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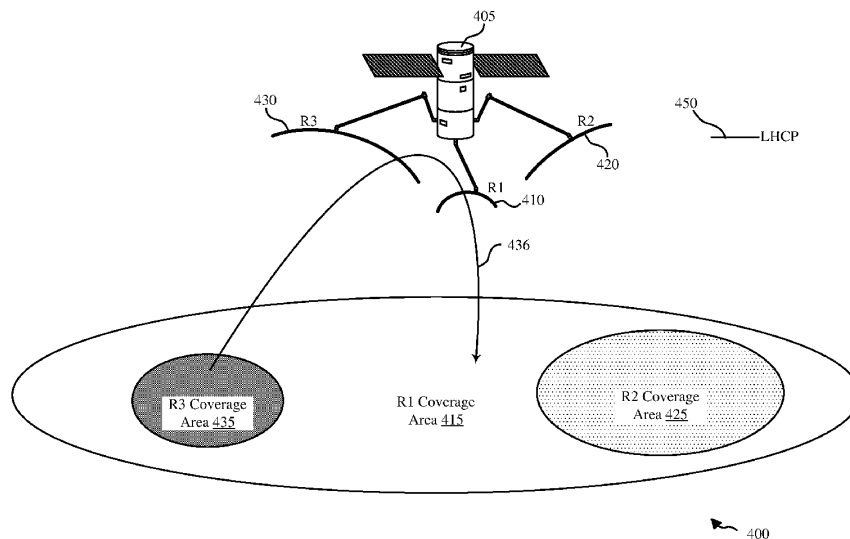


FIG. 4

(57) Abstract: Systems and methods for communications satellites to switch operating modes are described. A communications satellite may operate according to a first operating mode to provide communications services for user terminals in a first coverage area (e.g., providing the user terminals with forward link communications services using a first communication link with a first polarization) The communications satellite may receive correspondingly polarized forward uplink signals from access node terminals in a second coverage area, and the communications satellite may relay respective forward downlink signals to the user terminals in the first coverage area. In some cases, the first coverage area may geographically overlap the second coverage area. The communications satellite may determine a second operating mode (e.g., to optimize the communications services based on dynamic conditions), and the communications satellite may switch to the second operating mode to provide communications services for the user terminals.

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