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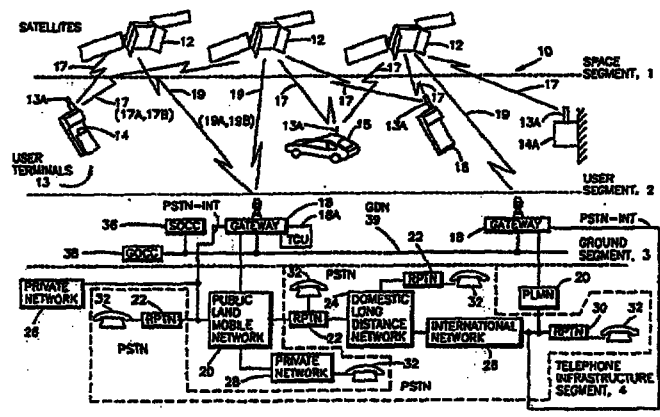
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(54) Title: **MULTIPLE SATELLITE REPEATER CAPACITY LOADING WITH MULTIPLE SPREAD SPECTRUM GATEWAY ANTENNAS**



(57) Abstract

A system (10) and method for allocating communication traffic through satellites (12) in low earth orbit. Each satellite is oriented, at any given time when in view of a ground station (18), at a particular elevation angle. The method includes: (a) providing each satellite with a receiver for receiving communication from the ground station and a transmitter for transmitting communication to user terminals (13); (b) in response to a request for service, determining if a highest elevation angle satellite can be assigned a new communication link; (c) if yes, assigning a new communication link to the highest elevation angle satellite; (d) if no, determining if a second highest elevation angle satellite can be assigned a new communication link; and (e) if yes, assigning a new communication link to the second highest elevation angle satellite. Assignability depends upon the number of communication links and/or beam power level of the satellite. Preferably, the user terminals employ diversity reception.

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