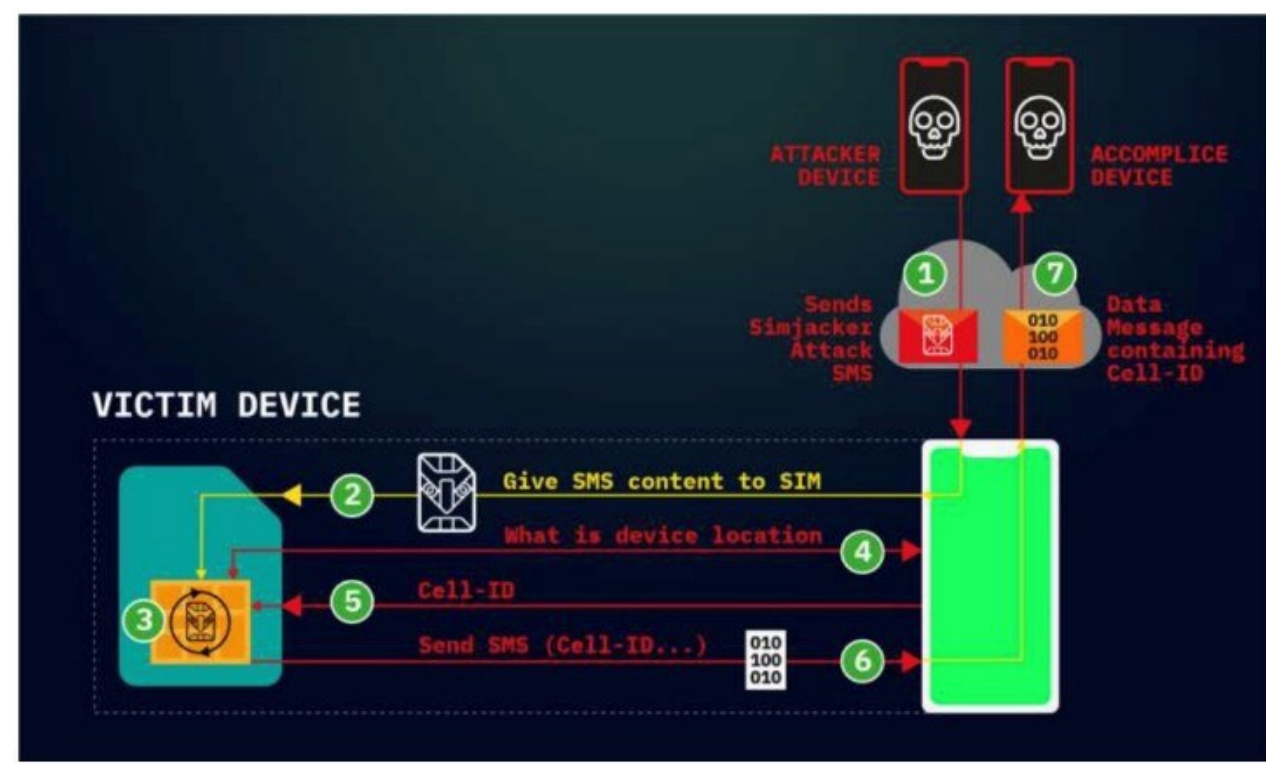
by Casey Crane on October 3, 2020

While SMS phishing text scams are nothing new, they're a type of threat that's gaining traction with cybercriminals. Proofpoint reports that 84% of organizations faced smishing attacks in 2019 alone...

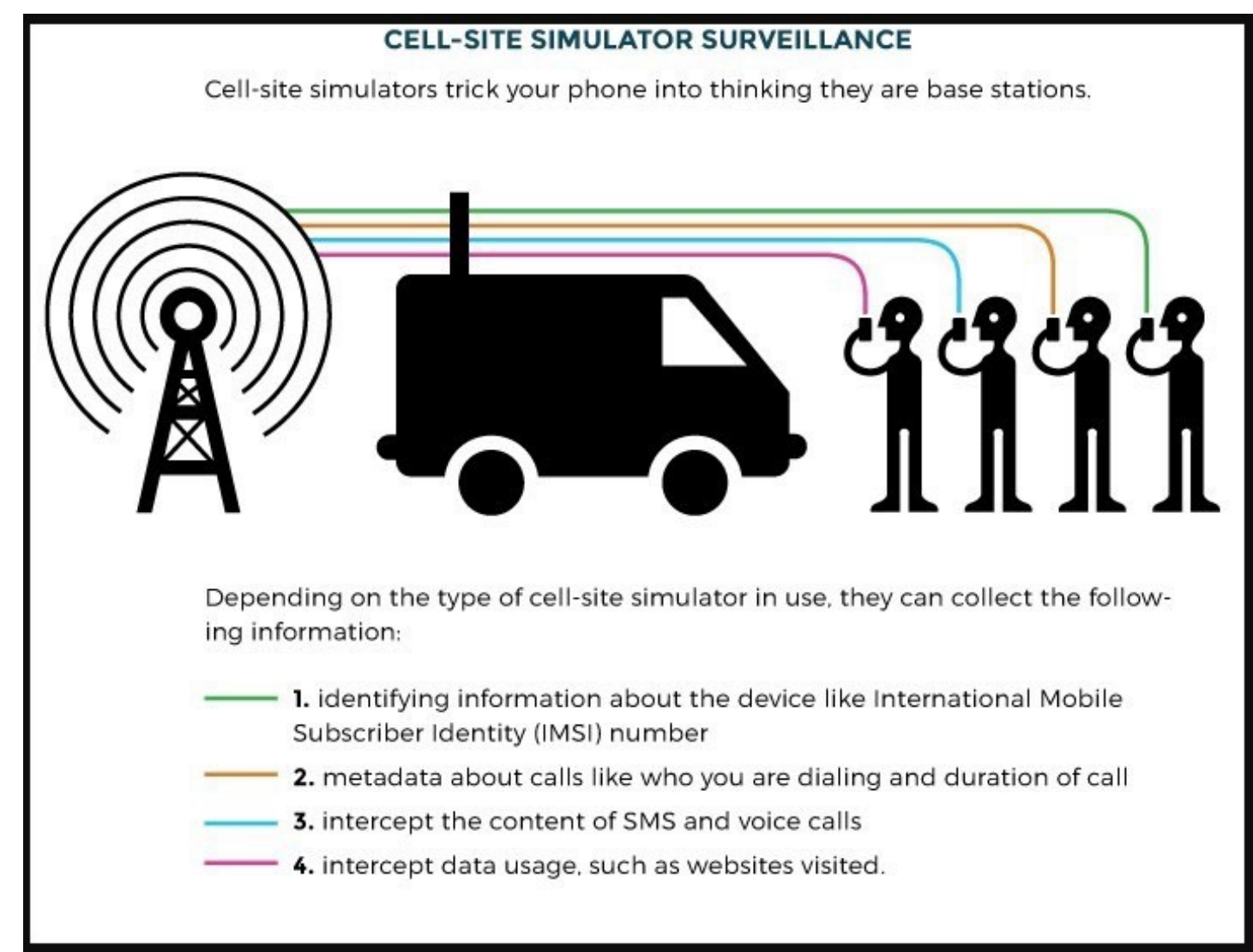
SEPTEMBER 15, 2019 WEBLOG

Simjacker exploit is independent of handset type, uses SMS attack

by Nancy Cohen , Tech Xplore



Credit: AdaptiveMobile Security



ETSI TS 123 040 V17.3.0 (2023-07)



**Digital cellular telecommunications system (Phase 2+) (GSM);
Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS);
LTE;
5G;
Technical realization of the Short Message Service (SMS)
(3GPP TS 23.040 version 17.3.0 Release 17)**

**Can we infer the location of a victim
by simply sending SMS messages?**

Attack Overview

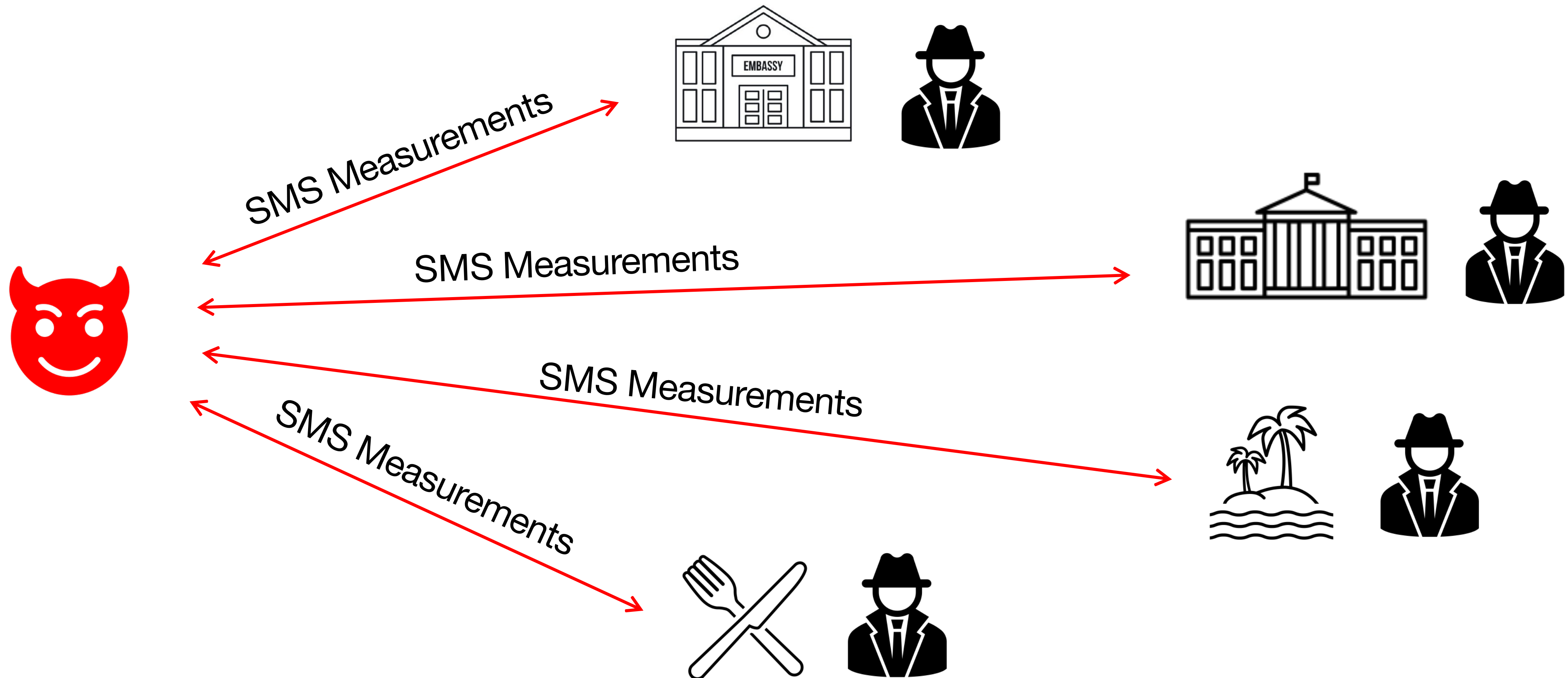
Goal: Identify the location of the SMS recipient-victim

Steps:

1. Know the routine locations and mobile number of the victim.
2. Send silent SMSs and receive acknowledgements and delivery reports.
3. Use the SMS timings to generate fingerprints per location.
4. Use the fingerprints to predict the location of the victim using ML techniques.

Example Scenario

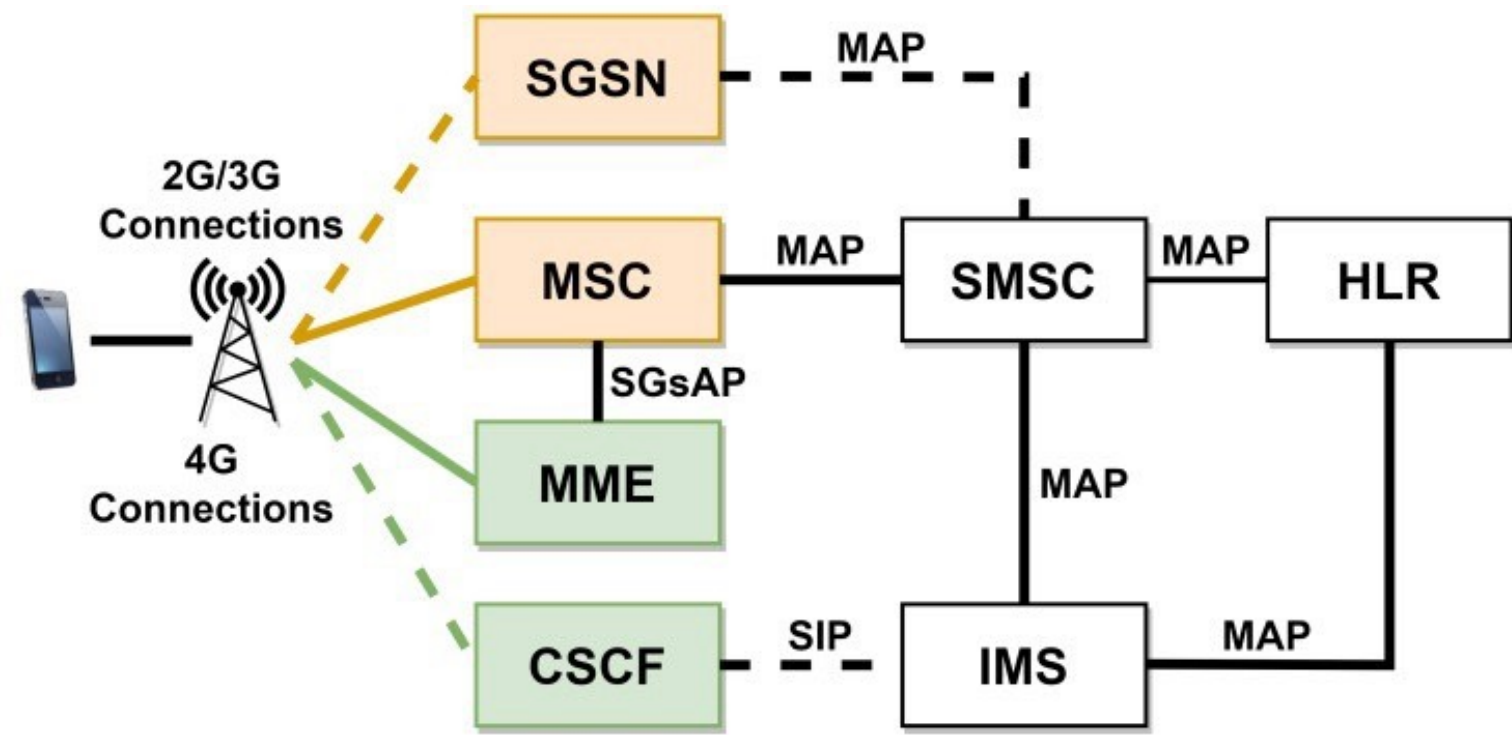
Tracking a diplomat to routine locations



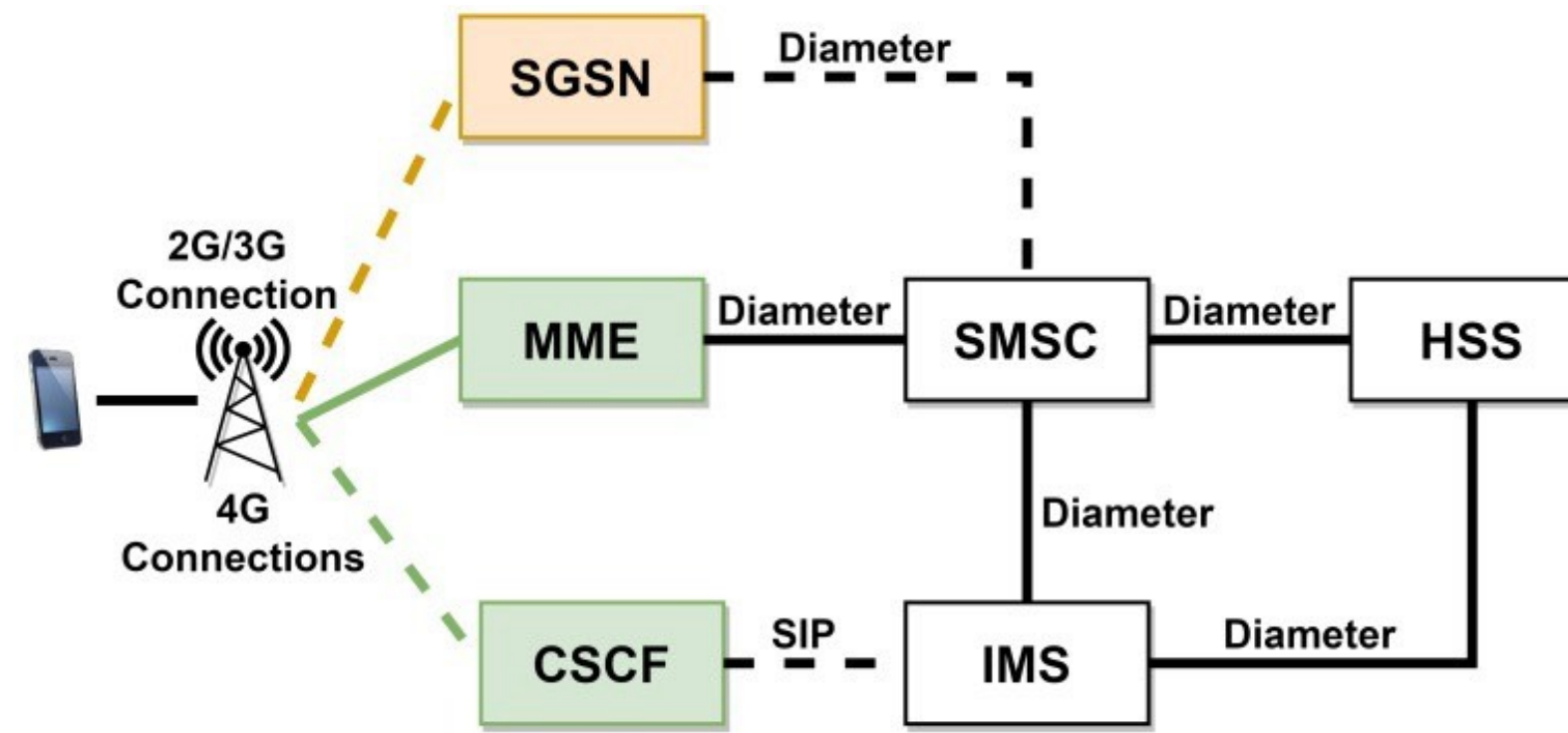
Our Contributions

- Unique and stealthy location identification attack based on the SMS infrastructure.
- Large-scale evaluation: 3 continents, 9 countries, 10 operators, and 16 devices.
- The attack can achieve up to 96% accuracy for international classifications, and over 70% more for many national/regional classifications.
- Countermeasures against the SMS location inference attack.

