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(54) **CRYPTOGRAPHIC KEY MANAGEMENT  
FOR DISTRIBUTED QUANTUM  
COMPUTING SYSTEMS**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**  
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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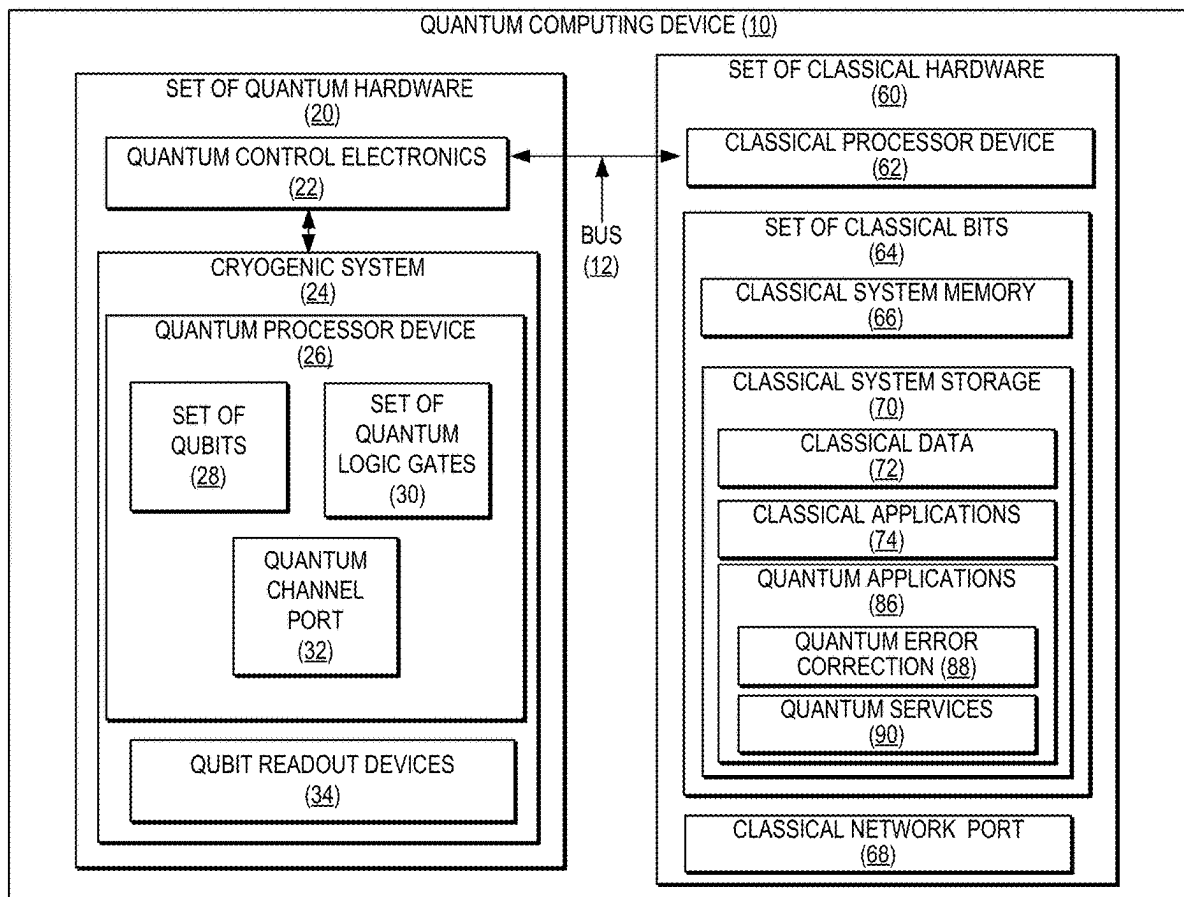
**Related U.S. Application Data**

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**Publication Classification**

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**H04L 9/08** (2006.01)

A system comprises a first set of quantum hardware (QH) that includes a first set of qubits, a second set of QH that includes a second set of qubits, and a third set of QH. The first set of qubits encodes a first portion of a cryptographic key (CK). The second set of qubits encodes a second portion of the CK. In response to receiving an access request, the third set of QH receives from the first set of QH, a first transmission that encodes the first portion of the CK and a second transmission, from the second set of QH, that encodes the second portion of the CK. The third set of QH generates a first encoding of the CK that includes the first portion and the second portion of the CK. The system provides a requesting party a third transmission based on the first encoding of the CK.



