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Foreword

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Introduction

Broadcast and Multicast are methods for transmitting data-grams from a single source to several destinations (point-to-multipoint). To date, release-4 and release-99 define two services in this respect:

A cell broadcast service (CBS) allowing for low bit-rate data to be transmitted to all subscribers in a set of given cells over a shared broadcast channel. This service offers a message-based service [5,6]

An IP-Multicast service allowing for mobile subscribers to receive multicast traffic. This service does not allow for multiple subscribers to share radio or core network resources and as such does not offer any advantages as far as resource utilization within the PLMN and over the radio access network. [3,4]

It is envisaged that for some applications, multiple users can receive the same data at the same time. The benefit of multicast and broadcast in the network is that the data is sent once on each link. For example, an SGSN will send data once to an RNC regardless of the number of Node Bs and UEs that wish to receive it. The benefit of multicast and broadcast on the air interface is that many users can receive the same data on a common channel, thus not clogging up the air interface with multiple transmissions of the same data.

With increasing use of high bandwidth applications in third generation mobile systems, especially with a large number of users receiving the same high data rate services, efficient information distribution is essential. Thus, broadcast and multicast are techniques to decrease the amount of data within the network and use resources more efficiently

1 Scope

This Technical specification defines the stage one description of the Broadcast and Multicast Services for the 3GPP System. Stage one is the set of requirements which shall be supported for the provision of Broadcast and Multicast services, seen primarily from the subscriber's and service providers' points of view.

Note: Non-3GPP access systems may provide MBMS transport service, but this is not in the scope of this specification.

This TS includes information applicable to network operators, content providers, and terminal and network manufacturers.

This TS contains the core requirements for Multicast and Broadcast Services, which are sufficient to provide a complete service.

2 References

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the present document.

- References are either specific (identified by date of publication, edition number, version number, etc.) or non-specific.
- For a specific reference, subsequent revisions do not apply.
- For a non-specific reference, the latest version applies. In the case of a reference to a 3GPP document (including a GSM document), a non-specific reference implicitly refers to the latest version of that document *in the same Release as the present document*.

- [1] 3GPP TR 21.905: "Vocabulary for 3GPP Specifications".
- [2] RFC 1112: "Host extensions for IP multicasting", RFC 1920: "Internet official protocol standards", RFC 1458: "Requirements for multicast protocols", RFC 1301: "Multicast transport protocol"
- [3] 3GPP TS 22.060: "General Packet Radio Service (GPRS); Service description; Stage 1".
- [4] 3GPP TS 23.060: "General Packet Radio Service (GPRS); Service description; Stage 2".
- [5] 3GPP TS 25.324: "Broadcast/Multicast Control BMC"
- [6] 3GPP TS 23.041: "Technical Realization of Cell Broadcast Service (CBS)"
- [7] 3GPP TS 22.246: "MBMS User Services".

3 Definitions, symbols and abbreviations

3.1 Definitions

For the purposes of the present document, the definitions in 3GPP TR 21.905 [1] as well as the following definitions apply.

Broadcast service area: The area in which a specific broadcast service is available. It is defined individually per broadcast service. The broadcast service area may represent the coverage area of the entire PLMN, or part(s) of the PLMN's coverage area. The broadcast service area is the sum of all local broadcast areas offering the same service.

Local Broadcast Area: The area of a broadcast service, where the service content is the same. One broadcast service may have different content in different local broadcast areas.

Broadcast mode: The part of MBMS that supports broadcast services.

Broadcast service: A unidirectional point-to-multipoint service in which data is efficiently transmitted from a single source to multiple UEs in the associated broadcast service area. Broadcast services may be received by all users who have enabled the specific broadcast service locally on their UE and who are in the broadcast area defined for the service.

Broadcast session: A continuous and time-bounded reception of a broadcast service by the UE. A single broadcast service can only have one broadcast session at any time. A broadcast service may consist of multiple successive broadcast sessions.

Mobile Station (MS): Defined in 3GPP TS 24.002. (The abbreviation "UE" in this specification refers both to MS and User Equipment.)

