

Agenda Item: 10.5.1.2
Source: EURECOM
Title: PRACH and RACH procedure
Document for: Discussion and decision

1. Introduction

According to the SI for Release 20 6G, PRACH and RACH procedure is included to support multi-antenna system in 6G. New PRACH design and RACH procedure is necessary to make the multi-antenna system achieve the 6G requirements.

2. Discussion

In 5G, 4-step RACH and 2-step RACH procedures are used for initial access between the user equipment (UE) and the base station (BS/gNB).

2.1 4-step RACH procedure

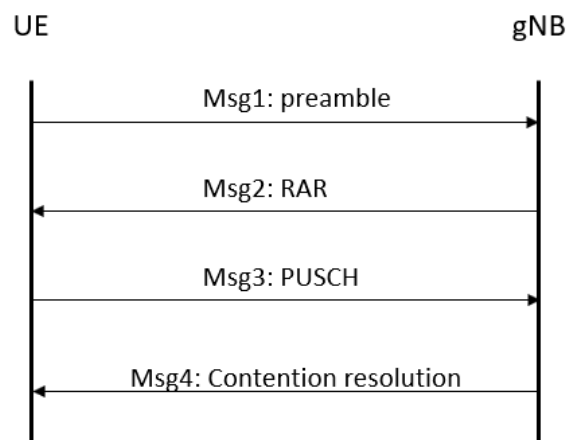


Figure 1: 4-step RACH procedure

When a UE wants to connect to the network for the first time or after a period of inactivity, it uses 4-step RACH procedure illustrated in Figure 1.

The UE sends Msg1 containing a random access preamble from a set of predefined preambles to the gNB on Physical random access channel (PRACH). The preambles are classified into two categories: Short Preamble Format and Long Preamble Format.

Upon receiving Msg1, the gNB sends Msg 2 (Random access response (RAR)) to response. Msg2 consists of several critical pieces of information, such as the Time Advance (TA) command for timing adjustment, the

RAPID (Random Access Preamble ID) matching the preamble sent by the UE, and an initial uplink grant that configures resource for the UE to transmit data in Physical uplink shared channel (PUSCH). The gNB also assigns a temporary identifier called RA-RNTI (Random Access Radio Network Temporary Identifier) to the UE.

The UE uses the resources configured through the uplink grant in Msg2 to transmit Msg3 to the gNB on PUSCH carrying RRC messages such as RRC request, RRC reestablishment, RRC handover or pure data.

After processing Msg3, the gNB sends Msg4 to the UE. Msg4 is a MAC data for Contention Resolution. The Contention Resolution message contains the UE's identity, confirming that the gNB has correctly identified the UE, and contention has been resolved. At this step, network provide UE with C-RNTI (Cell Radio Network Temporary Identifier).

2.2 2-step RACH procedure

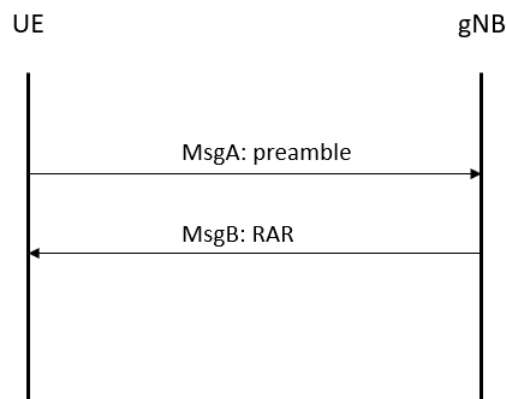


Figure 2: 2-step RACH procedure

The 2-step RACH procedure shown in Figure 2 was approved for 5G. The UE directly transmits a message A (MsgA) which is a combination of the PRACH preamble and a PUSCH transmission instead of waiting for the gNB to allocate PUSCH resources after PRACH reception. The goal is to reduce initial access time, i.e. the time required for the UE to transition into RRC_CONNECTED state. Message A consists of two parts: preamble on PRACH and RRC message/data on PUSCH. Both parts cannot be transmitted in the same slot. The minimum time gap between the preamble and the PUSCH transmissions is 2 or 4 symbols for 15/30kHz SCS and 60/120kHz SCS, respectively.