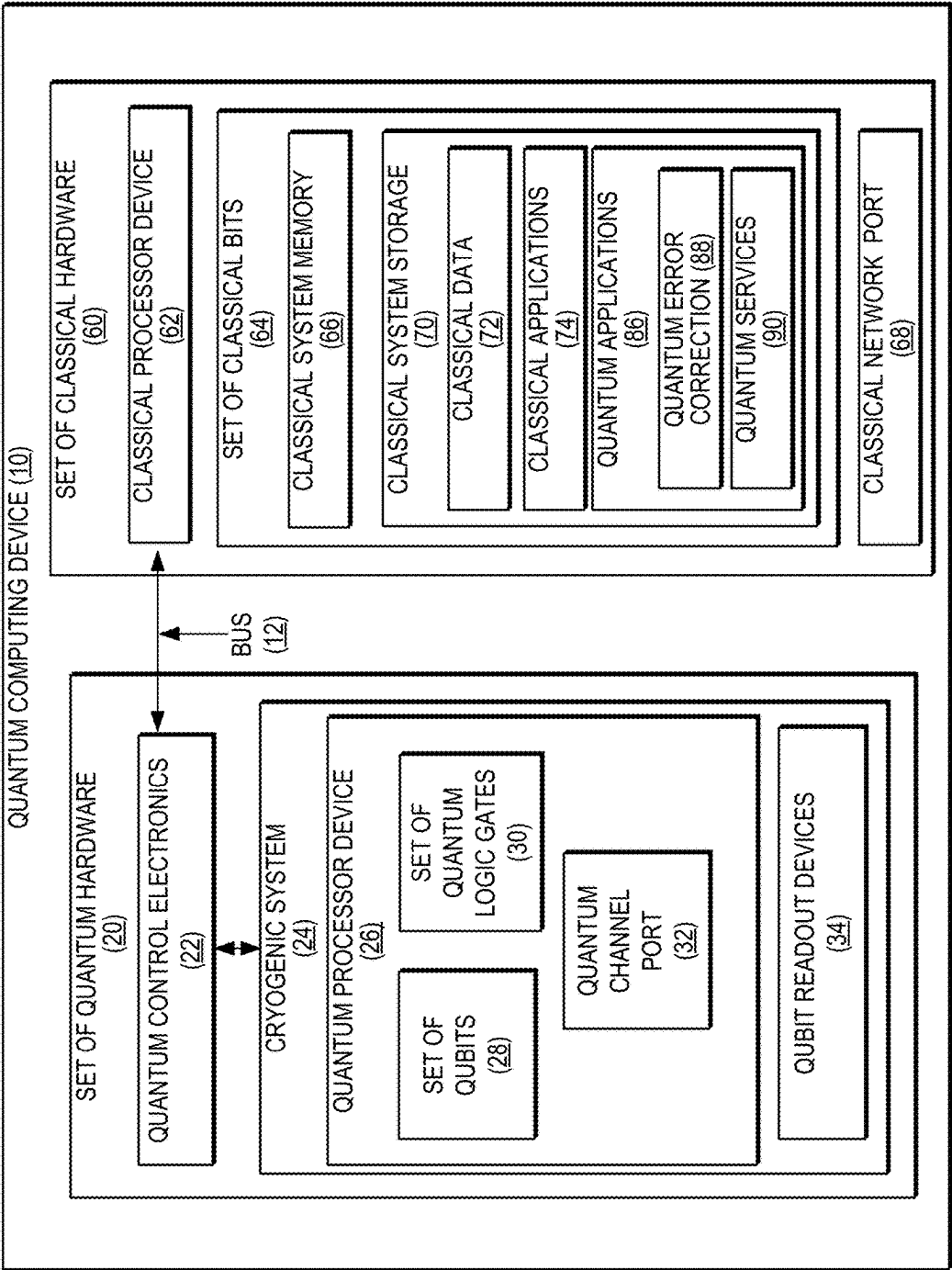


FIG. 1

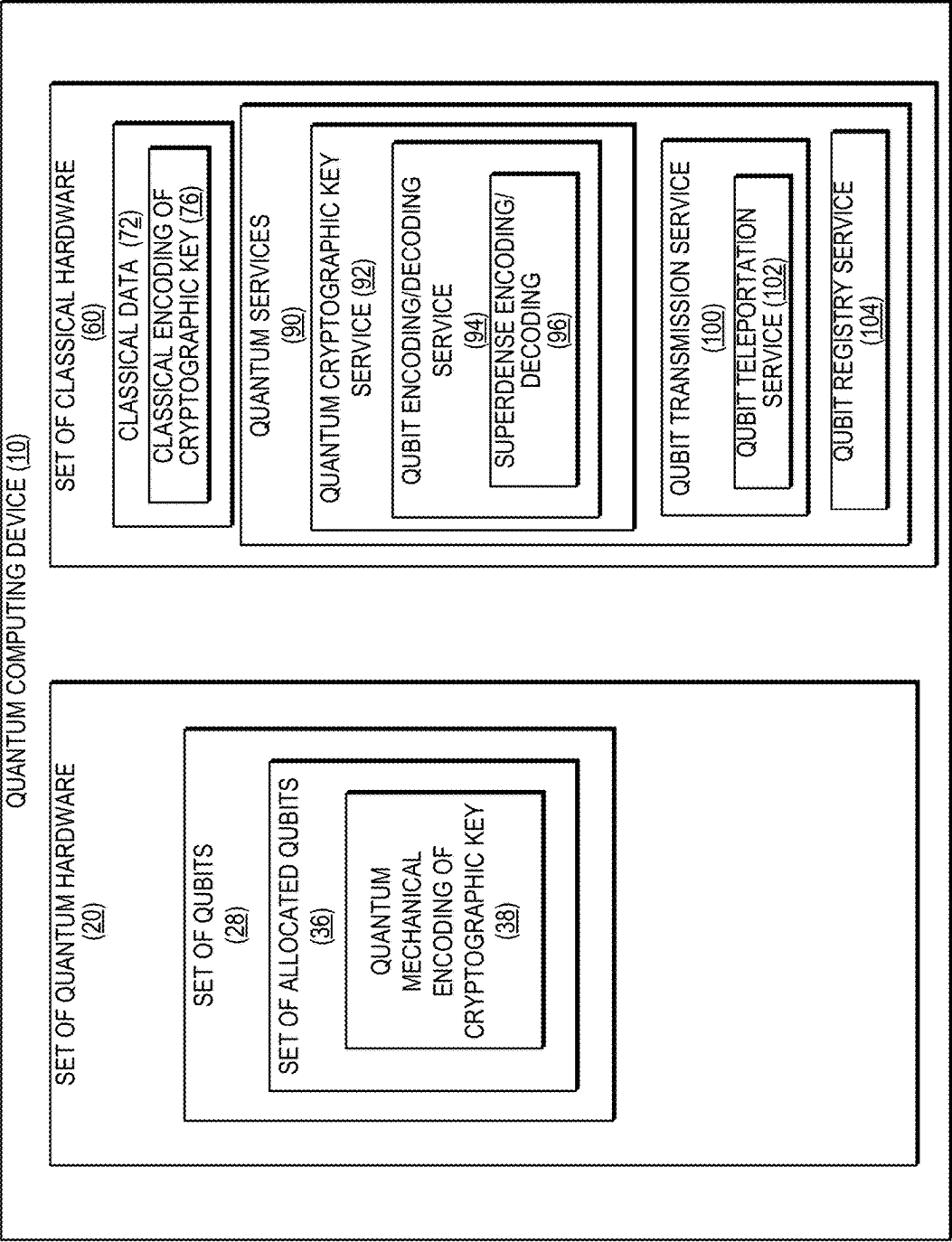


FIG. 2

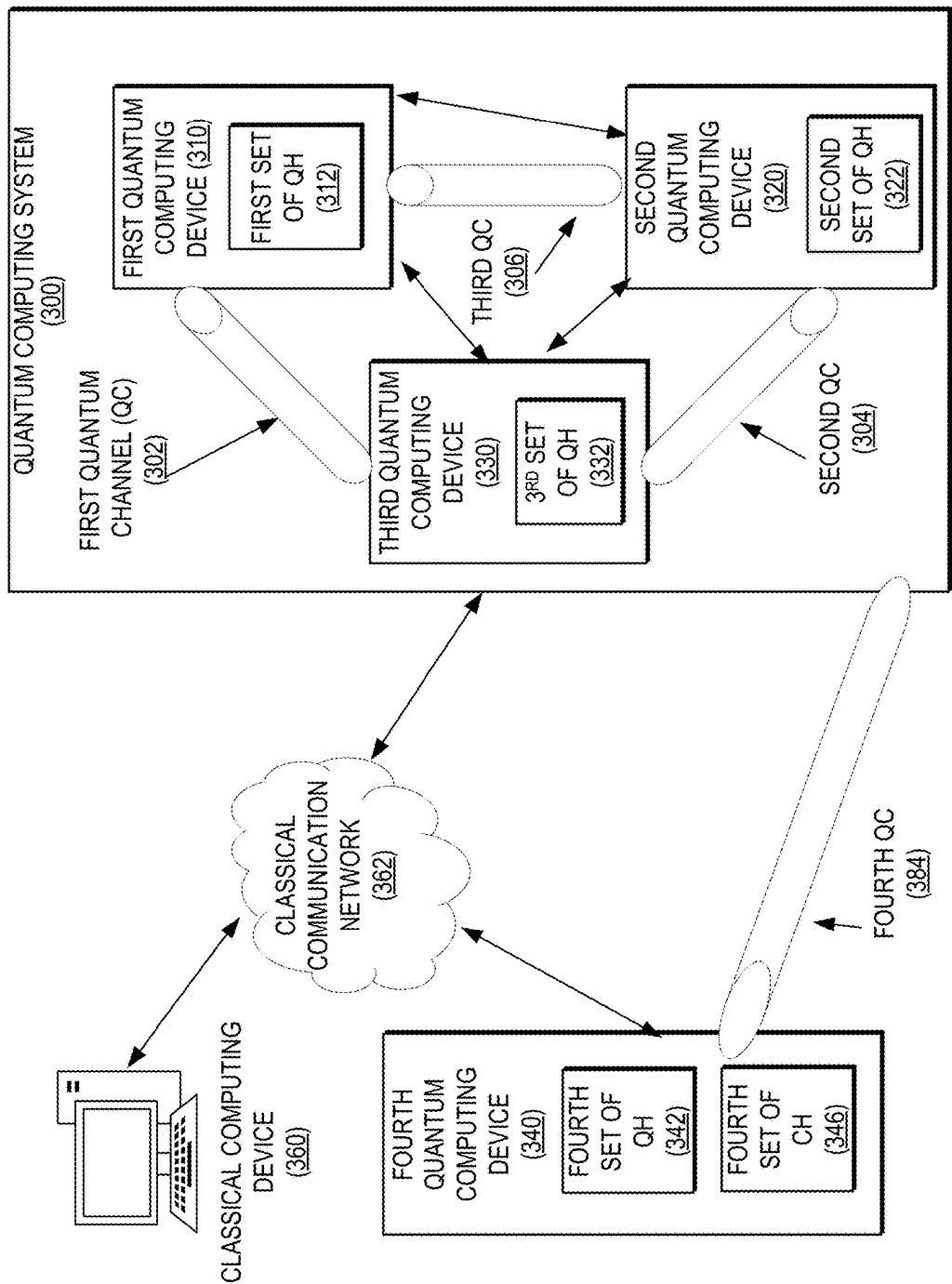


FIG. 3

