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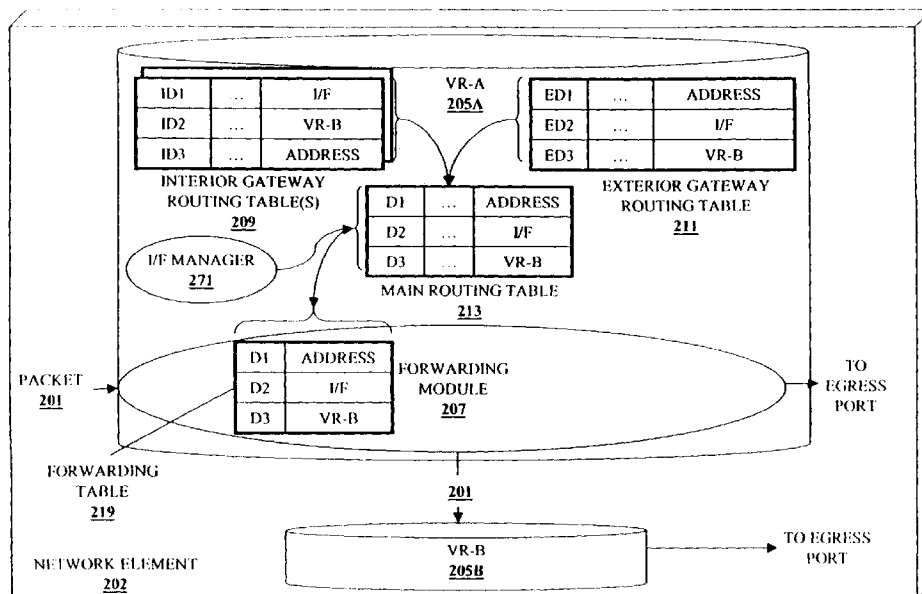
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ROUTING AND FORWARDING BETWEEN VIRTUAL ROUTERS WITHIN A SINGLE NETWORK ELEMENT



(57) Abstract: A method and apparatus for routing and forwarding between virtual routers is described. A method in a single network element comprises peering a first virtual router to a second virtual router, wherein the first and second virtual routers have separate address spaces and separate routing tables (205 A, B), distributing a set of one or more routes from the first virtual router to the second virtual router, wherein a first of the set of routes identifies the first virtual router as a next hop of the first route, said first route including a destination, and downloading to a set of one or more forwarding tables, the destination and the next hop.

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