

MODEM FOR CONTROLLING A NETWORK OF MODEMS

This invention relates to data transmission systems and, more particularly, to a control modem for controlling a network of modems.

Prior Art

There is at the present time a growing demand for large telecommunication networks of the type including large modem networks. This demand has been met through technological advances and the standardization of data exchange protocols. However, the ever increasing size and complexity of modem networks are limited by the means currently available to manage such large networks, in order, for example, to measure network performance, to identify problems, and to reconfigure the networks. One of the problems encountered in controlling the modems is that, in normal operation, the modems are transparent to the signals received from the data terminal equipments (DTEs) connected thereto. An article by S. Huon and R. Smith entitled "Network Problem-Determination Aids in Microprocessor-Based Modems", appearing in the IBM Journal of Research and Development, Vol.25, No.1, January 1981, describes a modem link control system wherein a DTE can control a local modem attached thereto by activating one of the interface lines, TC, to cause that modem to switch to the test mode and by then sending the modem a test command over the Transmit Data, or TD, line in the interface. If the test command is intended for the local modem, then that modem will perform the test and send the results to the DTE over the Receive Data, or RD, line in the interface. Alternately, if the test command is intended for the remote modem that communicates with the local modem, then the local modem will

interrupt all transmissions to the remote modem and send a signal at a so-called service frequency that will cause the remote modem to go to the test mode, and will then send the test command from the DTE to the remote modem at a so-called service rate. A disadvantage of this approach is that the DTE-modem interface must include a TC lead even though the modems used in a network may be of different manufacture, and that its implementation in a large network comprising multilevel links would raise a number of problems since, in this approach, a modem can only go to the test mode if the TC lead is activated or if the above-mentioned signal at the service frequency is received. A description of the technique shown in the article by S. Huon and R. Smith can be found in EP-A-0053212.

An article by J. Barlet et al. entitled "Inter-DCE Communication for Maintenance Loop Tests on Multipoint Networks", appearing in the IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin, Vol. 21, N° 11, April 1979, pages 4566-7, describes a system for testing a modem network in which the local DTE initializes the test operation by raising the RL lead attached to the local modem. The latter is then ready to recognize commands from the local DTE, which it re-transmits to the other modems at a low rate so-called service rate. During the final phase, the remote modems may resend at service rate to the local DTE the command received from it.

Document US-A-4,385,384 describes a control system for a modem network wherein the test commands are sent over the line through a secondary channel assigned to this specific purpose. In addition to necessitating one secondary channel per modem, this control system, being primarily designed for the transmission of data over analog lines, is unsuited to complex networks in which data must pass through digital nodes.

Summary of the Invention

An article entitled "SDLC Interface for modems" appearing in the IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin, Vol. 26, N° 61, November 1983, page 2775, describes a communication network in which an apparatus for detecting and analyzing a test command message is added to the remote modem processor. When a command message is detected, the modem becomes not transparent to data and is set in a test mode, waiting for the test message which will follow the command message it has detected. This article does not disclose that the command message is transmitted at a one bit per baud rate, which is one of the main features of the invention.

It is the purpose of this invention to overcome the above difficulties and to provide a method for controlling a modem network, that require no particular leads in the DTE-modem interface and in which the commands follow the same paths as the data, thereby enabling the invention to be used in large networks comprising both analog and digital links.

The foregoing and other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following more particular description of two preferred embodiments of the invention, as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

Generally, the invention provides a control modem for monitoring a network of modems which comprises a data terminal equipment, connected to the said control modem by a data transmission path and a data reception path (RD) On which the data terminal equipment transmits and receives data and control messages respectively, and, a remote modem linked to the said control modem by a transmission medium, each of the said modems operating in data mode with a transmission rate of n bits per baud, n being a positive integer greater than one, the said control modem

comprising a processor having means for performing permanent checking of the contents of the messages received from the data terminal equipment on the data transmission path, so as to detect the transmission by the data terminal equipment desiring to initiate a monitoring of the network of modems, on the data transmission path, of a control message comprising a first means of identification, a means of addressing, and a means of control ;

the said control modem being characterized in that the said processor comprises : a first means of storage of the control message received on the said data transmission path when the said control modem has detected in this message the presence of the first means of identification and that of its own address in the means of addressing,

a means of generation, on the basis of the said control message, of a first supervision message comprising a second means of identification (SH), and the means of addressing (AM) and the means of control (C) which were contained in the said control message, when the latter specifies a control signal for the said remote modem, and a first means of transmission on the transmission medium of a start-up sequence, then of the said first supervision message, the said first supervision message being transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud whatever the rate of the data exchanged by the said control modem and remote modem.

According to another aspect of the invention, said remote modem comprises a processor having :

a means of reception of the start-up sequence transmitted by the said control modem,

a means of control for passing to reception at the rate of one bit per baud at the end of the reception of the start-

up sequence, and the checking of the contents of the messages received from the said control modem after the initialization sequence, at the rate of one bit per baud,

a means of storage of the first supervision message received from the transmission medium when the said means of control has detected in this message the presence of the second means of identification and the address of the said control modem in the means of addressing,

a means of execution of the control signal specified by the means of control contained in the first supervision message received,

a means of preparation of a report containing the result of the execution of the control signal,

a means of generation of a second supervision message comprising the contents of the first supervision message received to which the report is added, and

a means of transmission on the transmission medium of a start-up sequence and of the second supervision message, the said second supervision message being transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud whatever the rate of the data exchanged by the said control modem and remote modem.

The invention further provides a local control modem for monitoring a network of modems which comprises a data terminal equipment, connected to the said control modem and a remote modem linked to the said control modem by a transmission medium, each of the said modems comprising several channels and a basic modem and exchanging bits of data between themselves at a transmission rate of n bits per baud, n being a positive integer greater than one, the data terminal equipment being linked to each of the channels of the said control modem by a data transmission path

and a data reception path on which the data terminal equipment transmits and receives data and control messages respectively, the said control modem comprising a processor having means for performing permanent checking by the said control modem of the contents of the messages received from the data terminal equipment on each of the data transmission paths linked to the data terminal equipment, so as to detect the transmission by the data terminal equipment desiring to initiate a monitoring of the network of modems, on one of the data transmission paths, of a control message comprising a first means of identification, a first means of addressing, an indicator of transmission mode, and a means of control,

the said control modem being characterized in that the said processor comprises :

a first means of storage of the control message received on one of the transmission paths when the presence of the first means of identification and that of the address of the said control modem have been detected in this message,

a means of generation, on the basis of the control message received, of a first supervision message comprising a second means of identification, a second means of addressing identifying which of the channels of the said control modem has received the control message, and the first means of addressing, the indicator of transmission mode and the means of control which were contained in the control message received, when the indicator of transmission mode specifies a first transmission mode, and the means of control specifies a control signal for the said remote modem, and

a first means of transmission on the transmission medium of a start-up sequence then of the first supervision message, the said first supervision message being transmitted

at the rate of one bit per baud whatever the rate of the data exchanged by the said control modem and remote modem.

Brief Description of the Figures

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a modem network in which the invention can be incorporated.

Figure 2 is a schematic diagram illustrating the path followed by the messages to enable a modem to be controlled by the DTE to which it is attached.

Figure 3 is a schematic diagram of the path of the "remote command/supervisory mode" type of messages.

Figure 4 is a schematic diagram of the path of "local command" messages involving a single channel of a multichannel modem.

Figure 5 is a schematic diagram of the path of "local command" messages involving the base modem in a multichannel modem.

Figure 6 is a schematic diagram of the path of "remote command/supervisory mode" messages for a multichannel modem.

Figure 7 is a schematic diagram of the path of "remote command/data mode" messages for a multichannel modem.

Figure 8 is a schematic diagram of the path of messages in the instance of a command intended for a remote primary modem in a two-level link.

Figure 9 is a schematic diagram of the path of messages in the instance of a command intended for a remote secondary modem in a two-level link.

Figure 10 is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary embodiment of a modem incorporating the invention.

Figure 11, consisting of Figures 11A and 11B, is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary embodiment of a modem incorporating the invention.

