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#### **ORIGINAL ARTICLE**



### SOURCES OF RADIO LINK INTERFERENCES AND THEIRMITIGATION TECHNIQUES

#### M.L.S.N. SWARAJYA LAKSHMI AND NIRANJAN PRASAD

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#### Abstract:

One of the primary tasks of the network planning engineer will be to manage interference issues in the design. This does not necessarily mean that at the end of the design process, there will be no interference anywhere in the network, but rather that the prevalence of interference is minimized and, if unavoidable, is placed where it will do the least harm (for those technologies that allow this to be done). There are a number of ways to do this. Of which the most effective way is proper frequency assignment. In this paper we have tried to explore different sources of interferences ( i.e.,intra & inter)their schematic representations and mitigation techniques for reducing interference.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

interference;tetra;frequencyhopping;tracking;

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

The issues of intra-net interference in other words interference caused by othertransmitters in the same network. At the modeling of co-channel interference, where both the wanted system and the interferer are tuned to the same channel, and then extend this to look at interference from interferers tuned to other channels, and also at the composite effects of multiple interferers.

For most mobile networks, we will be examining uplink and downlink interference separately.

Interference is defined as unwanted contributions from other intended radio systems. This is distinct from noise, which is regarded as contributions from unintended radio frequency sources. We can split interference sources into different categories.

Intra-network interference, where interference is caused by other transmitters within the same network. In this case, we can assume that the interfering signal has the same properties as the victim system.

Inter-network interference from similar radio networks. This might be the case, forexample, where the coverage from two adjacent TETRA networks overlaps. Inter-network interference from dissimilar radio systems. In this case, we cannot that the interfering signal has the same characteristics as the victim system.

We split potential interferers in this way because we will use different techniques to assess the level of likely interference, particularly for the third case.

1. Interference in the Spectral Domain

#### **DIFFERENT INTERFERENCE SCENARIOS:**

On-channel interference (also known asco-channel interference).

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Figure 1 Interference Scenario for a point to point link

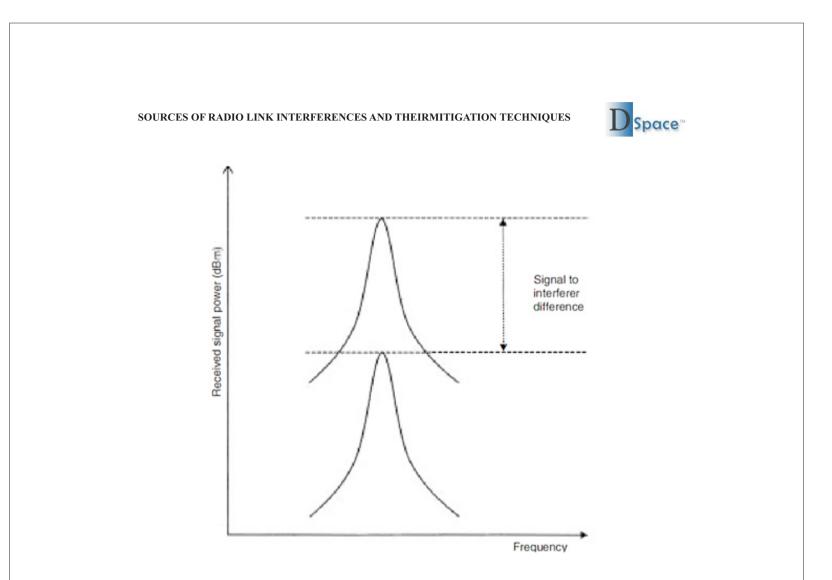


Figure 2:Co-channel signal to interferer level. For the example of TETRA, if the interferer is less than

19 dB lower than the wanted signal, then the wanted link will not function at the level prescribed by the interferer.

In general, it is highly undesirable to have re-used frequencies within potential interference range and normally the system designers will use frequency re-use to prevent this occurring in practice.

Interference in this case is considered such that into a base station and not the mobilesubscribers to the network. Interference from base stations to mobiles is unlikely tohappen because normally the uplink and downlink frequencies will be separated infrequency. For example, in the UK Airwave network, the difference between paireduplinks and downlinks is 10 MHz, and there is at least 5 MHz difference between the the closest uplink and downlink channels. Interference between mobiles is less likely sinceeach mobile is less powerful and is likely to be embedded in clutter. However, the same process as described above can be carried out for mobile to mobile interference.