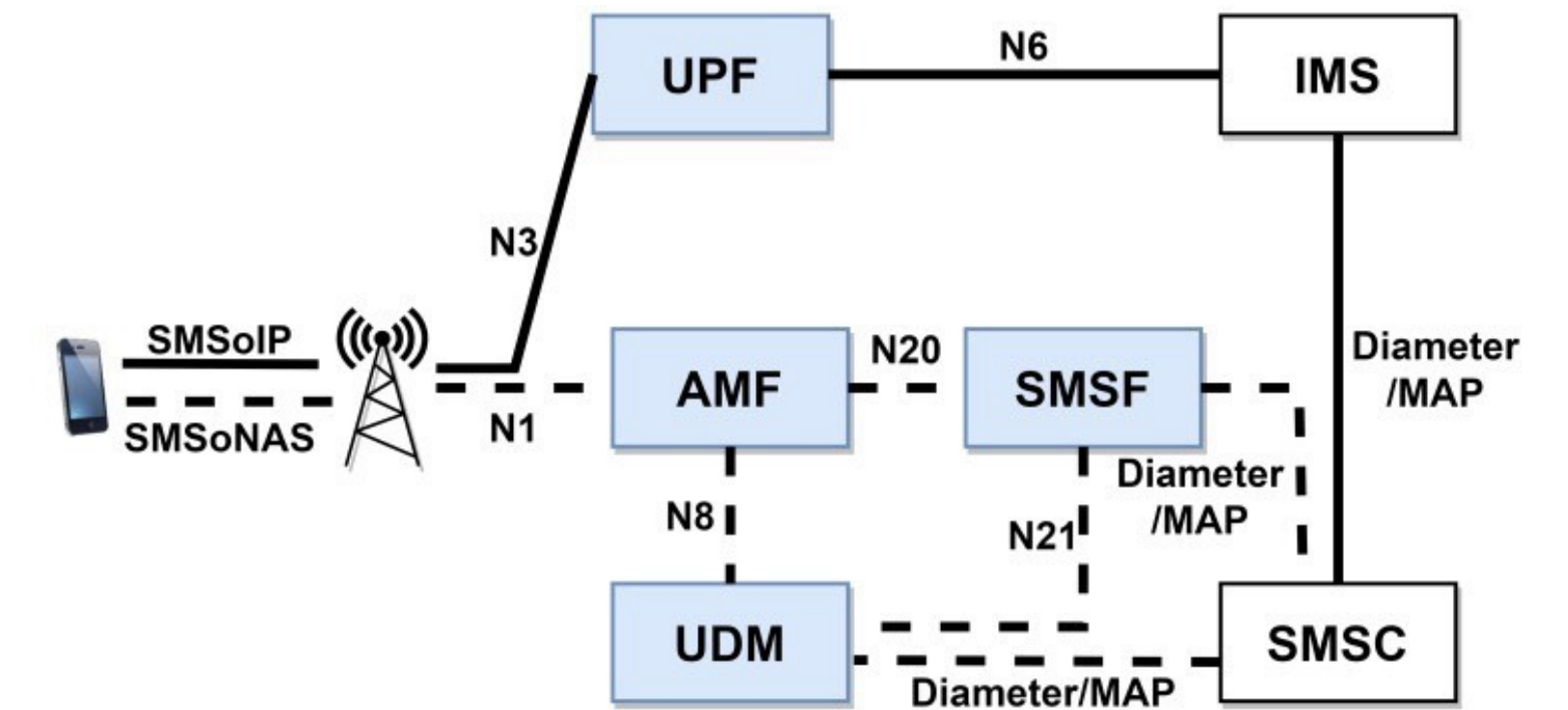
SMS Network Architecture



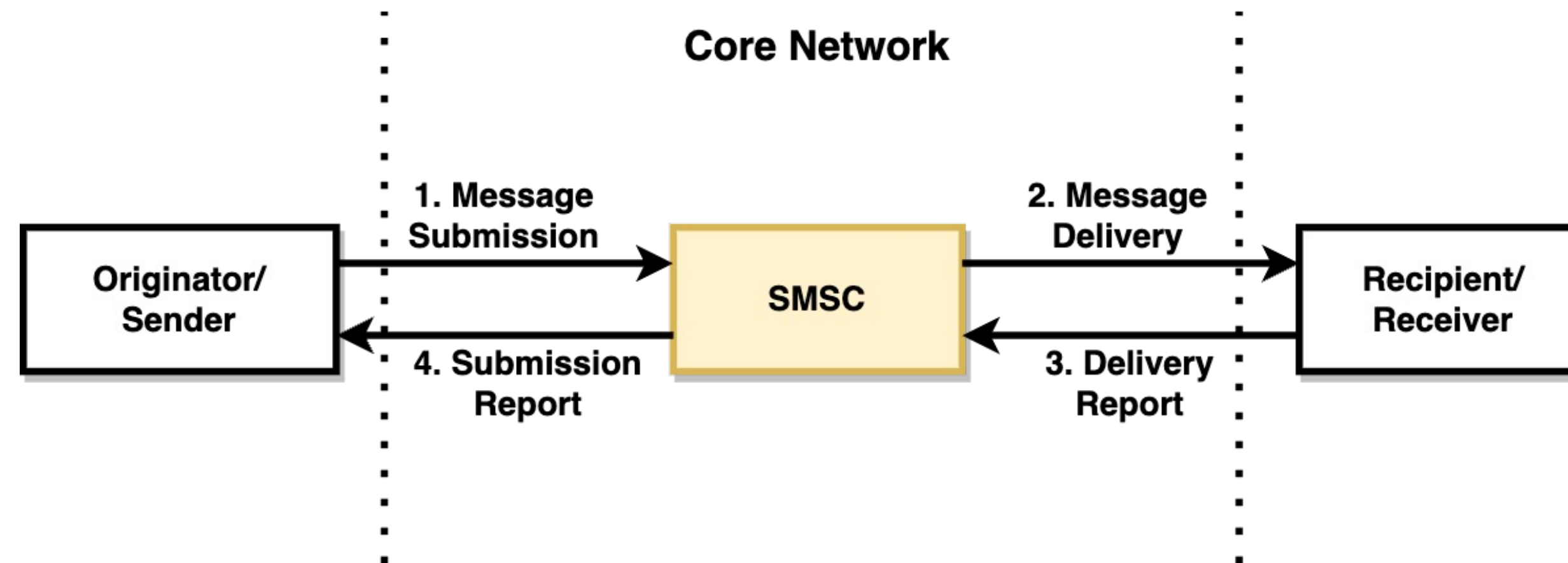
(a) 2G/3G/4G with MAP and IMS



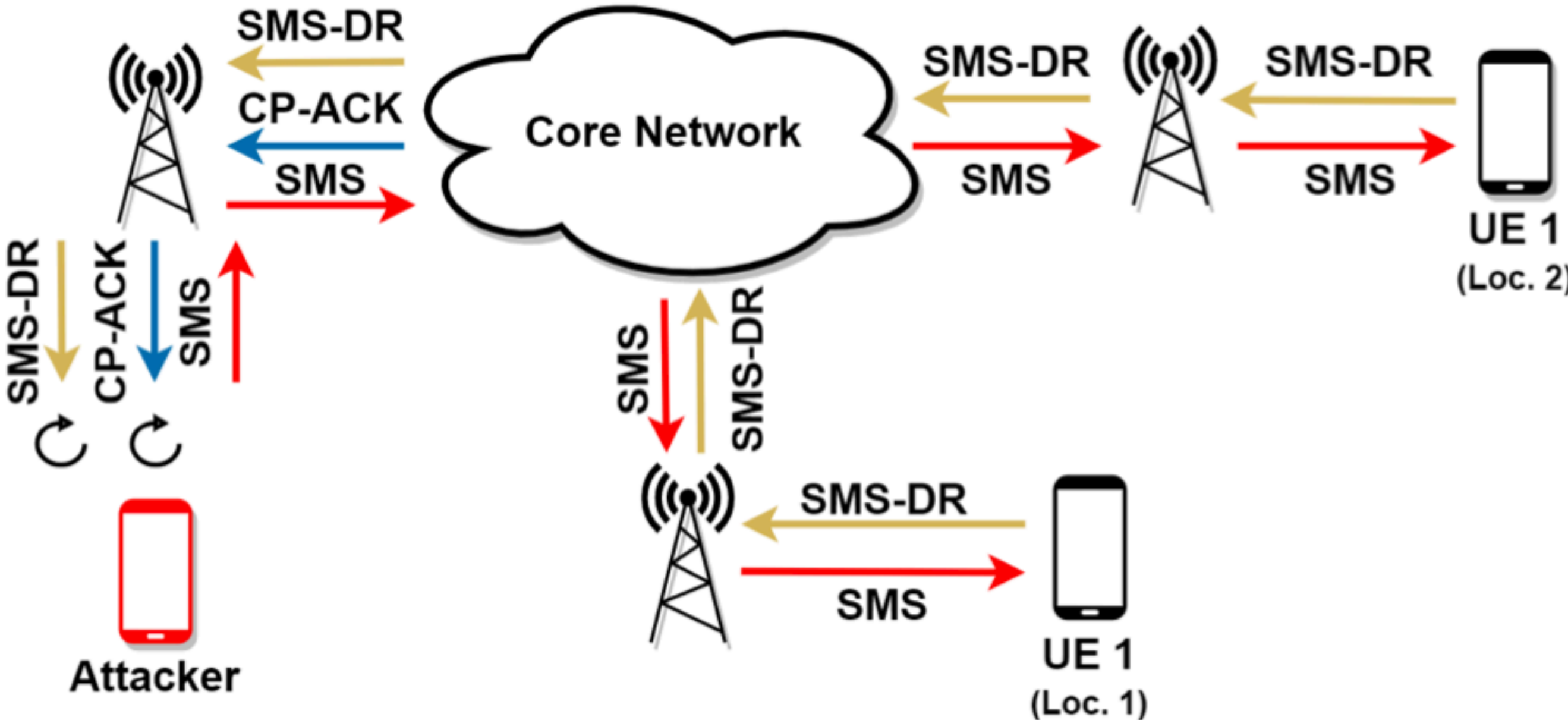
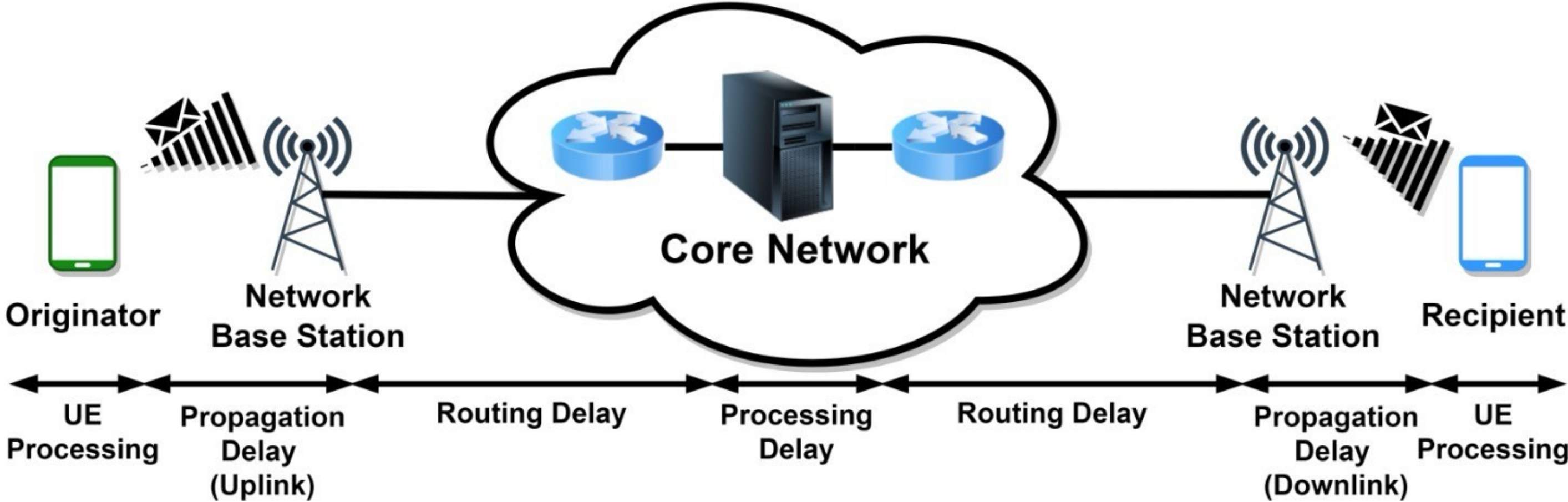
(b) 2G/3G/4G with Diameter and IMS



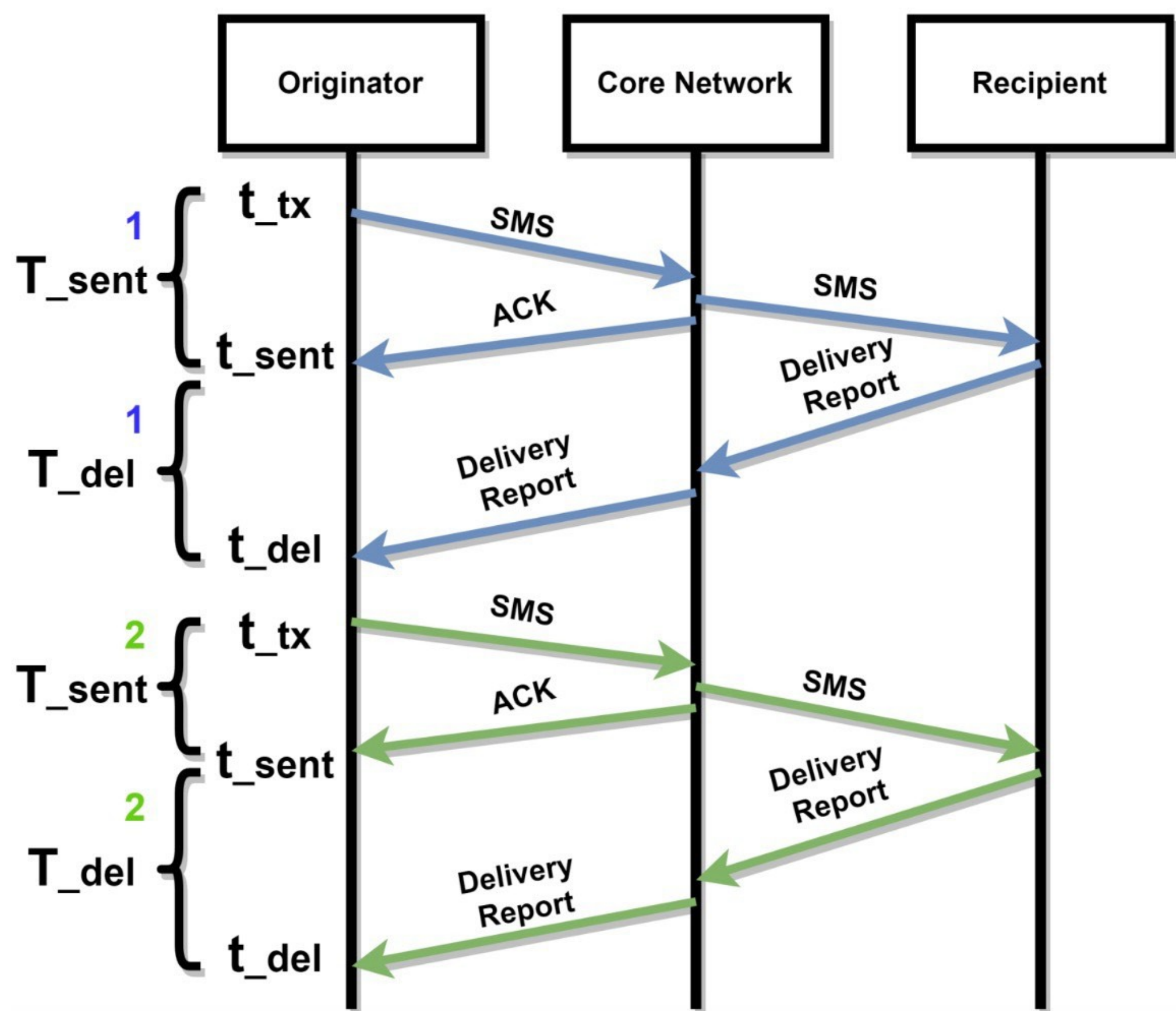
(c) 5G Standalone with IMS and NAS



SMS Timing Delays and Flow



SMS Timing Features



$$T_{sent} = t_{sent} - t_{tx} \quad (1)$$

$$T_{del} = t_{del} - t_{sent} \quad (2)$$

$$T_{tot} = T_{del} + T_{sent} \quad (3)$$

$$P = \frac{T_{del}}{T_{tot}} = \frac{t_{del} - t_{sent}}{t_{del} - t_{tx}} \quad (4)$$

Individual SMS

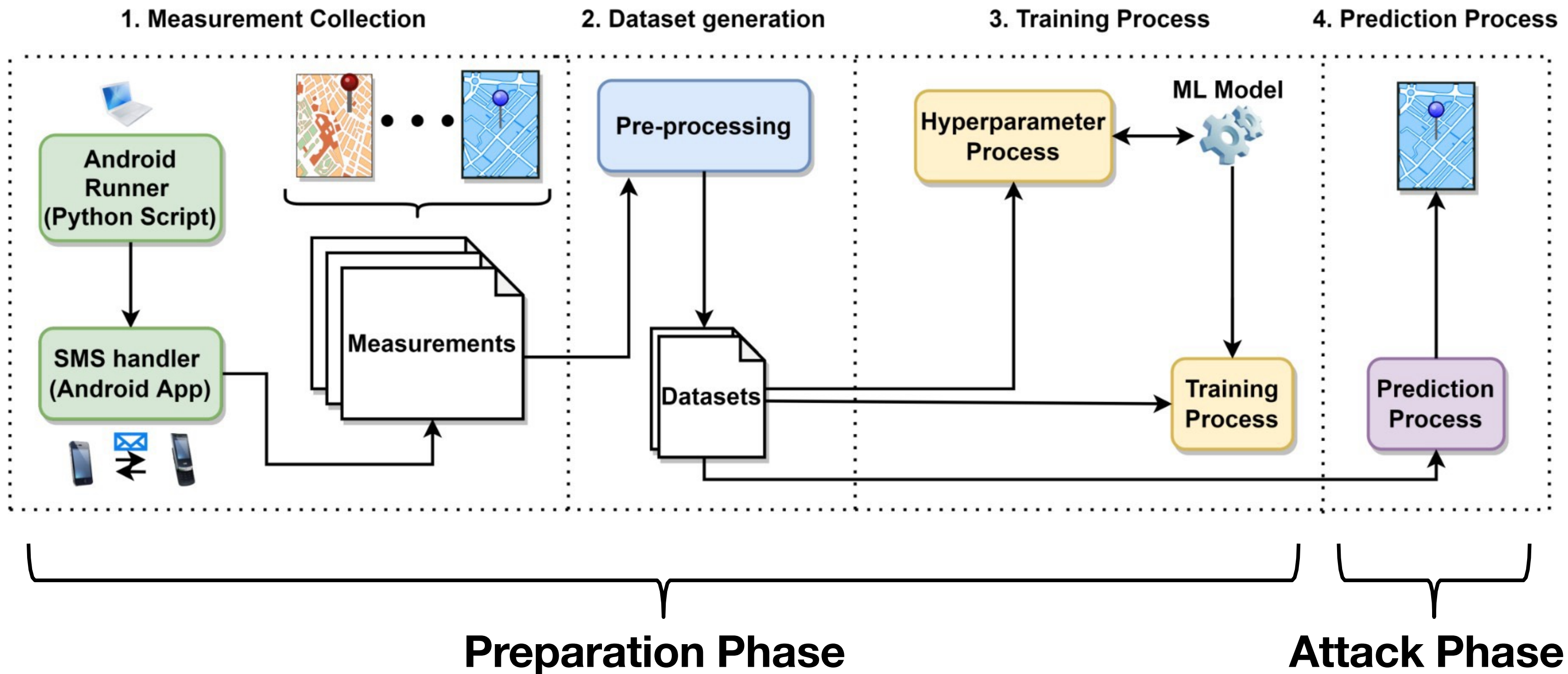
$$T_{\Delta sent} = (T_{sent}^i - T_{sent}^{i-1}) / T_{sent}^{i-1} \quad (5)$$

$$T_{\Delta del} = (T_{del}^i - T_{del}^{i-1}) / T_{del}^{i-1} \quad (6)$$

Consecutive SMS

**The location signature/fingerprint is a combination of these six features:
(T_{sent} , T_{del} , T_{tot} , P , $T_{\Delta sent}$, $T_{\Delta del}$)**

Evaluation Method and Setup



- SMS burst: 20 silent SMSs per hour (continuously).
- Various times of the day, network configurations, and levels of network loads.
- Locations in GR, DE, DK, UK, US, AE, NL, BE, LU.
- Connection Types: LTE, LTE+, 5G NSA/SA
- Routing Modes: SMSoIP, SGsAP/Diameter
- Approximately **155,512 SMSs** in total.

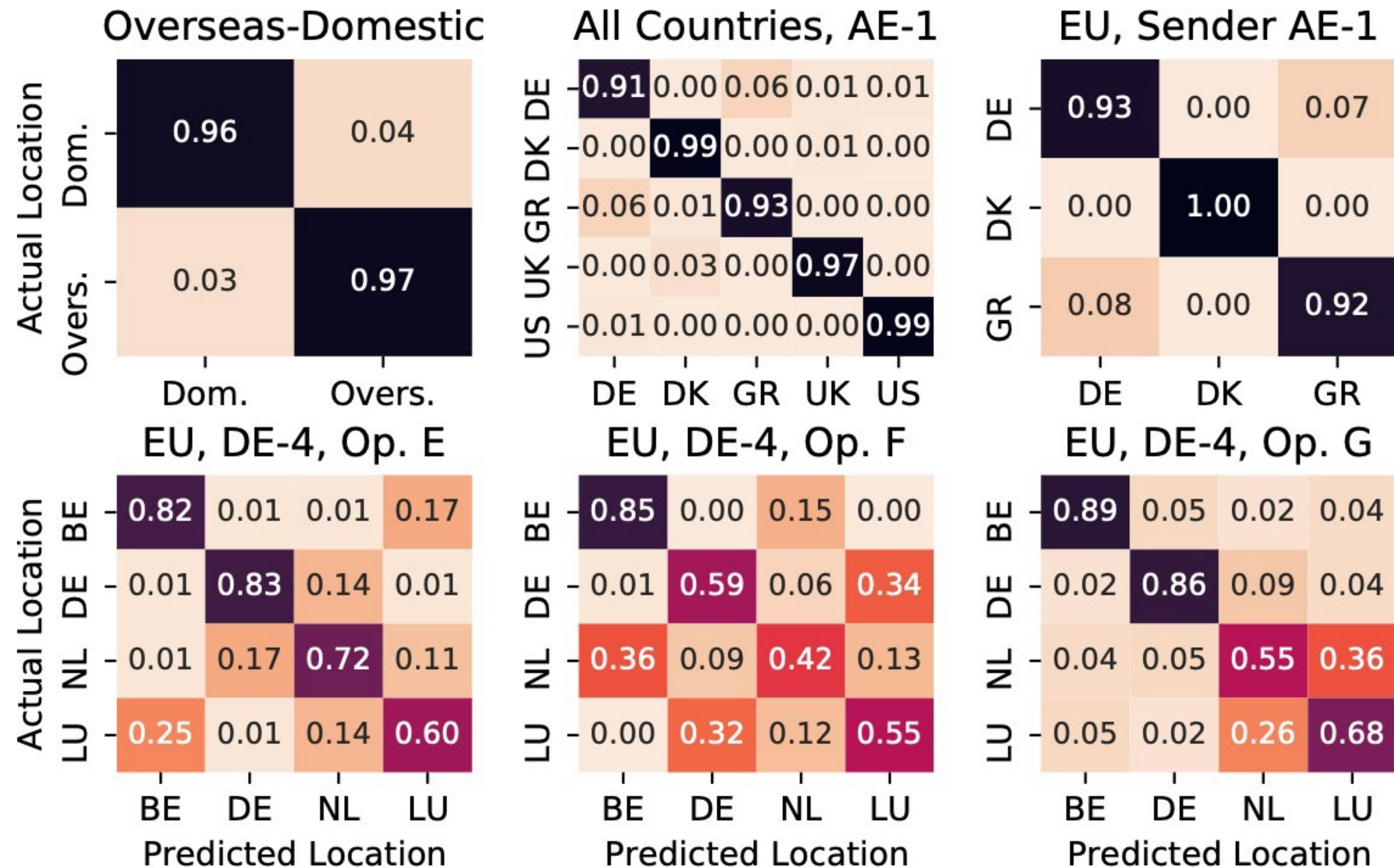
ML Parameter Tuning

Multi Layer Perceptron (MLP) Neural Network

- Manual & Automatic Hyperparameter tuning
- Stochastic gradient descent solver
- SoftMax and Sigmoid activations
- Three layers of 10, 40, 10
- Maximum iterations: 5000
- Constant learning rate
- Batch size: 32
- Alpha: 0.0001

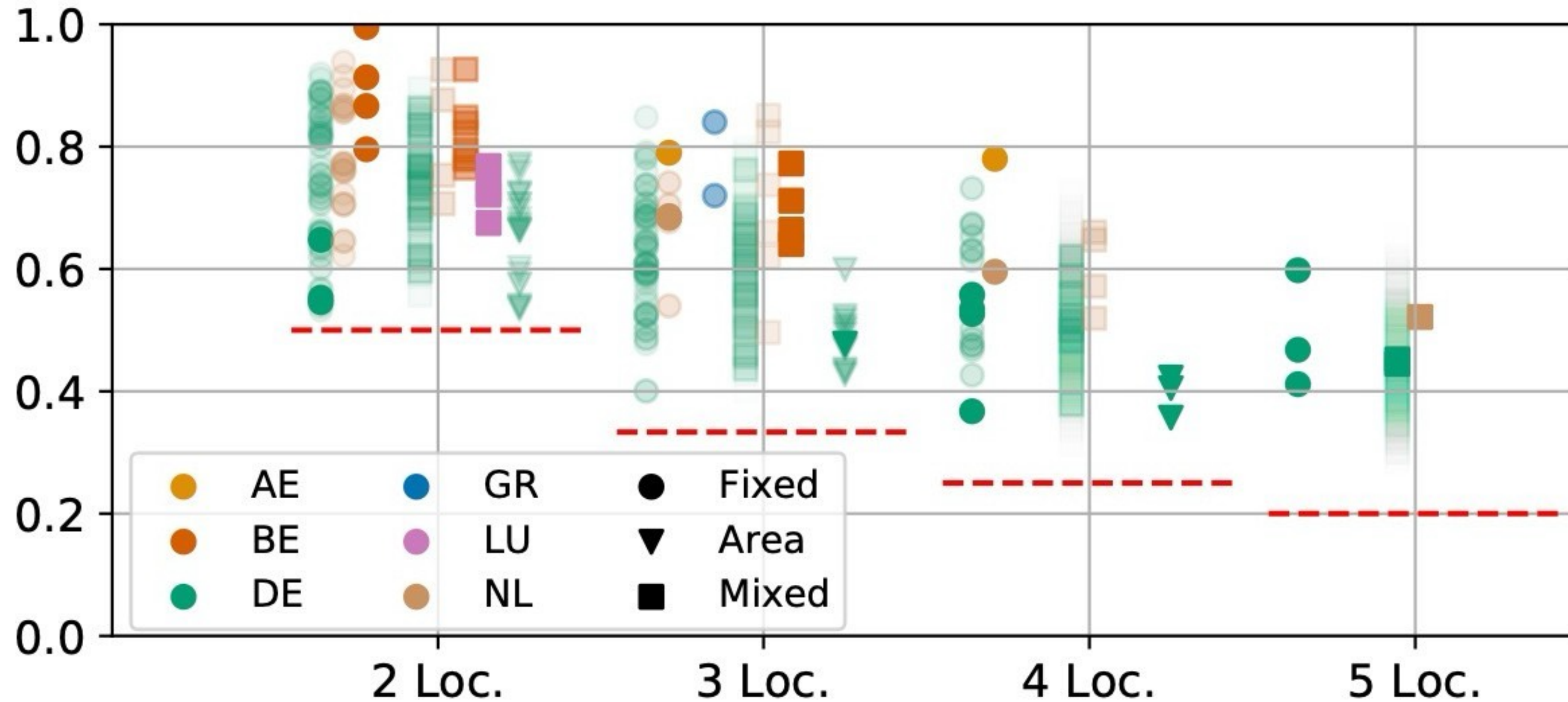
Results

International Classification



Results

Regional Classification



Receiver Locations	Accuracy
<i>Sender Location: DE-4, Operator E</i>	
BE-1, BE-2	83 %
BE-1, BE-3	80 %
BE-2, BE-3	74 %
LU-1, LU-3	64 %
<i>Sender Location: DE-4, Operator F</i>	
BE-1, BE-2	95 %
BE-1, BE-3	72 %
BE-2, BE-3	80 %
LU-1, LU-3	66 %
<i>Sender Location: DE-4, Operator G</i>	
BE-1, BE-2	86 %
BE-1, BE-3	84 %
BE-2, BE-3	84 %
LU-1, LU-3	72 %

Pros and Cons

- Low attacker resources (e.g., no need for false base stations)
- Stealthy (silent SMS), no need for infrastructure access (e.g., network insider)
- Existing SMS infrastructure available across generations of cellular networks
- Well, its machine learning :)
- ***Less accurate than other sophisticated location inference attacks especially for multiple classes***
- Hard to adapt to an open-world setting
- ***Provider might block that single sender***

Can we leverage multiple senders to improve on the limitations?