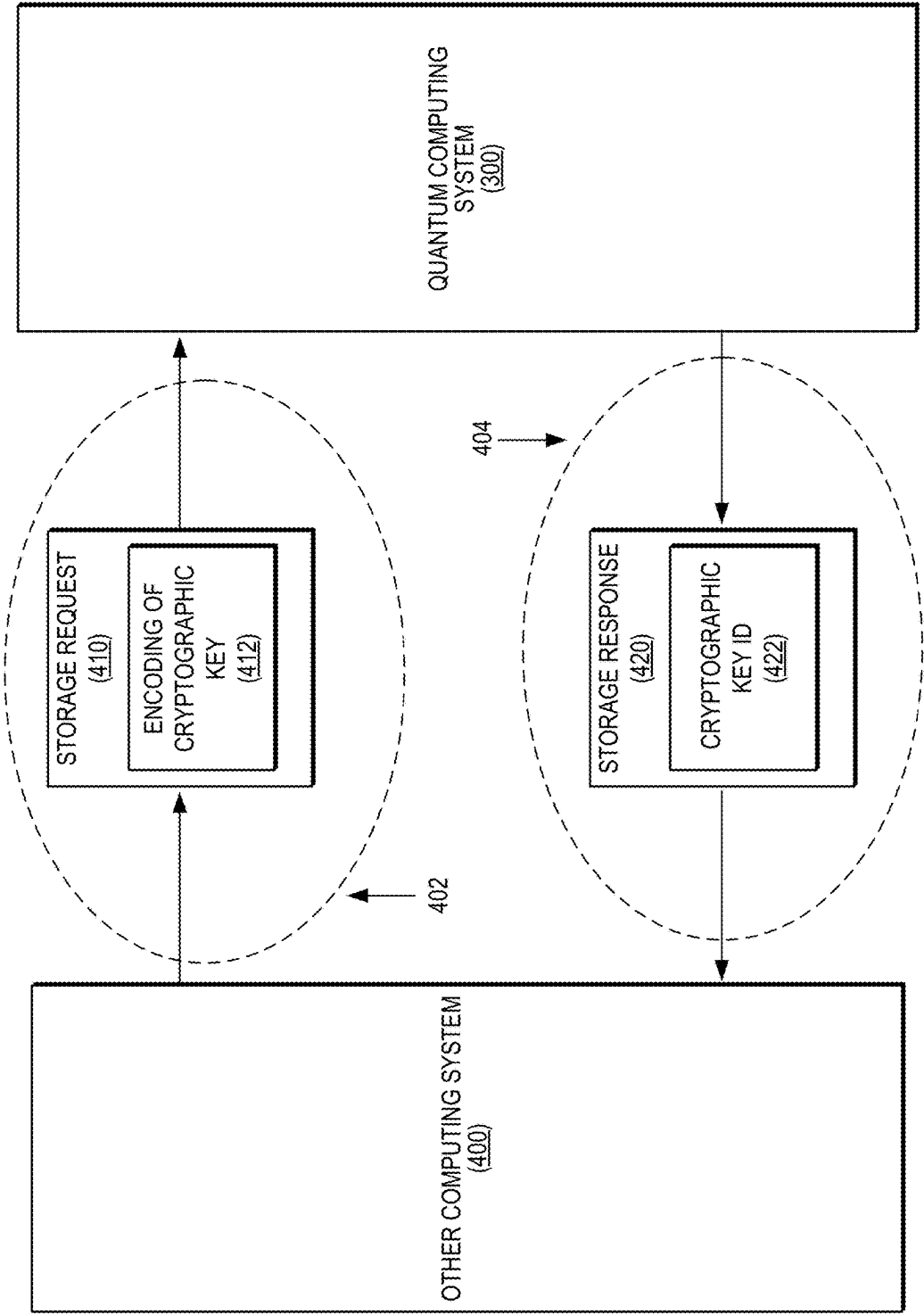


FIG. 4A

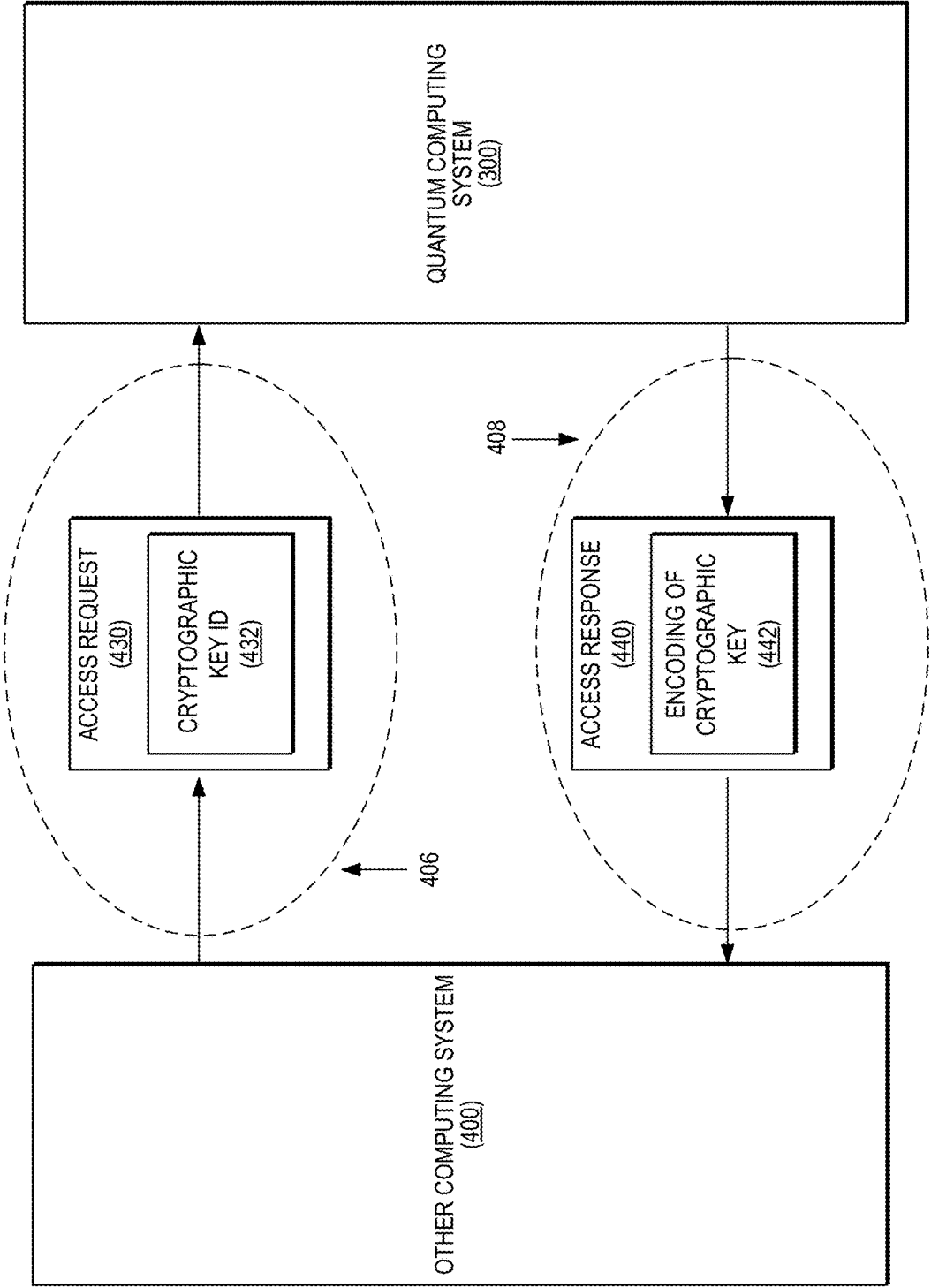
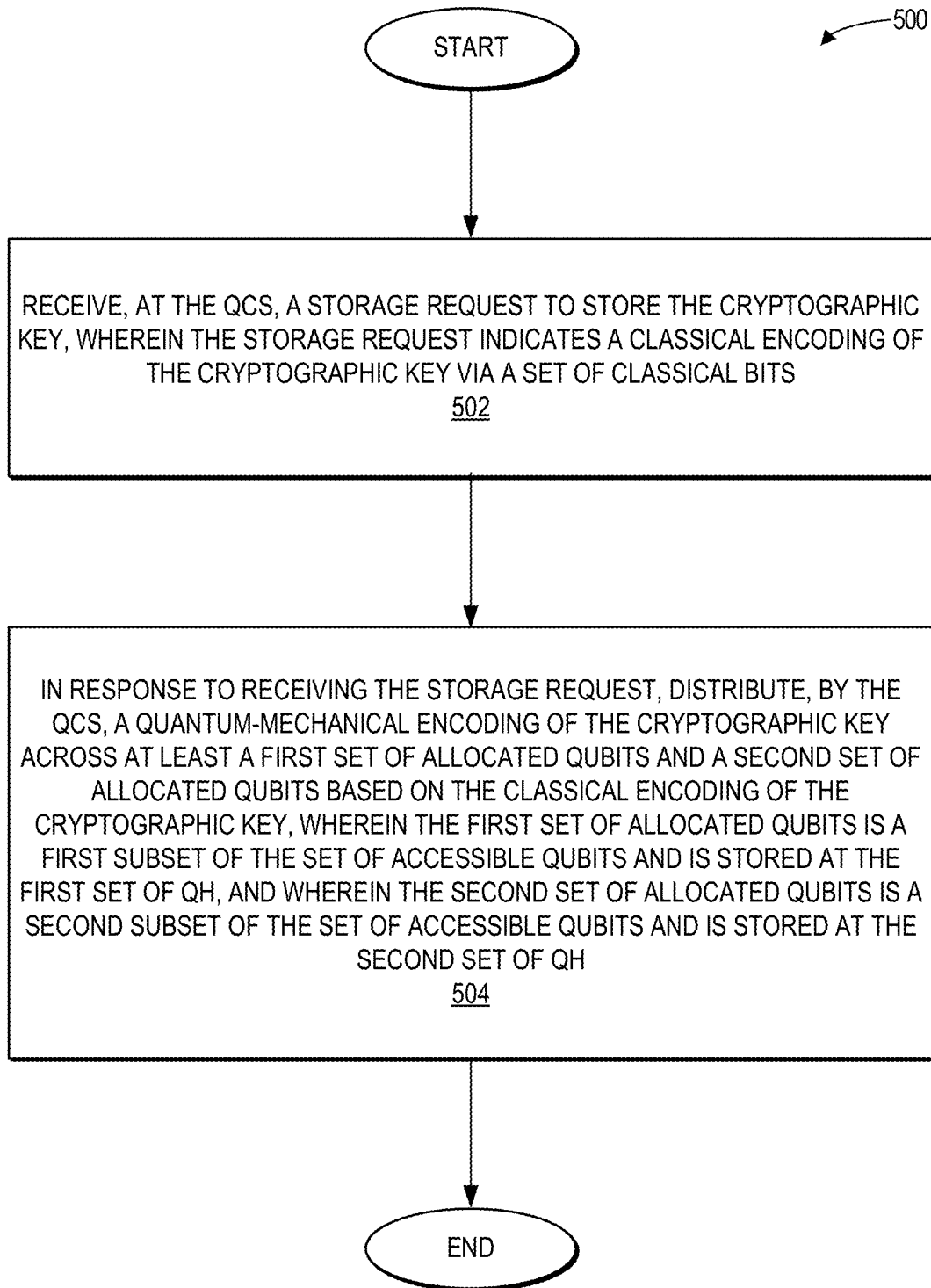
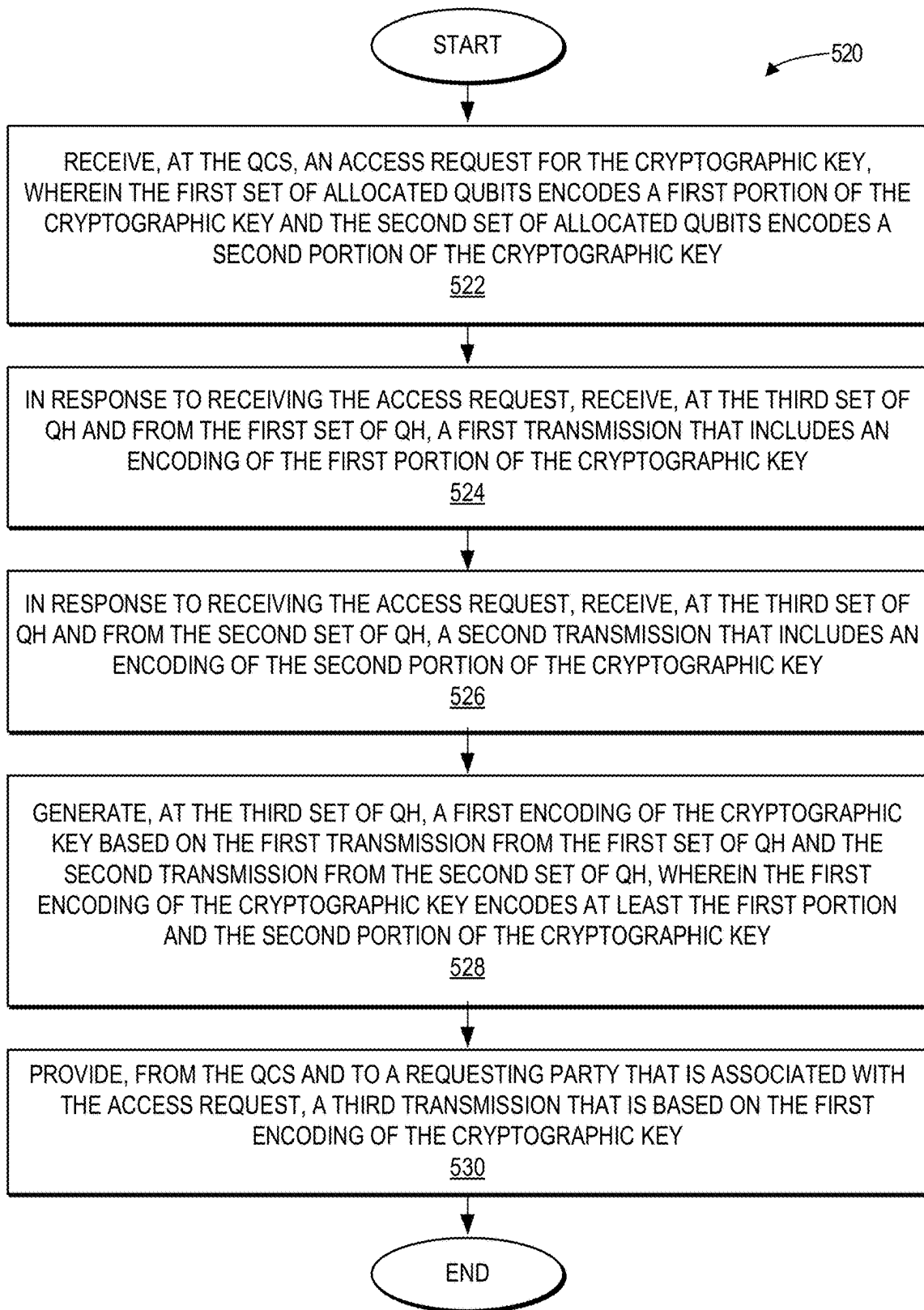


