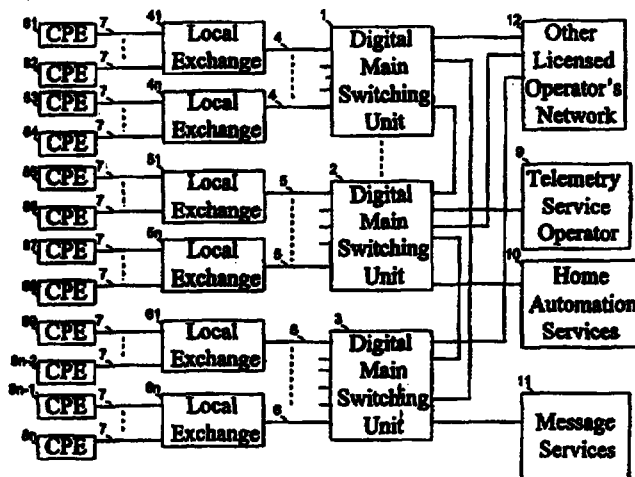




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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY [GB/GB]; 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ (GB).			
(72) Inventor; and (75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): HOY, Michael, Davey [GB/GB]; 36 Penshurst Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 8QY (GB).			

(54) Title: TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS



(57) Abstract

In a telecommunications network of the kind which handles non-time-critical calls (NTCC) in addition to normal telephony, a congestion indication is transmitted to NTCC transmitting platforms if volume and/or rate limit for a particular communications route or switch is exceeded. Transmitting platforms (9, 10, 11) establish a transmission rate based on a gaping rate (GR). On receipt of a congestion signal the platforms calculate an Inter call delay based on a random number multiplied by a weighting factor determined from the current value of GR. This provides a period during which calls are not attempted after which GR is adjusted using a common ratio to provide a higher value of GR thus transmission rate (or the rate at which calls are offered) to the congestion route is less onerous. Consecutive call failures result in a rapid increase in the value of GR leading to longer ICDs (to allow the congested route/switch to recover) and a lower traffic loading on recovery. Further, multiple transmitting platforms resume sending at different times due to randomisation of ICDs across platforms.