Multicast transmission activation: The process by which the network activates the transmission of Multicast data.

Multicast service area: The area in which a specific multicast service is available. It is defined individually per multicast service. The multicast service area may represent the coverage area of an entire PLMN, or part(s) of the PLMN's coverage area. The multicast service area is the sum of all local multicast areas offering the same service.

Local multicast area: The area of a multicast service, where the service content is the same. One multicast service may have different content in different local multicast areas.

Multicast mode: The part of MBMS that supports multicast services.

Multicast joining: The process by which a user joins a multicast group.

Multicast session: A continuous and time-bounded reception of a multicast service by the UE. A single multicast service can only have one multicast session at any time. A multicast service may consist of multiple successive multicast sessions.

Multimedia Broadcast/Multicast Service (MBMS): A unidirectional point-to-multipoint service in which data is transmitted from a single source entity to a group of users in a specific area. The MBMS has two modes: Broadcast mode and Multicast mode.

Multicast group: A group of users that have an activated MBMS in multicast mode and therefore are ready to or are receiving data transmitted by this service. The multicast group is a subset of the **Multicast subscription group**. Multicast subscription group members may join the corresponding multicast group.

Multicast service: A unidirectional point-to-multipoint service in which data is efficiently transmitted from a single source to a multicast group in the associated multicast service area. Multicast services can only be received by such users that are subscribed to the specific multicast service and have joined the multicast group associated with the specific service.

Multicast subscription: The process by which a user subscribes or is subscribed to a multicast subscription group and thereby is authorised to join certain multicast services. Multicast subscription is performed either upon user selection or due to home environment initiation.

Multicast Subscription Group: A group of users who are subscribed to a certain MBMS in multicast mode and therefore authorised to join and receive multicast services associated with this group.

User Equipment: defined in TS 21.905. An occurrence of a User Equipment is an MS for GSM as defined in TS 24.002.

3.2 Abbreviations

For the purposes of the present document, the following abbreviations apply:

MBMS	Multimedia Broadcast/Multicast Service
MS	Mobile Station
UE	User Equipment

4 General description of a multimedia broadcast/multicast service (MBMS)

Point to multipoint services exist today which allow data from a single source entity to be transmitted to multiple endpoints. These services are expected to be used extensively over wireless networks, hence there is a need for a capability in the PLMN to efficiently support them. The Multimedia Broadcast/Multicast Service (MBMS) will provide this capability for such broadcast/multicast services provided by the home environment and other VASPs.

The MBMS is a unidirectional point to multipoint bearer service in which data is transmitted from a single source entity to multiple recipients. It is anticipated that other services will use these bearer capabilities.

MBMS also enables an IMS application located on an application server to send multimedia to a set of IMS users in the service area by means of MBMS bearer service.

3GPP has defined two modes of operation:

- the broadcast mode
- the multicast mode.

4.1 MBMS broadcast mode

The broadcast mode is a unidirectional point-to-multipoint transmission of multimedia data (e.g. text, audio, picture, video) from a single source entity to all users in a broadcast service area. The broadcast mode is intended to efficiently use radio/network resources e.g. data is transmitted over a common radio channel. Data is transmitted in the broadcast service area as defined by the network (Home environment).

MBMS data transmission should adapt to different RAN capabilities or different radio resource availability, e.g. by reducing the bitrate of the MBMS data. The selection and description of an appropriate mechanism is subject to MBMS stage 2.

Figure 1 gives an example of how a network can be configured to broadcast a variety of high bit rate services to users within the associated broadcast service area.

A broadcast service received by the UE, involves one or more successive broadcast sessions. A broadcast service might, for example, consist of a single on-going session (e.g. a media stream) or may involve several intermittent sessions over an extended period of time (e.g. messages).