FIG. 4B

**FIG. 5A**

**FIG. 5B**



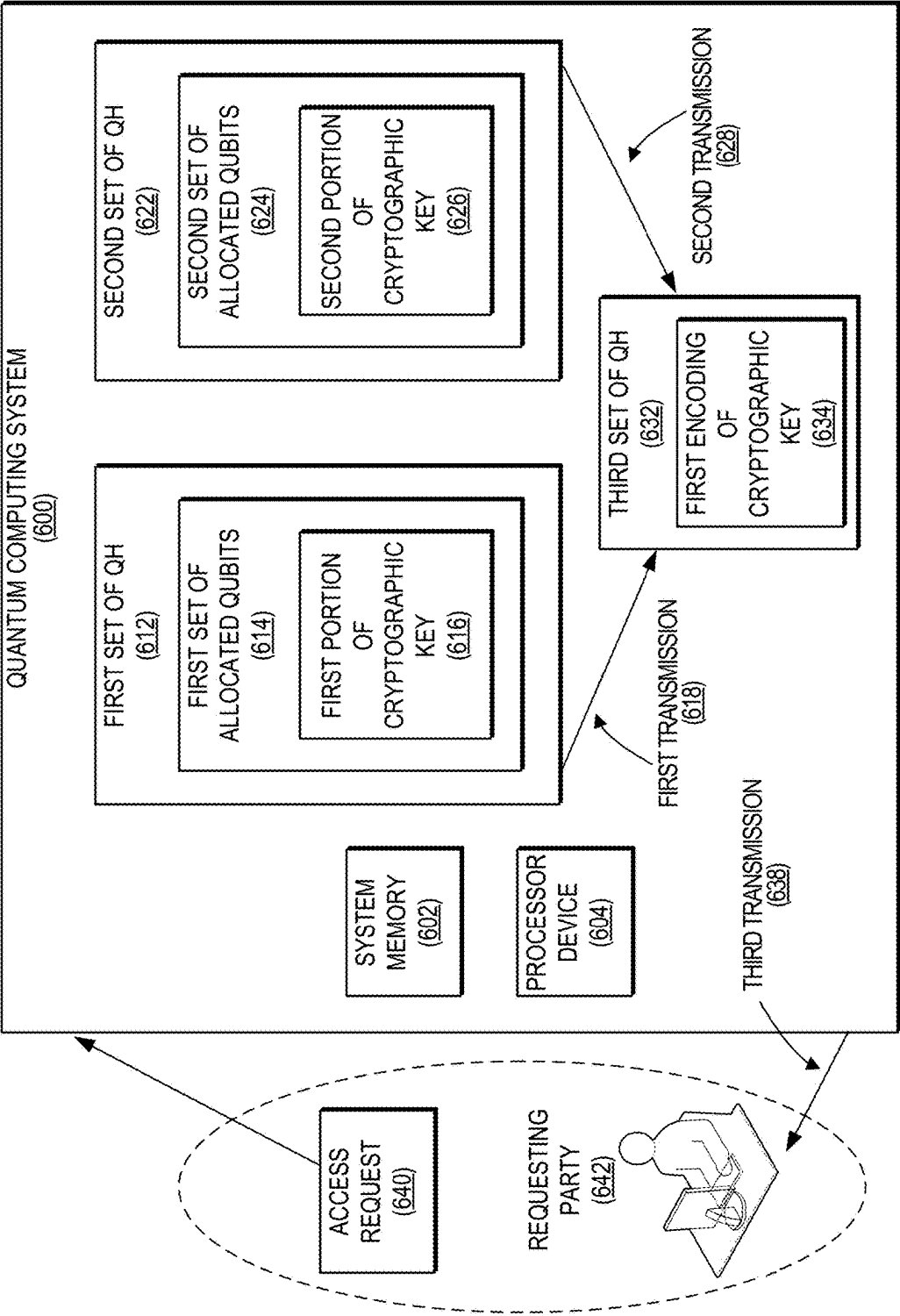


FIG. 6

## CRYPTOGRAPHIC KEY MANAGEMENT FOR DISTRIBUTED QUANTUM COMPUTING SYSTEMS

### RELATED APPLICATION

**[0001]** This application is a continuation of co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 18/190,296, filed on Mar. 27, 2023, entitled “CRYPTOGRAPHIC KEY MANAGEMENT FOR DISTRIBUTED QUANTUM COMPUTING SYSTEMS,” the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

### BACKGROUND

**[0002]** Quantum computing involves the use of quantum bits, referred to herein as “qubits,” which have characteristics that differ from those of classical (i.e., non-quantum) bits used in classical computing. Qubits may be employed by quantum services that are executed by quantum computing devices. As quantum computing continues to increase in popularity and become more commonplace, an ability to efficiently and accurately allocate qubits in real time will be desirable.

### SUMMARY

**[0003]** The examples disclosed herein provide archiving data via superdense coding and accessing data that has been archived via superdense coding. The embodiments employ a quantum mechanical mechanism referred to as superdense coding (or superdense encoding). Briefly, superdense coding is a QM encoding protocol that stores data in qubits. The number of qubits required to store the data is less than the number of classical bits that would be required to encode the same amount of data.

**[0004]** One embodiment includes a method for accessing a cryptographic key that is stored by a quantum computing system (QCS). The QCS comprises a first set of quantum hardware (QH) that includes a first set of allocated qubits, a second set of QH that includes a second set of allocated qubits, and a third set of QH. The method comprises receiving, at the QCS, an access request for the cryptographic key. The first set of allocated qubits encodes a first portion of the cryptographic key. The second set of allocated qubits encodes a second portion of the cryptographic key. In response to receiving the access request, the third set of QH receives, from the first set of QH, a first transmission that includes an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key. In response to receiving the access request, the third set of QH receives, from the second set of QH, a second transmission that includes an encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key. The third set of QH generates a first encoding of the cryptographic key based on the first transmission from the first set of QH and the second transmission from the second set of QH. The first encoding of the cryptographic key encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key. The QCS provides, to a requesting party that is associated with the access request, a third transmission that is based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key.

**[0005]** Another embodiment includes a method for storing a cryptographic key by a quantum computing system (QCS). The QCS comprises a first set of quantum hardware (QH), a second set of QH, and a set of accessible qubits. The method comprises receiving, at the QCS, a storage request

to store the cryptographic key. The storage request indicates a classical encoding of the cryptographic key via a set of classical bits. In response to receiving the storage request, the QCS distributes a quantum-mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key across at least a first set of allocated qubits and a second set of allocated qubits based on the classical encoding of the cryptographic key. The first set of allocated qubits is a first subset of the set of accessible qubits and is stored at the first set of QH. The second set of allocated qubits is a second subset of the set of accessible qubits and is stored at the second set of QH.

**[0006]** Another embodiment is directed to a quantum computing system (QCS). The quantum computing device comprises a first set of quantum hardware (QH), a second set of QH, a third set of quantum hardware, a system memory, and a processors device that is communicatively coupled to the system memory. The first set of quantum hardware includes a first set of allocated qubits that encodes a first portion of a cryptographic key. The second set of QH includes a second set of allocated qubits that encodes a second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0007]** The QCS receives an access request for the cryptographic key. In response to receiving the access request, the third set of QH receives, from the first set of QH, a first transmission that includes an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key. In response to receiving the access request, the third set of QH receives, from the second set of QH, a second transmission that includes an encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key. The third set of QH generates a first encoding of the cryptographic key based on the first transmission from the first set of QH and the second transmission from the second set of QH. The first encoding of the cryptographic key encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key. The QCS provides, to a requesting party that is associated with the access request, a third transmission that is based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key.

**[0008]** Individuals will appreciate the scope of the disclosure and realize additional aspects thereof after reading the following detailed description of the examples in association with the accompanying drawing figures.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0009]** The accompanying drawing figures incorporated in and forming a part of this specification illustrate several aspects of the disclosure and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the disclosure.

**[0010]** FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a quantum computing device, according to various embodiments;

**[0011]** FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the quantum computing device of FIG. 1 that provides additional components according to at least some of the embodiments;

**[0012]** FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a quantum computing system, according to various embodiments;

**[0013]** FIG. 4A shows the quantum computing system of FIG. 3 receiving and responding to a cryptographic key storage request, according to various embodiments;

**[0014]** FIG. 4B shows the quantum computing system of FIG. 3 receiving and responding to a cryptographic key access request, according to various embodiments;

**[0015]** FIG. 5A provides a flowchart for a method for quantum-mechanically storing a cryptographic key at a quantum computing system, according to various embodiments;

**[0016]** FIG. 5B provides a flowchart for a method for accessing a quantum-mechanical encoding of a cryptographic key at a quantum computing system, according to various embodiments; and

**[0017]** FIG. 6 is a block diagram of another quantum computing system that is similar to the quantum computing system of FIG. 1 that manages cryptographic keys, according to one example.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**[0018]** The examples set forth below represent the information to enable individuals to practice the examples and illustrate the best mode of practicing the examples. Upon reading the following description in light of the accompanying drawing figures, individuals will understand the concepts of the disclosure and will recognize applications of these concepts not particularly addressed herein. It should be understood that these concepts and applications fall within the scope of the disclosure and the accompanying claims.