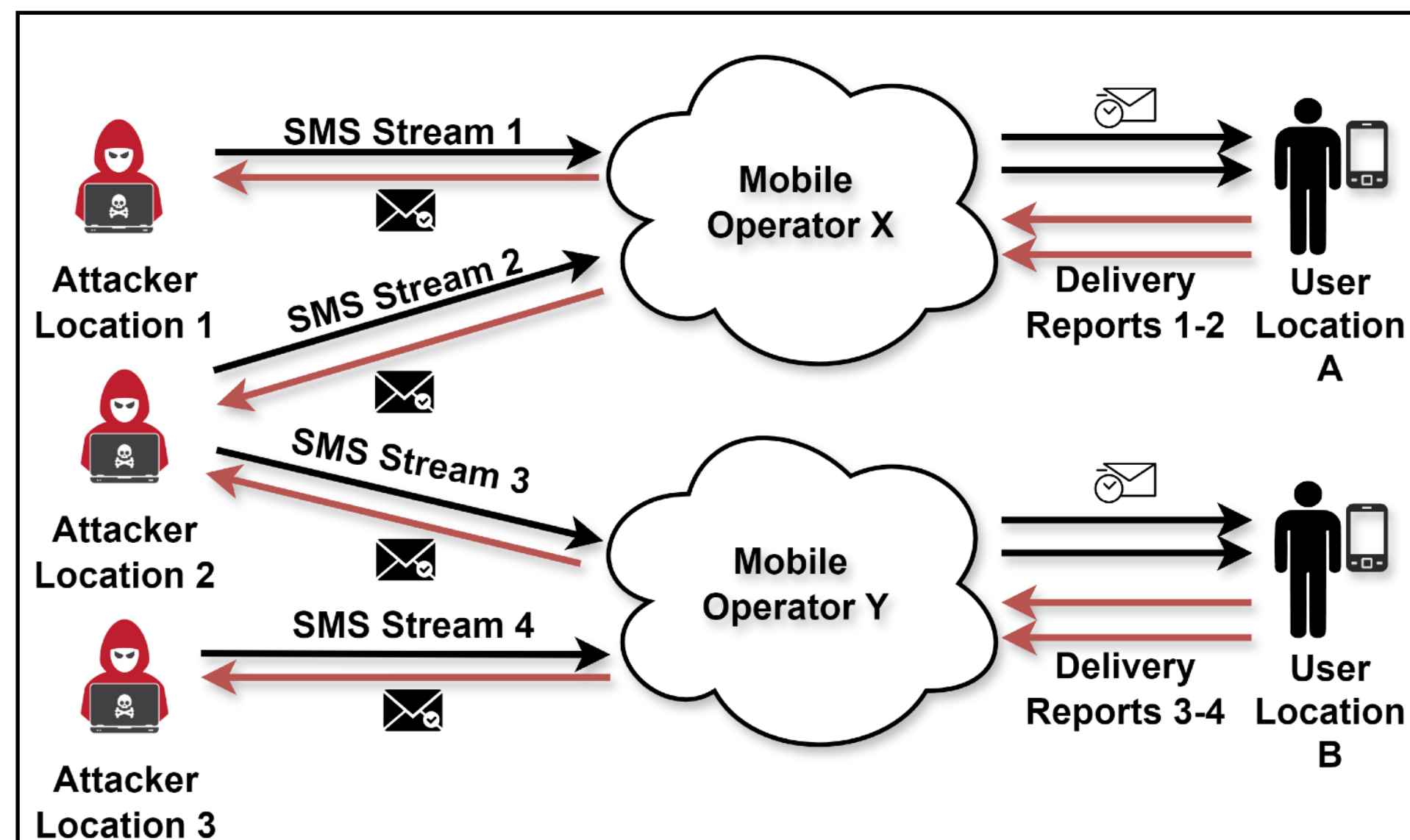
Amplifying Threats:

The Role of Multi-Sender Coordination in SMS-Timing-Based Location Inference Attacks

Evangelos Bitsikas, Theodor Schnitzler, Christina Poepper, Aanjhan Ranganathan (Useenix WOOT'24)

Role of Multi-sender Co-ordination in Location Inference

- Significantly improve the accuracy of the model
- Combine multiple sender locations for “multilateration”
- Statistically fuse synchronized features to create robust fingerprints
- Reduce the sample sizes -> Less SMS transmissions



- Synchronous transmissions of silent SMSs
- Recording of the timing characteristics with the timestamps
- Combination and statistical fusion of sender data
- ML training and prediction

Expanded Feature Set and Fusion

Initial Features:

$$T_{sent} = t_{sent} - t_{tx}$$

$$T_{del} = t_{del} - t_{sent}$$

$$T_{tot} = T_{del} + T_{sent}$$

$$P = \frac{T_{del}}{T_{tot}} = \frac{t_{del} - t_{sent}}{t_{del} - t_{tx}}$$

On single transmissions

$$\Gamma_{\Delta sent} = (T_{sent}^j - T_{sent}^{j-1}) / T_{sent}^{j-1}$$

$$T_{\Delta del} = (T_{del}^j - T_{del}^{j-1}) / T_{del}^{j-1}$$

On consecutive transmissions

```

2: for each receiver location  $r$  from 1 to  $n$  do
3:   for each  $S_{i,r,j}$  in  $D_i$  for all  $i$  do
4:     Initialize a list  $L_{i,r}$  to hold data for concatenation
5:     for each  $D_k$  where  $k \neq i$  do
6:       Find  $S_{k,r,l}$  in  $D_k$  such that  $|t_{del,i,r,j} - t_{del,k,r,l}|$  is minimized
7:       Add  $S_{k,r,l}$  to  $L_{i,r}$ 
8:     end for
9:     NewRecord $_{i,r} \leftarrow$  Concatenate( $L_{i,r}$ )
10:     $D_{concat} \leftarrow D_{concat} \cup \{\text{NewRecord}_{i,r}\}$ 
11:    Clear  $L_{i,r}$ 
12:  end for
13: end for

```

Expanded Features:

$$\mu^{(s,r)} = \frac{1}{z} \sum_{i=1}^z t_{del,i}^{(s,r)}$$

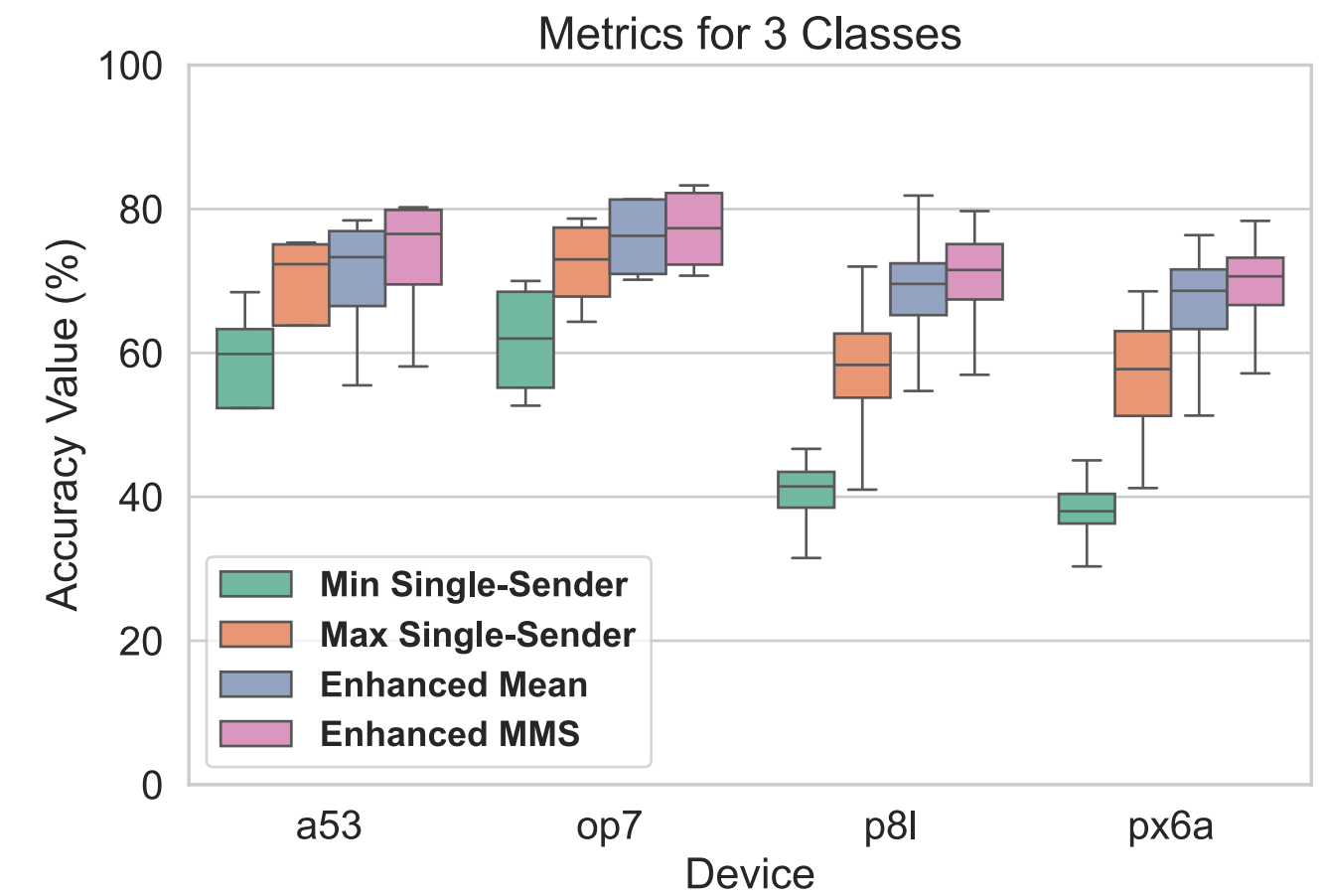
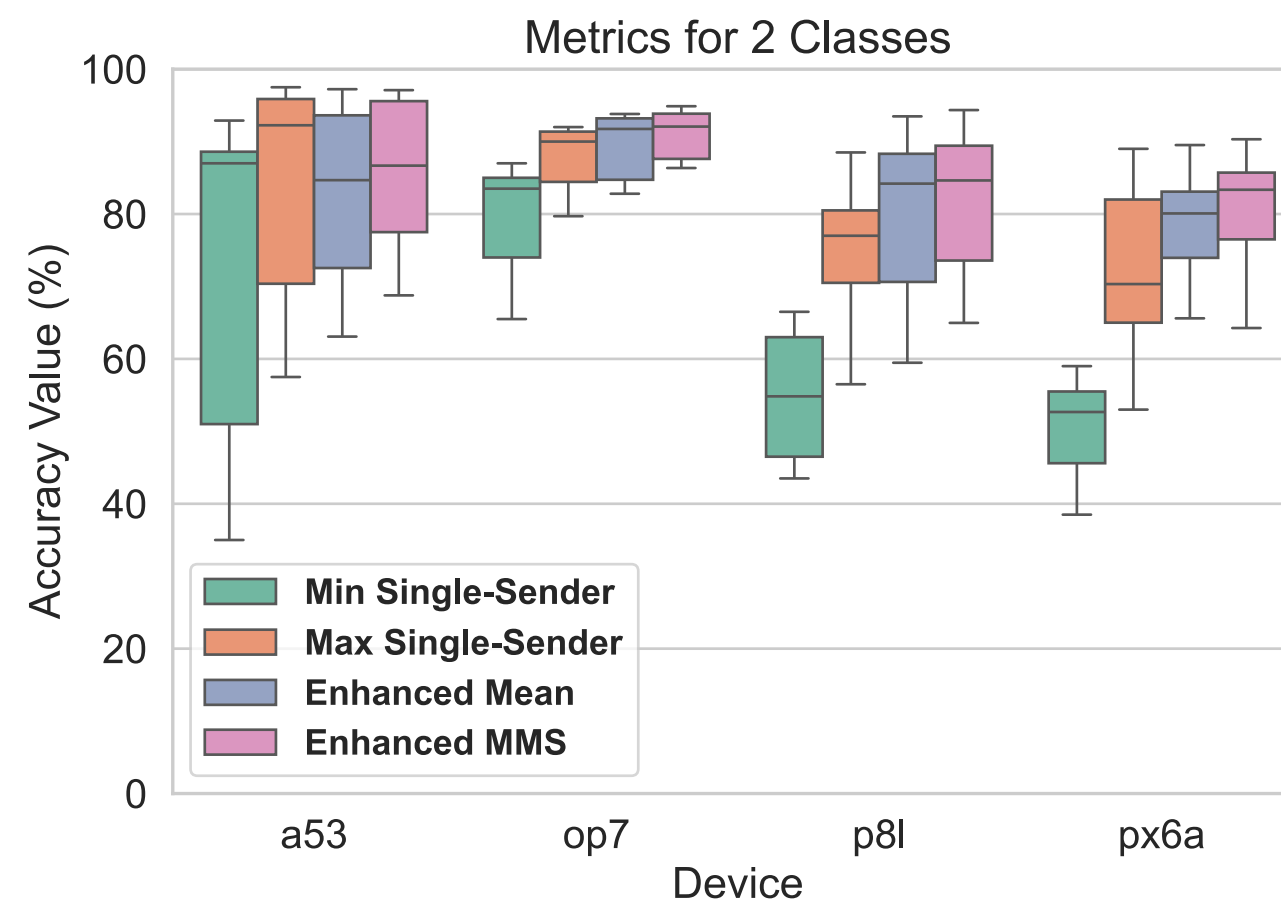
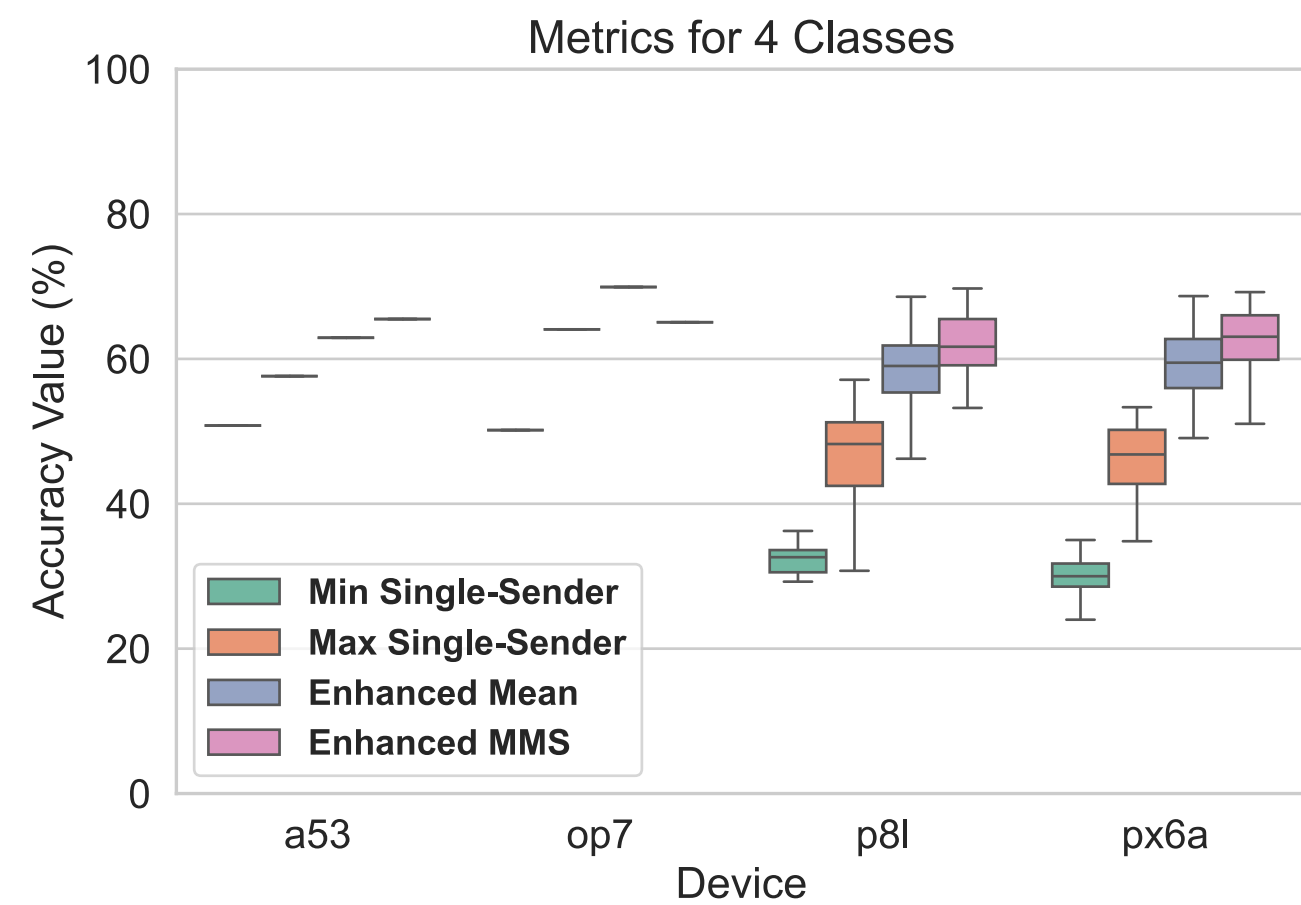
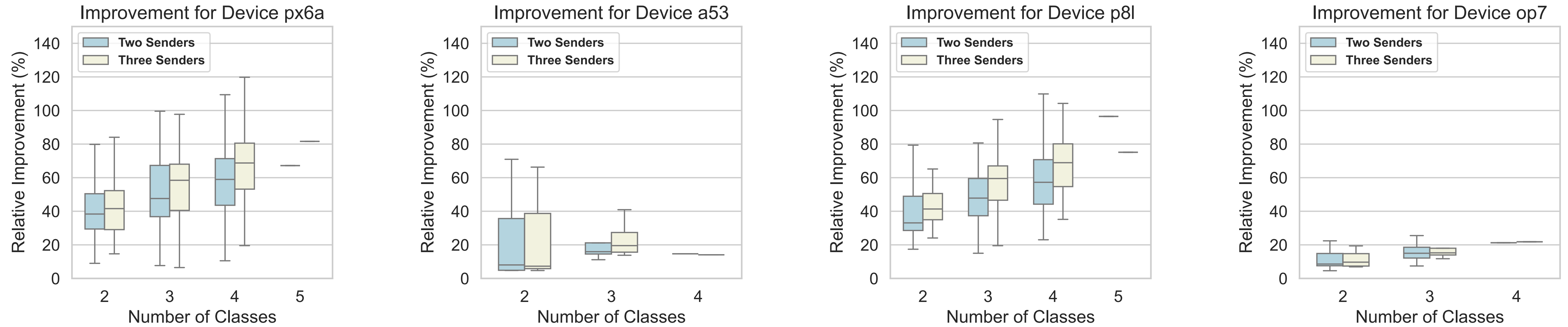
$$\text{Median}^{(s,r)} = \text{Median}\{t_{del,1}^{(s,r)}, t_{del,2}^{(s,r)}, \dots, t_{del,z}^{(s,r)}\}$$

$$\sigma^{(s,r)} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{z-1} \sum_{i=1}^z (t_{del,i}^{(s,r)} - \mu^{(s,r)})^2}$$

$$\Delta\mu^{(s_1,s_2,r)} = \mu^{(s_1,r)} - \mu^{(s_2,r)}$$

Mean, Median and Standard Deviation per two sender locations

Results for Multi-sender



Countermeasures



Rejecting/Dropping Silent SMS at the Core Network



More Robust Spamming/Flooding Filters



Artificial Random Delays for the Delivery Report



Total Elimination of the Delivery Reports

GSMA Mobile Security Research Acknowledgements
under [CVD-2023-0072](#)



