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(54) Title: PAYPHONE METERING IN A WIRELESS TELEPHONE SYSTEM

(57) Abstract

The wireless system includes one or more payphones (12) from which users may initiate payphone calls. A mobile switching center (16) connects telephone calls initiated from wireless payphones to external telephone systems (18) such as the public switch telephone network (PSTN). To meter charges incurred during the telephone call within an external system, the external system transmits periodic metering pulses (52, 54) to the mobile switching center. Each pulse is representative of a predetermined amount of money associated with the telephone call. The rate at which the periodic pulses are transmitted to the mobile switching center depends upon the current billing rate and may be affected by, for example, the time of day. Rather than the forwarding all of the metering pulses to the wireless payphone, therefore consuming a portion of the bandwidth available for wireless telephone calls, the mobile switching center (16) calculates a steady state billing rate from the metering pulses, then transmits only the steady state billing rate to the wireless payphone (12).