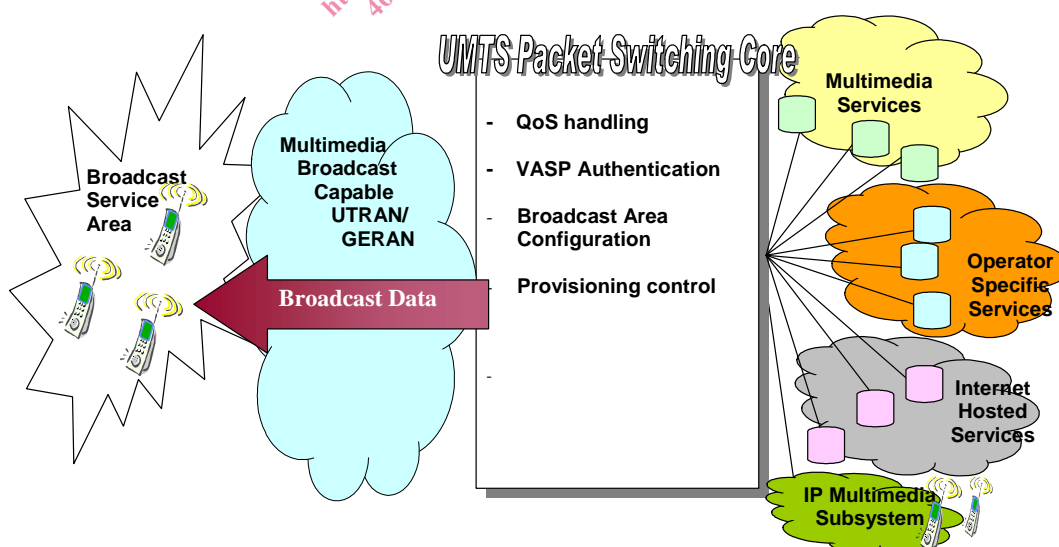


Figure 1: Example of Multicast Broadcast Mode Network

The broadcast mode should not be confused with the existing Cell Broadcast service (CBS) which is currently used for low bit rate services (messaging) whilst the broadcast mode enables the broadcast of multimedia services (Audio, Video etc).

An example of a service using the broadcast mode could be advertising or a welcome message to the network. As not all users attached to the network may wish to receive these messages then the user shall be able to enable/disable the reception of these broadcast service on his UE.

The broadcast mode differs from the multicast mode in that there is no specific requirement to activate or subscribe to the MBMS in broadcast mode.

The broadcast mode should allow terminals to minimise their power consumption.

It is expected that charging data for the end user will not be generated for this mode at MBMS Transport Service layer. Charging data related to security procedures for the end user at MBMS User Service layer may be generated, cf. clause 7. The reception of the traffic in the broadcast mode is not guaranteed. The receiver may be able to recognize data loss.

4.2 MBMS multicast mode

The multicast mode allows the unidirectional point-to-multipoint transmission of multimedia data (e.g. text, audio, picture, video) from a single source point to a multicast group in a multicast service area. The multicast mode is intended to efficiently use radio/network resources e.g. data is transmitted over a common radio channel. Data is transmitted in the multicast service area as defined by the network (Home environment). In the multicast mode there is the possibility for the network to selectively transmit to cells within the multicast service area which contain members of a multicast group.

MBMS data transmission should adapt to different RAN capabilities or different radio resource availability, e.g. by reducing the bitrate of the MBMS data. The selection and description of an appropriate mechanism is subject to MBMS stage 2.

A multicast service received by the UE, involves one or more successive multicast sessions. A multicast service might, for example, consist of a single on-going session (e.g. a multimedia stream) or may involve several intermittent multicast sessions over an extended period of time (e.g. messages).

An example of a service using the multicast mode could be a football results service for which a subscription is required.

Unlike the broadcast mode, the multicast mode generally requires a subscription to the multicast subscription group and then the user joining the corresponding multicast group. The subscription and group joining may be made by the PLMN operator, the user or a third party on their behalf (e.g. company). Unlike the broadcast mode, it is expected that charging data for the end user will be generated for this mode at MBMS Transport Service layer. Charging data related to security procedures for the end user at MBMS User Service layer may be generated, cf. clause 7.