GitHub

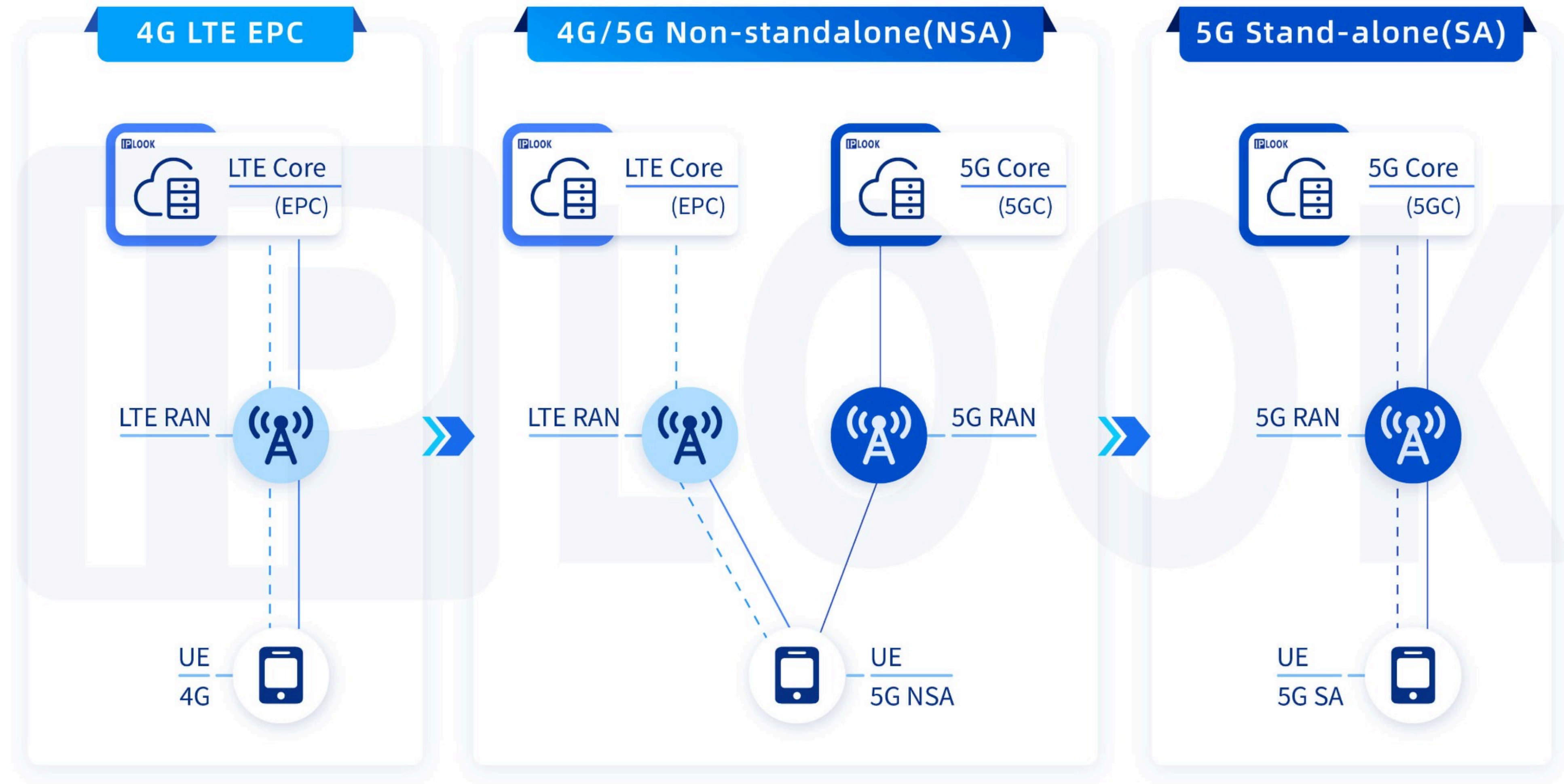


Longer Version



**From threats to
building frameworks and networks...**

4G to 5G transition

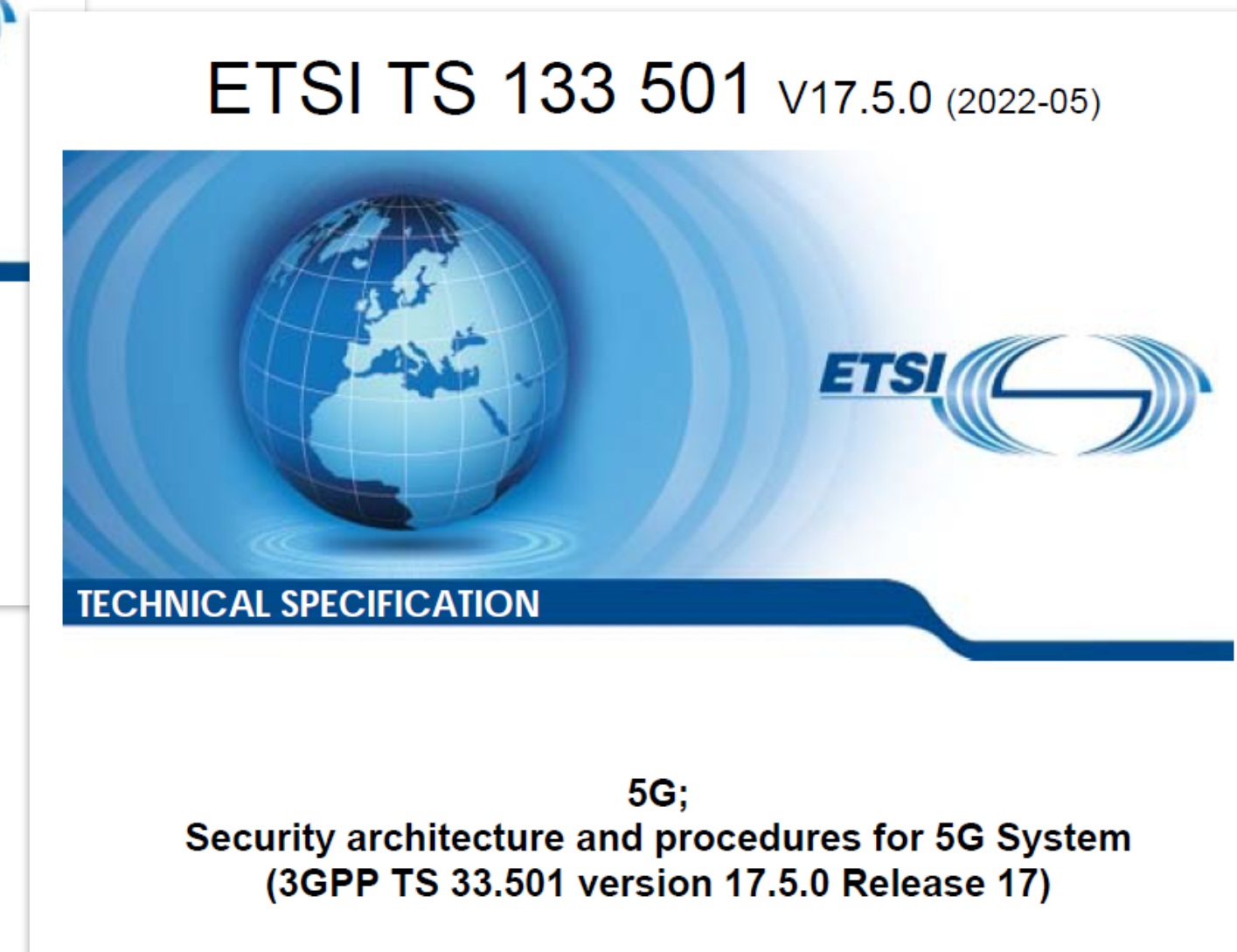
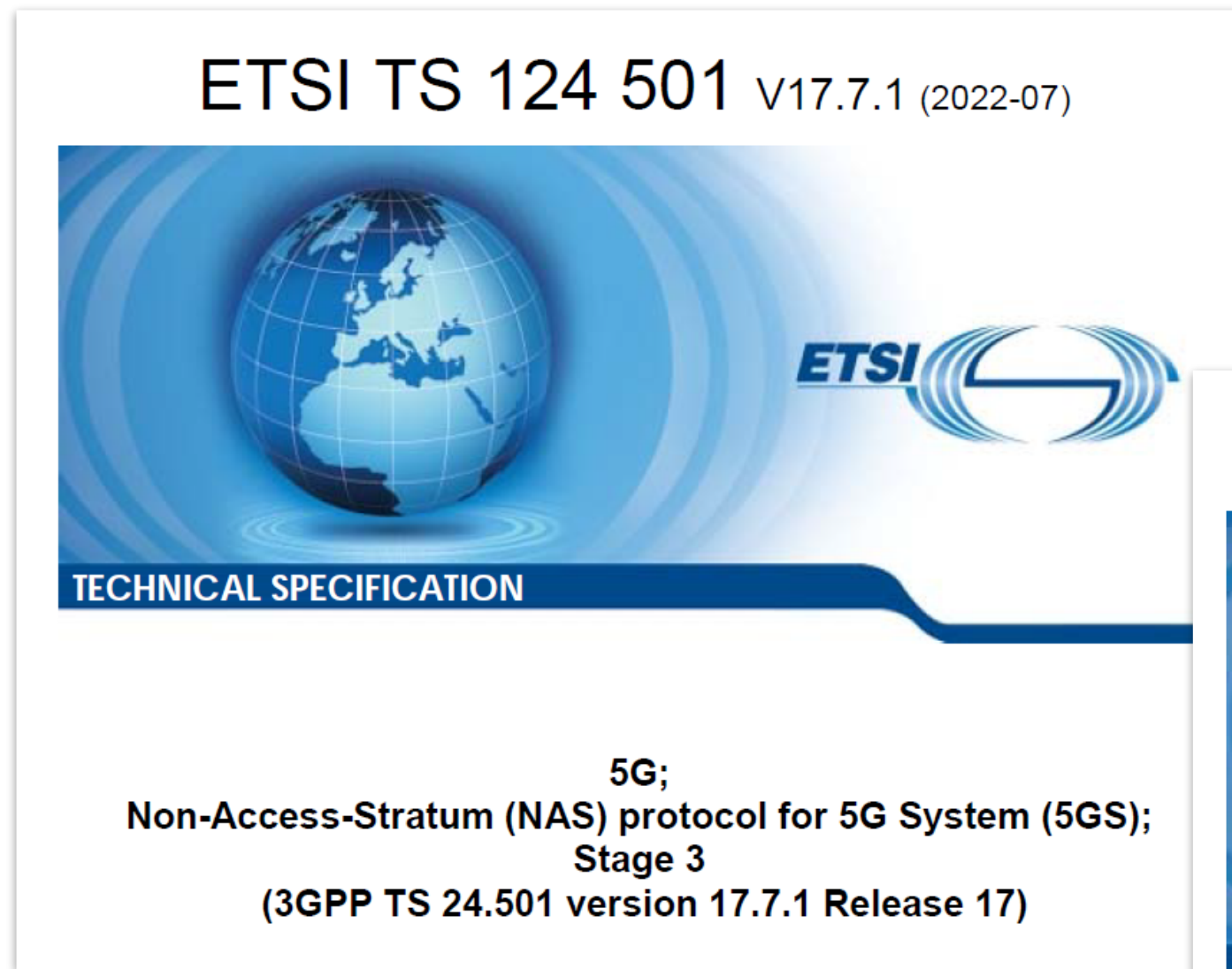


5G Standalone (SA)

The Real 5G

- Increasing complexity across the board even from 4G
- Network slicing, ultra-low latency, massive machine-machine communications, and so on..
- Interesting facts (in theory of course): **5G SA can support up to 1 million devices per square kilometer, ultra-low latency of 1 ms (~50 ms in 4G LTE) and is almost always used alongside technology jargons such as autonomous vehicles, mixed reality, remote surgery, etc.**

5G SA User Equipment (UE) Security



- Are they implemented in the UE?
- Are they following the specifications?
- An over-the-air test may reveal the real scenario

5G SA User Equipment (UE) Security

ETSI TS 124 501 V17.7.1 (2022-07)



TECHNICAL

Non-Acc

- Are they implemented in the UFD

Paper	Venue	Generation	Topic
DoLTest	Usenix'21	4G	Negative UE security
Noncompliance as Deviant Behavior	CCS'21	4G	UE security
Never Let Me Down Again	WiSec '23	4G/5G	Bidding down attack to UE
UE Security Reloaded	WiSec '23	5G	UE security

y reveal

THE REAL SCENARIO

5G;
Security architecture and procedures for 5G System
(3GPP TS 33.501 version 17.5.0 Release 17)

5G SA User Equipment (UE) Security

ETSI TS 124 501 V17.7.1 (2022-07)



TECHNICAL

Non-Acc

- Are they implemented in the UFD

Paper	Venue	Generation	Topic
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5G;
Security architecture and procedures for 5G System
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THE REAL SCENARIO

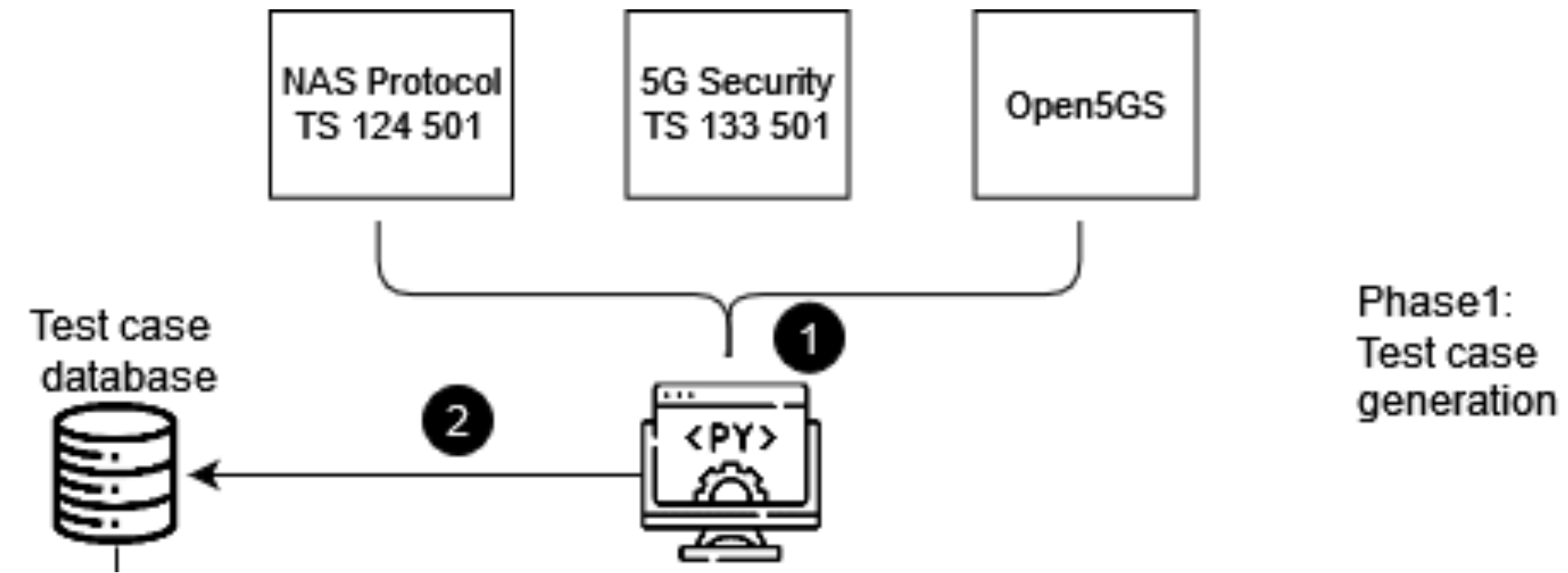
Need for frameworks verifying the security of implementations, specifically 5G SA UE devices

ASTRA-5G

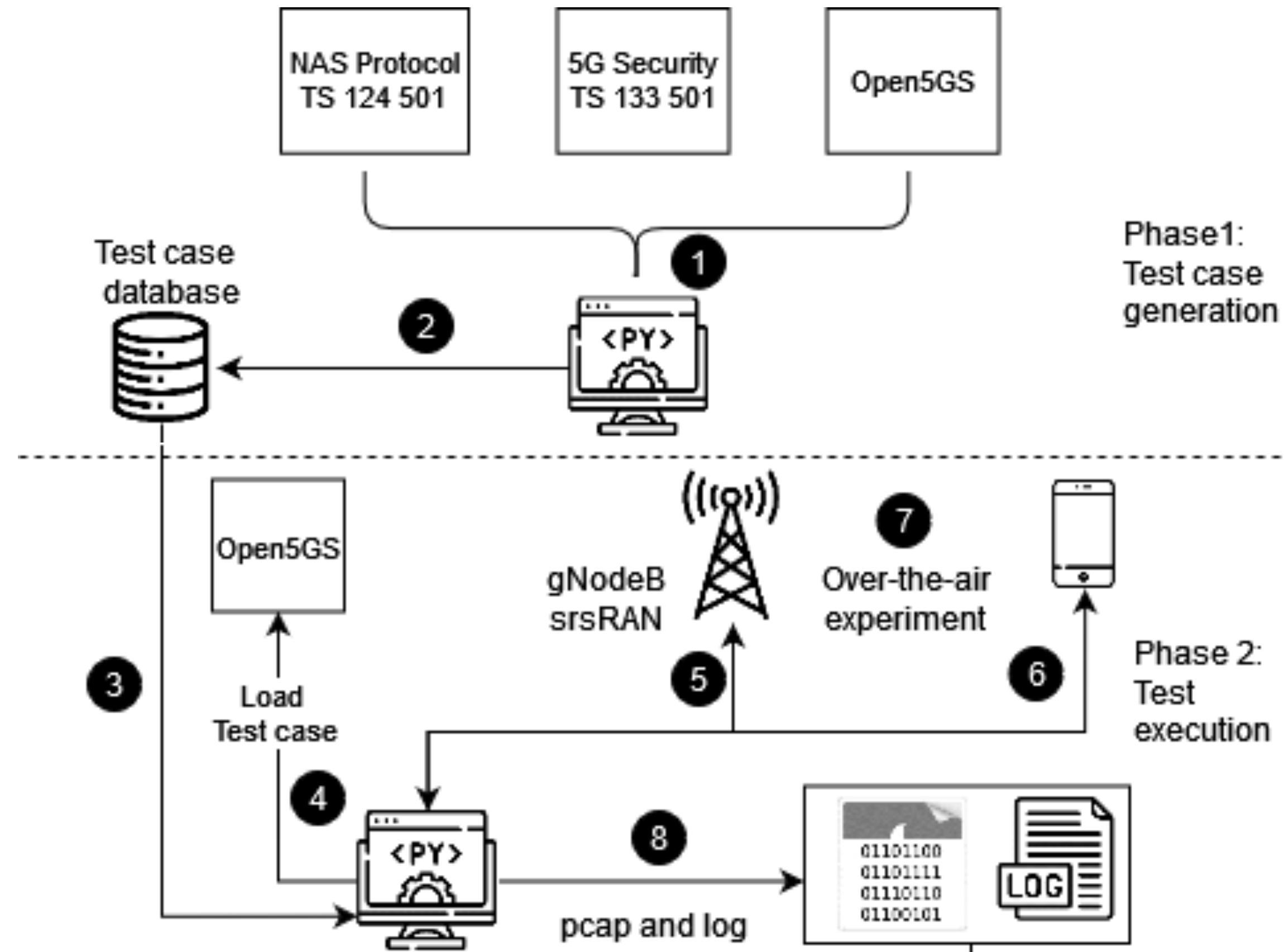
Automated Over-the-Air Security Testing and Research Architecture for 5G SA Devices

- Users can generate verity of test cases
- Tests can be executed automatically one after another at a high speed (e.g., 4 tests/minute)
- Evaluation reports are generated, eliminating time-consuming & labor-intensive manual checks
- Users do not need deep knowledge in this domains to conduct the tests

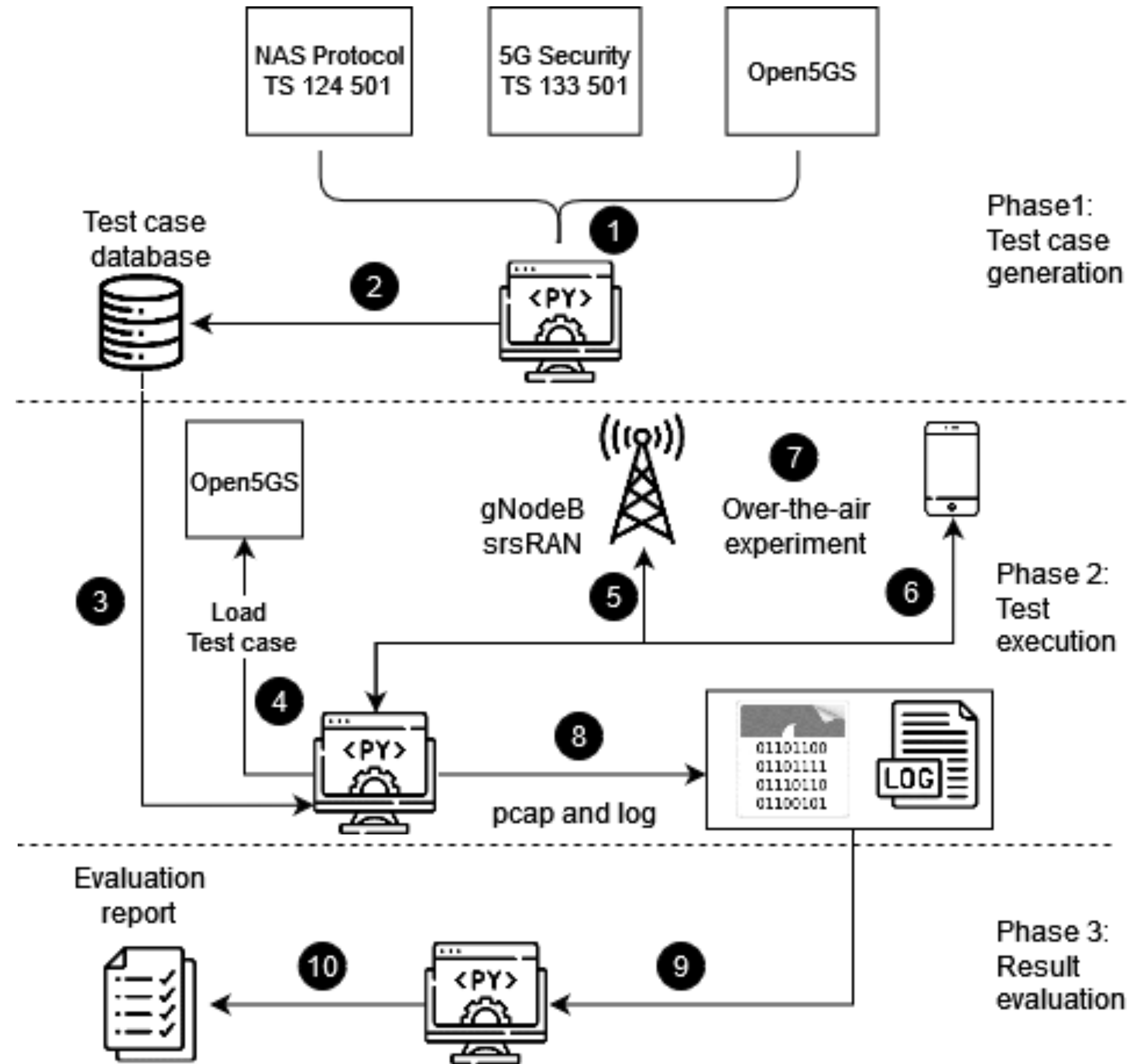
Automation Process



Automation Process



Automation Process



Test Case

- A test case is a set of instructions to be executed in the core network to send a fabricated signal to the UE via RAN.
- The follow-up uplink message reveals the UE's response to the test.
- A test case can be formulated in a way that either follows the protocol or violates it.
- Therefore, the follow-up uplink message reveals whether UE adheres to the protocol or not.

```
[{ // Pre-AKA
  "ue_ul_handle": "null",
  "dl_reply": "null",
  "command_mode": "null",
  "dl_params": "null"
},
{ // AKA
  "ue_ul_handle": "registration_request",
  "dl_reply": "identity_request",
  "command_mode": "send",
  "dl_params": {
    "identity_type":
"OGS_NAS_5GS_MOBILE_IDENTITY_SUCI"
  }
},
{ // Post-AKA
  "ue_ul_handle": "null",
  "dl_reply": "null",
  "command_mode": "null",
  "dl_params": "null"
}]
```


UE Response

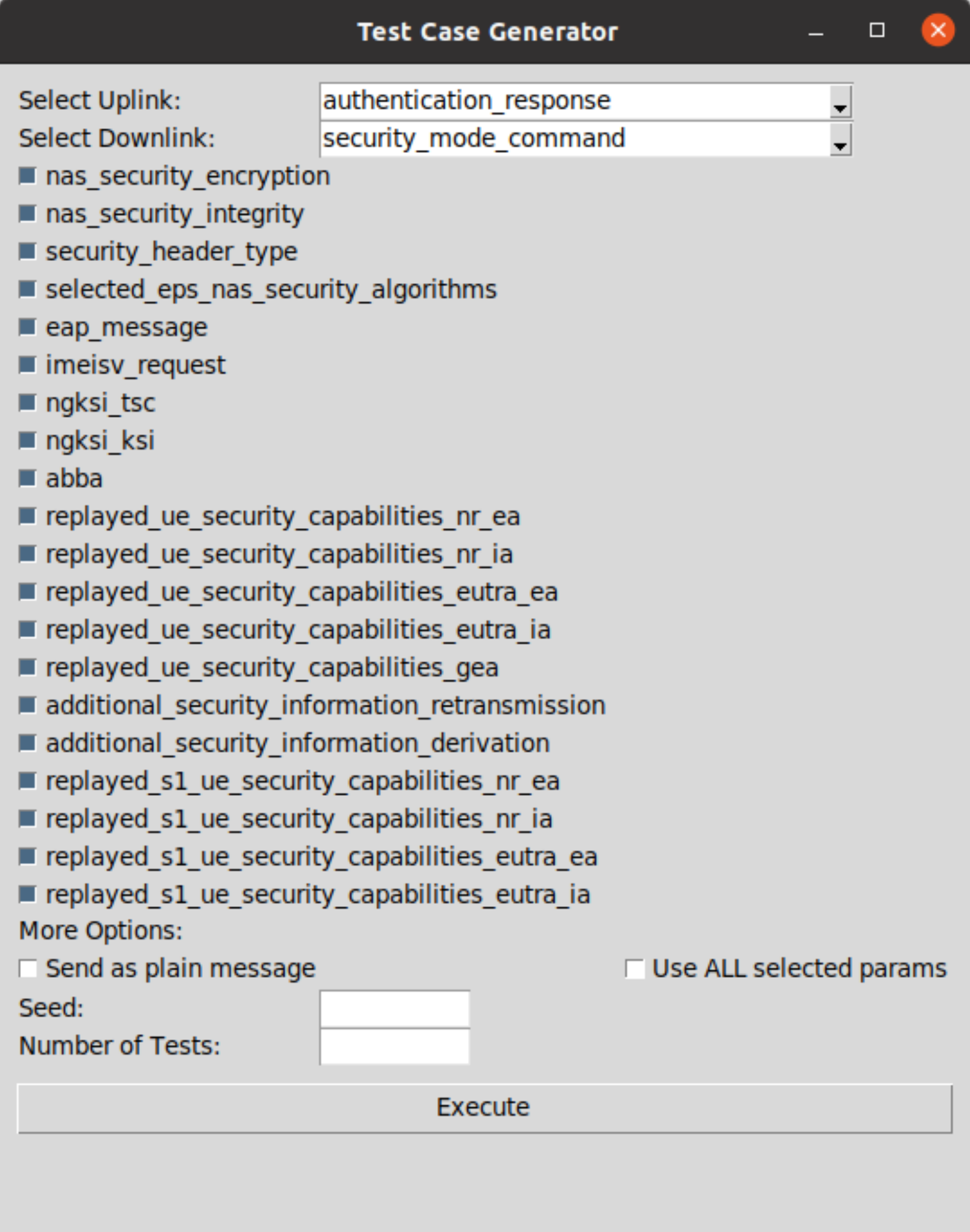
Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
1 0.000000	127.0.1.1	127.0.0.5	NGAP/NAS-5GS/NAS-5GS	200	InitialUEMessage, Registration request, Registration request
2 0.000280	127.0.0.5	127.0.1.1	NGAP/NAS-5GS	108	SACK (Ack=0, Arwnd=106496) , DownlinkNASTransport, Identity request
7 0.200582	127.0.1.1	127.0.0.5	NGAP/NAS-5GS	132	UplinkNASTransport, Identity response

Wireshark · Packet 2 · Test_case.pcap

- ▶ Item 1: id-RAN-UE-NGAP-ID
- ▼ Item 2: id-NAS-PDU
 - ▼ ProtocolIE-Field
 - id: id-NAS-PDU (38)
 - criticality: reject (0)
 - ▼ value
 - ▼ NAS-PDU: 7e005b01
 - ▼ Non-Access-Stratum 5GS (NAS)PDU
 - ▼ Plain NAS 5GS Message
 - Extended protocol discriminator: 5G mobility management messages (126)
 - 0000 = Spare Half Octet: 0
 - 0000 = Security header type: Plain NAS message, not security protected (0)
 - Message type: Identity request (0x5b)
 - 0000 = Spare Half Octet: 0
 - ▼ 5GS identity type
 -001 = Type of identity: SUCI (1)

Possible Test Cases

- Requesting IMEI before 5G-AKA completion
- Request to accept null integrity / cipher algorithm
- Sending a security-protected message as a plain message
- Using an inappropriate security header type
- Sending a message out of sequence
- Parameter violation: ABBA, RAND, AUTN, ngKSI tsc, ksi, GMM cause, etc.