**[0019]** Any flowcharts discussed herein are necessarily discussed in some sequence for purposes of illustration, but unless otherwise explicitly indicated, the examples are not limited to any particular sequence of steps. The use herein of ordinals in conjunction with an element is solely for distinguishing what might otherwise be similar or identical labels, such as “first executing quantum service” and “second executing quantum service,” and does not imply a priority, a type, an importance, or other attribute, unless otherwise stated herein. The term “about” used herein in conjunction with a numeric value means any value that is within a range of ten percent greater than or ten percent less than the numeric value. As used herein and in the claims, the articles “a” and “an” in reference to an element refers to “one or more” of the element unless otherwise explicitly specified. The word “or” as used herein and in the claims is inclusive unless contextually impossible. As an example, the recitation of A or B means A, or B, or both A and B.

**[0020]** Quantum computing and quantum information processing involve the use of quantum bits, referred to herein as “qubits,” which have characteristics that differ from those of classical (i.e., non-quantum) bits used in classical computing. Qubits may be employed by quantum services that are executed by quantum computing devices. In contrast to classical bits, which store classical encodings of data, the superposition of quantum states of qubits may be employed to store a quantum-mechanical (QM) encoding of the data. The embodiments employ QM encoding to store, manage, and distribute cryptographic keys.

**[0021]** The embodiments are directed to cryptographic key distribution and management. The embodiments may include and/or be implemented in quantum computing systems (QCSs). More specifically, the embodiments are directed towards employing a QCS to store, manage, retrieve, and provide encodings of cryptographic keys. The encodings of a cryptographic key may be quantum mechanical in nature (e.g., employing qubits to encode at least portions of a cryptographic key) and/or classical in nature (e.g., employing classical bits to encode at least a portion of the cryptographic key). Various embodiments may be enabled to convert from classical encodings of the cryptographic key to quantum mechanical encodings of a cryptographic key, and convert back to a classical encoding. Similarly, the various embodiments may be enabled to convert quantum mechanical encodings, to classical encod-

ings, and convert back to a quantum mechanical encoding. The embodiments are enabled to receive, store, and distribute quantum mechanical and/or classical encodings of cryptographic keys. Thus, the embodiments are directed to various mechanisms and systems for quantum key distribution (QKD).

**[0022]** The embodiments employ qubits for the storage and distribution of keys due to the inherent mobility qubits, as well as their ability to encode information through the superposition principle. The embodiments include a mechanism that receives a key of length  $n$  classical bits, where  $n$  is a positive integer. In some embodiments, the key may be stored in  $n/2$  qubits (e.g., by employing superdense encodings). The number of qubits required for a quantum mechanical encoding is determined. As discussed further below, a QCS may include multiple instances of quantum computing devices (or sets of quantum hardware). The multiple instances of quantum computing devices may be spatially distributed. The number of available instances of quantum computing devices is also determined. The quantum mechanical encoding of key may be distributed across multiple quantum computing devices (or sets of quantum hardware). The spatial distribution of the quantum mechanical encodings may ensure that if a single set of quantum hardware is compromised, the integrity of the encoding of the key is not put at risk, and the key may be accessed with confidence in its fidelity.

**[0023]** When the key is to be retrieved, the spatially distributed encoding qubits (or quantum states of the encoding qubits) may be centralized (via qubit transport over quantum channels, teleportation, or qubit swap operations) may be centralized at a single set of quantum hardware. The encoding qubits may be in superposition. In such superposition embodiments, an algorithm that identifies an energy minimum of the encoding qubits (in superposition) may be employed to decode the key (e.g., by measuring the quantum states of the encoding qubits). Once decoded (e.g., generating a classical encoding based on measuring the quantum states of the encoding qubits), the key may be provided to a requesting machine, application, or party by assembling the key fragments in the correct order. In various embodiments, a classical encoding of the key may be provided. In other embodiments, a quantum mechanical encoding may be provided via a quantum channel, quantum teleportation, or qubit swap operation. Thus, the embodiments provide an effective means of making the key available to any service within quantum and/or classical computing systems.

**[0024]** For the embodiments, a QCS may include multiple instances of quantum computing devices (or multiple instances of sets of quantum hardware). A quantum computing device may include a set of quantum hardware (e.g., a set of quantum computing hardware). A set of quantum hardware may include one or more quantum processor devices. A quantum processor device may include a set of qubits as well as a set of logic gates. A set of quantum hardware may additionally include a set of qubit readout devices. In at least one embodiment, a set of quantum hardware may include a quantum channel port that enables the transmission and reception of qubits (or quantum states of qubits) to and from other sets of quantum hardware (e.g., other sets of quantum hardware included in other quantum computing devices).

**[0025]** In addition to a set of quantum hardware, some quantum computing devices may include a set of classical

hardware (e.g., a set of classical computing hardware). A set of classical hardware may be equivalent (or at least similar to) a classical computing device. For instance, a set of classical hardware may include similar components to a classical computer (e.g., a classical processor device, classical system memory, classical system storage, and a network port for a classical communication network). A communication bus may exist between the set of quantum hardware and the set of classical hardware such that processor instructions and data may be exchanged between the set of quantum hardware and the set of classical hardware. The multiple instances of set of quantum hardware (or quantum computing devices) included in a single QCS may be spatially distributed. That is, a QCS of the embodiments may be a distributed QCS.

**[0026]** FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a quantum computing device 10, according to various embodiments. The quantum computing device 10 comprises a set of quantum hardware 20. In various embodiments, a quantum computing device includes a set of classical hardware 60. The set of quantum hardware 20 may include quantum control electronics 22 and a cryogenic system 24. Within the cryogenic system 24, there may be a quantum processor device 26. The quantum processor device 26 may include a set of qubits 28 and a set of quantum logic gates 30 enabled to perform quantum logic operations on qubits (or pairs of qubits) of the set of qubits 28. The quantum processor device 26 may also include a quantum channel port 32. Within the cryogenic system 24, the set of quantum hardware 20 may also include qubit readout devices 34. The cryogenic system 24 may be enabled to maintain an ambient temperature that is relatively near absolute zero (e.g., on the order of a few millikelvins or tens of millikelvins) for the coherent operation of the quantum processor device 26 and the qubit readout devices 34. For instance, the low ambient temperature of the cryogenic system 24 may maintain the coherence of the set of qubits 28 and keep the qubits' wavefunction coherent and unentangled with a wavefunction of an object outside of the cryogenic system 24. It should be noted that the combination of components included in the set of quantum hardware 20 and the specifics of its architecture may vary in the embodiments. However, the functionality of the set of quantum hardware 20 may be modeled as a universal Quantum Turing Machine (QTM). Thus, the set of quantum hardware 20 is enabled to perform various quantum computations and information processing that are associated with a QTM model.

**[0027]** The set of classical hardware 60 may be similar to a classical computing device. As such, the architecture of the set of classical hardware 60 may be similar to the von Neumann computer architecture or model. For instance, the set of classical hardware 60 may include a classical processor device 62 and a set of classical bits 64. The set of classical bits 64 may include classical system memory 66 and classical system storage 70. The classical system storage 70 may include classical data 72, classical applications 74, and quantum applications 86. The set of quantum applications 86 may include codes for quantum error correction (QEC) 88 (e.g., topological surface codes) and various quantum services 90. The set of classical hardware 60 may also include a classical network port 68. The classical network port 68 may enable the transmission and reception of classical communication signals over a classical communication network. Thus, the quantum computing device 10

(through the classical network port 68 and the quantum channel port 32) may be communicatively coupled to other quantum computing devices and/or classical computing devices.

**[0028]** It should be noted that the combination of components included in the set of classical hardware 60 and the specifics of its architecture may vary in the embodiments. However, the functionality of the set of classical hardware 60 may be modeled as a universal Classical Turing Machine (CTM). Thus, the set of classical hardware 60 is enabled to perform various classical computations and information processing that are associated with a CTM model.

**[0029]** Each qubit of the qubits of the set of qubits 28 may be characterized by a set of discretized quantum states, a subset of which may be computational quantum states. The quantum states of a qubit may be characterized as a vector in a complex Hilbert space (e.g., a vector with complex components). In some embodiments, the computational states of a qubit may be represented by points on Bloch sphere. Quantum states of multiple qubits of the set of qubits 28 (or subsets of qubits) may be characterized via tensor products generating Hilbert spaces of greater dimensions. The computational states of multi-qubit configurations may be represented as points on a hyper-Bloch sphere. In various embodiments, the number of dimensions of the Hilbert spaces and/or hyper-Bloch spheres may grow exponentially with the number of qubits (e.g.,  $\infty 2^n$ ). Various technologies may implement the qubits of the set of qubits 28, such as but not limited to superconducting qubits (e.g., transmon qubits). The near-absolute zero temperature of the cryogenic system 24 may enable the coherence of the qubits.

**[0030]** The set of logic quantum logic gates 30 may include single qubit gates. Such single qubit gates may include, but are not limited to Pauli X, Y, and Z gates, as well as Hadamard (H) gates, generalized phase shift gates (e.g., S and/or T gates), and the like. Single qubit gates may be employed to rotate the quantum state of a qubit around its associated Bloch sphere representation. For instance, an H gate may be employed to set up a state of superposition for a qubit. The set of quantum logic gates 30 may also include multi-qubit gates. Such multi-qubit gates may include but are not otherwise limited to controlled not (CNOT) gates, controlled Z (CZ) gates, swap gates, Toffoli gates, and the like. Multi-qubit gates may be employed to rotate the quantum state of subsets of qubits around their associated hyper-Bloch sphere representation. For instance, a CNOT gate may be employed to generate a state of entanglement between a pair of qubits. States of entanglement may include maximally entangled states between multiple qubits (e.g., Bell states). A quantum channel port 32 may be employed to transport qubits, or at least quantum states of qubits, to another quantum computer device via a quantum channel, quantum teleportation, quantum swap operations, or the like.