Description of the Invention

Referring now to FIG.1, a block diagram of a typical modem network incorporating the invention is shown. A central DTE 10, which may be, for example, an IBM 3725 Communications Controller, is attached to a central processing unit 12, such as an IBM 3081 CPU, and to a network of modems which may comprise different types of links, three of which are shown by way of example, namely, a point-to-point link, a multipoint link and a two-level link comprising multichannel modems. The central DTE 10 may of course consist of a network node controller. The point-to-point link includes a local modem 14 directly attached to the central DTE 10 and communicating through a transmission line 18 with a remote modem 16 directly attached to a DTE 20. The multipoint link includes a local primary modem 30 directly attached to central DTE 10 and communicating through a common transmission line 32 with several remote secondary modems shown in FIG.1 as blocks 34,

36 and 38 directly attached to three respective DTEs 40, 42 and 44. The two-level link includes a local multichannel modem 46 whose channels are directly connected to central DTE 10 and which communicates with a remote multichannel modem 48 through a line 50. In the example shown in FIG.1, each of modems 46, 48 is conventionally provided with four channels, A-D, a multiplexing/demultiplexing device, and a base modem, respectively designated 46X, 48X and 46B, 48B. The remote multichannel modem 48 has its channel D directly connected to a DTE 52, while its channel A is connected to a remote primary modem 54 and its other two channels are connected to devices or modem links not shown. Modem 54 communicates through a line 56 with a remote secondary modem 58 directly connected to a DTE 60. Each of modems 14, 16, 30, 34, 36, 38, 54 and 58, and each channel of modems 46 and 48 is connected to the central DTE or to another DTE or to another modem through a CCITT V24 interface. For simplicity, each interface is shown as comprising three lines respectively designated Transmit Data (TD), Receive Data (RD) and Test Indicator (TI). The three lines associated with channels A-D are designated TDA, RDA, TIA, ...TDD, RDD, TID, respectively. Modems 14, 16, 30, 34, 36, 38, 54 and 58 may be, for example, IBM 3863, 3864 or 3865 Modems adapted to incorporate the invention, as will be described later. Multichannel modems 46 and 48 may be, for example, IBM 3865 Modems provided with the multiplexing option and adapted to incorporate the invention.

In accordance with the invention, any DTE can control the modems attached thereto by sending command messages and analysing the report messages it receives from the modems in return. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, such messages are exchanged by the DTEs and the modems by using non sequential information frames as specified in the Synchronous Data Link Control (SDLC) procedure. This is a known procedure that conforms to the standardized High-Level Data Link Control (HDLC) procedure described, for example, in IBM public document No.GA27-3093-2 entitled "IBM Synchronous Data Link Control, General Information".

The format of the command messages is as follows:

F, A, N, H, I, AM, C, <P>, FCS, F

where:

F = SDLC frame delimiter (1 eight-bit byte = '7E')

A = SDLC address field (1 byte = 'FD')

N = SDLC command field (1 byte = '1B')

H = Command header informing the modem that a command message will be received next.
(8 bytes = '05 10 42 08 21 84 10 42')

I = 2-byte identifier to be described later.

AM = Modem address field. (2 bytes)

This field contains the address of the modem that is to intercept the command message, and that of the modem for which the message is intended.

C = Command code. (1 byte). Different values of this code will be described later.

<P> = Command parameters. This is an optional field serving to complement the command byte as necessary.

FCS = SDLC frame check sequence field. (2 bytes)

In the above description, the single quotation marks (' ') indicate a value given in hexadecimal notation.

Identifier I in the command message is two bytes long, as follows:

Byte 0

L	M	C	S	R	E	O	O
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Bit 0 (L) : Test mode.

When 1, this bit specifies a test mode in accordance with the invention.

Bit 1 (M) : Command transmission mode.

This bit is solely used with multichannel modems to indicate the manner in which a command is to be transmitted from a local modem to a remote modem.

When 0: Supervisory Mode transmission. This mode is specific to the invention and will be described later.

When 1: Data Mode transmission.

Bit 2 (C) : Command/Report.

When 0: Command.

When 1: Report.

Bit 3 (S) : System information.

When 0: Command generated by the central DTE to cause statistical data to be collected.

When 1: Command generated by the central DTE upon detecting a failure in the link.

Bit 4 (R) : Initial Command/Repeated Command.

When 0 : Initial command.

When 1 : Command repeated by the DTE.

Bit 5 (E) : Command repetition enable

When 0 : The local modem is enabled to repeat a command if the remote modem involved failed to respond to the original command or if an erroneous report was received.

When 1 : Repetition of the command is not allowed.

Bits 6 and 7: maintained at zero.

Byte 1

Reserved for future use.

The command code is one byte long and its content is as follows:

O	O	G				N	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Bits 0 and 1 : Maintained at zero.

Bits 2 and 3 (G) : Command group.

When 10: Problem determination commands.

When 10: Operational commands.

Bits 4 to 7 (N) : Command identification number.

0000 to 1111: This number identifies

the command. A partial list of commands is given below by way of example:

- local self-test,
 - remote self-test,
 - status of local/remote modem,
 - status of link,
 - status of local/remote DTE interface,
 - line analysis,
 - read local/remote configuration,
 - write local/remote configuration,
- etc.

The format of the report messages is as follows:

F, A, N, L, K, I, AM, C, <P>, SB, D, FCS, F

where:

F = SDLC frame delimiter (1 byte = '7E')

A = SDLC address field (1 byte = 'FD')

N = SDLC command field (1 byte = '1B')

L = Length field (1 byte)

This field specifies the number of 8-bit bytes in the report message.

K = Key (1 byte = '50')

This byte indicates that the next data are a response

to a command from a modem.

I = Message identifier, to be described later. (2 bytes)

AM = Modem address (2 bytes)

Retransmission of field AM of the command message.

C = Command code (1 byte)

Retransmission of field C of the command message.

<P>= Command parameters

Retransmission of field <P> of the command message.

SB = Detection byte (1 byte)

This byte contains a return code that is significant if an exception condition occurred while detecting or executing the command. Such codes may indicate, for example, that:

- the command message was too long and could not be decoded; or that
- the received command message included an erroneous FCS, causing the command message to be retransmitted by the DTE; or that
- the execution of the command would necessitate the use of a device that is not installed;
- etc.

D = Data field (0 to n bytes)

This field contains the report from the modem that intercepted the command and/or the report from the modem that executed the command.

FCS = SDLC frame check sequence field (2 bytes)

Identifier I in the report message is two bytes long, as described below:

Byte 0:

L M C E R O O O

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Bit 0 (L) : Test mode

When 1, this bit specifies a test mode in accordance with the invention.

Bit 1 (M) : Command transmission mode

This bit is solely used with multichannel modems and specifies the manner in which a command is to be transmitted from a local modem to a remote modem.

When 0, this bit specifies a Supervisory Mode transmission.

When 1, it specifies a Data Mode transmission.

Bit 2 (C) : Command/Report

When 0: Command.

When 1: Report.

Bit 3 (E) : Exception condition

When 0, this bit indicates that the command has been correctly executed and that a data field follows. The detection byte is set to zero.

When 1, an exception condition has occurred. The nature of the exception is indicated in the detection byte.

Bit 4 (R) : Retransmission

When 0, this bit indicates that no retransmission has been performed by the modem.

When 1, the bit indicates that the command message has been retransmitted by the local modem.

Bits 5-7 : These bits are maintained at zero.

Byte 1

Reserved for future use.

(For simplicity, field <P> will be omitted from the various messages discussed hereafter.)

General Description

The network control method of the invention will now be described in general terms with reference to FIG.1.

Control by DTE of a Modem Attached Thereto

A DTE, such as the central DTE 10, controls an attached modem, such as modem 14, by sending thereto over the Transmit Data (TD) line a command message of a type called local command

message, in the format described earlier. Upon receiving header H in the SDLC frame received from the TD line, the modem determines whether its address is contained in the modem address field AM. If it is not, the modem ignores the content of the message; if it is, the modem intercepts and stores the command message, and sends forced 1 bits over the transmission line. The modem then checks the validity of the command message (format, command byte, parameters, FCS, etc). If the message is found to be invalid, the modem generates a report message to identify the reasons for the invalid condition, inserting the appropriate code in detection byte SB, and sends the message to the DTE over its Receive Data (RD) line; if the command message is valid, the modem executes the command specified by the message, generates a report message and sends it to the DTE over its RD line. This type of control of a modem is schematically shown in FIG.2.