The screenshot shows a window titled "Test Case Generator" with a dark title bar. The interface includes the following elements:

- Select Uplink:** A dropdown menu with "authentication_response" selected.
- Select Downlink:** A dropdown menu with "security_mode_command" selected.
- A list of checkboxes for selecting test parameters, including:
 - nas_security_encryption
 - nas_security_integrity
 - security_header_type
 - selected_eps_nas_security_algorithms
 - eap_message
 - imeisv_request
 - ngksi_tsc
 - ngksi_ksi
 - abba
 - replayed_ue_security_capabilities_nr_ea
 - replayed_ue_security_capabilities_nr_ia
 - replayed_ue_security_capabilities_eutra_ea
 - replayed_ue_security_capabilities_eutra_ia
 - replayed_ue_security_capabilities_gea
 - additional_security_information_retransmission
 - additional_security_information_derivation
 - replayed_s1_ue_security_capabilities_nr_ea
 - replayed_s1_ue_security_capabilities_nr_ia
 - replayed_s1_ue_security_capabilities_eutra_ea
 - replayed_s1_ue_security_capabilities_eutra_ia
- More Options:**
 - Send as plain message
 - Use ALL selected params
- Seed:** An empty text input field.
- Number of Tests:** An empty text input field.
- Execute:** A large button at the bottom of the window.

Experiment Setup and Verification



Device	Chipset	OS	Model	Release
Honor X9a 5G	Snapdragon 695	Android 12	RMO-NX1	2023
Huawei P40 Pro 5G	Kirin 990 5G	Android 10	ELS-NX9	2020
Oppo Reno8 Z 5G	Snapdragon 695 5G	Android 13	CPH2457	2022
Realme 8 5G	Dimensity 700	Android 11	RMX3241	2021
OnePlus Nord 2 5G	Dimensity 1200 5G	Android 11	DN2101	2021

Test Evaluation

- Checking the hooking point, DL message, and parameters from the test case
- Identify the same from the pcap file
- Retrieving the UE response for the test case
- Evaluate whether the UE response aligns with the state and parameters according to the protocol

Example Test Case: Identity Request

4.4.4.2 Integrity checking of NAS signalling messages in the UE

Except the messages listed below, no NAS signalling messages shall be processed by the receiving 5GMM entity in the UE or forwarded to the 5GSM entity, unless the network has established secure exchange of 5GS NAS messages for the NAS signalling connection:

- a) IDENTITY REQUEST (if requested identification parameter is SUCI);

SL	Test Name	Test content	UE response	Status	Remark
1	test_case_0	Hooking point: registration request Downlink command: identity request 5G-AKA: Not completed Message send as: Plain Requested identity: TMSI ←	No response	Pass	Discarded, because of requested identity type: TMSI which should not be given for plain message or before 5G-AKA complete
2	test_case_1	Hooking point: registration request Downlink command: identity request 5G-AKA: Not completed Message send as: Plain Requested identity: IMEI ←	No response	Pass	Discarded, because of requested identity type: IMEI which should not be given for plain message or before 5G-AKA complete
3	test_case_2	Hooking point: registration request Downlink command: identity request 5G-AKA: Not completed Message send as: Plain Requested identity: SUCI ←	Identity response	Pass	Identity type: SUCI

Example 2: Plain and Protected Message

Once the secure exchange of NAS messages has been established, the receiving 5GMM entity in the UE shall not process any NAS signalling messages unless they have been successfully integrity checked by the NAS. If NAS signalling messages, having not successfully passed the integrity check, are received, then the NAS in the UE shall discard that message.

test_case_2	Hooking point: service request Downlink command: identity request 5G-AKA: Completed Message send as: Plain ← Requested identity: SUCI	Identity response	Fail	After key establishment, plain message should be not be processed
test_case_3	Hooking point: service request Downlink command: identity request 5G-AKA: Completed Message send as: Plain ← Requested identity: No identity	Identity response	Fail	After key establishment, plain message should be not be processed
test_case_15	Hooking point: service request Downlink command: configuration update command 5G-AKA: Completed Message send as: Protected ← Security header: Integrity protected (1)	Configuration update complete	Pass	Configuration update successfully completed
test_case_16	Hooking point: service request Downlink command: configuration update command 5G-AKA: Completed Message send as: Protected ← Security header: Integrity protected and ciphered (2)	Configuration update complete	Pass	Configuration update successfully completed

Summary of Results

Test	Huawei	Oneplus	Honor	Oppo	Realme
Identity request other than SUCI in plain message	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Identity requested in plain message after 5G-AKA completed	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Security header type mismatch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Non-zero ABBA	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖
Deregistration accept before registration complete	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Identity request for unlisted identity type	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Parameter violation (RAND, AUTN, ngKSI, GMM cause etc.,)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Null-Cipher / integrity algorithm acceptance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Protected message as plain message	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Message out of sequence or state	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note:

- ✓ = Pass ✗ = Fail ⊖ = some violation / inconclusive
- We have reported our findings to relevant manufacturer

LLM-based Evaluation

Of-course, why not?

- ChatGPT
- Google Bard
- LLAMA-2

Prompt: This is a security test for a UE. The UE sent a registration request to the AMF. Then the AMF sent an identity request to the UE. The downlink message sent by the AMF was a plain 5GS NAS message, with the requested identity type = IMEI. Upon receiving the downlink message, the UE did not respond. At that time, AKA was not completed. The packet capture during the test is as follows:

0.0, UE to AMF, InitialUEMessage, Registration request, Registration request
0.0012581348419189453, AMF to UE, SACK (Ack=0, Arwnd=106496), DownlinkNASTransport, Identity request

Did the UE pass or fail the test? If a decision cannot be made, report it as inconclusive. Always include the reason for your decision.

ChatGPT Answer: *Based on the provided information, the UE behavior appears to be secure. The UE did not respond to the identity request from the AMF because the AKA (Authentication and Key Agreement) was not completed. This is a security measure to prevent unauthorized access or manipulation of the UE's identity. The UE is correctly waiting for the completion of the AKA before responding to the identity request, which is a good practice in maintaining the security of the UE. Therefore, the UE passes the test.*

LLM-based Evaluation

Downlink NAS message	Execution time per test case	Evaluation time per test case				Evaluation accuracy			
		ChatGPT	Bard	LLaMA-2	Rule-Based	ChatGPT	Bard	LLaMA-2	Rule-Based
Identity Request	12.50	10.75	7.56	210.85	0.29	≈ 59%	≈ 57%	≈ 51%	100%
Authentication Request	13.03	10.38	7.62	217.81	0.70				
Security Mode Command	13.10	10.55	8.34	208.18	0.87				
Configuration Update Command	12.38	11.20	7.59	204.50	0.28				
Service Accept	12.50	10.08	8.64	209.02	0.16				
Service Reject	13.10	10.25	8.29	213.41	0.30				
GMM Status	13.40	11.29	8.45	210.93	0.27				
Deregistration Accept	13.23	10.50	7.81	211.87	0.15				
Deregistration Request	12.49	10.23	8.06	205.95	0.38				
Authentication Reject	13.20	10.44	8.16	213.21	0.16				
Registration Reject	12.41	11.08	7.33	213.81	0.29				
<i>Average</i>	<i>12.85</i>	<i>10.61</i>	<i>7.98</i>	<i>210.86</i>	<i>0.35</i>				

*All times in seconds

Summary

- 5G SA testing is not straightforward, requires handling all the network components e.g., core, RAN, and UE
- Automation significantly reduces testing complexity and broadens the testing scope (e.g., order of multiple minutes to ≈ 15 seconds)
- Such open source tool can ensuring transparency and independence in testing
- In the future, LLM will play a crucial role in the cellular security domain

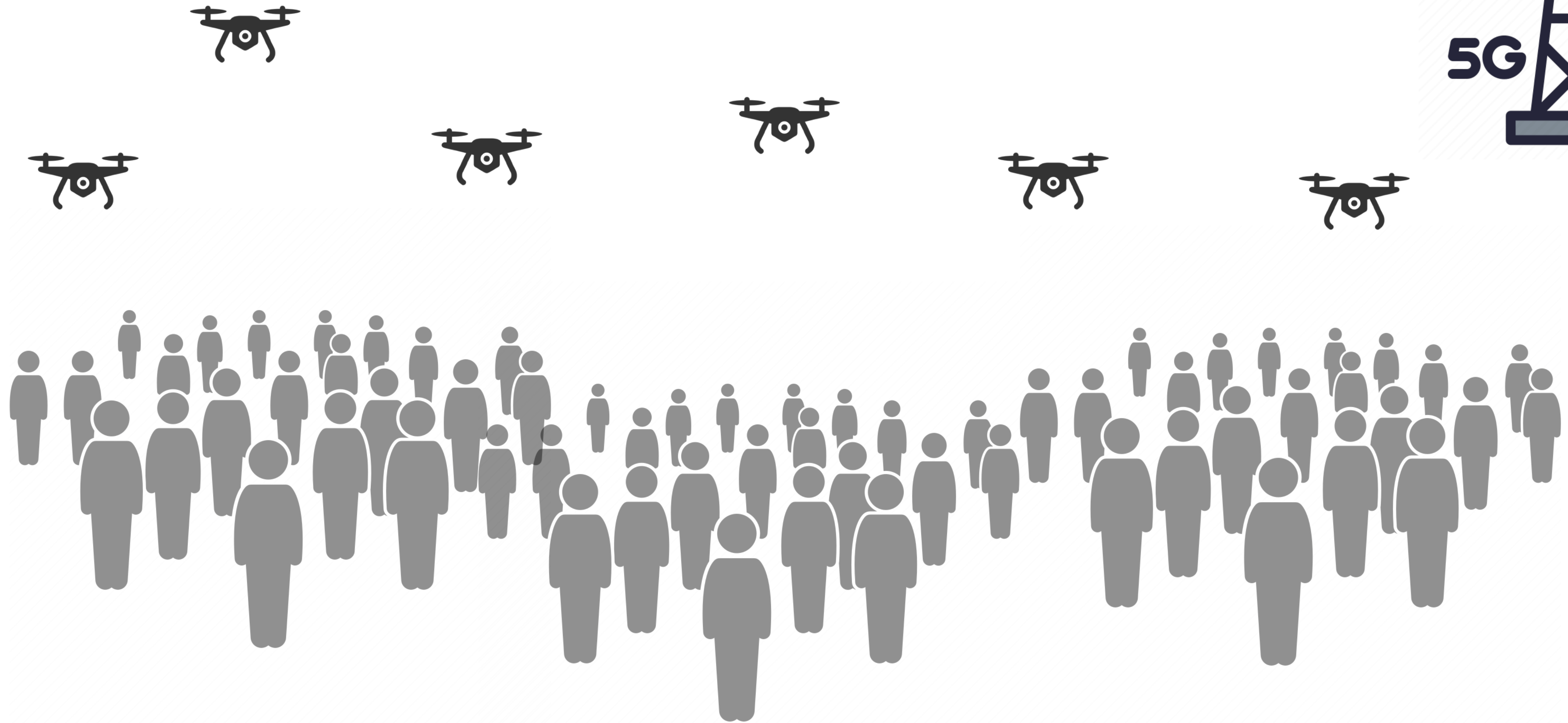
Github Repo



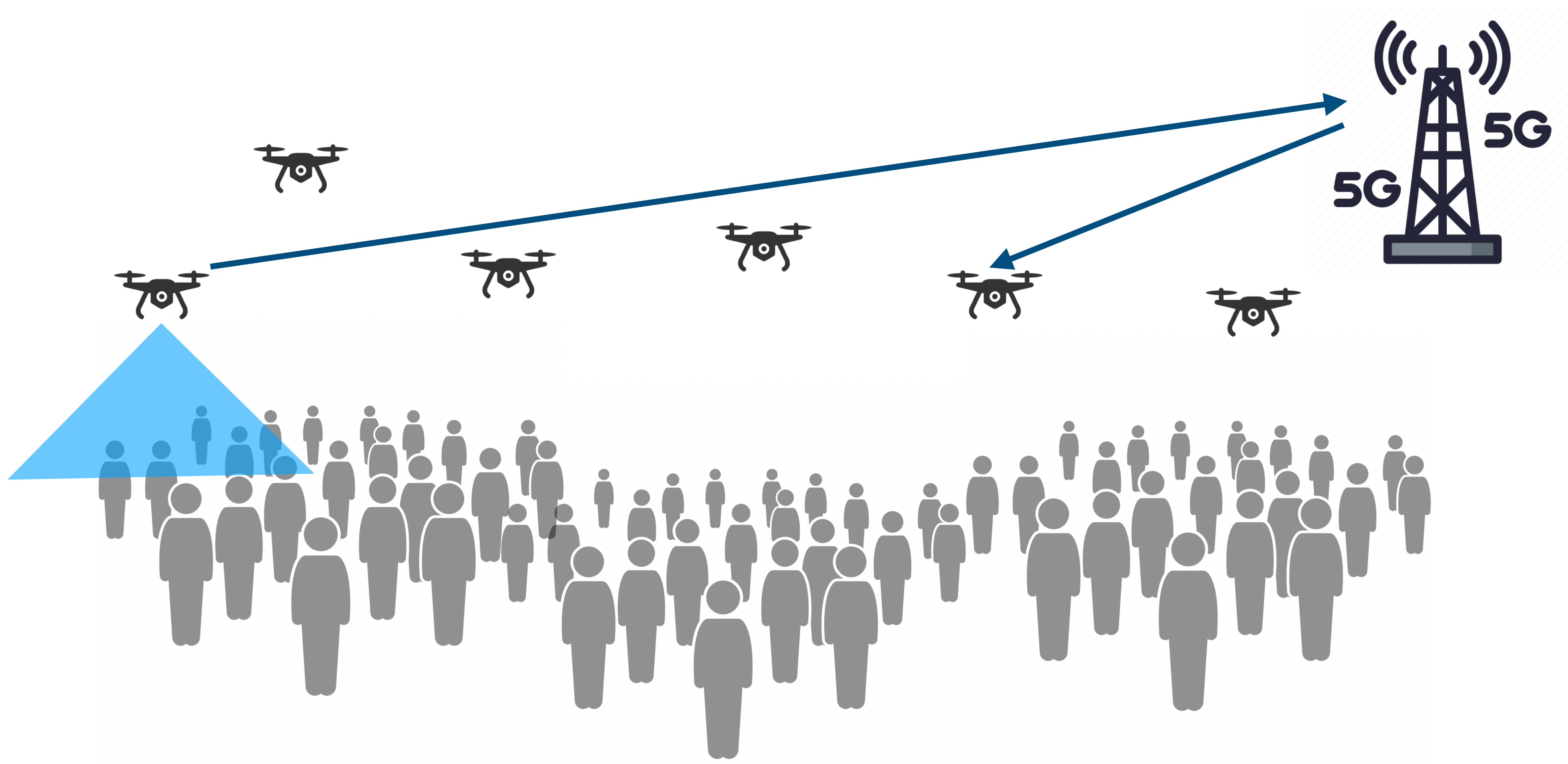
Do you remember this statement?

- Interesting facts (in theory of course): **5G SA can support up to 1 million devices per square kilometer, ultra-low latency of 1 ms (~50 ms in 4G LTE) and is almost always used alongside technology jargons such as autonomous vehicles, mixed reality, remote surgery, etc.**