Figure 3 illustrates an example of MsgA structure with the mapping between the preambles and PUSCH occasions (POs). The example assumes 32 POs consisting of 16 time-frequency resources each with 2 DMRS configurations. The associated RACH occasion (RO) is one time-frequency resource with 32 different preambles. Every preamble is then directly mapped to a specific PO, first in frequency then DMRS and time domain. Hence, by detecting the preambles, the gNB knows exactly which PO to decode. In summary, the PRACH preamble has the following purposes: time-frequency synchronization and PUSCH resource identification.

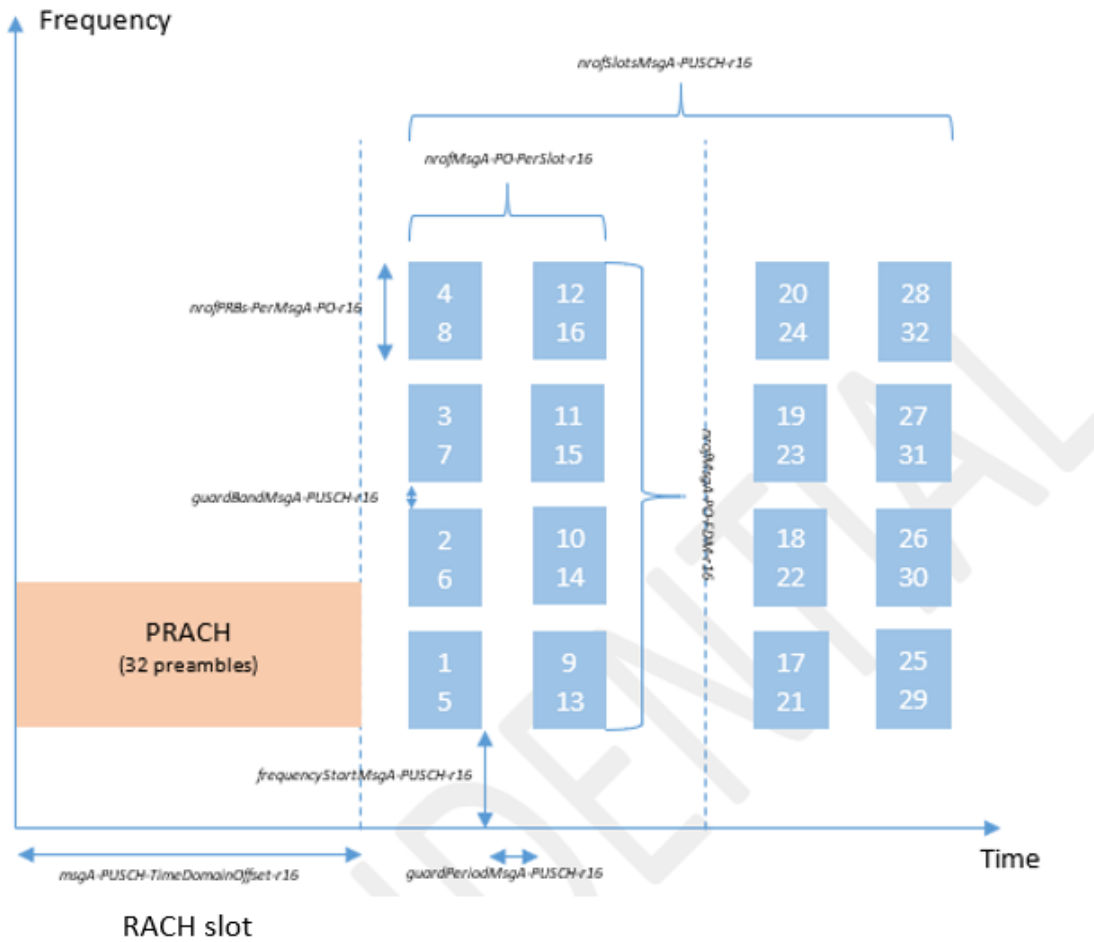


Figure 3: Channel structure of MsgA: mapping between preambles and PUSCH occasions

The gNB receives the MsgB and there are 4 cases that can happen:

- Case 1: The gNB detects the preamble from the UE and successfully decodes the payload. It notifies the UE of contention resolution by sending a successful Random Access Response (RAR) in MsgB with a TA command which is an integer value greater than or equal to zero.
- Case 2: The gNB detects a single preamble but fails to decode the payload. Using the preamble reception time, it sends back a fallback RAR in MsgB to the UE with the TA command and an uplink grant for the payload retransmission.
- Case 3: The gNB detects multiple identical preambles from UEs. There is no fallback RAR because the gNB is unable to specify the preamble reception time of each UE. Therefore, the gNB transmits a backoff indication to UEs that will attempt random access again.
- Case 4: The gNB fails to detect the preamble. There is no RAR to the UE.