Control of a Remote Modem

A DTE, such as the central DTE 10, controls a remote modem, such as modem 34, by sending to local modem 30 connected to modem 34 a command message of a type called remote command/supervisory mode, whose format has been described earlier, over the TD line. Upon detecting header H in the SDLC frame received over the TD line, local modem 30 determines whether its address is contained in modem address field AM. If it is not, the modem ignores the content of the message; if it is, the modem intercepts and stores the command message, sends forced 1 bits over the transmission line and checks the validity of the message (format, command byte, parameters, FCS, etc). If the message is found to be invalid, the modem generates a report message identifying the causes of the invalidity and sends it to the DTE over its RD line. If the command message is determined to be valid, local modem 30 constructs a so-called supervisory message and sends it over the transmission line in a mode called supervisory mode. The format of the supervisory message carrying the command message is as follows:

F, SH, I, AM, C, FCS, F

Field SH is a supervisory header used to identify supervisory messages. It has a length of one byte and contains the following information:

Bit 0 : Speed

When 0: Backup speed

When 1: Nominal speed

Bit 1 : Repetition

When 1, the modem that receives this message interrupts all transmissions over the line, then retransmits the supervisory message.

Bit 2 : Cancellation of loss-of-carrier indicator

When 1, the modem that receives this message ignores any loss-of-carrier indication therein.

Bit 3 : Test mode

When 1, this bit indicates a test mode in accordance with the invention.

Bit 4 : Origin of command

When 0: DTE.

Bits 5-6: Unused.

Bit 7 : When 1, the supervisory message is stored by the modem for which the command message is intended.

The contents of fields I, AM, C are identical to those of corresponding fields of the command message intercepted by local modem 30.

The supervisory mode of transmission is as follows: the modem interrupts all transmissions over the line, then sends a conventional startup sequence (TS) of the type described in CCITT Recommendations V27 and V29. The startup sequence is sent in a conventional manner, exactly as if it preceded a data message, and as indicated, for example, in said CCITT Recommendations. The supervisory message is sent at the rate of one bit per baud time, regardless of the speed at which modems 30 and 34 communicate with each other. For example, if two modems communicate at a nominal speed of 9600 bps in accordance with Recommendation V29, with the baud rate being 2400 bauds and four data bits being transmitted every baud time, the supervisory message will still be sent at the rate of one bit per baud time. This type of transmission, while slow, ensures a much more reliable reception of the supervisory message by the modem to which it is sent. When transmission of the supervisory message is completed, the local modem can send data in a conventional manner and at the desired speed.

Upon receiving a startup sequence, the remote modem 34 switches to a speed of one bit per baud time at the end of the sequence to determine whether a supervisory message, as indicated by a supervisory header, is present. Any such message, if detected, is stored by the remote modem 34 for analysis. The modem then determines whether its address is contained in address field AM. If it is not, modem 34 ignores the content of the message; if it is, modem 34 checks the validity of the command message (format, command byte, parameters, FCS, etc.). If the message is found to be invalid, the modem supplies a report message identifying the reasons therefor and sends it to the local modem as part of a supervisory message transmitted in the supervisory mode. If the command message is valid, modem 34 executes the command specified by the message and generates both a report message

and a supervisory message containing the report message. The format of such a supervisory message is as follows:

F, SH, I, AM, C, DR, FCS, F

The contents of fields I, AM and C are the same as those of the corresponding fields of the received supervisory message, and field DR contains the report from the remote modem. The supervisory/report message is sent to local modem 30 in the supervisory mode.

If no supervisory message containing a report message is received within a predetermined time interval and if the logic level of bit 5 (E) in the identifier of the command message received from the DTE does not allow the command to be repeated, then local modem 30 provides a report message indicating "no report received". If an erroneous supervisory message is received from the transmission line and if the logic level of said bit 5 (E) does not allow the command to be repeated, then local modem 30 generates a report message indicating an "erroneous report" condition. If no supervisory message containing a report message is received within a predetermined time interval, or if an erroneous supervisory message is received from the line while the logic state of said bit 5 (E) does allow the command to be repeated, then local modem 30 resets bit 5 and retransmits the supervisory message. If a supervisory message containing a report message and no errors is received within the prescribed time interval, then local modem 30 generates a report message from the report message received from the remote modem and transmits same to the DTE over its RD line. This type of control of a remote modem is schematically shown in FIG.3

Control by DTE of a Multichannel Modem Attached Thereto

A DTE, such as central DTE 10, controls all channels of the multichannel modems attached thereto, say, multichannel modem 46, or the base modem in the multichannel modem, by means of command messages of the local command type. Each channel

monitors the train of bits received from its TD line. Upon detecting header H in a received SDLC frame, a channel determines whether the address of multichannel modem 46 is contained in modem address field AM. If it is not, the channel ignores the content of the message; if it is, the channel intercepts and stores the command message, and transmits forced 1 bits to the remote multichannel modem. The channel then checks the validity of the command message (format, command byte, parameters, FCS, etc). If the message is found to be invalid, the channel provides a report message identifying the reasons for the invalid condition and sends it to the DTE over its RD line. If the command message is valid, the command is decoded. At this stage, it may be found that the command solely concerns the channel, or that it relates to the base modem. If the former, the channel executes the command, supplies a report message and sends it to the DTE over its RD line. This type of control of a modem is illustrated in FIG.4.

If the command involves the base modem, the channel transfers the command message thereto and waits for a report message. The command is executed in the base modem, which generates a report message and sends it to the channel. The channel then sends the report message to the DTE over its RD line. This type of control of a modem is illustrated in FIG.5.

Control of a Remote Multichannel Modem

A DTE, such as the central DTE 10, controls all channels of the remote multichannel modems attached thereto, for example the channels of multichannel modem 48, or the base modem 48B of remote modem 48, by means of remote command/supervisory mode or of remote command/data mode types of messages. Each channel of multichannel modem 46 monitors the train of bits received over its TD line. Upon detecting header H in a received SDLC frame, a channel determines whether the address of multichannel modem 46 is contained in the modem address field (AM). If it is not, the channel ignores the content of the message; if it is, the channel intercepts and stores the

command message, and transmits forced 1 bits to the remote multichannel modem 48. The channel then checks the validity of the command message (format, command byte, parameters, FRC, ...). If the message is found to be invalid, the channel provides a report message identifying the reasons for this condition, and sends same to the DTE over its RD line. If the command message is found to be valid, the command is decoded. There are two possibilities at this stage:

- the command message is to be sent in the supervisory mode (bit 1 (M) of identifier I of the command message being logically 0); or
- the command message is to be sent in the data mode (bit 1 (M) being logically 1).

(1) Supervisory Mode Transmission of Command Messages

In this case, the channel transfers the command message to the base modem, which derives therefrom a supervisory message and sends it over the transmission line in the supervisory mode. The channel then waits for a report message from the remote modem 48. The supervisory sequence used here is similar to that used to exchange messages in links not involving multichannel modems, except for the fact that the supervisory message has been slightly modified as noted below. The format of the supervisory message that contains the command message, where multichannel modems are used, is as follows:

F, SH, CH, I, AM, C, FCS, F

The contents of fields SH, I, AM and C are identical to those of corresponding fields of the command message intercepted by the channel. Field CH contains an 8-bit byte specifying the address of the channel that received the command message. After transmitting the supervisory message, base modem 46B waits for a supervisory message containing the report message from remote multichannel modem 48. Upon receiving a startup sequence, modem 48 waits for the end of the sequence, then

monitors the incoming train of bits to determine whether a supervisory message, as indicated by a supervisory header, is present. Such a message, if detected, is stored in modem 48 for analysis. If its address is not contained in the modem address field (AM), modem 48 ignores the content of the message; if it is contained in field AM, the modem checks the validity of the command message (format, command byte, parameters, FCS, etc). If the message is found to be invalid, the modem generates a report message identifying the reasons for this condition and transmits it over the line to local multichannel modem 46 by means of a supervisory message. If the command message is found to be valid, modem 48 decodes the command to determine whether or not it involves its base modem. If the command only involves a channel whose address is contained in field CH, the base modem transfers the command message to that channel. The channel then executes the command, provides a report message and transfers it to base modem 48B, which transmits it over the line by means of a supervisory message. If the command involves the base modem, the base modem executes the command and generates a report message which it then sends over the line by means of a supervisory message whose format is as follows:

F, SH, CH, I, AM, C, DR, FCS, F

The contents of fields SH, CH, I, AM and C are identical to those of corresponding fields of the received command message, and field DR contains the report from the remote modem. The supervisory message is sent in the supervisory mode to local modem 46 within a supervisory sequence similar to that received from the local modem.