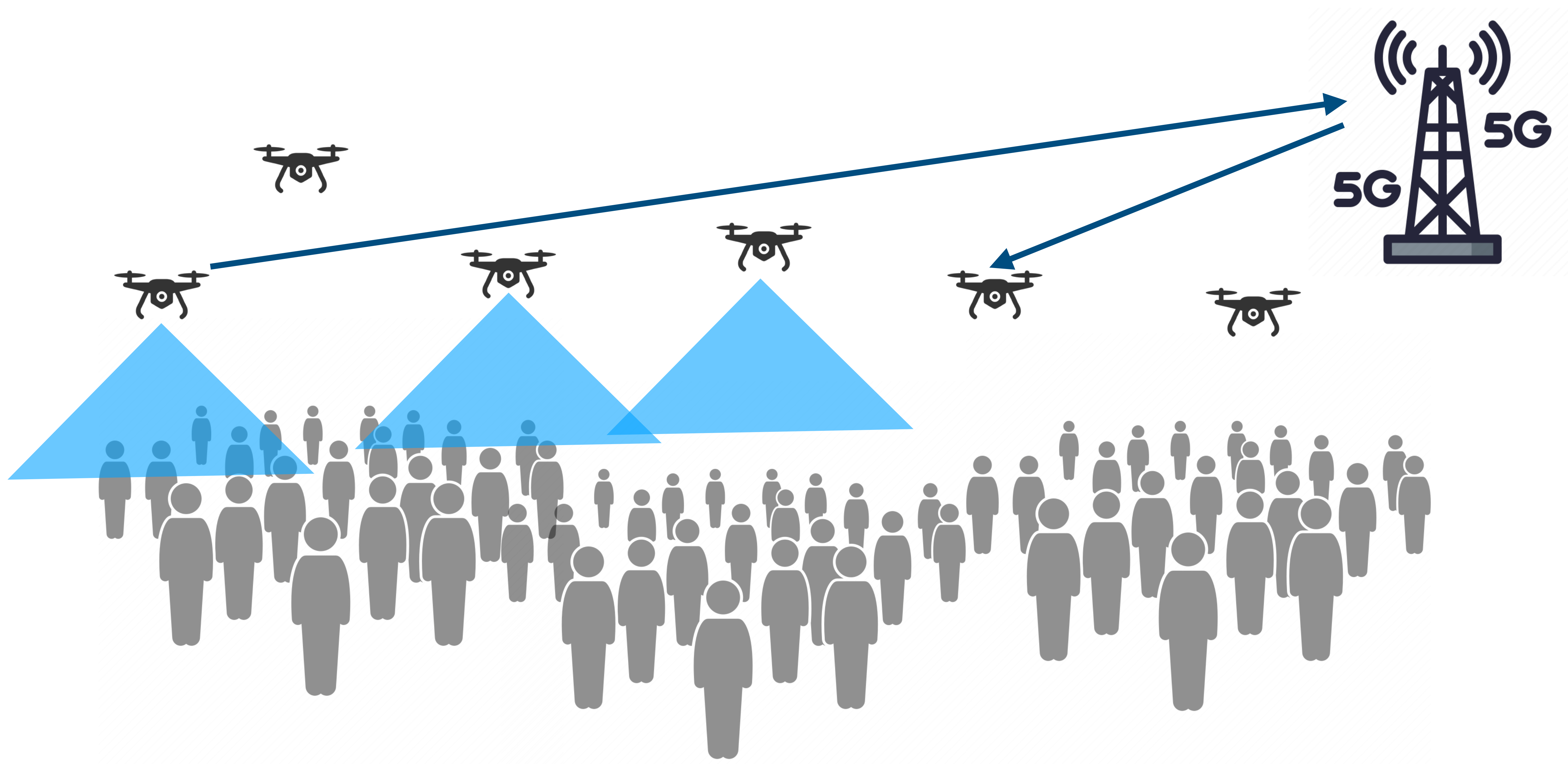
Drone Swarms — Crowd Monitoring



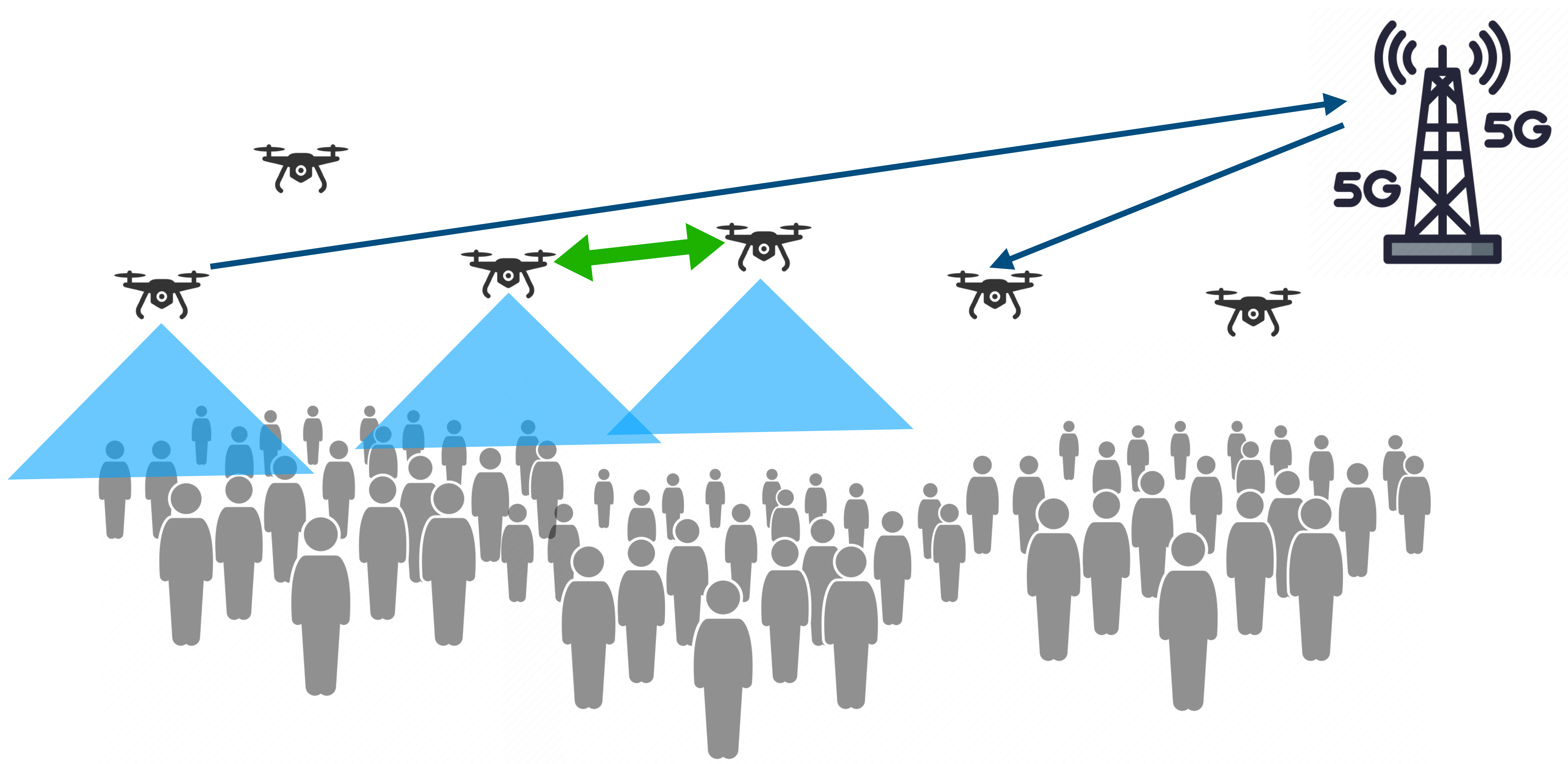
Drone Swarms – Crowd Monitoring



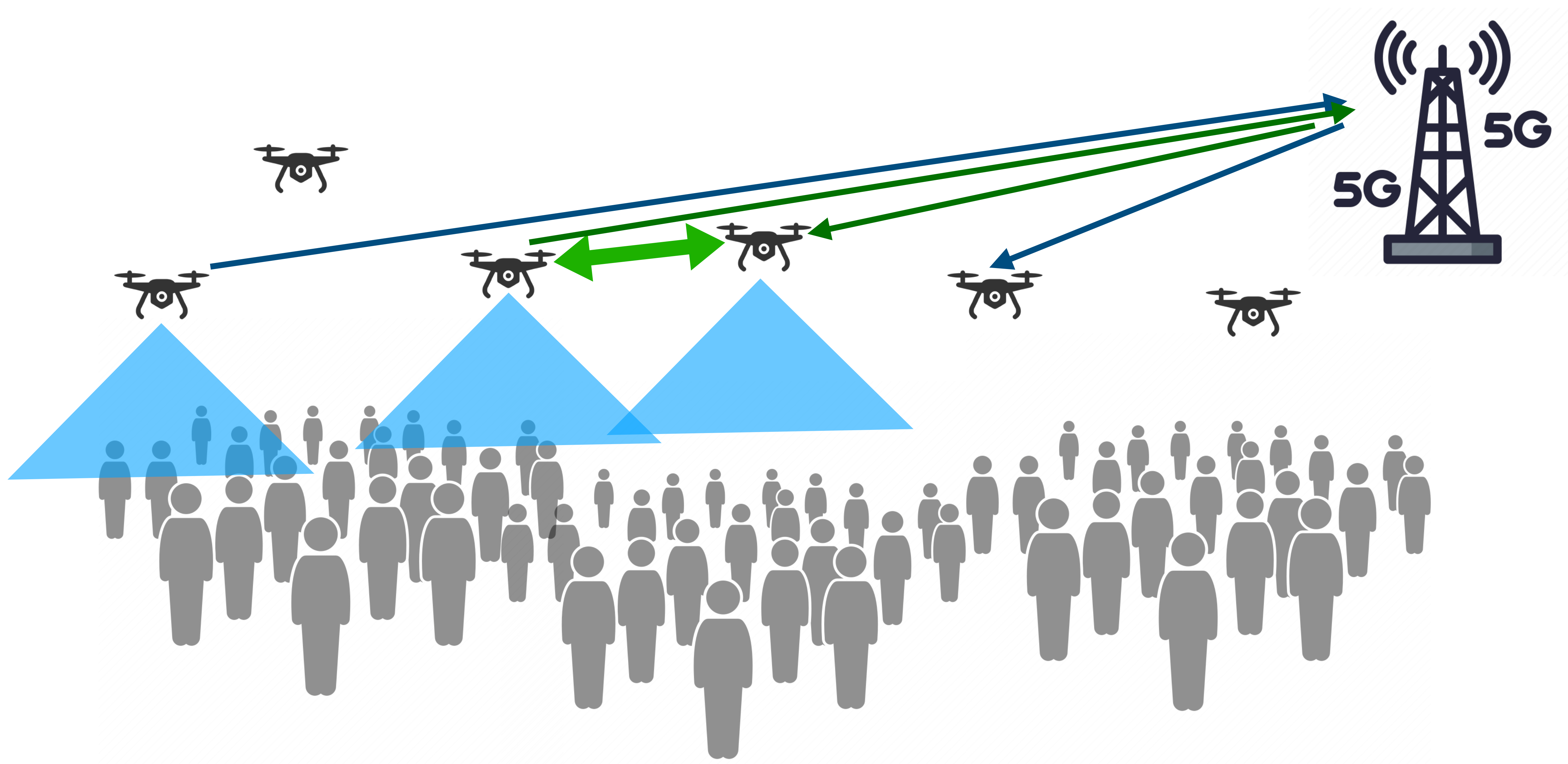
Drone Swarms – Crowd Monitoring



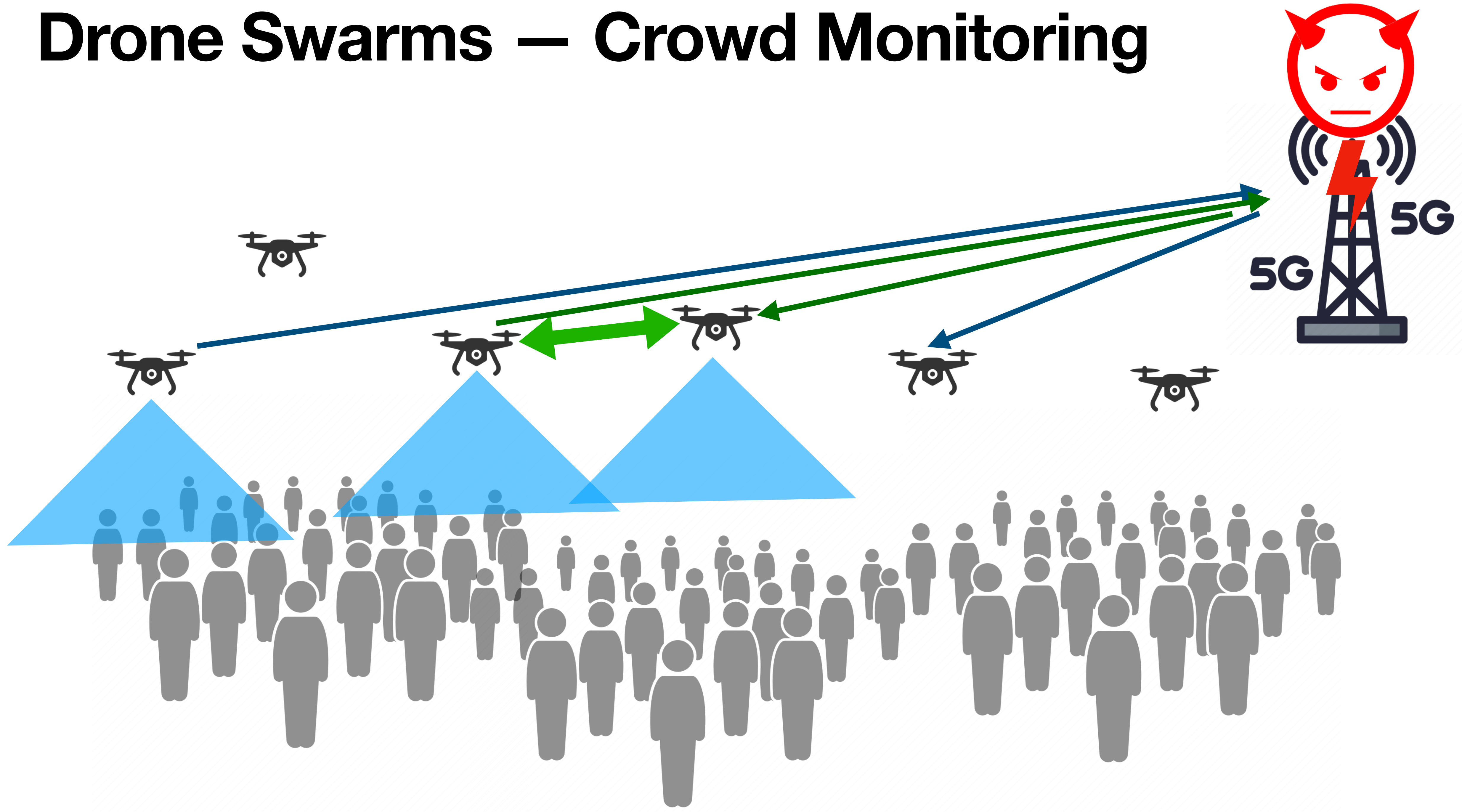
Drone Swarms – Crowd Monitoring



Drone Swarms – Crowd Monitoring



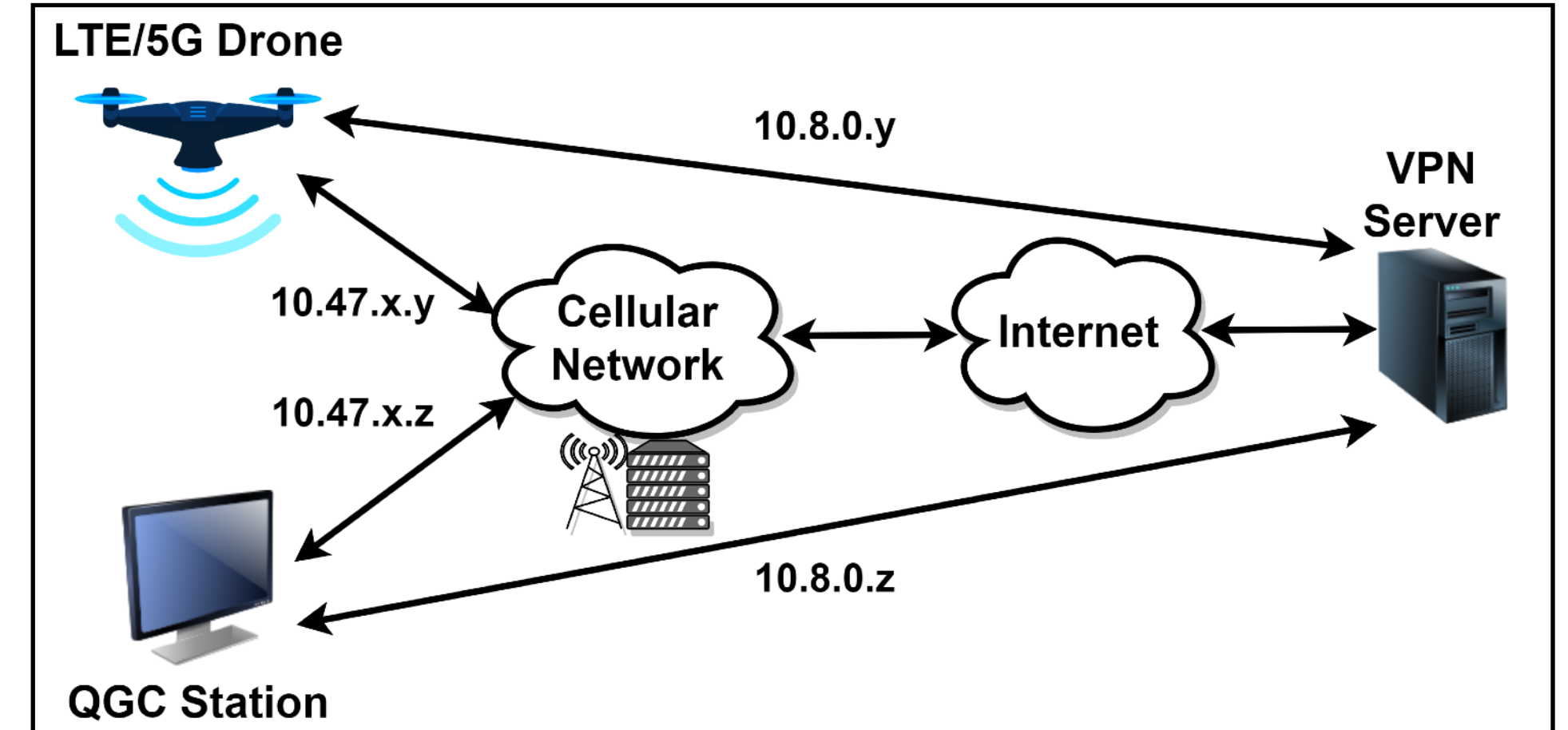
Drone Swarms – Crowd Monitoring



Many limitations...

- ~ Conventional cellular networks
- ~ Single points of failures
- ~ Slow M2M communications
- ~ Deficient failure recovery mechanisms

Rigid
Static
Immobile
Not fully suitable for dynamic applications and devices



Can 5G really support massive M2M applications in its true sense?

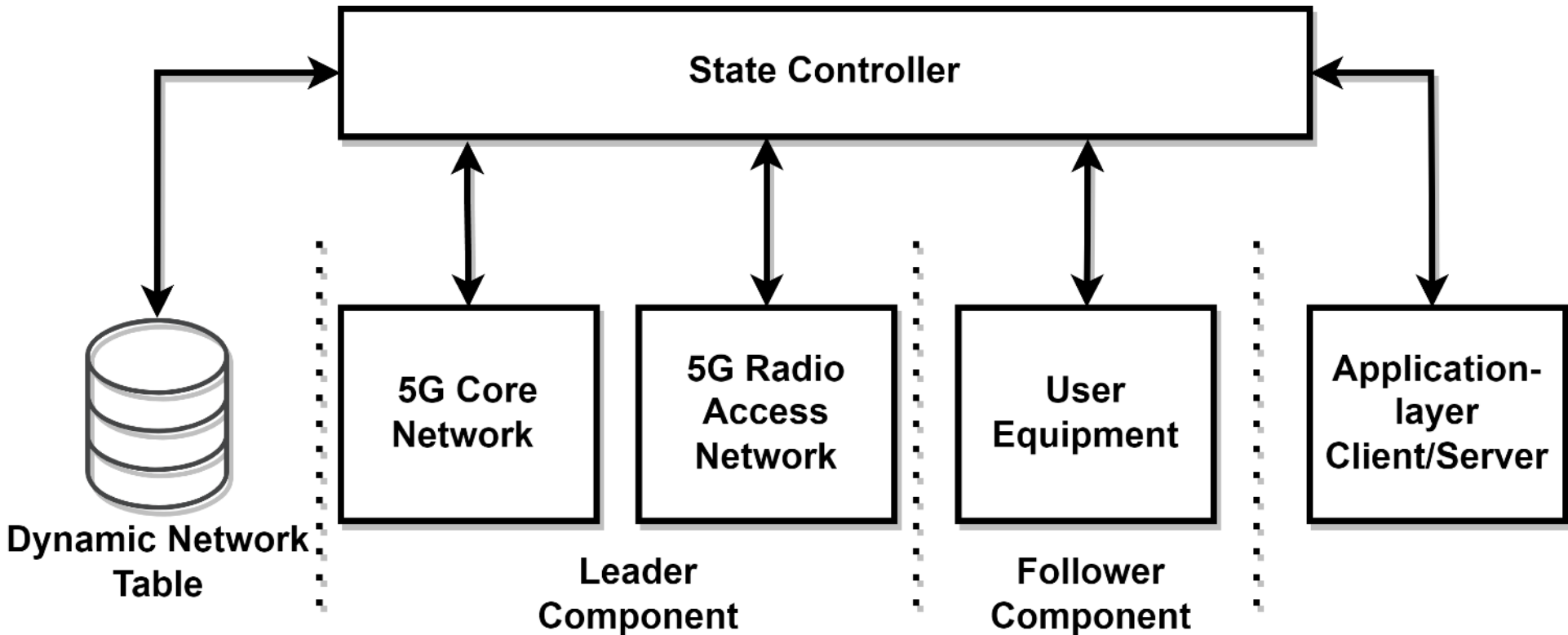
Dyna-5G

Dynamic 5G standalone deployment tailored specifically for massive M2M

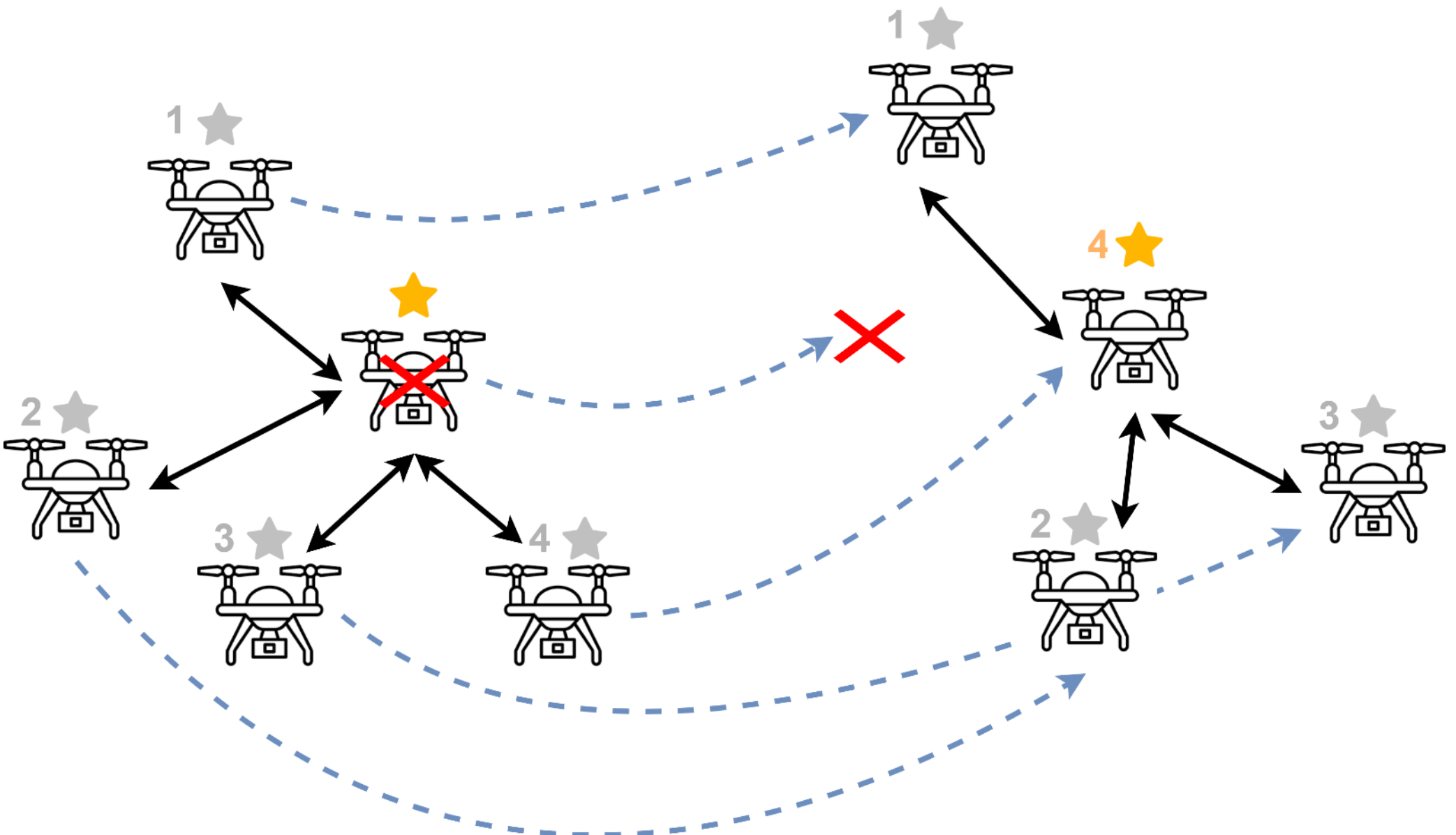
- Every node in the network can act as UE or RAN/Core Network
- No single point of failure
- Dynamic reconfiguration of the network
- Failure recovery mechanisms

Network Requirements & Structure

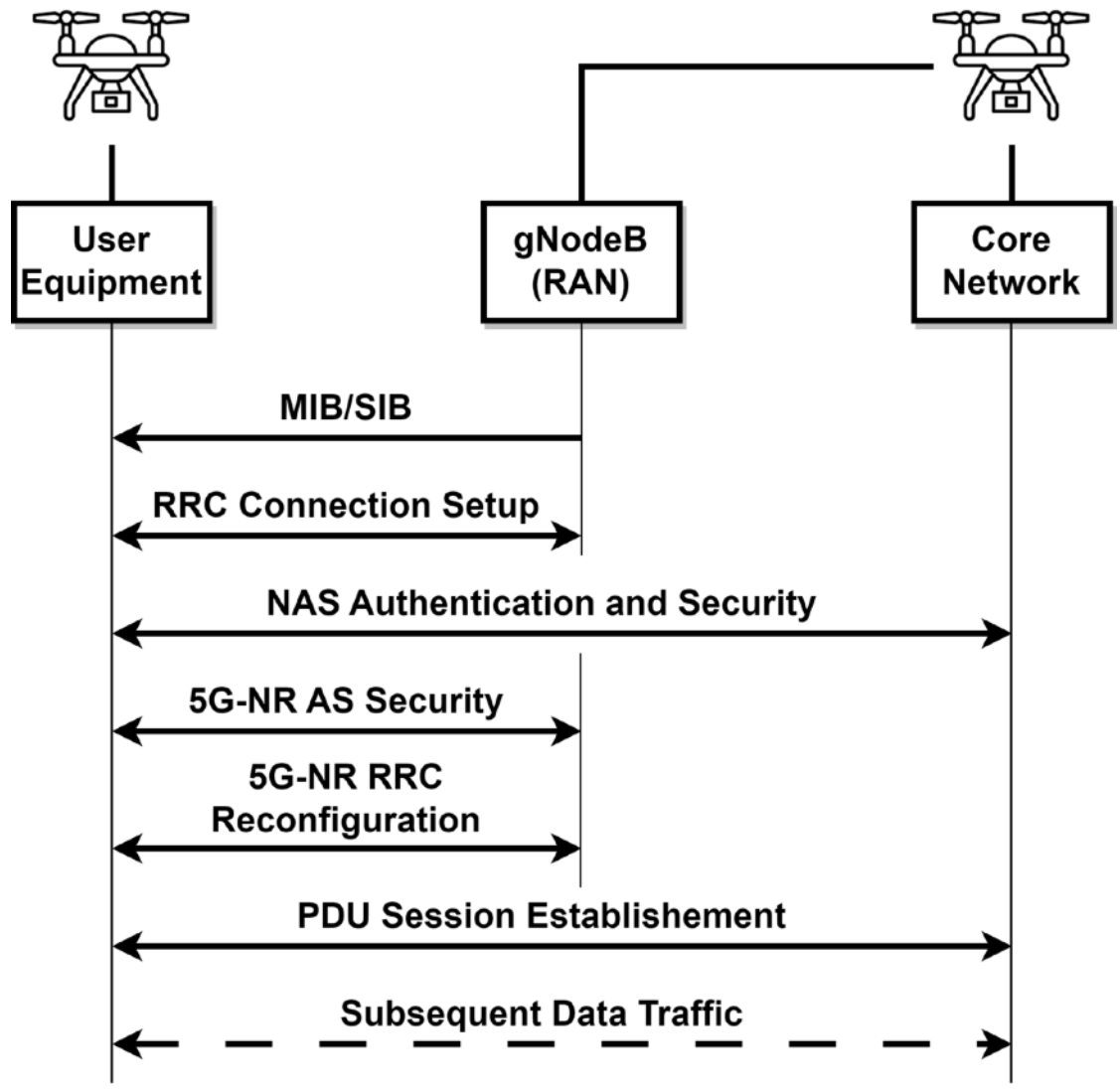
System structure per device



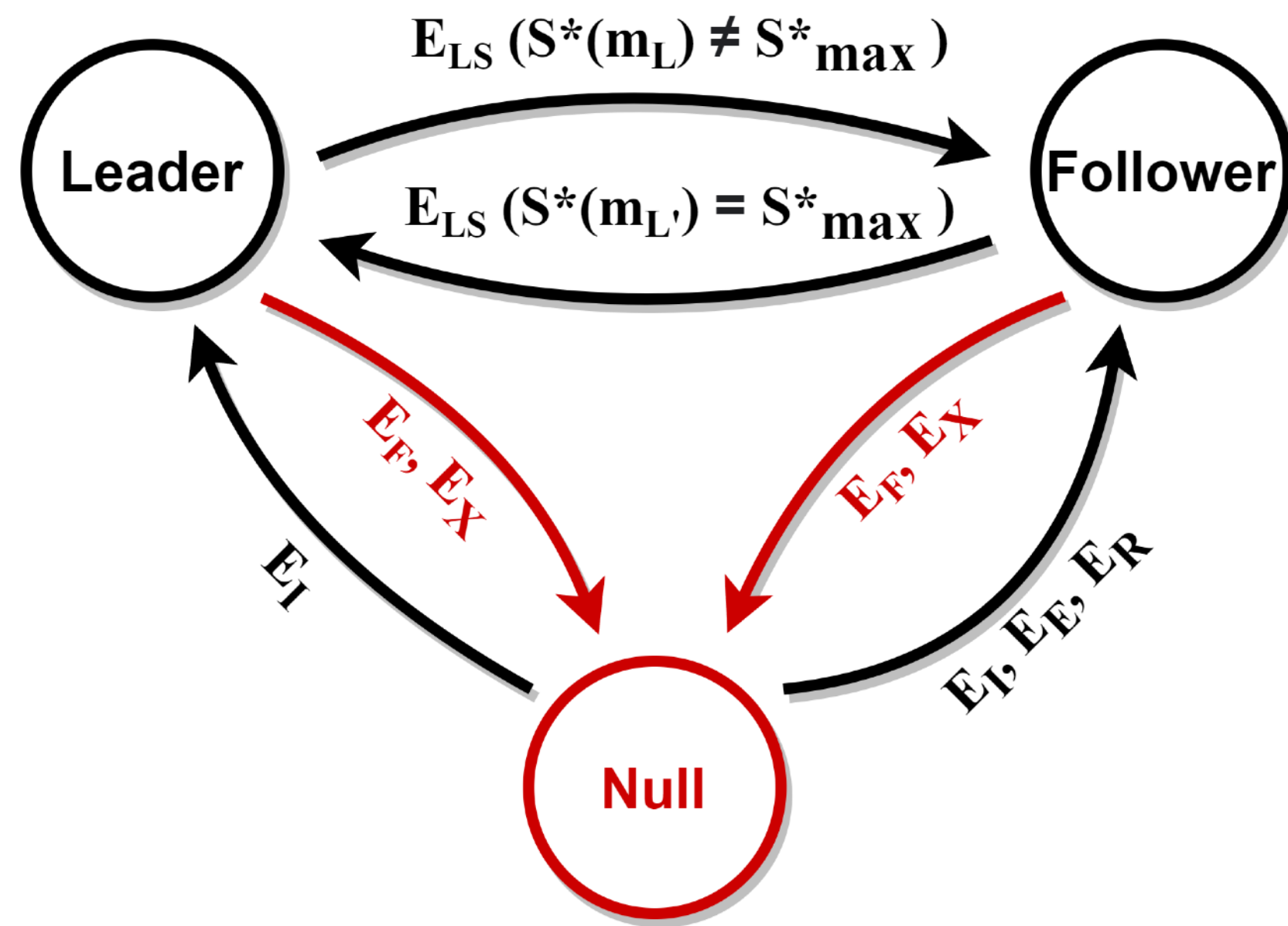
Drone network transition during the mission