2.3. New PUSCH format for RACH procedure

The current MsgA transmission in the 2-step RACH procedure has a shortcoming where preamble and PUSCH are in two transmissions in different slots and cannot be transmitted in the same slot as shown in Figure 3 that might cause latency in RRC connection (request, reestablishment, handover) for the time-sensitive applications. It also causes an increase of resource consumption due to two separate transmissions.

In order to deal with the shortcomings of the current RACH procedure, the new PUSCH formats are used for MsgA of the 2-step RACH procedure which allows the information for the UE detection, synchronization (provided by preamble in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure) and data part for RRC connection to be transmitted in a single PUSCH transmission.

A new PUSCH format is illustrated in Figure 4 as an example for the proposed PUSCH formats. The proposed PUSCH (noted as PUSCH++ in Figure 4) has the same format as PRACH format 0 for long preamble. Other PRACH formats (format 1, 2, 3) for long preamble sequence where there are repetitions of the sequence also can be used for the new PUSCH formats.

This PUSCH has a length of 839 that accounts for 839 resource elements (REs) in a duration of 800 μ s with SCS of 1.25 kHz. The proposed PUSCH contains DMRS and data in 839 REs. DMRS is used by the gNB to detect the UE and calculate timing advance (TA) as preamble sequence in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure. Data part in the proposed PUSCH of MsgA includes the messages for RRC connection as PUSCH in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure. Therefore, MsgA in the proposed scheme only contains one PUSCH with DMRS and data part instead of one preamble and one PUSCH in the conventional 2-step RACH-procedure where DMRS of the proposed PUSCH assumes the function of preamble and data of the proposed PUSCH carries the same content as PUSCH transmission in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure. DMRS and data are transmitted together in the proposed PUSCH so MsgA is transmitted in a single transmission instead of two transmissions in different slots in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure where one transmission is for preamble transmission and one transmission is for data (PUSCH) transmission.

In Figure 4, in PUSCH with length of 839, there are 419 REs used for DMRS and 420 REs used for PUSCH data. DMRS configuration is Type 1 as DMRS configuration Type 1 for normal PUSCH where DMRS is allocated to every second subcarriers. The lengths of DMRS and data in Figure 4 are only an example. The lengths of DMRS and data can vary based on the requirements of the UE detection (based on DMRS) and data decoding of different applications and channel condition. To determine DMRS and data lengths, one option is that the gNB configures DMRS and data resources in the proposed PUSCH for the UE based on the requirements of the UE detection and data decoding, channel condition and the configuration of other UEs in the cell.