At local multichannel modem 46, if no report message is received within a predetermined time interval and if the logic level of bit 5 (E) in the identifier of the command message from the DTE does not allow the command to be repeated, the base modem generates a report message indicating "no report received". If an erroneous supervisory message is received over the line and if the logic level of said bit 5 (E) does

not allow the command to be repeated, the base modem generates a report message indicating an "erroneous report" condition. If no report message is received within a predetermined time interval, or if an erroneous supervisory message is received over the line while the logic level of bit 5 (E) does allow the command to be repeated, the base modem resets that bit 5 and then retransmits the supervisory message. If a supervisory message containing a report message and no errors is received within the prescribed time interval, the base modem generates a report message based upon the received supervisory message and transfers it to the channel whose address is contained in field CH for transmission to the DTE over its RD line. This type of control of a remote multichannel modem is illustrated in FIG. 6.

(2) Data Mode Transmission of Command Messages

Where the command message intercepted by the channel is to be transmitted in the data mode, the channel transmits at the normal data rate the command message received in the train of data bits and waits for a report message from the remote modem. At the remote multichannel modem 48, each channel monitors the train of bits from base modem 48B. When a channel detects header H, it determines whether the address of modem 48 is contained in modem address field AM. If it is not, the channel ignores the content of the message; if it is, the channel intercepts and stores the command message, and transmits forced 1 bits over its RD line. The channel then checks the validity of the command message (format, command byte, parameters, FCS, etc). If the message is found to be invalid, the channel supplies a report message identifying the reasons for this condition and transmits it over the line in the data mode. If the command message is valid, the command is decoded. If the command only relates to the channel, the channel executes the command and provides a report message which it then transmits over the line in the data mode. If the command relates to base modem 48B, the channel transfers the command message thereto and waits for a report message therefrom. The command is executed in the base modem, which

generates a report message and transfers same to the channel for transmission over the line in the data mode. This type of control of a modem is illustrated in FIG. 7.

Control of Second-Level Modems in a Two-Level Link

The second-level modems in a two-level link, for example modems 54 and 58 connected to channel A of multichannel modem 48, can be controlled as follows. Remote primary modem 54 connected to channel A of modem 48 is controlled by DTE 10 as briefly described hereafter and as shown in FIG.8. DTE 10 transmits over channel A in the data mode a command message of the local command type that contains the address of remote primary modem 54, but not the addresses of modems 46 and 48. Accordingly, neither of modems 46 and 48 will intercept the command message, which will be received directly by modem 54 and processed by that modem in the same manner as if it were directly attached to DTE 10. Modem 54 will respond to the command by sending a report message to DTE 10 through channel A.

Remote secondary modem 58 connected to channel A of modems 46 and 48 is under the control of DTE 10 as briefly described below and as illustrated in FIG.9. DTE 10 transmits over channel A in the data mode a remote command/supervisory mode type of command message containing the addresses of remote modems 54 and 58, but not those of modems 46 and 48. Consequently, neither of modems 46 and 48 will intercept the command message, which will be received directly and intercepted by remote primary modem 54. The message will be processed in the same manner as it would have been by modem 30. If valid, the command message will have its format changed by modem 54 into a supervisory message that will be transmitted to the remote secondary modem in the supervisory mode. Upon receiving a report message from modem 58, modem 54 will generate a report message and transmit it to DTE 10 through channel A.

Detailed Description

The invention will now be described in detail by means of typical command and report messages, referring initially to FIG.10 which illustrates an exemplary embodiment of a modem incorporating the invention. Only those elements which are essential to the invention have been shown. The modem illustrated in FIG.10 is mainly comprised of a test command interface contained within the dashed outline 100, a transmitter and a receiver shown as blocks respectively labeled XMIT and RCV, a test controller 101, and a configuration controller 102. Transmitter XMIT, receiver RCV and controllers 101 and 102 are widely used in modems, and only those components thereof which are necessary for a full understanding of the invention will be described below. Line TD is connected in test command interface 100 to one of the two inputs of a switch 104 whose output is applied to one input of an OR gate 106. The output of OR gate 106 is connected to a line labeled TDO which leaves the interface and is connected to the input of transmitter XMIT. Line TD is also connected to the serial input of a SDLC adapter 108 which has its serial output connected by a line 110 to the other input of switch 104, its parallel input connected to a bus 112, and its parallel output connected to a command buffer register 114. SDLC adapter 108 is a commercially available, conventional device that can operate either in the receive mode or in the transmit mode. In the receive mode, the SDLC adapter, upon detecting a frame delimiter denoting the start of a SDLC frame, removes the extra zeros from the train of bits being received, in accordance with SDLC rules, analyses the bytes of remaining bits until a delimiter indicating the end of a frame is detected, and then checks the Frame Check Sequence (FCS). In the transmit mode, the SDLC adapter generates the start-of-frame delimiter, inserts zeros in the train of bits to be transmitted, and then generates the FCS and the end-of-frame delimiter. Buffer register 114 is coupled to a command encoder/decoder 116 connected to SDLC adapter 108 by means of a validation line 118 and a non validation line 120, and whose output is connected to the other input of OR

gate 106 by a line 122. Encoder/decoder 116 may consist of any binary encoder/decoder capable of selectively activating its outputs according to the content of command buffer register 114. The latter is coupled by a bus 124 to a report buffer register 126 whose output is connected to the parallel input of a SDLC adapter 128 identical to SDLC adapter 108. The serial input of SDLC adapter 128 is connected to a line labeled RDO which connects the output of receiver RCV to one of the two inputs of a switch 132 whose output is connected to line RD. The parallel output from SDLC adapter 128 is applied to a receive buffer register 134 coupled to an encoder/decoder 136 similar to encoder/decoder 116 and connected to SDLC adapter 128 by a validation line 138 and a non validation line 140. Bus 124 and the output of receive buffer register 134 are both connected by buses 142 and 144 to the inputs of a gate 146 whose output is applied via a bus 148 to the input register 150 of test controller 101. The output register 152 of test controller 101 has its output connected via buses 154 and 156 to report register 126 and to a supervisory message register 158. Test controller 101 has an output connected via a line 160 to transmitter XMIT, to the control input of switch 104, and to the transmit mode control input of SDLC adapter 108. Test controller 101 has another output connected via a line 162 to one of the two inputs of an OR gate 164 whose output is applied to the transmit mode control input of SDLC adapter 128 and to the control input of switch 132. Another output of test controller 101 is connected to line TI. Encoder/decoder 116 has an output connected via a bus 168 to report register 126, another output connected via a line 170 to the other input of OR gate 164, and another output connected via a line 172 to one of the two inputs of an OR gate 174 whose output is applied via a line 176 to test controller 101. Encoder/decoder 136 has an output connected via a line 178 to the other input of OR gate 174, and another output connected via a line 180 to test controller 101. The output from output register 152 of test controller 101 is applied to input register 182 of configuration controller 102, which is provided with an output register 184 and is connected

to a configuration register 186. Test controller 101 is additionally connected to a clock 188.