Cellular protocol integration



Finite State Machine & Performance Calculation



Initialization: E_I

Entering: E_E

Leader Selection: E_{LS}

Exiting: E_X

Failure: E_F

Recovery: E_R

Performance Score Calculation:

$$1. Cc(i) = (M+B+P)/3$$

$$2. Sp(i) = 100/1+a \cdot dist(P(i), COM_{x,y,z})$$

$$3. S(i) = (Sp(i)+Cc(i))/2$$

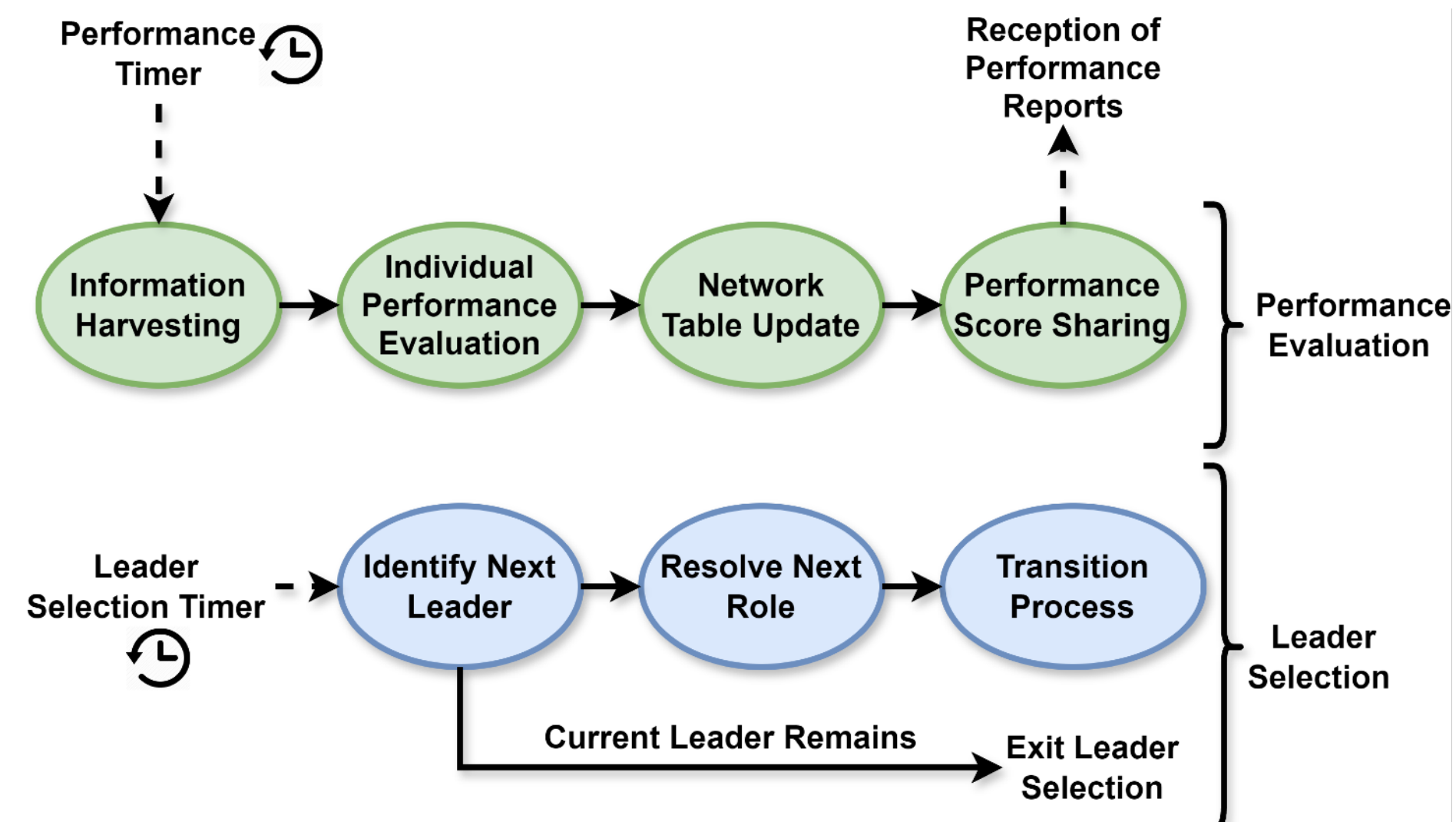
Main implementation components:

- ▶ State Controller
- ▶ Network State Table
- ▶ Operational Timers (e.g., leader selection timer)

Network Operations

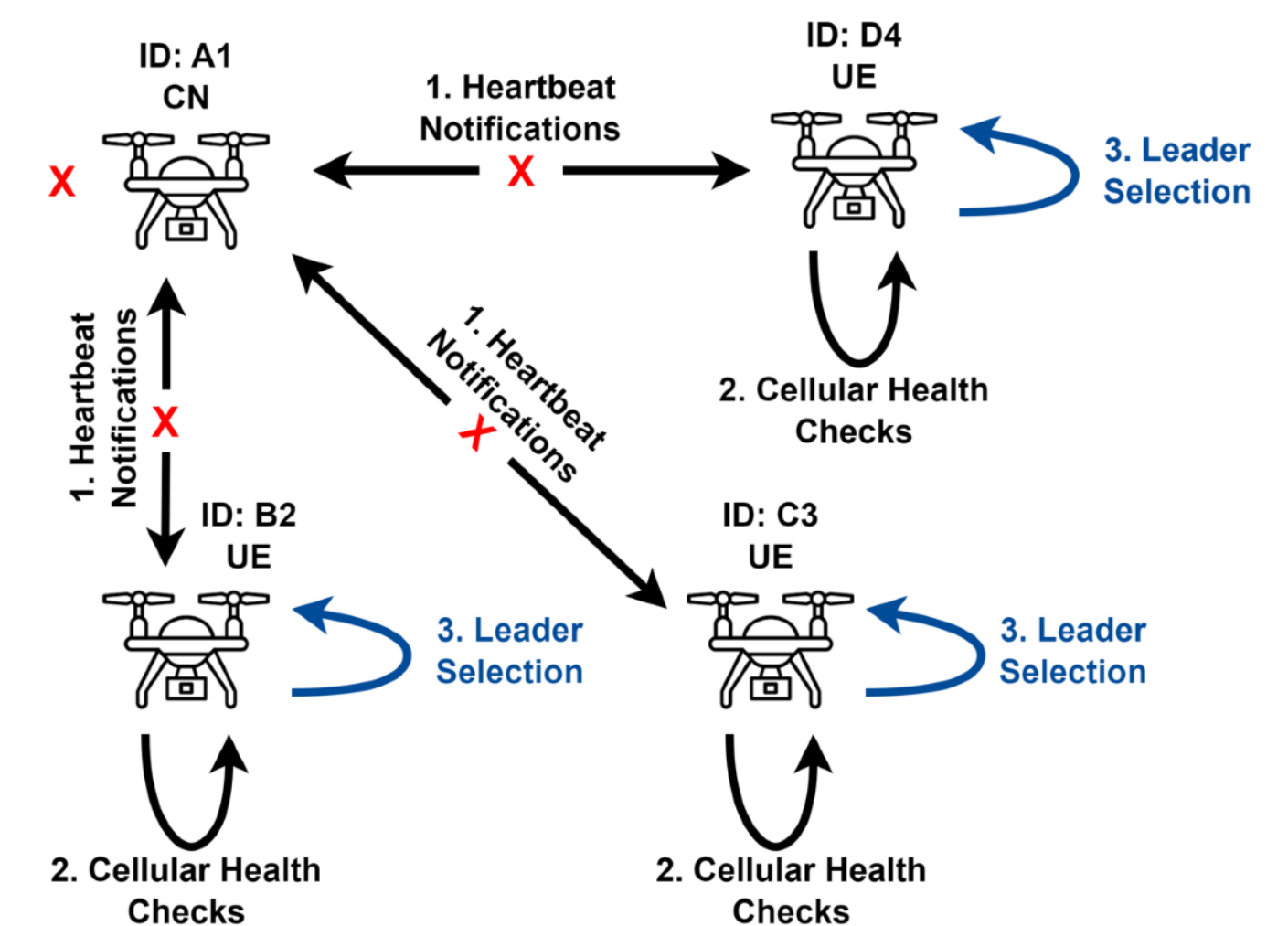
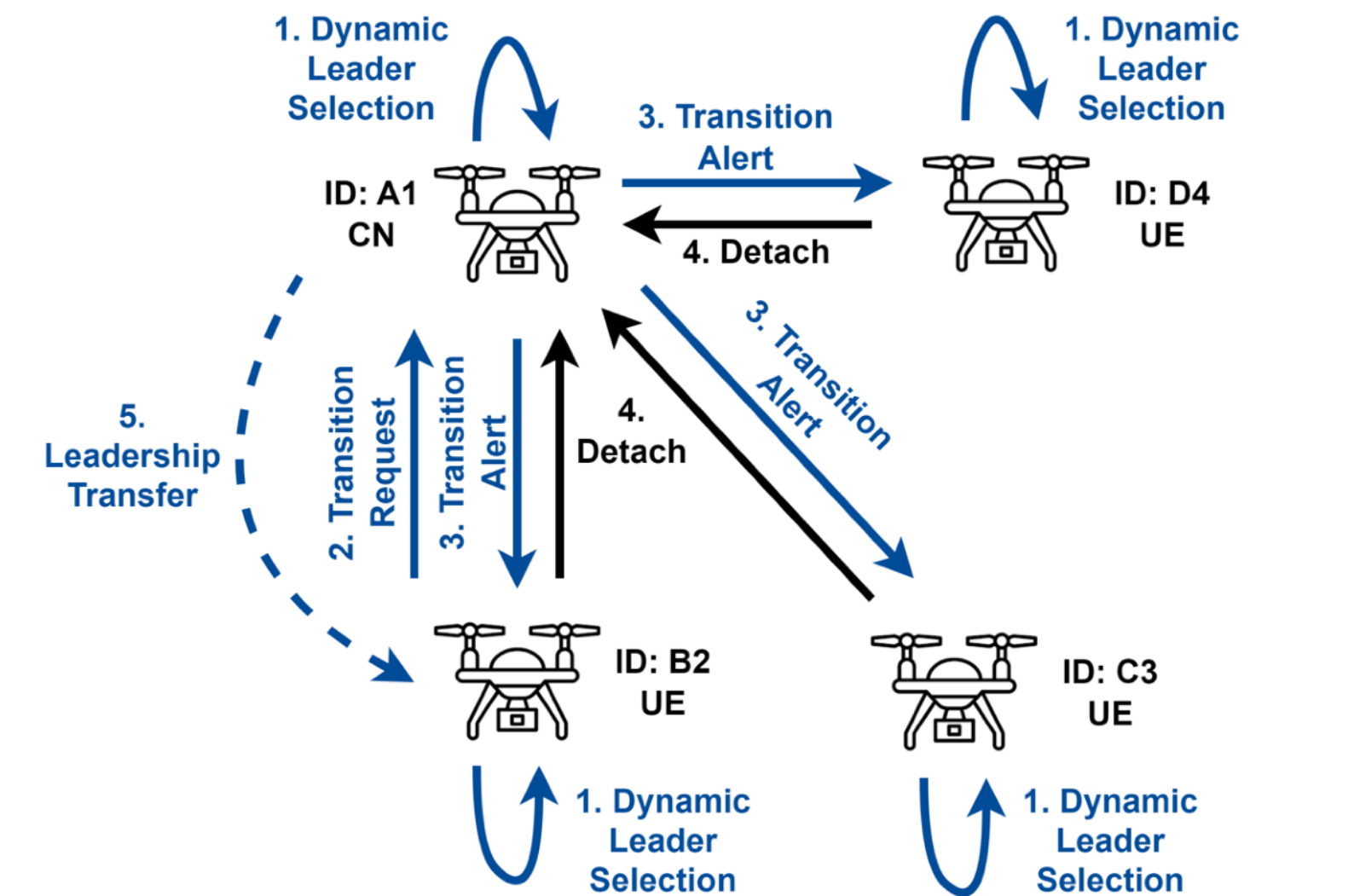
Network Initialization:

- ❖ Preparation Phase
- ❖ Discovery & Association Phase

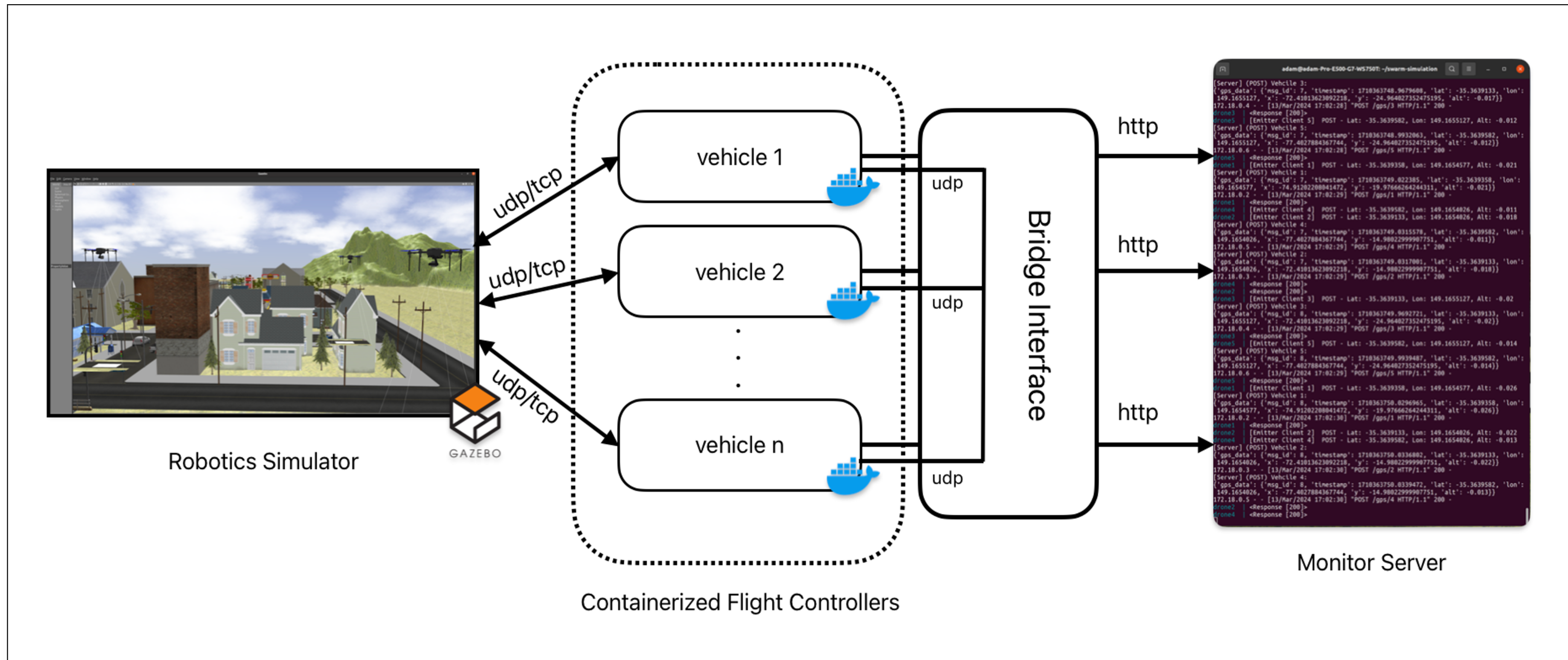


Post-Initialization:

- ❖ Heartbeat Process
- ❖ Performance self-evaluation
- ❖ Performance Sharing
- ❖ Leader Selection
- ❖ Cellular-level health checks
- ❖ Application layer health checks

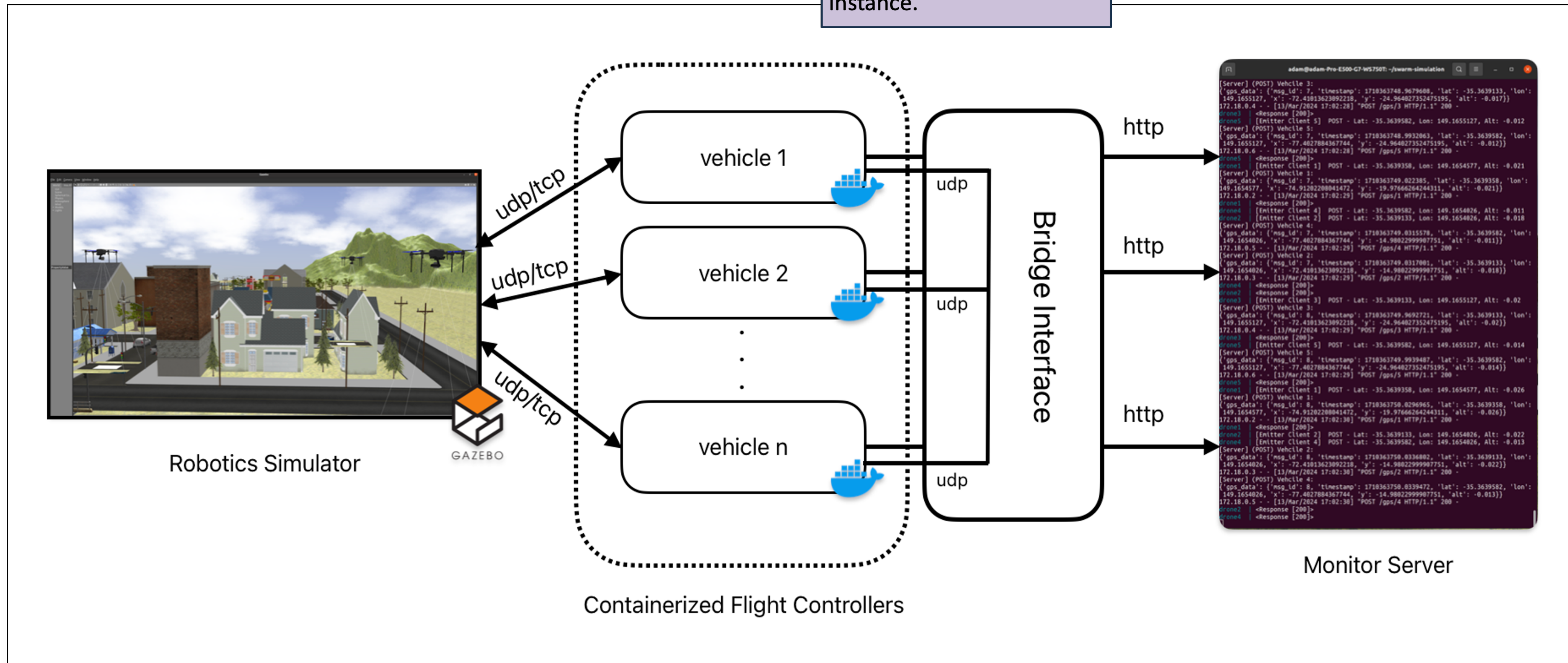


Evaluation Platform



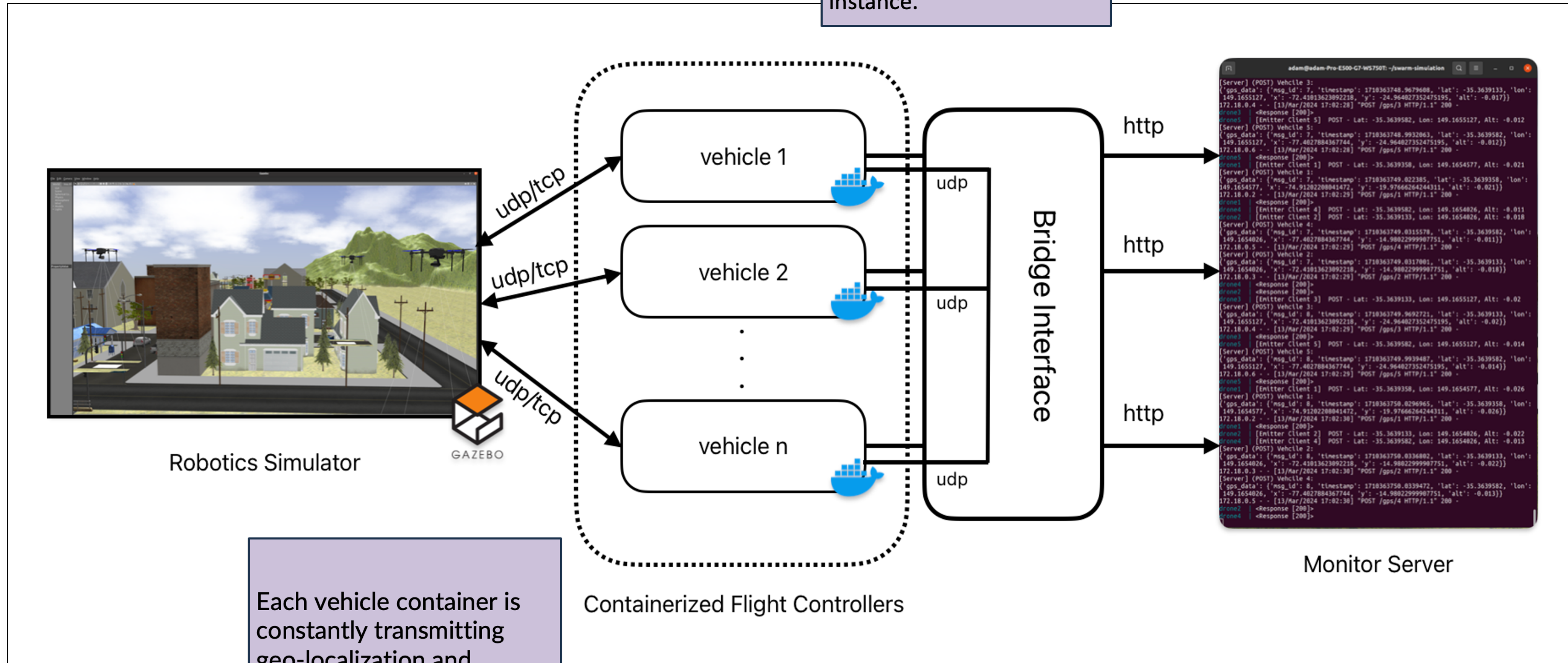
Evaluation Platform

The simulation environment creates a model for each simulated vehicle in the world it generates and is connected to its corresponding autopilot software instance.