**[0031]** The qubit readout devices 34 may be employed measure (or read) a quantum state of a qubit. A qubit read device of the qubit readout devices 34 may be associated with a set of eigenstates, a subset of which may include computational eigenstates. A pair of computational eigenstates for a qubit readout device may be associated with a pair of antipodal points on the measured qubit's Bloch sphere representation. A quantum state that is not co-located with one of the points of the readout device's associated pair of antipodal points may be said to be in superposition. When a qubit is measured (or read) by a qubit readout device, if its

quantum state is not already co-located at one of the readout device's antipodal points, then the quantum state will stochastically "snap" to one of the two antipodal points. This may be referred to as the "collapse" of the qubit's wavefunction under the Copenhagen interpretation (or alternatively as "branching" of the wavefunction in an Everettian "Many-Worlds Interpretation (MW)"). If the quantum state is already at one of the antipodal points, it will remain at the antipodal point, until perturbed (e.g., operated on by a quantum logic gate).

**[0032]** A quantum channel port **32** may enable the transport of a qubit (or its quantum state) to another set of quantum hardware. For instance, a qubit of the set of qubits **28** may be physically transmitted to another set of qubits (e.g., included in another set of quantum hardware and/or another quantum computing device) over a quantum channel. In other embodiments, the quantum state of the qubit may be quantum-mechanically teleported to another qubit. In still other embodiments, the quantum state of the qubit may be swapped with another qubit via a swap operation (e.g., via an application of a swap gate).

**[0033]** The quantum control electronics **22** generate and receive various analog and/digital signals for operating (e.g., providing instructions), as well as providing inputs and receiving outputs (I/O operations) to the quantum processing device **26** and qubit readout devices **34**. A communication bus (e.g., bus **12**) may enable analog and/or digital communications between the set of quantum hardware **20** and the set of classical hardware **60**. In some embodiments, the classical processor device **42** may enable the generation of signals to the quantum control electronics **22** and/or received signals from the quantum control electronics **22**.

**[0034]** FIG. 2 is a block diagram of the quantum computing device **10** of FIG. 1 that provides additional components according to at least some of the embodiments. In FIG. 2, the set of qubits **28** (of the set of quantum hardware **20**) includes a set of allocated qubits **36**. The set of allocated qubits **36** may be allocated for various quantum computation and/or quantum information processing tasks. For instance, at least a subset of the set of allocated qubits **36** may be allocated for a quantum mechanical encoding of a cryptographic key **38**. The set of classical data **72** (of the set of classical hardware **60**) may include a classical encoding of the cryptographic key **76**.

**[0035]** The quantum services **90** (of the quantum applications **86**) may include a quantum cryptographic key service **92**, a qubit transmission service **100**, and a qubit registry service **104**. The quantum cryptographic key service **92** may be enabled to perform various tasks associated with the cryptographic key distribution and management services of the various embodiments. That is, the quantum cryptographic key service **92** may be enabled to quantum mechanically encode, store, manage, and distribute cryptographic keys. As such, the quantum cryptographic key service **92** may include a qubit encoding/decoding service **94**. The qubit encoding/decoding service **94** may be enabled to encode and decode the information encoded in the various qubits of the set of qubits **28**. For instance, the qubit encoding/decoding service **94** may encode the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key **38** in at least a subset of the set of allocated qubits **36**. That is, the qubit encoding/decoding service **94** may perform a "quantum mechanical write" operation. The qubit encoding/decoding service **94** may additionally perform a "quantum mechanical

read" operation. That is, the qubit encoding/decoding service **94** may decode the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key **38**. In some embodiments, the encoding and decoding of information stored in qubits may be performed via superdense coding mechanism. In such embodiments, the qubit encoding/decoding service **94** may include a superdense encoding/decoding **96** module.

**[0036]** The quantum services **90** may also include a qubit transmission service **100**. The qubit transmission service **100** is enabled to transmit (or transport) qubits (or at least the quantum states of qubits) to another quantum computing device (or another set of quantum hardware). The qubits may be physically transmitted over a quantum channel. In other embodiments, the quantum states of various qubits may be teleported to other qubits via quantum teleportation mechanisms or swap logic operations. Thus, in some embodiments, the qubit transmission service **100** may include a qubit teleportation service **102**.

**[0037]** The quantum services **90** may also include a qubit registry service **104**. The qubit registry service **104** is generally responsible in allocating and registering the allocated qubits to various quantum services and quantum computation/information processing tasks. For instance, the qubit registry service **104** may be enabled to allocate (and register) the qubits of the set of allocated qubits **36** for various quantum services, including the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key **38**.

**[0038]** FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a quantum computing system (QCS) **300**, according to various embodiments. QCS **300** may include at least a first quantum computing device **310**, a second quantum computing device **320**, and a third quantum computing device **330**. Each of the first quantum computing device **310**, the second quantum computing device **320**, and the third quantum computing device **330** may be similar to quantum computing device **10** of FIGS. 1-2. As such, the first quantum computing device **310** may include a first set of quantum hardware **312** that is similar to the set of quantum hardware **20** of quantum computing device **10**. Likewise, the second quantum computing device **320** may include a second set of quantum hardware **322** that is similar to the set of quantum hardware **20** and the third quantum computing device **330** may include a third set of quantum hardware **332** that is similar to the set of quantum hardware **20**. Although not shown explicitly in FIG. 3, the first quantum computing device **310** may include a first set of classical hardware similar to the set of classical hardware **60** of FIGS. 1-2. Likewise, the second quantum computing device **320** may include a second set of classical hardware similar to the set of classical hardware **60** and the third quantum computing device **330** may include a third set of classical hardware similar to the set of classical hardware **60**.

**[0039]** Each of the first quantum computing device **310**, the second quantum computing device **320**, and the third quantum computing device **330** may be spatially remote from one another. However, qubits (or quantum states of qubits) may be transmitted, transported, swapped, exchanged, and/or teleported between the third quantum computing device **330** and the first quantum computing device **310** via a first quantum channel (QC) **302** of the QCS **300**. A second QC **304** may similarly enable the transmission of qubits (or quantum states of qubits) between the third quantum computing device **330** and the second quantum computing device **320**. Likewise, a third QC **306** may enable the transmission of qubits (or quantum states of qubits)

between the first quantum computing device **310** and the second quantum computing device **320**. Thus, the quantum computing devices **310/320/330** may exchange and/or transmit quantum information (e.g., encoded in qubits) via the first QC **302**, the second QC **304**, and the third QC **306**. The sets of classical hardware of the first quantum computing device **310**, the second quantum computing device **320**, and the third quantum computing device **330** may exchange and/or transmit classical information via a wireless and/or wired communication network, as indicated by the bi-directional arrows connecting the quantum computing devices. Note that the configuration of QCS **300** is not limited to that shown in FIG. 3, and the QCS **300** may include fewer or additional quantum computing devices and QCs. In some embodiments, at least two quantum computing devices included in the QCS **300** may not be spatially remote from one another.

[0040] The QCS **300** may be enabled to exchange (e.g., transmit to and/or receive from) classical information to a classical computing device **360** and/or a fourth quantum computing device **340**. The classical computing device **360** and/or the fourth quantum computing device **340** may (or may not be) spatially remote from the quantum computing system **300**. In some embodiments, the fourth quantum computing device **340** may be included in another quantum computing system. In at least one embodiment, at least one of the classical computing device **360** or the fourth quantum computing device **340** may be included in the QCS **300**.

[0041] The fourth quantum computing device **340** may include a fourth set of quantum hardware **342** that is similar to the set of quantum hardware **20** of FIGS. 1-2. Also, the fourth quantum computing device **340** may include a fourth set of classical hardware **346** that is similar to the set of classical hardware **60** of FIGS. 1-2. Qubits (or quantum states of qubits) may be transmitted, transported, swapped, exchanged, and/or teleported between the QCS **300** and the fourth quantum computing device **340** via a fourth QC **384**.

[0042] The QCS **300** is enabled to perform cryptographic key storage, distribution, and management. More specifically, the QCS **300** is enabled to store, manage, retrieve, and provide encodings of cryptographic keys. The cryptographic key service **92**, along with the qubit transmission service **100** and qubit registry service **104** of FIG. 2 enables many of the functionalities of the cryptographic key storage, distribution, and management service of the QCS **300**. The encodings of a cryptographic key may be quantum mechanical in nature (e.g., employing qubits to encode at least portions of a cryptographic key) and/or classical in nature (e.g., employing classical bits to encode at least a portion of the cryptographic key). For instance, the quantum mechanical encoding of cryptographic key **38** of FIG. 2 is encoded in at least a subset of the set of allocated qubits **36**. The classical encoding of the cryptographic key **76** of FIG. 2 is encoded in the classical data **72**.

[0043] The QCS **300** is enabled, via the qubit encoding/decoding service **94** of FIG. 2, to convert from classical encodings of the cryptographic key to quantum mechanical encodings of a cryptographic key and convert back to a classical encoding. Similarly, the qubit encoding/decoding service **94** of the QCS **300** is enabled to convert quantum mechanical encodings, to classical encodings, and convert back to a quantum mechanical encoding. Thus, the QCS **300** is enabled to receive, store, and distribute quantum mechanical and/or classical encodings of cryptographic keys. The

quantum cryptographic key service **92** of the QCS **300** is enabled with various mechanisms and systems for quantum key distribution (QKD). The QCS **300** employs qubits for the storage and distribution of keys due to the inherent mobility qubits, as well as their ability to encode information through the superposition principle. The qubit registry service **104** of FIG. 2 may identify, allocate, and register qubits for the storage of the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key **38**. The qubits of the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key **38** may be spatially distributed across two or more spatially remote sets of quantum hardware of the QCS **300** (e.g., the first quantum computing device **310**, the second quantum computing device **320**, the third quantum computing device **330**, and/or additional quantum computing devices included in QCS **300**).

[0044] FIGS. 4A-4B will now be discussed in conjunction with FIG. 3. FIG. 4A shows the QCS **300** of FIG. 3 receiving and responding to a cryptographic key storage request, according to various embodiments. FIG. 4B shows the QCS **300** of FIG. 3 receiving and responding to a cryptographic key access request, according to various embodiments. Turning attention to FIG. 4A, at step **402**, the QCS **300** receives a cryptographic key storage request **410** that includes an encoding of a cryptographic key **412**. The storage request **410** is received from another computing system **400**. The other computing system **400** may be a quantum computing device and/or system (e.g., the fourth quantum computing device **340** of FIG. 3). In other embodiments, the other computing system **400** may be a classical computing device and/or system (e.g., the classical computing device **360** of FIG. 3). The encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be a quantum mechanical encoding in qubits that is provided over a quantum channel (e.g., fourth QC **384** of FIG. 3). In such embodiments, the encoding qubits (or quantum states of the encoding qubits) may be transmitted, teleported, and/or swapped via the quantum channel. In other embodiments, the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be a classical encoding in classical bits. For instance, the storage request **410** and the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be transmitted over a classical network (e.g., classical communication network **362** of FIG. 3).