Commands Received From DTE

In the data mode of operation, the data bits from the DTE to which a modem is attached are conventionally sent to that modem over the TD line. These bits travel through switch 104 and OR gate 106 and are then applied to the transmitter (XMIT) of the modem. In a known manner, the transmitter converts the data bits into analog signals suitable for transmission over the transmission line labeled 32T. The data bits from the DTE are also applied to SDLC adapter 108 which, unless a signal to the contrary has been generated, operates in the receive mode. Upon detecting a start-of-frame delimiter, SDLC adapter 108 eliminates the extra zeros from the train of bits being received, in accordance with the SDLC procedure, and loads the successive bytes of remaining bits in command buffer register 114. Upon detecting a command header, H, in the train of bits being loaded in buffer register 114, encoder/decoder 116 waits for the receipt of the modem address field, AM, of the command message and decodes the address contained therein. If field AM does not contain the address of the modem mentioned earlier, the command message is ignored. If it does, encoder/decoder 116 forces the output of OR gate 106 to a logical 1 value, thereby causing 1 bits to be produced by transmitter XMIT, then waits until SDLC adapter has determined whether the received command message is valid or invalid. In the latter case, SDLC adapter 108 supplies a high level over line 120 to encoder/decoder 116, which responds thereto by causing the contents of fields A, N, I, AM and C of the received command message previously stored in buffer register 114 to be transferred to predetermined positions of a report register 126; by generating a detection byte SB specifying that the received command message is invalid and a byte L specifying the number of bytes in the report message; and by loading said bytes SB and L into report register 126. At this time, register 126 contains the following report message:

A, N, L, K, I, AM, C, SB

Byte K, having a constant value of '50', is pre-loaded in report register 126. The report message contained in register 126 is then transferred to SDLC adapter 128, which goes to the Transmit mode upon receipt of an appropriate signal X1 sent by encoder/decoder 116 over line 170 and which generates a SDLC frame from the contents of report register 126 and transmits it over line RD to the DTE through switch 132, which is set to the appropriate position by signal X1. On the other hand, if the command message from the DTE is found to be valid, SDLC adapter 108 supplies a high level over line 118 to encoder/decoder 116, which responds thereto by supplying the test controller 101 of the modem via line 172 with a low level representative of a test request and by causing the contents of fields A, N, I, AM, C of the received command message previously stored in buffer register 114 to be transferred to report register 126 and to the input register 150 of test controller 101. Upon detecting the test request signal, test controller 101 decodes command code C of the command message stored in input register 150. The command code may specify a local command, a remote command, or a local/remote command.

Local Commands

If the command code specifies a local command, test controller 101 causes the command specified by command code C to be executed and then loads the result, that is, the content of field D of the report message, into register 152. In addition, test controller 101 generates the contents of fields SB and L of the report message and loads them into register 152. The content of register 152 is then transferred to report register 126 which, at this time, contains the following report message:

A, N, L, K, I, AM, C, SB, D

This report message is then transferred to SDLC adapter 128 which is set to the transmit mode of operation by a signal X2

sent by test controller 101 over line 162 and which generates from the content of report register 126 a SDLC frame that is transferred to the DTE over line RD through switch 132. If the command code specifies a local configuration command, the test controller transfers the command message in register 150 to input register 182 of configuration controller 102 through its output register 152. After the configuration command has been executed, configuration controller 102 loads its report in its output register 184 whose content is transferred to test controller 101, which derives therefrom the report message and transmits it to the DTE as explained earlier.

For example, consider the type of local command termed "Local Self-Test". The command message that carries this command has the following format:

F, A, N, H, I, AM, '11', FCS, F

where the command code '11' specifies a "Local Self-Test" command. The corresponding report message has the following format:

A, N, L, K, I, AM, '01', SB, D

where field D, representative of the result of the execution of the command, includes the following byte:

bit 0	0
bit 1	Successful/Unsuccessful test
bit 2	0
bit 3	Coupler in error
bit 4	Multiplexing device in error
bit 5	0
bit 6	Base modem in error
bit 7	0

As another example, consider the type of local configuration command termed "Read Local Configuration", which is used to

read the configuration of the local modem. The command message that carries this command has the following format:

F, A, N, H, I, AM, '25', CF1, ..., CFn, FCS, F

where the command code '25' specifies "Read Local Configuration", and where fields CF1, ..., CFn specify the areas of the configuration register that are to be read out. Each of these fields is one byte long and can contain, for example, the following information:

CF = '40' Product description
 '41' Manufacturing description
 '42' Transmission speed
 '43' Base modem configuration
 '44' Multiplexing parameters
 '45' Alarm thresholds
 '46' Coupler parameters
 '47' Coupler description
 '4A' Stored telephone number
 '4B' Customer information

The report message corresponding to this command has the following configuration:

A, N, L, K, I, AM, '25', SB, CF1,
 A1, D1, ...CFn, An, Dn, FCS, F

where D1, ...Dn represent the contents of fields CF1, ...CFn that have been read out, and A1, ..., An are one-byte attributes of fields CF1, ..., CFn. These attributes may contain the following codes:

- 0 This field is applicable to the addressed modem, has been initialized and is valid.
- 1 This field has not been initialized.
- 2 The content of this field is invalid.
- 3 This field necessitates an option that has not been installed.

- 4 This field is not applicable to this modem.

Remote Commands/Supervisory Mode

If the command code specifies a remote command/supervisory mode (bit 1(M) of the identifier being zero), test controller 101 causes the contents of fields I, AM and C of the received command message to be transferred from input register 150 to supervisory message register 158 and generates supervisory header SH which it then loads into register 158 via output register 152. Test controller 101 then supplies transmitter XMIT with a Supervisory Mode signal X3 over line 160. In response thereto, XMIT stops transmitting data over the line, then starts transmitting a startup sequence TS. Switch 104 inhibits all communications between line TD and XMIT, and SDLC adapter 108 is set to the transmit mode of operation. The supervisory message in register 158 is sent to adapter 108 for conversion into a SDLC frame, which is then applied through switch 104 and OR gate 106 to XMIT to be transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud time by means, for example, of a differential biphase modulation technique. Test controller 101 initializes clock 188, which determines a time-out for a supervisory message containing a report from the remote modem. If no such message is received within the allotted time interval and if the logic level of bit 5 (E) of the identifier of the command message from the DTE, as stored in register 150, allows no repetition of the command, then test controller 101 prepares a "no report received" type of report message and loads that message into register 152, for subsequent transmission to report register 126 and the DTE, as has been explained. If no supervisory message is received within said time interval while said bit 5 (E) does allow the command to be repeated, then test controller 101 causes the supervisory message in register 158 to be retransmitted.

The signals received over transmission line 32R are fed to receiver RCV in which they are converted, in conventional fashion, into bits transmitted to the DTE through switch 132 over line RD. Upon detecting a startup sequence in the signals

received over the transmission line, receiver RCV goes to a receive rate of one bit per baud time at the end of the startup sequence. Upon detecting a start-of-frame delimiter, SDLC adapter 128, which operates in the receive mode unless a signal to the contrary has been generated, removes all zeros from the train of bits being received and loads the successive bytes of remaining bits into the receive buffer register 134. After receiving a complete frame, encoder/decoder 136 decodes address field AM of the message contained in buffer register 134. If the address in field AM is not that of the modem, the received message is ignored; if it is, encoder/decoder 136 waits until SDLC adapter 128 has determined whether the message is valid or invalid. In the latter case, SDLC adapter 128 supplies a high level on line 140, and encoder/decoder 142 informs controller 101 accordingly by supplying a signal on line 180. Test controller 101 determines the logic level of bit 5 (E) of the identifier in the command message stored in register 150 and, if that level does not allow the command to be repeated, generates a report message denoting an "erroneous report" condition and stores it in register 152. This message is then transferred to report register 126 and to the DTE in the manner previously described. If the logic level of bit 5 (E) does allow the command to be repeated, controller 101 causes the supervisory message stored in register 158 to be retransmitted in the supervisory mode. If, on the other hand, the received message is determined to be valid, SDLC adapter supplies a high level on line 138, and encoder/decoder 136 decodes the message in receive register 134. If it is a report message, the message is transferred to register 150 and controller 101 derives therefrom fields L, SB and DR, which are then loaded into register 152 and transferred to report register 126. The format of the report message is as follows:

A, N, L, K, I, AM, C, SB, DR

The report message is fed to SDLC adapter 128 which derives from the content of report register 126 a SDLC frame which is then sent to the DTE over line RD.

For example, the command message that carries the "Remote Self-Test" type of remote command/supervisory mode has the following format:

F, A, N, H, I, AM, '19', FCS, F

where command code '19' specifies the "Remote Self-Test" command. The format of the corresponding report message is given below:

A, N, L, K, I, AM, '19', DR.

Field DR is one byte long and is similar to field D of the report message associated with the "Local Self-Test" command.

