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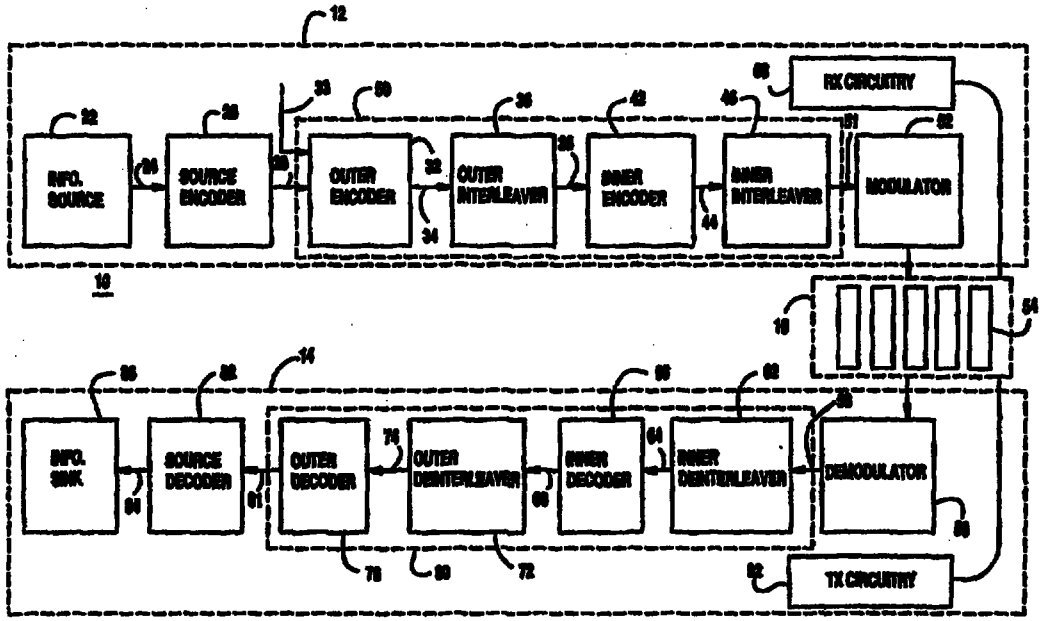
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(54) Title: APPARATUS, AND ASSOCIATED METHOD, FOR TRANSMITTING AND RECEIVING A MULTI-STAGE, ENCODED AND INTERLEAVED DIGITAL COMMUNICATION SIGNAL



(57) Abstract

Apparatus (50) and associated method for improving the radio link performance of a radio communication system, such as a cellular communication system (10). Multi-stage encoding (32, 42) and interleaving (36, 46) of the data bits of a digital information signal is performed at a single logical device, such as a radio base station (12). By performing two stages of interleaving (36, 46) over the same number of information frames of the data bits, only a single buffering state is required to perform such multi-stage interleaving.