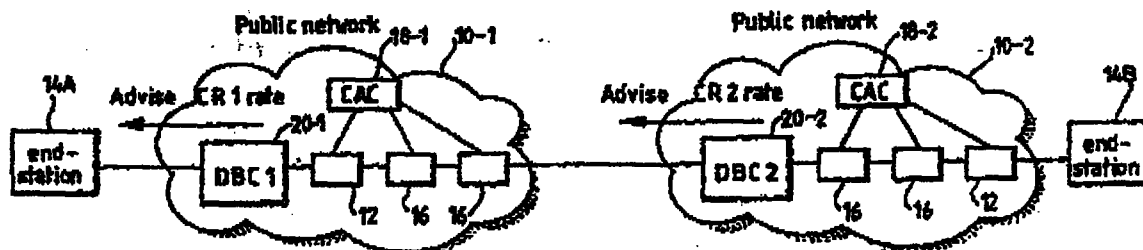


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(54) Title: BROADBAND SWITCHING NETWORK



(57) Abstract

In a broadband switching system for the switching of asynchronously transferred cells of data, a dynamic bandwidth controller (DBC) controls the application of data cells at an input port of the system, the data cells being supplied by a number of transmitting end-stations. The DBC detects incoming cells, identifies the source of the cells, provides buffering for the cells, and controls the output of the cells to the system switches according to a current cell rate (CR) assigned to the cells from the respective source. The system also includes a connection admission (CAC) module which determines bandwidth available in the system. The DBC and CAC operate together to maintain a permanent virtual path of a predetermined minimum bandwidth through the system and allocate additional bandwidth on demand up to a maximum. The additional bandwidth allocated to the path can be automatically removed or reduced if it is not used by the source. Feedback to the source can be provided to prevent cells being supplied at a rate which would result in significant cell loss due to the limitation of bandwidth available for the path in the system.