#### 1.1 Adjacent and Other Channel Offset interference:

Interferers on other channelscan cause problems due to energy spilling over their channel into others. This is worstfor the immediate channel above and below the victim frequency. These channels areknown as 'adjacent channels'. To determine potential interference, we need to know the relative strength of energy in the adjacent channels and then proceed to determine the effect of that energy. The adjacent channel situation is shown in Figure 3.

If we consider channeln as the victim and channeln+ 1 as the interferer, it can be seen that although most of the energy is within its own channel, there is still a skirt of energy overflowing into the adjacent channel and beyond. It is this energy that causes adjacent channel interference. Although the level of energy spilled into other bands is relatively low compared to the main channel, it must be remembered that the power transmitted is significantly higher than the receive signal level and can still cause problems. This is particularly the case where transmitters and receivers are positioned in close proximity to one another. Most systems will give figures for the relative strength of interference into adjacent channels. For example, if the amount of energy radiated into the adjacent channel is 50 dB down on the peak

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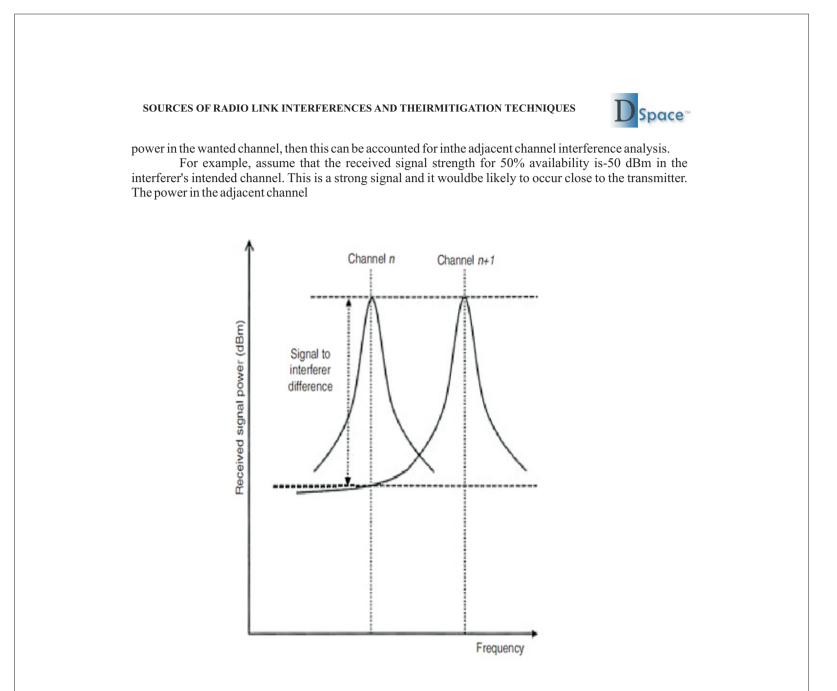


Figure.3 Diagram showing energy from an interferer (tuned to channeln + 1) spreading into a victimreceiver tuned to channeln. Energy from a transmission, even if filtered at the transmitter, will still bepresent outside of the tuned band. This can cause interference to the adjacent channel as shown or evenreceivers many channels away(2).

would be -100 dBm, assuming the 50-dB adjacent channel figure quoted above. If thewanted signal strength for another receiver operating in the adjacent channel is-90 dBm, then the difference between the wanted and interfering signal is only10 dB below the wanted signal. We would need to compare this to the co-channel interferencerejection figure to determine whether interference would be present in this scenario.

We can also apply the same corrections to account for fading of both the wanted and interfering signal to determine its performance at the required levels of availability.

Interference does not stop at the adjacent channels, but may continue over a widerange. An illustration of wider transmit spectral power is shown in Figure 4. The level of energy received in these other bands can be described in the manner shown on Table 1.