Local/Remote Commands

If the command code specifies a local/remote command, such as "Status of Local/Remote Modem" to be described later, test controller 101 causes the received command to be sent over the transmission line in the supervisory mode by means of a supervisory message, as in the case of a remote command/supervisory mode, but, pending receipt of the supervisory message containing the report from the addressed remote modem, executes the local command and loads the local report, DL, into report register 126. Upon receipt of said supervisory message, test controller 101 generates fields SB and L of the report message and loads both fields, together with the report, DR, from the addressed remote modem, into register 126. If the addressed remote modem fails to respond within the allotted time interval, field DR will contain an all-zero byte, in which case the report message in register 126 will have the following format:

F, A, N, L, K, I, AM, C, SB, DL, DR, FCS, F

This report message will then be transmitted to the DTE over line RD through SDLC adapter 128 and switch 132. For example,

the command message that carries the "Status of Local/Remote Modem" type of local/remote command has the following format:

F, A, N, H, I, AM, '1A', FCS, F

where command code '1A' specifies the command. This command is used to read the line quality parameters at the transmitting and receiving ends. The report message corresponding to this command has the following format:

F, A, N, L, K, I, AM, '1A', SB, DL, DR, FCS, F

Field DL, representing the report from the local modem, is comprised of four bytes, as noted below:

<u>Byte 0:</u>	bits 0-5	Count of receive errors
	bit 6	Reinitialization of modem
	bit 7	Loss of carrier
<u>Byte 1:</u>	bits 0-3	Quality of data
	bit 4	Detection of power-off condition of remote modem
	bit 5	Detection of power failure at remote modem
	bit 6	Switched network backup
	bit 7	Detection of streaming condition of remote modem
<u>Byte 2:</u>	bit 0	Receive level off-specs
	bit 1	Data quality off-specs
	bits 2-7	Receive level
<u>Byte 3:</u>	bit 0	Speed control mode
	bit 1	Contact closed
	bit 2	Second-level modem connected
	bit 3	Receive error off-specs
	bit 4	Non significant receive error
	bit 5	Non significant drop in data quality
	bit 6	Intervention necessary in the

configuration

bit 7 Loss of nonessential information

Field DR, representing the report from the remote modem, is comprised of four bytes as noted below:

Byte 0: bits 0-5 Count of receive errors
 bit 6 Reninitialization of modem
 bit 7 Loss of carrier

Byte 1: bits 0-3 Quality of data
 bit 4 0
 bit 5 0
 bit 6 Switched network backup
 bit 7 Detection of streaming condition at
 remote modem

Byte 2: bit 0 Receive level off-specs
 bit 1 Data quality off-specs
 bits 2-7 Receive level

Byte 3: bit 0 Speed control mode
 bit 1 Contact closed
 bit 2 Second-level modem connected
 bit 3 Receive level off-specs
 bit 4 Non significant receive error
 bit 5 Non significant drop in data quality
 bits 6-7 00

Commands Received From the Transmission Line

If the message received from the transmission line is a command message, encoder/decoder 136 sends a test request signal over line 178 to test controller 101 and transfers the received command message to input register 150 and supervisory message register 158. Upon detecting the test request signal, controller 101 reads out the content of register 150, activates line TI to inform the DTE to which it is attached that it is about to perform a test, and executes the command

in register 150. If the command is a configuration command, it is transferred to configuration controller 102, which sends a report message to test controller 101. When the command has been executed, test controller 101 loads the result of the execution of the command, that is, the content of field DR of the report message, into register 152. The content of register 152 is then transferred to register 158, whose content is in turn sent over the transmission line in the supervisory mode of operation through SDLC adapter 108, switch 104, gate 106 and transmitter XMIT.

FIG.11 shows an exemplary embodiment of a multichannel modem incorporating the invention. Only those elements necessary for a full understanding of the invention are illustrated. The modem shown comprises four channels A-D, a multiplexing/demultiplexing device DMPX consisting of multiplexers/demultiplexers MPX, and a base modem. Four channel test control interfaces 200A-200D are respectively associated with the four channels A-D. For simplicity, only one of these interfaces, 200A, is shown in detail in FIG.11. Interface 200A has an input line TDA connected to as one input to a switch 204 whose output is applied as one input to an OR gate 206 which has its output applied as an input to the base modem over an output line TDAO of interface 200A. Input line TDA is also connected to the serial input of a SDLC adapter 208 which has its parallel input connected to a bus 212 and whose serial and parallel outputs are respectively connected to the other input of switch 204 and to a command buffer register 214. SDLC adapter 208 is similar to the SDLC adapters of FIG.10. Buffer register 214 is coupled to an encoder/decoder 216 connected to SDLC adapter 208 via a validation line 218 and a non validation line 220 and which has an output connected to the other input of OR gate 206 via a line 222. Command buffer register 214 is connected via a bus 224 to a report buffer register 226 whose output is connected to the parallel input of a SDLC adapter 228 identical to SDLC adapter 208. The serial output of SDLC adapter 228 is connected to one of the two inputs of a switch 232 whose other input is connected to a line RDAO from the base modem and

whose output is connected to line RDA through an AND gate 233. Bus 224 is connected via a bus 248 to input register 250 of channel test controller 201, whose output register 252 has its output connected via a bus 254 to report register 226. Test controller 201 has an output connected via a line 260 to the control input of switch 204 and to the transmit mode control input of SDLC adapter 208, and has another output connected through a line 262 and an OR gate 264 to the transmit mode control input of SDLC adapter 228 and to the control input of switch 232. Encoder/decoder 216 has an output connected via a bus 268 to report register 226, and two other outputs respectively connected to the other input of OR gate 264 via a line 270 and to test controller 201 via a line 272. Test controller 201 is connected to the base modem via a modem test request line 290A and via a channel test request line 292A. Input register 250 and output register 252 are respectively connected to the base modem via buses 294A and 296A. Line TDAO and corresponding lines TDB0-TDD0 of interfaces 200B-200D are connected to a multiplexer 300 whose output is connected to line TD of the base modem. Similarly, line RDAO and corresponding lines RDB0-RDD0 of interfaces 200B-200D are connected to the outputs of a demultiplexer 302 whose input is connected to line RD of the base modem. The base modem and the modem of FIG.10 have a number of elements in common. For simplicity, elements which are common to FIGS. 10 and 11 are assigned the same numerals. Line TD is connected to one of the two inputs of a switch 104 whose output is connected via a line TDO to the input of the transmitter XMIT of the base modem. The output of the receiver RCV of the base modem is connected via line RDO to the serial input of a SDLC adapter 128 whose parallel output is connected to a receive buffer register 134. The latter is coupled to an encoder/decoder 136 connected to SDLC adapter 128 via a validation line 138 and a non validation line 140. The output of buffer register 134 is connected via a bus 144 to the input of a gate 304 whose output is connected to input register 150 of test controller 101. The other input of gate 304 is connected via a bus 306 to bus 296A and to corresponding buses 296B-296D of interfaces 200B-200D. The output register 152 of test controller 101 has

its output connected via a bus 156 to a supervisory message register 158 and via a bus 308 to bus 294A and to corresponding buses 294B-294D of interfaces 200B-200D. The output of register 158 is connected via a bus 112 to the parallel input of a SDLC adapter 108 which has its serial output connected to the other input of switch 104. Test controller 101 has an output connected to transmitter XMIT via a line 160, as well as to the control input of switch 104 and to the transmit mode control input of SDLC adapter 108. Test controller 101 has another output connected via a line 162 to the transmit mode control input of SDLC adapter 128, and is connected to lines 290A and 292A and to corresponding lines 290B-290D and 292B-292D of interfaces 200B-200D as well as to lines TIA-TID. Line RDO is connected to one of the two inputs of an OR gate 310 whose other input is connected via a line 312 to test controller 101 and whose output is connected to line RD. Output register 152 of test controller 101 is also connected to the input register 182 of a configuration controller 102 whose output register 184 is connected to input register 150 of test controller 101 and which is coupled to a configuration register 186. Test controller 101 is connected to a clock 188.