[0045] The QCS **300** may quantum mechanically store the cryptographic key (e.g., the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key of FIG. 2). The qubits of the encoding may be spatially distributed amongst two or more quantum computing devices of the QCS **300** (e.g., the first quantum computing device **310** of FIG. 3 and the second quantum computing device **320** of FIG. 3). Upon a successful storage of the cryptographic key and at step **404**, the QCS **300** responds to the other computing system **400** with a cryptographic key storage response **420**. The storage response **420** may include a cryptographic key ID **422** that identifies a file, link, or other unique identifier for retrieval of the cryptographic key.

[0046] The encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may indicate that the cryptographic key is of length  $n$  classical bits, where  $n$  is a positive integer. The QCS **300** may store the key in  $n/2$  qubits (e.g., by employing superdense encodings via the superdense encoding/decoding **96** of FIG. 2). The qubit registry service **104** of QCS **300** may determine the number of qubits required for a quantum mechanical encoding, as well as identify, allocate, and register the

qubits. The cryptographic key service **92** of FIG. **2** may determine the number of available instances of quantum computing devices in the QCS **300**. The quantum mechanical encoding of key may be distributed across multiple quantum computing devices (e.g., the first quantum computing device **310** and the second quantum computing device **320**). The spatial distribution of the quantum mechanical encodings may ensure that if a single set of quantum hardware is compromised, the integrity of the encoding of the key is not put at risk, and the key may be accessed with confidence in its fidelity.

**[0047]** A non-limiting example of quantum mechanically storing a cryptographic key is now described. In this non-limiting example, the storage of the key is to be distributed across the first quantum computing device **310** and the second quantum computing device **320** of QCS **300** FIG. **3**. In other embodiments, the storage of the key may be distributed across additional and/or alternative quantum computing devices of QCS **300**. As shown in step **402** of FIG. **4A**, the storage request **410** is received at the QCS **300**. The storage request **410** may include (or at least indicate) an encoding of the cryptographic key **412**. In the non-limiting embodiment, the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be indicated by a set of classical bits included in the storage request **410**. In other embodiments, the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be indicated by a set of qubits included in the storage request **410** (e.g., delivered over a quantum channel or the quantum states of the set of qubits may be teleported and/or swapped to the QCS **300**). In such embodiments, the qubit may be received by a qubit transmission service of the QCS **300** (e.g., qubit transmission service **100** of FIG. **2**).

**[0048]** The storage request **410** may be forwarded to a quantum cryptographic key service (e.g., quantum cryptographic key service **92** of FIG. **2**) of the QCS **300**. In response to receiving the storage request **410**, the quantum cryptographic key service may employ a qubit registry service of the QCS **300** (e.g., qubit registry service **104** of FIG. **2**) to identify, allocate, and register a first set of allocated qubits (e.g., stored at the first quantum computing device **310**) for encoding the cryptographic key. Also, in response to receiving the storage request **410**, the qubit registry service may identify, allocate, and register a second set of allocated qubits (e.g., stored at the second quantum computing device **320**) for encoding the cryptographic key.

**[0049]** A qubit encoding service of the QCS **300** (e.g., qubit encoding/decoding service **94** of FIG. **2**) may encode a first portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of allocated qubits based on a first portion of the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** that corresponds to the first portion of the cryptographic key. Also, the qubit encoding service may encode a second portion of the cryptographic key in the second set of allocated qubits based on a second portion of the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** that corresponds to the second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0050]** Turning attention to FIG. **4B**, at step **406**, the QCS **300** receives a cryptographic key access request **430** that includes a cryptographic key ID **432** that identifies a file, link, or other unique identifier for retrieval of the cryptographic key. The access request **430** is received from the other computing system **400** (e.g., the classical computing device **360** of FIG. **3** or the fourth quantum computing device **340** of FIG. **3**).

**[0051]** The encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be a quantum mechanical encoding in qubits that is provided over a quantum channel (e.g., fourth QC **384** of FIG. **3**). In such embodiments, the encoding qubits (or quantum states of the encoding qubits) may be transmitted, teleported, and/or swapped via the quantum channel. In other embodiments, the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be a classical encoding in classical bits. For instance, the storage request **410** and the encoding of the cryptographic key **412** may be transmitted over a classical network (e.g., classical communication network **362** of FIG. **3**).

**[0052]** The QCS **300** may retrieve the quantum mechanically stored cryptographic key (e.g., the quantum mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key of FIG. **2**). The qubits of the encoding may have been spatially distributed amongst two or more quantum computing devices of the QCS **300** (e.g., the first quantum computing device **310** of FIG. **3** and the second quantum computing device **320** of FIG. **3**). Upon successful retrieval of the cryptographic key and at step **408**, the QCS **300** responds to the other computing system **400** with a cryptographic key access response **440**. The access response **440** may include an encoding of the cryptographic key **442**. The encoding of the cryptographic key **442** may be a quantum mechanical encoding in qubits that is provided over a quantum channel (e.g., fourth QC **384** of FIG. **3**). In such embodiments, the encoding qubits (or quantum states of the encoding qubits) may be transmitted, teleported, and/or swapped via the quantum channel. In other embodiments, the encoding of the cryptographic key **442** may be a classical encoding in classical bits. For instance, the access response **440** and the encoding of the cryptographic key **442** may be transmitted over a classical network (e.g., classical communication network **362** of FIG. **3**).

**[0053]** When the key is to be retrieved and/or access (e.g., in response to receiving the access request **430**), the spatially distributed encoding qubits (or quantum states of the encoding qubits) may be centralized (via qubit transport over quantum channels, teleportation, or qubit swap operations) may be centralized at a single set of quantum hardware (e.g., at the third quantum computing device **330** of FIG. **3**). The encoding qubits may be in superposition. In such superposition embodiments, an algorithm that identifies an energy minimum of the encoding qubits (in superposition) may be employed to decode the key (e.g., by measuring the quantum states of the encoding qubits). Once decoded (e.g., generating a classical encoding based on measuring the quantum states of the encoding qubits), the key may be provided to a requesting machine, application, or party by assembling the key fragments in the correct order (e.g., the other computing system **400**). In various embodiments, a classical encoding of the key may be provided. In other embodiments, a quantum mechanical encoding may be provided via a quantum channel, quantum teleportation, or qubit swap operation. Thus, the QCS **300** provides an effective means of making the key available to any service within quantum and/or classical computing systems.

**[0054]** A non-limiting example of accessing a cryptographic key that is quantum-mechanically stored via QCS **300** is now described. In this non-limiting example, the storage of the key is distributed across the first quantum computing device **310** and the second quantum computing device **320** of QCS **300** FIG. **3**. In other embodiments, the storage of the key may be distributed across additional and/or alternative quantum computing devices of QCS **300**.

More specifically, a first portion of the cryptographic key is encoded in a first set allocated qubits and a second portion of the cryptographic key is encoded in a second set allocated qubits. The first set of allocated qubits is stored (or located) at the first quantum computing device **310** and the second set of allocated qubits is stored (or located) at the second quantum computing device **320**.

**[0055]** As shown in step **406** of FIG. **4B**, the access request **430** is received at the QCS **300**. The qubit encodings of the cryptographic key may be centralized at the third quantum computing device **330** of the QCS **300**. In response to receiving the request, the first quantum computing device **310** may provide a first transmission to the third quantum computing device **330** (e.g., over the first QC **302** of FIG. **3** or over a classical communication network or communication bus). The first transmission may include a (quantum-mechanical or a classical) encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key. Also, in response to receiving the request, the second quantum computing device **320** may provide a second transmission to the third quantum computing device **330** (e.g., over the second QC **304** of FIG. **3** or over a classical communication network or communication bus). The second transmission may include a (quantum-mechanical or a classical) encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0056]** The third quantum computing device **330** may generate a first encoding of the cryptographic key based on the first transmission from the first quantum computing device **310** and the second transmission from the second quantum computing device **320**. The first encoding of the cryptographic key (e.g., the encoding of the cryptographic key **442**) may encode at least the first portion of the cryptographic key and the second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0057]** As shown in step **408**, the QCS **300** may provide a third transmission to the other computing system **400**. The third transmission may include the access response **440** and be based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key (e.g., the encoding of the cryptographic key **442**).

**[0058]** To illustrate exemplary operations performed by the QCS **300** of FIGS. **3-4B**, FIGS. **5A-5B** provide flowcharts for methods **500** and **520** respectively. Elements of FIGS. **1-4B** are referenced in describing FIGS. **3A-3B** for the sake of clarity.

**[0059]** FIG. **5A** provides a flowchart for a method **500** for quantum-mechanically storing a cryptographic key at a quantum computing system (QCS), according to various embodiments. The QCS may comprise a first set of quantum hardware (QH), a second set of QH, and a set of accessible qubits. Method **500** begins at block **502**, where a storage request to store a cryptographic key is received at the QCS. The storage request may indicate a classical encoding of the cryptographic key via a set of classical bits.

**[0060]** At block **504**, and in response to receiving the storage request, the QCS may distribute a quantum-mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key across at least a first set of allocated qubits and a second set of allocated qubits. The quantum-mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key may be based on the classical encoding of the cryptographic key. The first set of allocated qubits may be a first subset of the set of accessible qubits. The first set of allocated qubits may be stored at the first set of QH. The second set of allocated qubits may be a second subset of the

set of accessible qubits. The second set of allocated qubits may be stored at the second set of QH.

**[0061]** In some embodiments, the method may further include, in response to receiving the storage request, allocating, at the QCS, the first set of allocated qubits. Also, in response to receiving the storage request, the QCS may allocate the second set of allocated qubits. The QCS may encode a first portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of allocated qubits based on a first portion of the classical encoding that corresponds to the first portion of the cryptographic key. The QCS may encode a second portion of the cryptographic key in the second set of allocated qubits based on a second portion of the classical encoding that corresponds to the second portion of the cryptographic key. The quantum-mechanical encoding of the cryptographic key may be a superdense encoding.