Table 1 can be interpreted in the following manner. For co-channel interference, the wanted power must be 12 dB higher than any interferer. For the adjacent channels above and below the wanted channel, the signal can tolerate an interferer as powerful as the wanted channel. For interferers four channels away, the interference power at its own tuned frequency can be 30 dB higher than the wanted signal.

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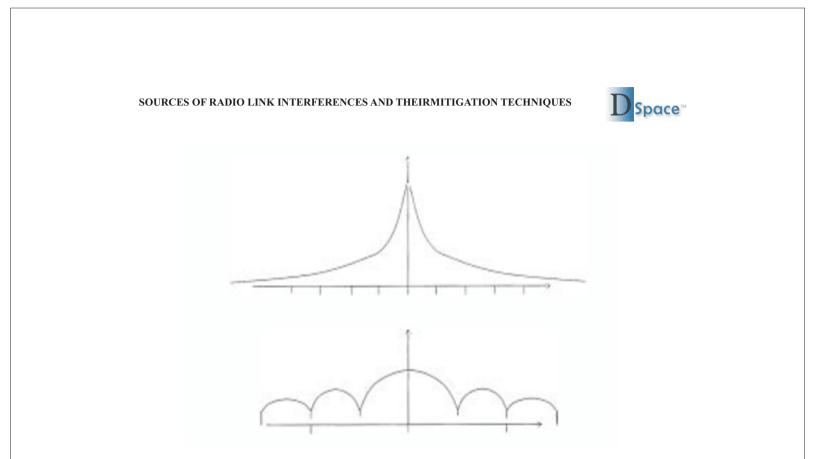


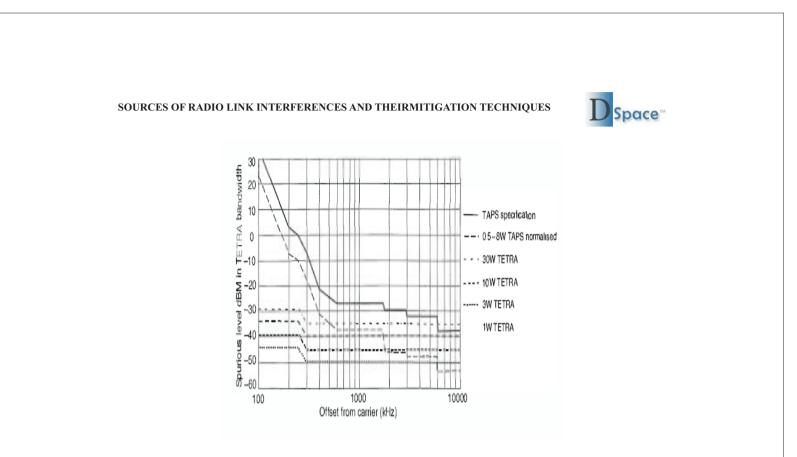
Figure .4 Illustration of energy radiated from a narrowband transmission (top) and a widebandtransmission (bottom) These Images are indicative only, but they show how energy is present outside ofthe tuned frequency) and can extend a wide range beyond the nominal bandwidth.

Specifications for radio transmitters for a particular service can include a spectrum Mask. This is not anexact description of the actual transmitted power spectral density, but is a definition of maximum values that cannot be exceeded. An example is shown inFigure 5.for TETRA and for the TETRA Advanced Packet Service (TAPS). The frequency offset values are in MHz and the lines for spurious levels in the TETRA bandwidth are shown in dB. Note that the frequency offset is applicable both above and below the tuned frequency.

Channel Offset(No. of channels)	C/I (dB)
0	12
1	0
2	-6
3	-12
4	-30
5	-40

Table .1 Hypothetical C/I figures for a radio system. The channel offset figures are valid for channels above and below the tuned frequency, which is channel offset = 0

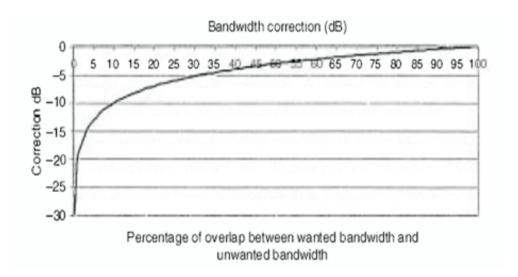
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#### 1.3 Interference between Dissimilar Systems:

Management of interference between dissimilar systems is complicated by the differences between the spectral characteristics of the interfering transmitter and the type of signal the receiver is designed to capture. We need a generic method of determining how these different systems interact.