Evaluation Platform

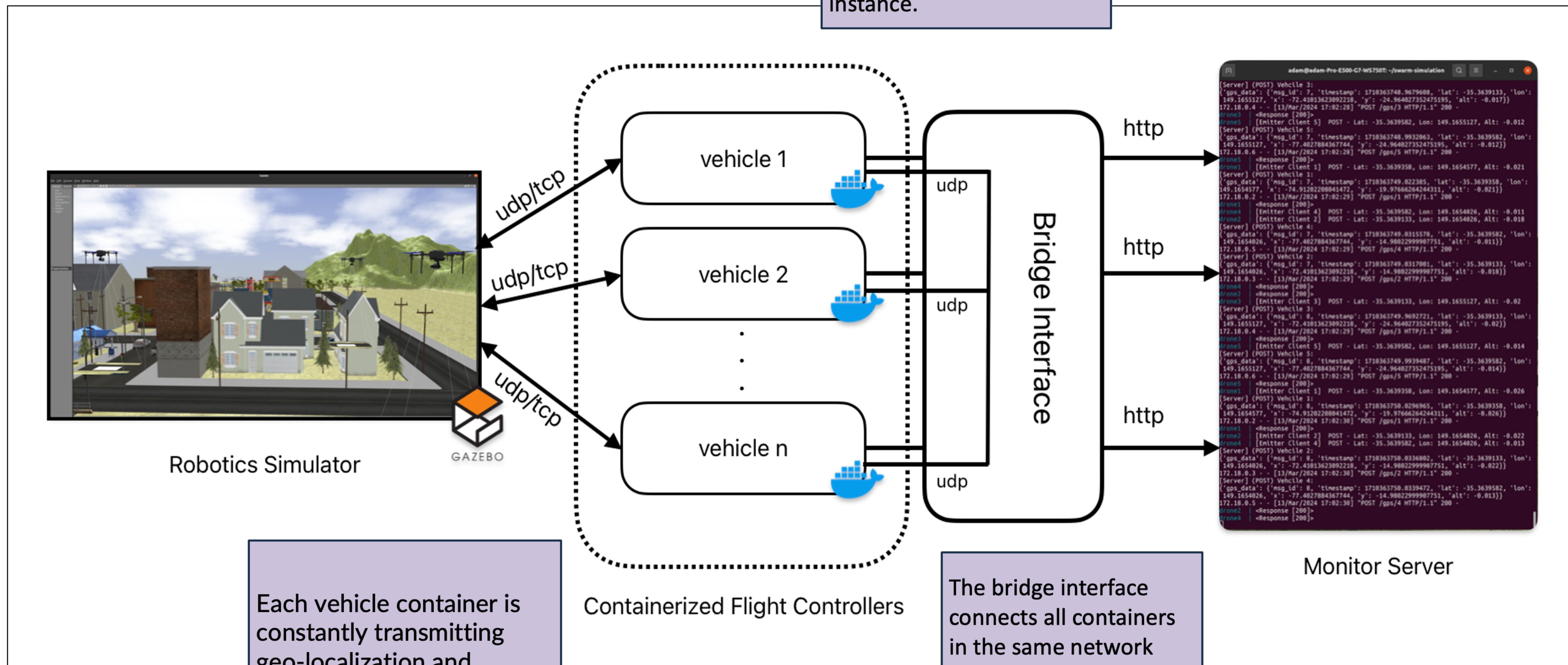
The simulation environment creates a model for each simulated vehicle in the world it generates and is connected to its corresponding autopilot software instance.



Each vehicle container is constantly transmitting geo-localization and mission related data to the Monitor server.

Evaluation Platform

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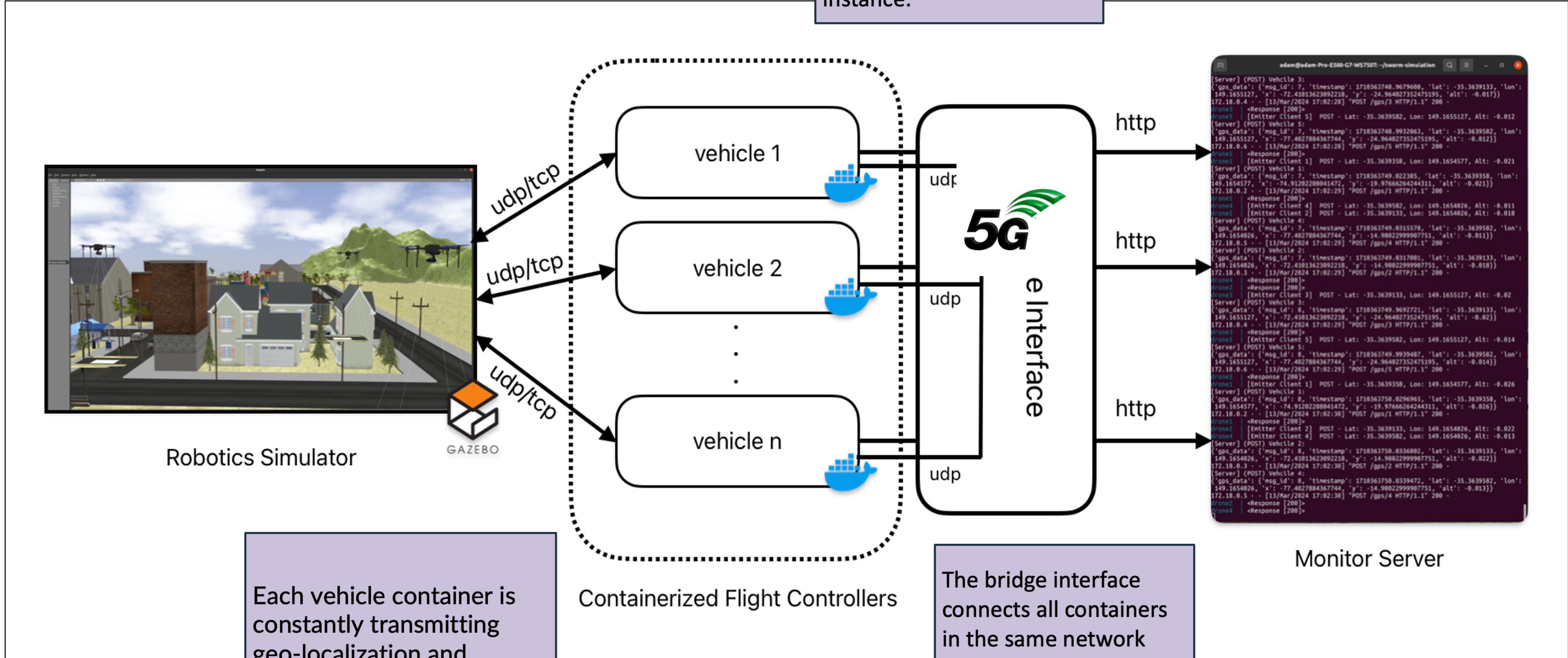


Each vehicle container is constantly transmitting geo-localization and mission related data to the Monitor server.

The bridge interface connects all containers in the same network and to their host machine, enabling intra-swarm communication.

Evaluation Platform

The simulation environment creates a model for each simulated vehicle in the world it generates and is connected to its corresponding autopilot software instance.

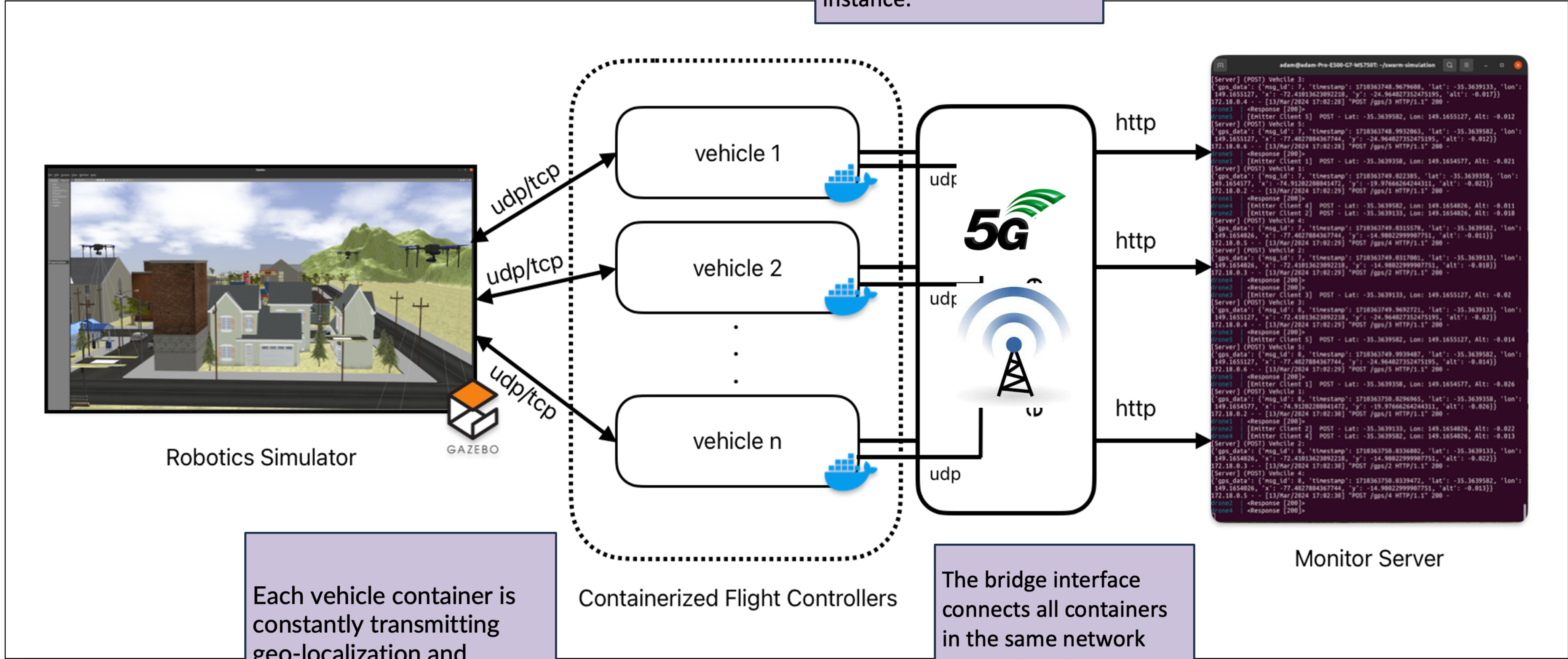


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Evaluation Platform

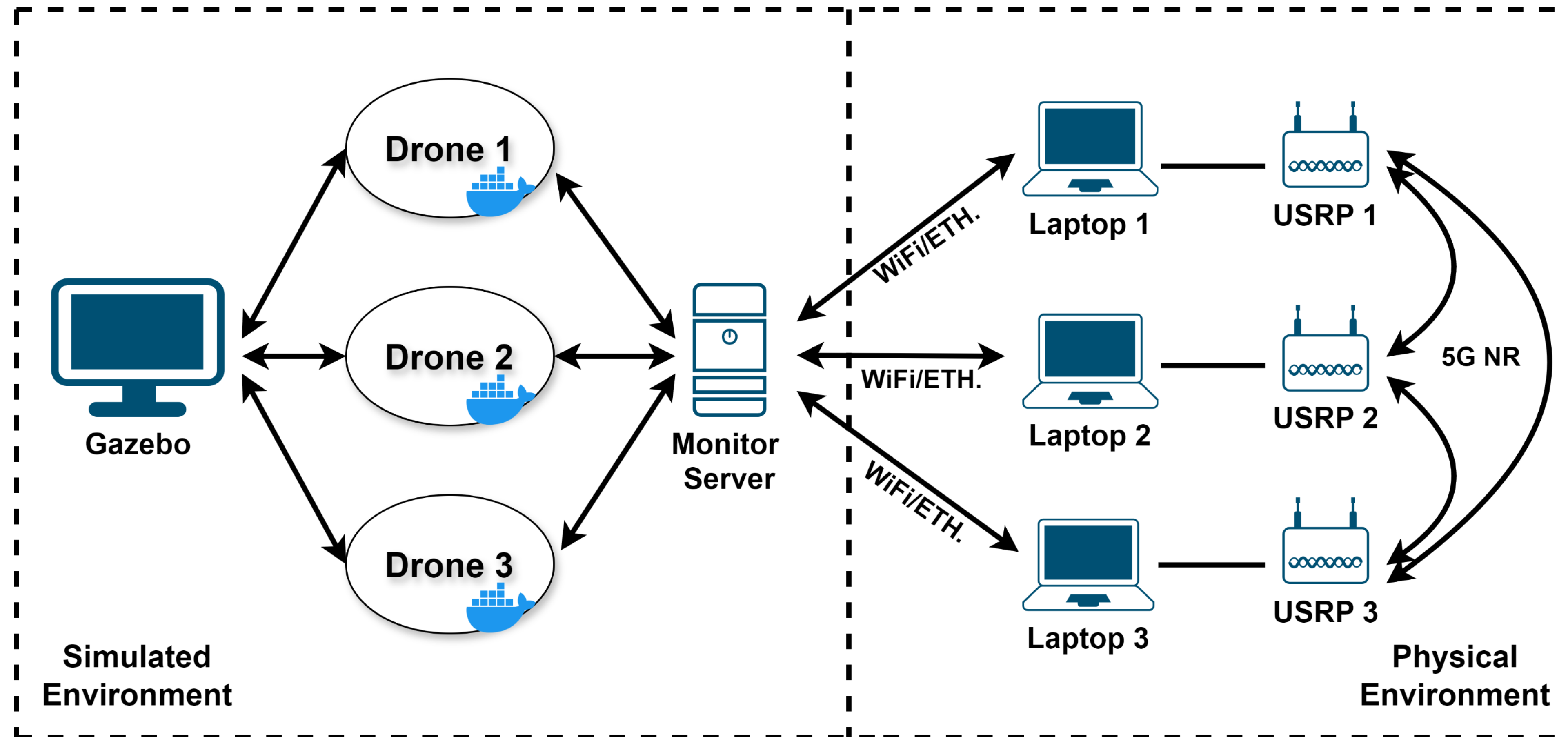
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The bridge interface connects all containers in the same network and to their host machine, enabling intra-swarm communication.

Evaluation Platform





adam
Trash



```
adam@adam-Pro-E500-G7-WS750T: ~/...  
adam@adam-Pro-E500-G7-WS750T: ~/swarm-simulation (edit-cartesian-coordinates)$ python3 src/sim_swarm.py multi small_city_voronoi_5
```

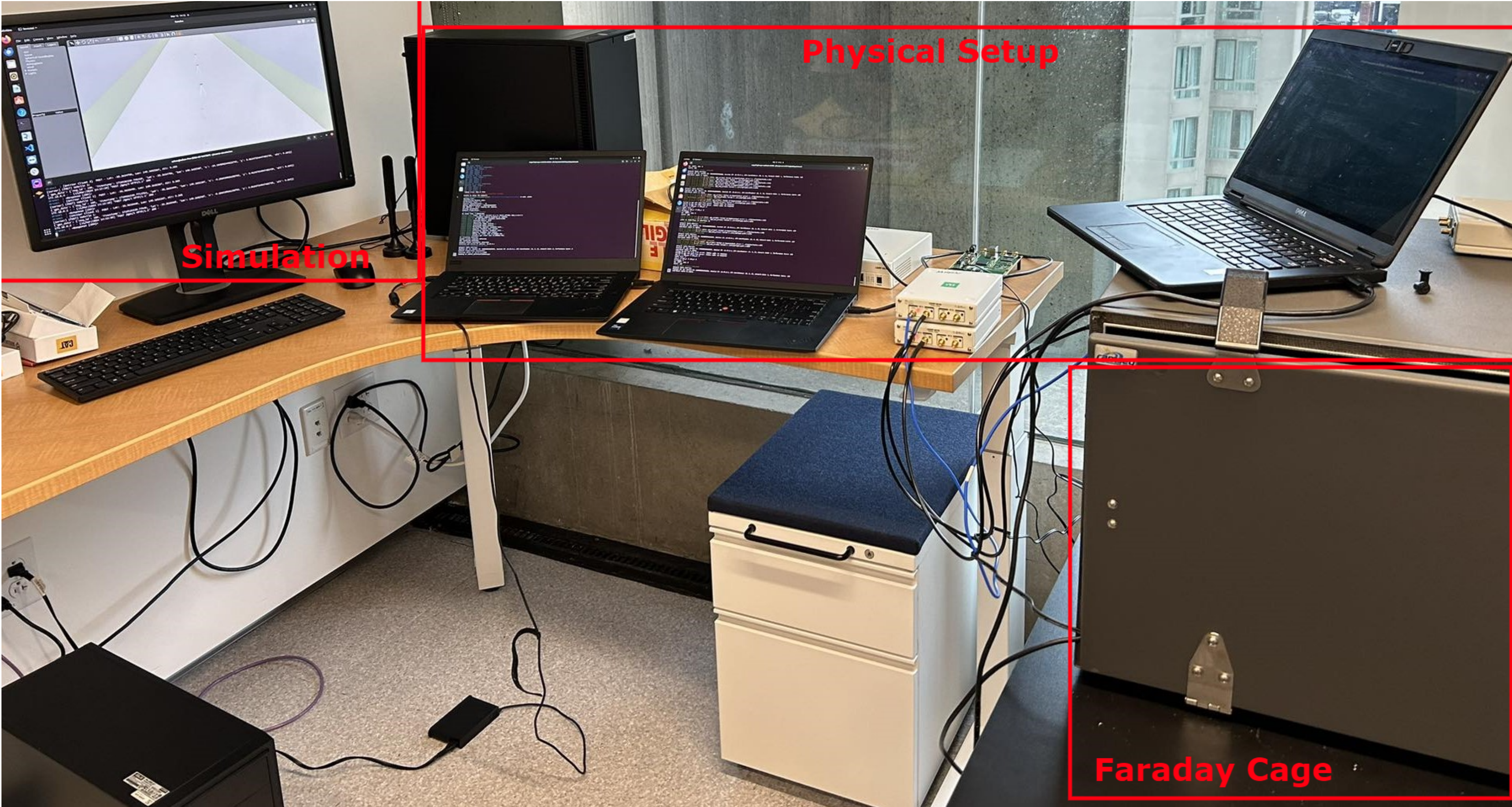



adam
Trash



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adam@adam-Pro-E500-G7-WS750T: ~/...  
adam@adam-Pro-E500-G7-WS750T: ~/swarm-simulation (emit-cartesian-coordinates)$ python3 src/sim_swarm.py multi small_city_voronoi_5
```


Physical Setup



Next steps...

- Secure deployment of private 5G networks at scale specifically tailored for autonomous cyber-physical systems
- Addressing challenges in deploying various distributed/decentralized algorithms developed by the robotics community with available wireless networks

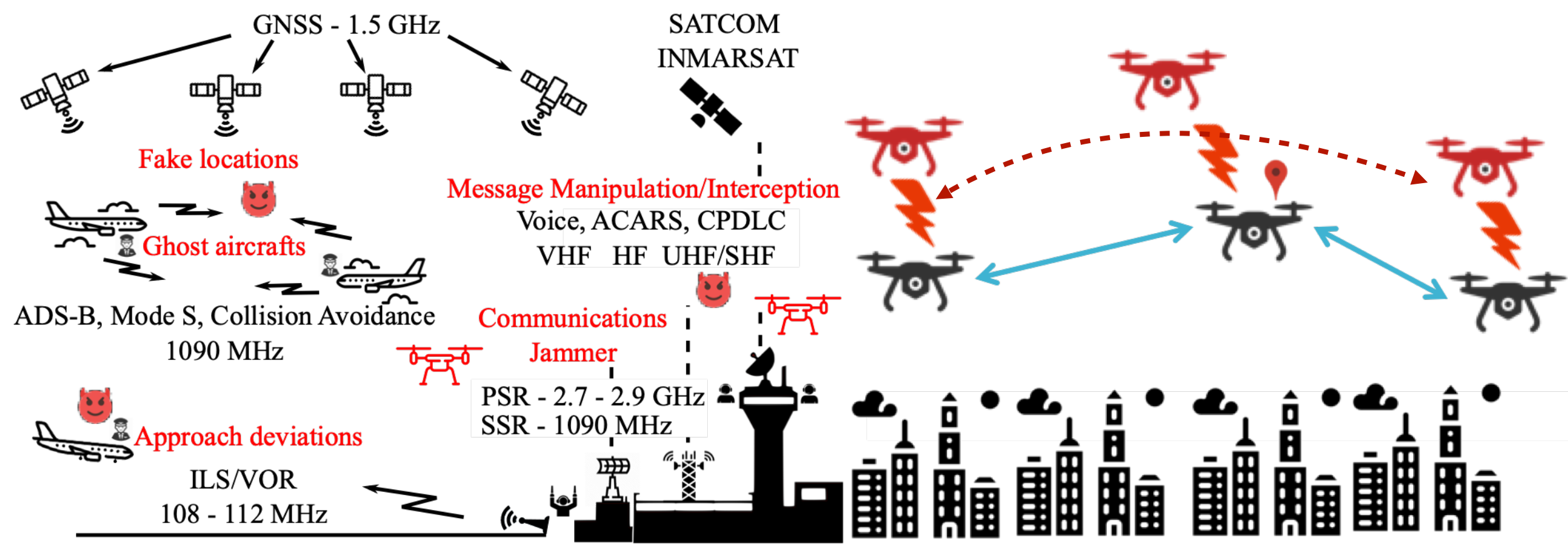
Signal Intelligence Lab @ Northeastern



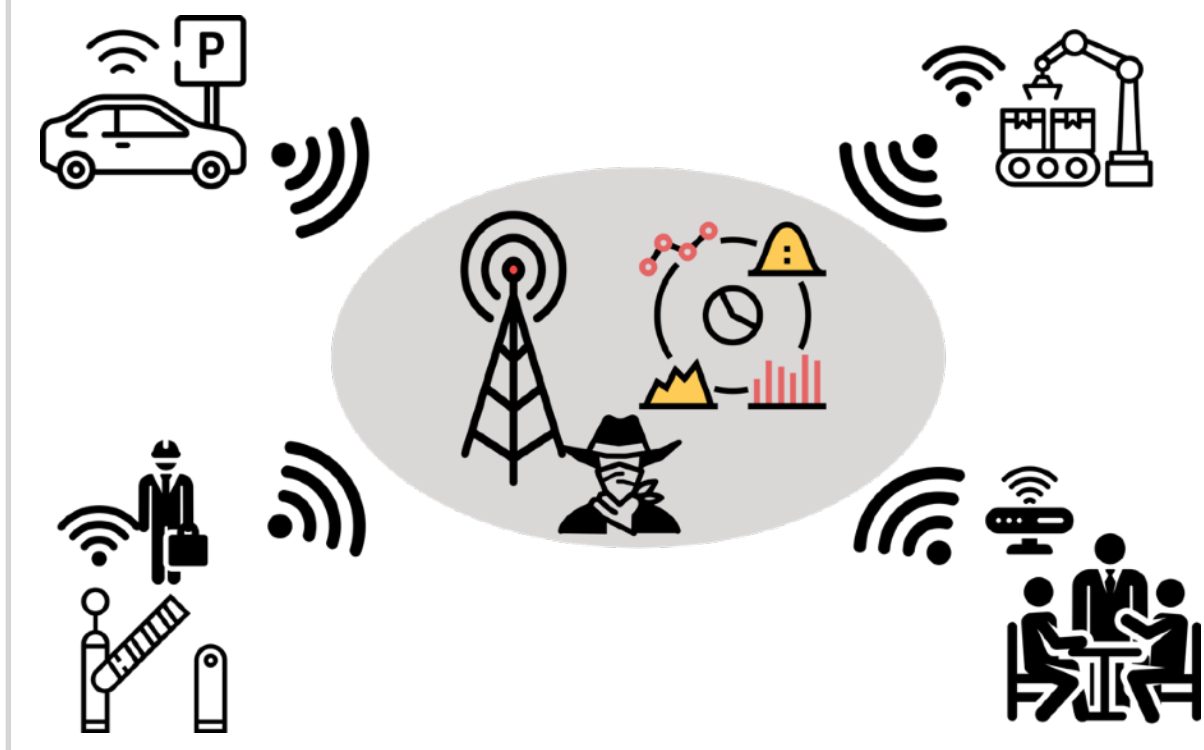
Security and privacy of wireless networks with a focus on *autonomous cyber-physical systems and smart ecosystems.*



Secure and Private
Wide-area Positioning



Aviation and Aerospace Security



Security and Privacy
of xIoT

Faculty



Aanjhan Ranganathan
Assistant Professor
www.aanjhan.com

Group Members