Commands Received From DTE

In the data mode of operation, the data bits sent over channel A by the DTE to which the modem is attached are conventionally applied to that modem via line TDA. The data bits are then fed through switch 204, gate 206 and line TDAO to multiplexer 300 where they are multiplexed together with the bits on channels B-D to form a composite train of bits that is fed to transmitter XMIT of the base modem to be sent over the transmission line. The data bits on line TDA are also fed to SDLC adapter 208 which operates in the receive mode unless a signal to the contrary has been generated. Upon detecting a start-of-frame delimiter, SDLC adapter 208 removes the extra zeros from the train of bits being received and loads the successive bytes of remaining bits into command buffer register 214. Upon detecting a command header H in the train of bits

being loaded in buffer register 214, encoder/decoder 214 waits for address field AM of the command message to be received and then decodes the address contained in that field. If this address is not that of the modem, the command message is ignored. If field AM does contain the address of the modem, encoder/decoder 216 forces the output from OR gate 206 to a logical 1 value, thereby causing 1 bits to be transmitted over channel A, then waits for SDLC adapter 208 to determine whether the received command message is valid or invalid. In the latter case, SDLC adapter 208 supplies a high level over line 220 to encoder/decoder 216, which responds thereto by causing fields A, N, I, AM and C of the received command message stored in buffer register 214 to be transferred to predetermined positions of report register 226, and by then generating a detection byte SB specifying that the received command message is invalid and a byte L specifying the number of bytes in the report message, and loading said bytes SB and L into register 226. The report message in register 226 is then applied to SDLC adapter 228, which is set to the transmit mode by an appropriate signal supplied by encoder/decoder 216 over line 270 and which generates from the content of register 226 a SDLC frame that is sent to the DTE through line RDA and switch 232. If, on the other hand, the command message is found to be valid, SDLC adapter 208 supplies a high level over line 218 to encoder/decoder 216, which responds thereto by sending a test request signal to the test controller 201 of the channel over line 172 and by transferring fields A, N, I, AM and C of the command message stored in buffer register 214 to report register 226 and to input register 150 of test controller 101. Upon detecting the test request signal, test controller 101 decodes command code C of the command message stored in input register 150. The command code may specify a local command, a remote command, or a local/remote command

Local Commands

If the command code specifies a local command, the command may or may not relate to the base modem. In the latter case, test controller 201 causes the command specified by command code C

to be executed and loads the result of the execution of the command, that is, the content of field D of the report message, into register 252. In addition, test controller 101 generates the contents of fields SB and L of the report message and loads them into register 252. The content of register 252 is then transferred to register 226. The report message contained in register 226 is then applied to SDLC adapter 228, which is set to the transmit mode by an appropriate signal supplied by test controller 101 over line 262 and which generates a SDLC frame from the content of report register 226. The SDLC frame is then sent to the DTE over line RDA through switch 232 and OR gate 233. If the command concerns the base modem, test controller 201 supplies a test request signal over line 290A and transfers the command to the test controller 101 of the base modem through its output register 252, bus 296A, bus 306, gate 304 and input register 150. Test controller 101 causes the command specified by command code C to be executed and stores the result of the execution of the command, that is, the content of field D of the report message, into output register 152. In addition, test controller generates the contents of fields SB and L of the report message and stores them in register 152. The content of register 152 is then transferred to test controller 201 via buses 308 and 294A to be loaded in its input register 250. Test controller 201 detects the report from the base modem and transfers it to report register 226. The report message in register 226 is then supplied to SDLC adapter 228, which is set to the transmit mode of operation by an appropriate signal sent over line 262 by test controller 201, and which derives a SDLC frame from the content of register 226. The SDLC frame is then sent to the DTE over line RDA through switch 232 and OR gate 233.

Remote Commands/Supervisory Mode

If the command code specifies a remote command to be transmitted in the supervisory mode of operation (with identifier bit 1(M) being zero), test controller 201 transfers the command received from the DTE to the test controller 201

of the base modem, as has been described. Upon detecting a remote command to be transmitted in the supervisory mode, test controller 101 causes the command message to be transferred from input register 150 to supervisory message register 158, and generates supervisory header SH and channel address CH, both of which it then loads in register 158 through its output register 152. Test controller 1091 sends a supervisory mode signal to transmitter XMIT over line 160. In response thereto, XMIT stops transmitting data over the line and starts transmitting a startup sequence TS, switch 104 interrupts all communications between line TD and XMIT, and SDLC adapter 108 is set to the transmit mode of operation. The supervisory message in register 158 is applied to SDLC adapter 108, which converts it into a SDLC frame. The SDLC frame is then applied through switch 104 to XMIT and transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud time. Test controller 101 initializes clock 188, which determines a specific time interval within which a report message is to be received from the remote modem, and takes the action described earlier if no such message is received before that time interval has elapsed. If the base modem receives a valid report message from the remote modem, encoder/decoder 136 decodes the message contained in receive buffer register 134. If it is a report message, the message is transferred to register 150 and controller 101 derives therefrom fields L, SB and DR, which are then loaded into register 152 and transferred to the buffer register 226 of the channel. The report message is next applied to SDLC adapter 228 which derives from the content of report register 226 a SDLC frame which it then transmits to the DTE over line RDA.

Remote Commands/Data Mode

If the command code specifies a remote command to be transmitted in the data mode of operation (with identifier bit 1(M) being one), test controller 201 causes the received command stored in buffer register 214 to be sent over line TDA through SDLC adapter 208, switch 204 and OR gate 206.

Commands Received From the Transmission Line

Signals received from the transmission line are applied to receiver RCV and conventionally converted into a train of bits that is demultiplexed by demultiplexer 302 for transmission to the DTE over lines RDA-RDD. Upon detecting a startup sequence among the signals received from the transmission line, receiver RCV goes to a receive rate of one bit per baud time at the end of the startup sequence. Upon detecting a start-of-frame delimiter, SDLC adapter 128, which operates in the receive mode unless a signal to the contrary has been generated, eliminates the extra zeros from the train of bits being received and loads the successive bytes of remaining bits in receive buffer register 134. After receiving a complete frame, encoder/decoder 136 decodes the address field, AM, of the message contained in buffer register 134. If field AM does not contain the address of the modem, the received message is ignored; if it does, encoder/decoder 136 waits for SDLC adapter 128 to determine whether the message is valid or invalid. In the latter case, test controller 101 generates the various report messages, as has been seen. If found to be valid, the message is transferred by encoder/decoder 136 to test controller 101. If the message happens to be a command message, the test controller determines whether it does or does not involve a channel (if it does, an address is specified in field CH). If it only concerns the base modem, the command is dealt with by the controller in the manner previously described. If the command relates to a channel, say, channel A, the controller activates test request line 292A and transfers the command to channel test controller 201, which executes the command and generates a report message which it then transmits to test controller 101. The latter derives therefrom a supervisory message which it then sends in the supervisory mode over the transmission line through SDLC adapter 108 and transmitter XMIT.

Control of Multiplexing Configurations

If the DTE desires to make changes in the multiplexing configuration, as by modifying the distribution and/or speed of the active channels, it sends to the multichannel modem attached thereto, over any one of the channels, a command called Write Local Configuration as described below. The command message that carries this command has the following format:

F, A, N, H, I, AM, '26', CF, D, FCS, F

where command code '26' specifies the command Write Local Configuration, field CF contains an 8-bit byte whose value is '44' (see the command Read Local Configuration, previously described), and field D is comprised of three bytes, as noted below:

<u>Byte 0</u>	bits 0-3: 0000 bits 4-7: Number of the external clock to be activated.
<u>Byte 1</u>	Number of the multiplexing configuration to be used at nominal speed.
<u>Byte 2</u>	Number of the multiplexing configuration to be used at backup speed.

When a channel detects this command, it transfers the command to the test controller 101 of the base modem, which identifies it and transfers it in its turn to configuration controller 102, or more precisely to the input register 182 thereof. The configuration controller compares the content of field D with that of configuration register 186 which specifies the number of the current multiplexing configuration. If the contents of registers 182 and 186 match, no action is taken. If they do not, this means that a configuration change is being requested, and configuration controller 102 signals the fact

to test controller 101, which sends the received command to the remote modem by means of a supervisory message transmitted in the supervisory mode and waits for the same supervisory message to be returned by the remote modem as an acknowledgment. If no such acknowledgment is received within a predetermined time interval, the modem may or may not retransmit the message from the DTE, as has been seen. If the acknowledgment is received before the allotted time interval has elapsed, the modem changes to the new configuration after a predetermined reaction time has elapsed.