#### Figure .6 Bandwidth correction in dB compared to the percentage overlap

One possible way of achieving this isto perform actual measurements on the test bench using test gear that as far as possible reproduces the transmit characteristics, the propagation channel and the receive interference rejection characteristics against the interfering signal type.

If this is donecorrectly, then very useful metrics can be derived for use in system design.

not be made publicly available. This is of course particularly true formilitary systems, where security

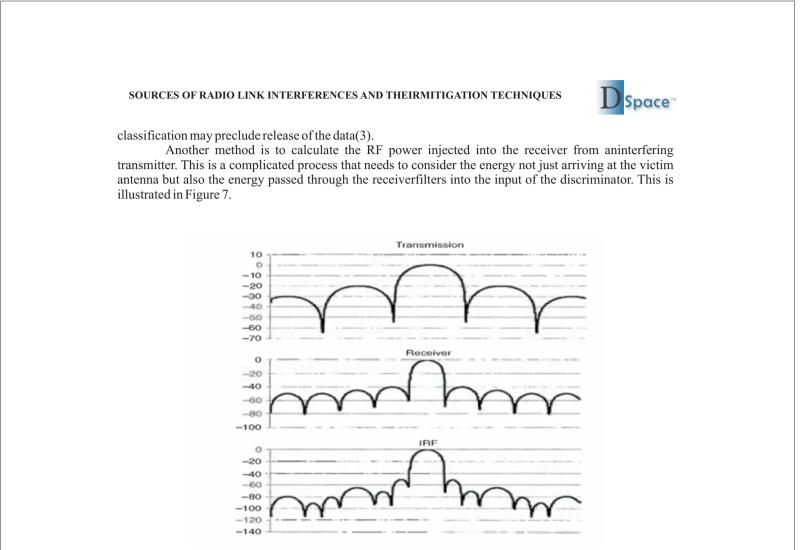


Figure .7Theenergy transmitted by a co-channel interferer is affected by the receiver response, including filters designed to reject interference. The Interference Rejection Factor is the convolution of the two.

The top diagram shows the transmitted energy from an interferer. The receiver inputrejection filter response. (IRF) is shown in the bottom diagram. This is the convolution of the input energy and receiver response. Theresponse shown is for a co-channel interferer. This shows the importance of bothtransmitter and receiver filters to reduce the potential effects of interference.

The sumof the energy input into the receiver discrimination circuits determines how much the interferer will disrupt the victim receiver. The lower the unwanted energy, the better receiver will work. This process also works for interferers that are not co-channel as illustrated in Figure 8. The rejection response is again shown at the bottom. In this case, it is more complex in nature. The important aspect is the sum of energy injected into the receiverafter filtering.

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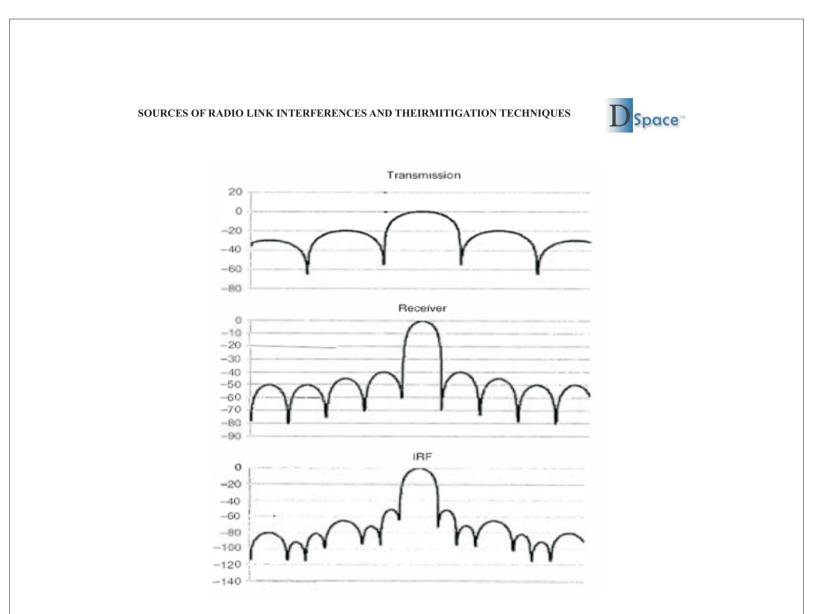


Figure 8 Interference Rejection Factor(IRF) can also be determined for off-channel interferers as shown.

