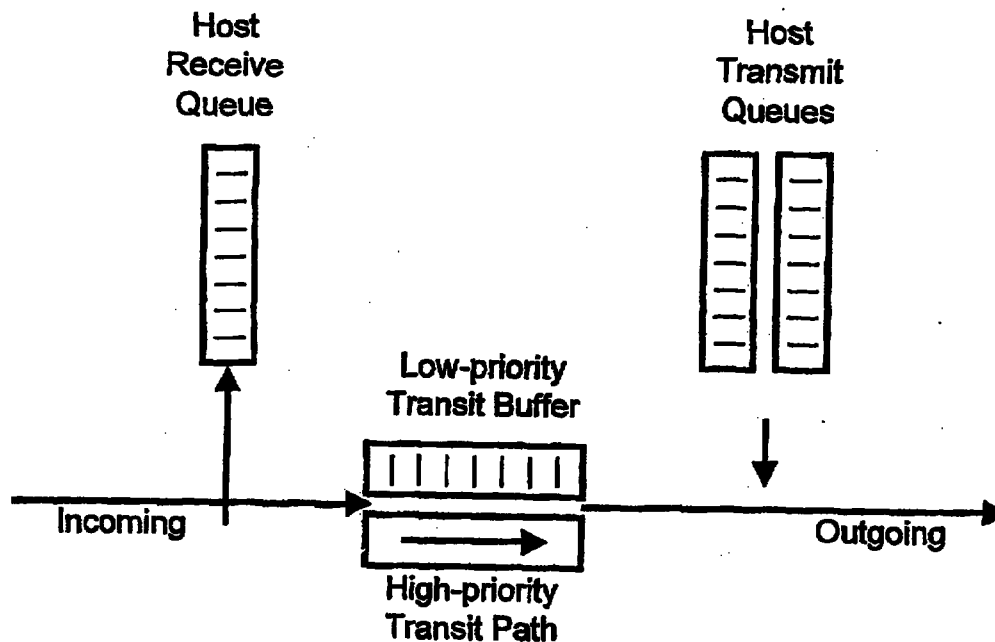




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(54) Title: OPTICAL COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK



(57) Abstract

In a communications network, a node receives a transit packet. The priority assigned to the transit packet is determined and when it has a low priority then the transit packet is removed and a higher priority packet is inserted in the resulting vacancy.