CLAIMS

1. Local control modem for monitoring a network of modems which comprises a data terminal equipment (10), connected to the said control modem (14, 30, 46) by a data transmission path (TD) and a data reception path (RD) on which the data terminal equipment transmits and receives data and control messages respectively, and, a remote modem (16, 34, 36, 38, 48) linked to the said control modem by a transmission medium (18, 32, 50), each of the said modems operating in data mode with a transmission rate of n bits per baud, n being a positive integer greater than one, the said control modem comprising a processor having means for performing permanent checking of the contents of the messages received from the data terminal equipment on the data transmission path (TD), so as to detect the transmission by the data terminal equipment desiring to initiate a monitoring of the network of modems, on the data transmission path (TD), of a control message comprising a first means of identification (H), a means of addressing (AM), and a means of control (C);
- the said control modem being characterised in that the said processor comprises: a first means of storage of the control message received on the said data transmission path (TD) when the said control modem has detected in this message the presence of the first means of identification (H) and that of its own address in the means of addressing (AM),
- a means of generation, on the basis of the said control message, of a first supervision message comprising a



second means of identification (SH), and the means of addressing (AM) and the means of control (C) which were contained in the said control message, when the latter specifies a control signal for the said remote modem, and
5 a first means of transmission on the transmission medium of a start-up sequence, then of the said first supervision message, the said first supervision message being transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud whatever the rate of the data exchanged by the said control modem and
10 remote modem.

2. Control modem according to Claim 1, for monitoring a network of modems in which the said remote modem (16, 34, 36, 38, 48) comprises a processor having:

15 a means of reception of the start-up sequence transmitted by the said control modem,

a means of control for passing to reception at the rate of one bit per baud at the end of the reception of the start-up sequence, and the checking of the contents of the messages received from the said control modem after
20 the initialisation sequence, at the rate of one bit per baud,

a means of storage of the first supervision message received from the transmission medium when the said means of control has detected in this message the presence of the second means of identification (SH) and the address of the said control modem in the means of addressing (AM),
25

a means of execution of the control signal specified by the means of control (C) contained in the first supervision message received,
30

a means of preparation of a report containing the result of the execution of the control signal,

a means of generation of a second supervision message comprising the contents of the first supervision message received to which the report is added, and
35

a means of transmission on the transmission medium of a start-up sequence and of the second supervision message, the said second supervision message being transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud whatever the rate of the



data exchanged by the said control modem and remote modem.

3. Control modem according to Claim 2 in which the said processor comprises:

- 5 a means of reception of the start-up sequence transmitted by the said remote modem (16, 34, 36, 38, 48),
a means of control for passing to reception at the rate of one bit per baud at the end of the reception of the start-up sequence transmitted by the said remote modem
10 and the checking of the contents of the messages received from the said modem, at the rate of one bit per baud,
a second means of storage of the second supervision message received from the transmission medium when the said control modem has detected in this message the
15 presence of the said second means of identification (SH) and that of its own address in the means of addressing (AM),
a means of detection of the report from the said remote modem contained in the second supervision message
20 received,
a means of preparation of a report message containing the result of the execution of the control signal on the basis of the second supervision message received from the said remote modem, and
25 a second means of transmission of the report message by the said control modem to the data terminal equipment on the data reception path (RD) of the data terminal equipment.

- 30 4. Control modem according to Claim 1, for monitoring a network of modems in which, when the control message received by the said control modem and originating from the data terminal equipment is in error, the said means of preparation of the said control modem prepares a report message specifying the errors contained
35 in the control message received, and
the said second means of transmission of the said control modem transmits a report message to the data terminal equipment on the data reception path (RD) of the data terminal equipment.



5. Control modem according to Claim 3, for monitoring a network of modems in which, if no second supervision message containing a report from the said modem and originating from the latter is received after
5 a predetermined waiting time,

the said means of preparation of the said control modem prepares a report message specifying that no report from the said remote modem has been received, and
10 the said second means of transmission of the said control modem transmits a report message to the data terminal equipment on the data reception path (RD) of the data terminal equipment.

6. Local control modem for monitoring a network of modems which comprises a data terminal equipment (10),
15 connected to the said control modem (46) and a remote modem (48) linked to the said control modem by a transmission medium (50), each of the said modems comprising several channels (A-D) and a basic modem (46B, 48B) and exchanging bits of data between themselves at a transmission rate of n bits per baud, n being a positive
20 integer greater than one, the data terminal equipment being linked to each of the channels of the said control modem by a data transmission path (TDA, TDB, TDC, TDD) and a data reception path (RDA, RDB, RDC, RDD) on which
25 the data terminal equipment transmits and receives data and control messages respectively, the said control modem comprising a processor having means for performing permanent checking by the said control modem of the contents of the messages received from the data terminal
30 equipment on each of the data transmission paths (TDA, TDB, TDC, TDD) linked to the data terminal equipment, so as to detect the transmission by the data terminal equipment desiring to initiate a monitoring of the network of modems, on one of the data transmission paths
35 (TDA, TDB, TDC, TDD), of a control message comprising a first means of identification (H), a first means of addressing (AM), an indicator of transmission mode (M), and a means of control (C),
the said control modem being characterised in that the



said processor comprises:

a first means of storage of the control message received on one of the transmission paths (TDA, TDB, TDC, TDD) when the presence of the first means of identification (H) and that of the address of the said control modem have been detected in this message,

a means of generation, on the basis of the control message received, of a first supervision message comprising a second means of identification (SH), a second means of addressing (CH) identifying which of the channels of the said control modem has received the control message, and the first means of addressing (AM), the indicator of transmission mode (M) and the means of control (C) which were contained in the control message received, when the indicator of transmission mode specifies a first transmission mode, and the means of control specifies a control signal for the said remote modem, and

a first means of transmission on the transmission medium of a start-up sequence then of the first supervision message, the said first supervision message being transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud whatever the rate of the data exchanged by the said control modem and remote modem.

7. Control modem according to Claim 6 for monitoring a network of modems in which the said remote modem (48) comprises a processor having a means of reception of the start-up sequence transmitted by the said control modem (46),

a means of control for passing to reception at the rate of one bit per baud at the end of the reception of the start-up sequence, and the checking of the contents of the messages received from the said control modem after the initialisation sequence, at the rate of one bit per baud;

a means of storage of the first supervision message received from the transmission medium when the said remote modem has detected in this message the presence of the second means of identification (SH) and that of its



own address in the first means of addressing (AM),
a means of execution of the control signal specified by
the means of control contained in the first supervision
message received,

5 a means of preparation of a report containing the result
of the execution of the control signal,

a means of generation of a second supervision message
comprising the contents of the first supervision message
received to which the report is added, and

10 a means of successive transmission on the transmission
medium of a start-up sequence, then of the second
supervision message, the said second supervision message
being transmitted at the rate of one bit per baud what-
ever the rate of the data exchanged by the said control
15 modem and remote modem.

8. Control modem (46) according to Claim 7, in which
the said processor comprises:

a means of reception of the start-up sequence transmitted
by the said remote modem (48),

20 a means of control for passing to reception at the rate
of one bit per baud at the end of the reception of the
start-up sequence, and the checking of the contents of
the messages received from the said remote modem after
the initialisation sequence, at the rate of one bit per
25 baud,

a second means of storage of the second supervision
message received from the transmission medium when the
said control modem has detected in this message the
presence of the second means of identification (SH) and
30 that of its own address,

a means of detection of the report from the said remote
modem contained in the second supervision message
received,

35 a means of preparation of a report message containing the
result of the execution of the control signal on the
basis of the second supervision message received from the
said remote modem, and

a second means of transmission of the report message by
the said control modem on the data reception path (RDA,



- 7 -

RDB, RDC, RDD) of the channel which has received the control message from the data terminal equipment.

- 5 9. Control modem according to Claim 6, for monitoring a network of modems in which, when the indicator of transmission mode contained in the control message received by the said control modem (46) from the data terminal equipment specifies a second mode of transmission, the address of the channel which has received the control message is added to the control message received, and the control message thereby resulting is transmitted on the transmission medium in data mode.
- 10