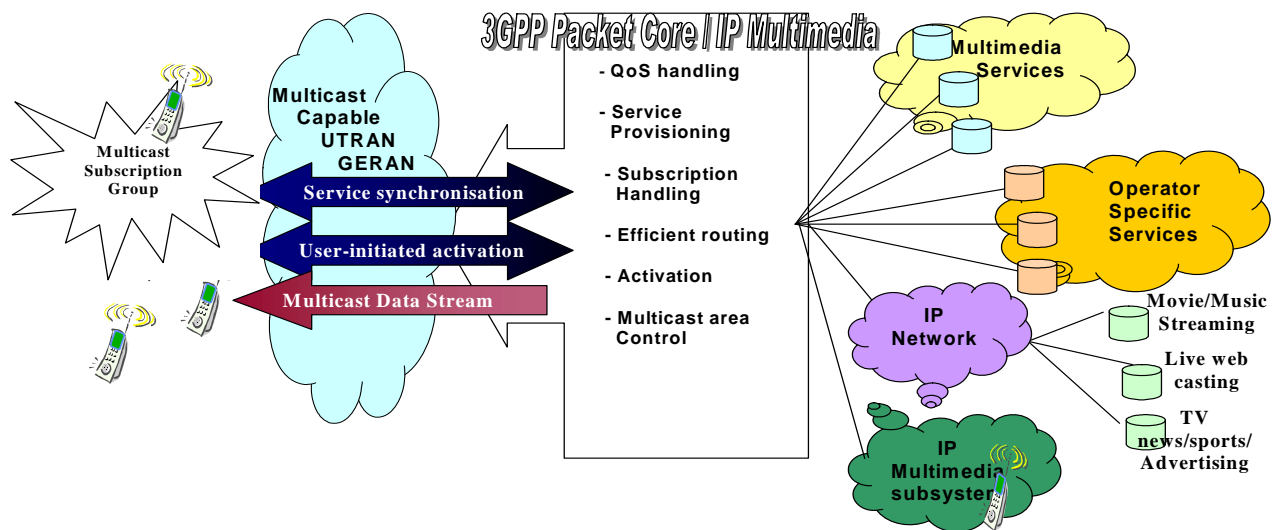


Figure 2: Example of Multicast Mode Network

Reception of multicast services cannot be guaranteed over the access network. For many applications and services guaranteed data reception may be carried out by higher layer services or applications which make use of MBMS.

Multicast mode should allow terminals to minimise their power consumption.

The multicast mode defined in this specification should not be confused with IP Multicast (RFC s 1112, 1301, 1458, 1920 [2]). There are similarities between these two services and such similarities may be exploited in 3GPP networks given that 3GPP multicast mode has been defined with consideration to maximizing efficiency on the radio interface and of network resources.

Multicast mode shall be inter-operable with IETF IP Multicast. This could allow the best use of IP service platforms to help maximize the availability of applications and content so that current and future services can be delivered in a more resource efficient manner. Figure 2 above shows a general high level overview of multicast mode network.

4.2.1 Multicast subscription and reception

The following is the expected sequence for the user to be able to access the MBMS multicast mode:

- 1 The user subscribes or is subscribed to a multicast subscription group which is uniquely identified and thereby becomes a member of that group. The subscription may be continuous (e.g. as defined by the subscriber's contract), time-limited, or generated by the subscriber on a one-time basis. The subscription to multicast services shall not be further standardized.
- 2 The user discovers, or becomes aware (e.g. via service announcements), that there are multicast services currently active, or multicast services that will become active at some time later, at the user's current location.
- 3a) The user selects a multicast service and hence the user joins the corresponding multicast group. The user should be able to join a multicast service as soon as possible after announcement of the service.
- 3b) As an alternative, the Home Environment can join the user to the selected multicast group on behalf of the user, that has previously subscribed to this multicast group.

Signalling exchange between the UE and the network might not be necessary in some cases, e.g. in the case of network congestion.

- 4 If the transmission is not already in progress the network starts transmitting the corresponding multicast content. Alternatively, the transmission may start at a later time.
- 5 The network may optionally select to set up unicast (point to point) connections to some users e.g. if there are insufficient users to justify multicasting