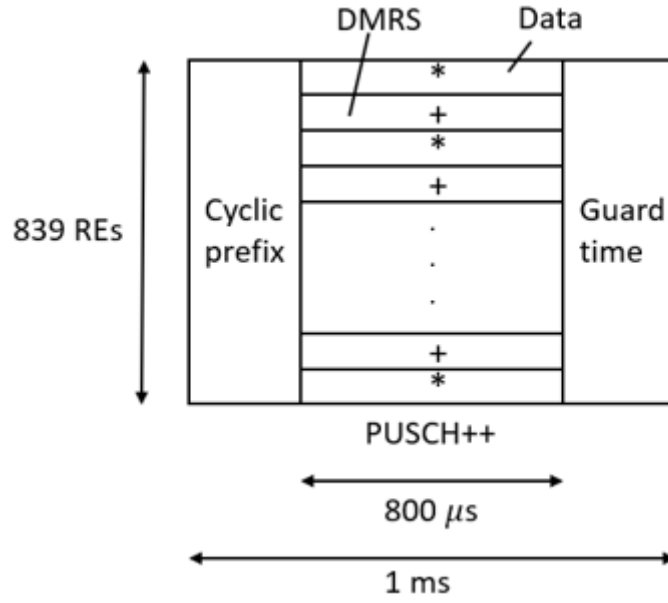


Figure 4: New long PUSCH format

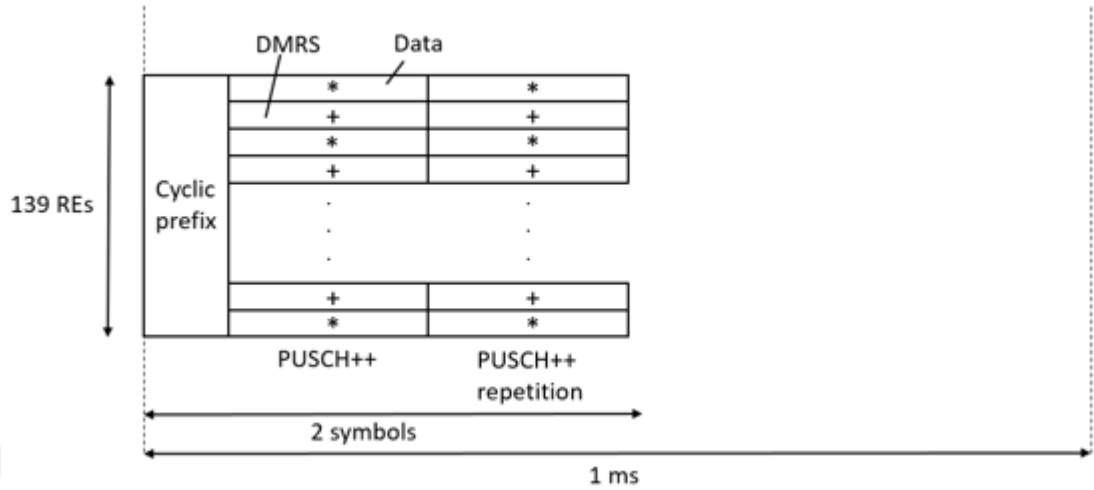


Figure 5: New short PUSCH format

Figure 5 illustrates an example for the proposed PUSCH (noted as PUSCH++ in the figure) with the same format of PRACH for short preamble (format A1 in this example). Other PRACH formats (A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, B4, C0, C2) also can be used for the proposed PUSCH formats.

The length of the proposed PUSCH is 139 that accounts for 139 subcarriers in a duration of one symbol in SCS of 15 kHz, 30 kHz, 60 kHz and 120 kHz. The proposed PUSCH is repeated one time with the same content as the first PUSCH in an occasion so the total duration of PUSCH format A1 is 2 symbols. There is no cyclic prefix or guard period between these two PUSCH. There is cyclic prefix at the beginning of the first PUSCH and no guard period at the end of the second PUSCH. 139 subcarriers of PUSCH contains DMRS and data. DMRS is used by the gNB to identify the UE and do synchronization between the gNB and the UE as short preamble

sequence in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure. Data part contains the messages of RRC connection such as connection request, reestablishment, handover as PUSCH in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure. Therefore, MsgA with the proposed PUSCH is transmitted in a single transmission instead of two transmissions in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure.

An example of DMRS and data allocation in short PUSCH format A1 is shown in Figure 5. In 139 resource elements (REs) in one PUSCH++, there are 69 REs for DMRS and 70 REs for data. DMRS configuration follows DMRS configuration Type 1 where DMRS is allocated to every second subcarriers. DMRS is generated from a Zadoff-Chu sequence as the conventional PUSCH transmitted with Transform Precoding then cyclic shift is applied to the root sequences. The resource allocation for DMRS and data can be changed to adapt to channel condition and different applications with different requirements of DMRS detection and data decoding. The gNB configures DMRS and data resources in the proposed PUSCH for the UE based on the requirements of the UE detection and data decoding, channel condition, the configuration of other UEs in the cell.

Proposal 1: A new PUSCH format for MsgA is used in 2-step RACH procedure where two transmissions in different slots of preamble and PUSCH is replaced by a single PUSCH transmission.

Proposal 2: DMRS in the new PUSCH assumes the role of preamble in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure for UE detection and synchronization.

Proposal 3: Data in the new PUSCH contains the same messages (RRC messages) as data in PUSCH in the conventional 2-step RACH procedure.

Proposal 4: The new PUSCH has the same formats as PRACH for long and short preambles.

3. Conclusion

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