The Interference Rejection Factor (IRF )response shown in Figures 7 and 8 can be resolved into a numeric value for interference rejection for a given type of transmission and receiver, and for a givenfrequency offset. The overall response is likely to be along the lines of the response shown in Figure .5.for the TAPS/TETRA case.

#### 1.4 Multiple interferers:

So far in this section we have only considered a single interferer. However, in somecases there may be many interferers, each providing a component of energy to the totalinterference. We will look at two methods of assessing interference from multipleinterferers; the Power Sum Method and the Simplified Multiplication Method (SMM)(4).

#### 1.4.1 Power Sum Method:

The power sum method can be used for multiple interferers when they are of the sametype as the victim signal. The formula for the power sum method is:

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 $P_1 = 10 \log_{10}(1 / \frac{1}{2} q(0))$ 

Where

 $P_{I}$  is the calculated total interference. Its the interfering power level of each interferer (dBm).

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We can illustrate the use of this by examples. First, consider two interferers each with a power level in the
receiver channel of $-100 \text{ dBm}$ . Thus, the equation becomes
$P_1 = 10 \log_{10} (10(-100)/10+ 1 0 (-1 0 e d 2)) / 1 0)$
This evaluates to -96.9897 dB, or approximately -97 dBm. Consideration of this will show that in the case of two de-correlated interference sources of the same power, the total power is 3 dB above the level of each. Since 3 dB equates to double the power, this is logical. However, the process also works for any combination of interferers withany individual power contribution. As another example, consider the four interferers:
$I_{2} = -103 dBm.$ $I_{2} = -97 dBm.$ $I_{3} = -105 dBm.$ $I_{4} = -120 dBm.$
Applying this to the formula gives:
$P_{1}=10 \log_{10} (1 0^{10}+3 1^{-0}+1 0^{+1} 1^{-0}+1 0^{+1}) q(3)$
Evaluating this gives a result of $PI = -95.49  dBm$
1.42 Simplified Multiplication Method:
The Simplified Multiplication Method (SMM) is one of the most popularmethod for assessing interference from multiple interferers. The method is based on the following assumptions:
There is no correlation between the interferers. There is one dominant interferer. Time dispersion can be ignored. Noise is negligible compared to the interferers.
The SMM is based on using the CDF of the normal distribution. The method isdescribed by an example shown below. The process is iterative.
Assume there are four interferers as in the example for the power sum method:
I1=-103 dBm.

II = -103 dBm.I2 = -97 dBm.I3 = -105 dBm.I4 = -120 dBm.

The SMM process starts by choosing a seed value to begin the calculation. This is chosen as 6 dB above the highest interferer, which in this case is -97 + 6 = -91 dBm.Each of the interferers are compared to this value, giving a difference value ZI. After this, the normal distribution is normalized for each interferer by the expression:

#### $X_{I} = Z^{i}/(S^{d} - 2$

whereSd is the standard deviation due to fading, which at VHF is approximately due to fading, which at VHF is approximately 8.3dB, or approximately 9.5 dB for UHF. In this case, we will use the VHF value. For each interferer we determine the normal distribution CDF for Xi. We then multiply the CDF values for each interferer together and finally produce the delta value that wewill use to modify the seed value for the next step. The delta value is calculated according to:

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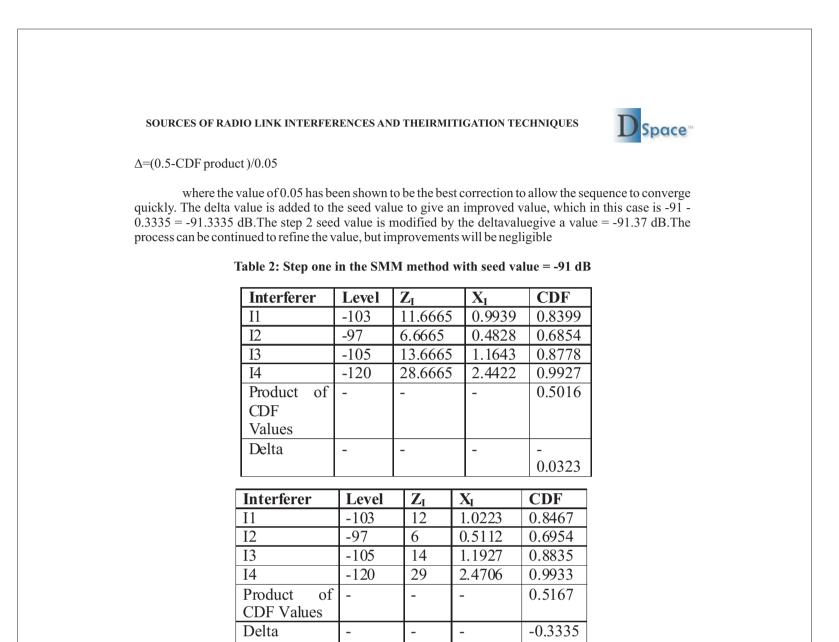


Table 3: Step two in the SMM method with seed value = -91.3335 dBm

dB

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The SMM is the accurate method of assessing interference from multiple interference; there are others based on modifying the SMM or via other routes. Often these have been designed to deal with specific circumstances. The processes involved in this process are illustrated in Tables 2 and 3.

#### 1.5Interference in the Time Domain

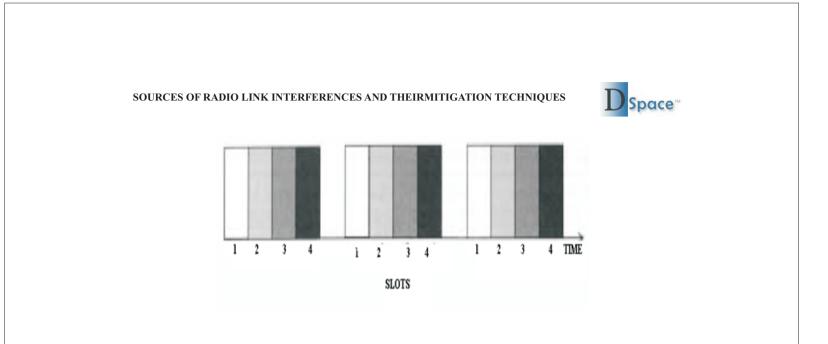
1.5.1 Time Slots, Frequency Hopping Systems and Activity Ratios:

Interference is not just dependent on spectrum considerations, but it can also havetime-varying characteristics due to a number of factors. Some of these are technologydriven and others due to variable atmospheric effects over time. Technologies based onTime Division Duplexing (TDD) use time slots to multiplex several radio channelsonto a single channel as shown in Figure 9

These time slots help to preventinterference and they also mean that one individual channel is working only in 1/n of thetime, where n is the number of slots. TETRA, for example, uses four time slots in asingle carrier.

Timing is vital for the receiver to function properly. The relative time that a signal is active is called the "activity ratio". A continuouslytransmittingsignal has an activity ratio of 1.0, and a signal that is active only 1 % of the time has an activity ratio of 0.01. When considering interference effects of signals with intermittent transmission, this must be included in interference calculations. The precise method of evaluating interference depends on the statistics describing the probability of the wanted and unwanted and unwanted being precent at the semi-interference.

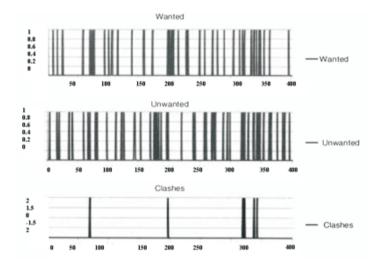
signals being present at the same instant.



#### Figure .9 Time slots in a TDD system, with a gap for synchronization and system management.

Thisis described in Figure10, whichshowswanted and unwante drandomly distributed transmissions occurring at an activity level of 0.2. The relative locationsofthe two transmission sources are not considered at present, but we will be looking at this aspectshortly. We are also assuming that the receiver for the wanted transmitter is looking for signal during the same time slot.

The clashes can be seen from the figure 10. These are where both systems are using thesame part of spectrum at the same time, and thus where interference can occur. If the two transmissions are truly random, then classic Erlang-B calculations can be used to determine the probability of interference occurring based on common use of the same channel at the same time.



#### Figure 10Example of two systems operating independently with occasional time clashes.

However, it pays to be careful about applying Erlang-B without considering thescenario to be modeled. Erlang-B requires randomness for the statistics to be valid(technically, this is called a poisson process), but there can be many conditions thatprohibit this from being the case. These include:

Systems where one transmission will trigger another one. This might be the relayof orders from higher to lower echelons, a sensor network where communications are used to relay information about intercepts or other tactical information, orsystems based on timing (where, for example, transmissions are made at the sametime each day).

In this case, the transmissions are not truly random. Although the triggering event may be random, once the process has started it follows nonrandombehaviour.

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Systems where the use of spectrum is correlated between wanted and victim. This may include two frequency hopping systems using the same or similar hop sets. Thus the two systems are linked and not therefore random.

A tracking system, such as a follower jammer, which will attempt to jam the portion of the link present during a time slot period. Again, the two systems are linked and not truly random.

These cases, which are not poisson processes, cannot be solved using Erlang'sequations. Without calculating the mathematics from scratch, one possible approach is simulate the network performance to gather the metrics necessary to determine interference probability.

#### **1.5.3Non-Continuous Interference:**

Interference is not always a constant effect. In particular, signals that propagate a long wayare subject to changes in atmospheric conditions. This includes variation in thek-factor due to changes in the vertical atmospheric column, ducting and increases introposcatter. These can be modeled over long periods to produce special propagation prediction models that account for differences in propagation over time(3). Such models normally include results for different percentages of time; 50%, 10%, 5% and 1 % are commonly quoted in such models.

#### **1.6 Interference Mitigation Techniques:**

There are several ways of mitigating against interference. These include:

Power management of the interferer.

Antenna height of both interferer and victim.

Antenna tilt of both interferer and victim: sectored antennas or null steering for both interferer and victim. Frequency re-assignment for either interferer or victim.

The selection of which mitigation method is applied is usually based on theamountofinterference and the implications of the potential changes. Some typical considerations include:

**Power management:** one approach is to reduce the power of the interferer, to benefitfrom the change in relative signal strength. However, reducing the power of the interferer will also reduce its service area and this will have an effect on network coverage and capacity in the region around the interfering base station.

Antenna height: the antenna heights of either the interferer or victim can be reduced(or both). This will have the effect of reducing the range of the interferer if its antenna height is reduced (again this may have a knock-on effect to the overall networkcoverage and local capacity). The victim antenna height can also be reduced. This can help in the situation where the reduction in height will result in benefits from terrain or clutter shielding.

Again, of course, the coverage area of the victim will be reduced in this case.

Antenna tilting: for antennas that have vertical directivity, it is possible to orient antennas used for paths within the horizon such that the energy radiated towards the horizon is reduced. This will have the effect of maintaining the coverage in the wanted area but reducing interference outside of it.

Sectored antennas and null steering: antennas with directional patterns in the horizontal plane can be used to minimize interference in the direction of the victim or interferer (as required).

Antennas that have a null (very low response in a particular direction) can be used to spatially filter out particular interferers(5). This approach can only be used when the direction of the interfering energy is known, and thus it is applicable to the condition of base station to base station interference.

**Frequency Assignment:** either the victim or interfering system can have theirfrequencies changed to prevent interference between them. This of course maycause interference with other spectrum users and thus should only be done with care, and with checks to identify any potential problems that may be caused by the change.

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#### **CONCLUSION:**

Interference is a phenomenon which we cannot be completely destroyed i.e.,unavoidable.But there are number of techniques for reducing its harmness to the network. In this paper we have tried to explore the different souces of interference and some of the mitigation techniques for reducing its malicious effects to the communication networks.Further more research has to be carried out to determine most effective and advantageous techniques for reducing interference there by increasing the performance of the networks.

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