**[0062]** FIG. **5B** provides a flowchart for a method **520** for accessing a quantum-mechanical encoding of a cryptographic key at a quantum computing system (QCS), according to various embodiments. The QCS may comprise a first set of quantum hardware (QH) that includes a first set of allocated qubits, a second set of QH that includes a second set of allocated qubits, and a third set of QH. Method **520** begins at block **522**, where the QCS may receive an access request for the cryptographic key. The first set of allocated qubits may encode a first portion of the cryptographic key. The second set of allocated qubits may encode a second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0063]** At block **524**, and in response to receiving the access request, the third set of QH may receive a first transmission from the first set of QH. The first transmission may include (or indicate) an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0064]** At block **526**, and in response to receiving the access request, the third set of QH may receive a second transmission from the second set of QH. The second transmission may include (or indicate) an encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0065]** At block **528**, the QCS may generate a first encoding of the cryptographic key. Generating the first encoding of the cryptographic key may be based on the first transmission from the first set of QH and the second transmission from the second set of QH. The first encoding of the cryptographic key encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0066]** At block **530**, the QCS may provide a third transmission to a requesting party that is associated with the access request. The third transmission may be based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key.

**[0067]** Generating the first encoding of the cryptographic key may include forming, at the third set of QH, a set of encoding qubits that encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key. The QCS may generate the third transmission based on the set of encoding qubits. Providing the third transmission may include the QCS providing the set of encoding qubits to the requesting party via a quantum channel (QC). The QC may be enabled to transmit the set of encoding qubits from the QCS to a fourth set of QH that is associated with the requesting party.

**[0068]** In other embodiments, providing the third transmission may include the QCS providing a set of classical bits to the requesting party via a classical network. The set of classical bits encodes information that enables a quantum teleportation event that transfer a set of quantum states from



the set of encoding qubits to another set of quantum states of another set of qubits included in a fourth set of QH that is associated with the requesting party. The other set of qubits may be entangled with a set of ancilla qubits of the QCS. The information encoded in the set of classical bits may be based on measurements of quantum states of the set of encoding qubits and measurements of quantum states of the set of ancilla qubits.

**[0069]** In some embodiments, receiving the first transmission includes receiving the first set of allocated qubits via a first quantum channel (QC) that is enabled to transmit the first set of allocated qubits from the first set of QH to the third set of QC. Receiving the second transmission may include receiving the second set of allocated qubits via a second QC that is enabled to transmit the second set of allocated qubits from the second set of QH to the third set of QC. Generating the first encoding of the cryptographic key may include forming, at the third set of QH, a set of encoding qubits that includes at least the first set allocated qubit and the second set of allocated qubits. Providing the third transmission may include providing the set of encoding qubits to the requesting party via a third QC. The third QC may be enabled to transmit the set of encoding qubits from the QCS to a fourth set of QH that is associated with the requesting party.

**[0070]** In other embodiments, providing the third transmission may include providing, from the QCS, a set of classical bits to the requesting party via a classical network. The set of classical bits encodes information that enables a quantum teleportation event that transfers a set of quantum states from the set of encoding qubits to another set of quantum states of another set of qubits included in a fourth set of QH that is associated with the requesting party.

**[0071]** In some embodiments, receiving the first transmission includes receiving, at the third set of QH and from the first set of QH via a classical network of the QCS, a first set of classical bits. The first set of classical bits may enable a first quantum teleportation event that transfers a first set of quantum states from the first set of allocated qubits to a third set of quantum states of a third set of allocated qubits of the third set of QH. Receiving the second transmission may include receiving, at the third set of QH and from the second set of QH via the classical network, a second set of classical bits. The second set of classical bits enables a second quantum teleportation event that transfers a second set of quantum states from the second set of allocated qubits to a fourth set of quantum states of a fourth set of allocated qubits of the third set of QH.

**[0072]** Generating the first encoding may include forming, at the third set of QH, a set of encoding qubits that includes at least the third set allocated qubit and the fourth set of allocated qubits. In some embodiments, providing the third transmission may include providing the set of encoding qubits to the requesting party via a quantum channel (QC) that is enabled to transmit the set of encoding qubits from the QCS to a fourth set of QH that is associated with the requesting party.

**[0073]** In other embodiments, providing the third transmission includes providing, from the QCS, a set of classical bits to the requesting party via a classical network. The set of classical bits encodes information that enables a quantum teleportation event that transfers a set of quantum states from the set of encoding qubits to another set of quantum

states of another set of qubits included in a fourth set of QH that is associated with the requesting party.

**[0074]** In some embodiments, a first set of quantum states of the first set of allocated qubits includes a first superposition of one or more qubits of the first set of allocated qubits that encodes the first portion of the cryptographic key. A second set of quantum states of the second set of allocated qubits includes a second superposition of one or more qubits of the second set of allocated that encodes the second portion of the cryptographic key. The method may further include determining, at the QCS, the cryptographic key based on identifying a first minimum energy of the first superposition of the one or more qubits of the first set of allocated qubits and identifying a second minimum energy of the second superposition of the one or more qubits of the second set of allocated qubits.

**[0075]** In at least one embodiment, the method further includes receiving, at the QCS, a storage request to store the cryptographic key. The storage request indicates a classical encoding of the cryptographic key via a set of classical bits. In response to receiving the storage request, the QCS may allocate the first set of allocated qubits for encoding the cryptographic key. In response to receiving the storage request, the QCS may allocate the second set of allocated qubits for encoding the cryptographic key. The method further includes encoding, at the QCS, the first portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of allocated qubits based on a first portion of the classical encoding that corresponds to the first portion of the cryptographic key. The QCS may encode the second portion of the cryptographic key in the second set of allocated qubits based on a second portion of the classical encoding that corresponds to the second portion of the cryptographic key.

**[0076]** FIG. 6 is a block diagram of another quantum computing system (QCS) 600 that is similar to the quantum computing system 300 of FIG. 1 that manages cryptographic keys, according to one example. In the example of FIG. 6, the QCS 600 comprises a system memory 602 and a processor device 604. The QCS further comprises a first set of quantum hardware (QH) 612, a second set of QH 622, and a third set of QH 632. The first set of QH 612 includes a first set of allocated qubits 614 that encodes a first portion of a cryptographic key 616. The second set of QH 622 includes a second set of allocated qubits 624 that encodes a second portion of the cryptographic key 626.

**[0077]** The processor device 604 is communicatively coupled to the system memory 602, such that the QCS 600 receives an access request 640 for the cryptographic key. In response to receiving the access request 640, the third set of QH 632 receives from the first set of QH 612, a first transmission 618 that includes an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key 616. In response to receiving the access request 640, the third set of QH 632 receives from the second set of QH 622, a second transmission 628 that includes an encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key 626. The third set of QH 632 generates a first encoding of the cryptographic key 634 based on the first transmission 618 from the first set of QH 612 and the second transmission 628 from the second set of QH 622. The first encoding of the cryptographic key 634 encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key. The QCS 600 provides a third transmission 638 to a request-

ing party **642** that is associated with the access request **640**. The third transmission **638** is based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key **634**.

**[0078]** Individuals will recognize improvements and modifications to the preferred examples of the disclosure. All such improvements and modifications are considered within the scope of the concepts disclosed herein and the claims that follow.

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:
  - receiving, by a first set of quantum hardware (QH) of a quantum computing system (QCS), at least a first portion of a cryptographic key;
  - determining, by the first set of QH, that a first set of qubits of a first plurality of qubits implemented by the first set of QH is allocated for an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key; and
  - encoding, by the first set of QH, the first portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of qubits.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - receiving, by a second set of QH of the QCS, at least a second portion of the cryptographic key;
  - determining, by the second set of QH, that a second set of qubits of a second plurality of qubits implemented by the second set of QH is allocated for an encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key; and
  - encoding, by the second set of QH, the second portion of the cryptographic key in the second set of qubits.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising transmitting, by the first set of QH to a third set of QH, the first portion of the cryptographic key.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein transmitting the first portion of the cryptographic key further comprises transmitting the first set of qubits via a first quantum channel (QC) that is enabled to transmit the first set of qubits from the first set of QH to the third set of QH.
5. The method of claim 3, wherein transmitting the first portion of the cryptographic key further comprises transmitting, via a classical network, a first set of classical bits that enables a first quantum teleportation event that transfers a first set of quantum states from the first set of qubits to a third set of quantum states of a third set of qubits of the third set of QH.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein a first set of quantum states of the first set of qubits includes a first superposition of one or more qubits of the first set of qubits that encodes the first portion of the cryptographic key.
7. The method of claim 6, further comprising:
  - determining, at the QCS, the cryptographic key based on identifying a first minimum energy of the first superposition of the one or more qubits of the first set of qubits.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - receiving, by the first set of QH, an indication of a classical encoding of the cryptographic key via a set of classical bits; and
  - encoding, by the first set of QH, the portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of qubits based on a first portion of the classical encoding that corresponds to the first portion of the cryptographic key.
9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - receiving, at a third set of QH from the first set of QH, a first transmission that includes an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key;

receiving, at the third set of QH from a second set of QH, a second transmission that includes an encoding of a second portion of the cryptographic key;

generating, at the third set of QH, a first encoding of the cryptographic key based on the first transmission from the first set of QH and the second transmission from the second set of QH, wherein the first encoding of the cryptographic key encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key; and

providing, from the QCS and to a requesting party, a third transmission that is based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key.

**10.** The method of claim 9, wherein generating the first encoding of the cryptographic key comprises:

forming, at the third set of QH, a set of encoding qubits that encode the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key; and

generating, at the QCS, the third transmission based on the set of encoding qubits.

**11.** A quantum computing system (QCS), comprising:

a first set of quantum hardware (QH), comprising:

- a first processor device; and
- a first plurality of qubits; and

wherein the first processor device is to:

- receive at least a first portion of a cryptographic key;
- determine that a first set of qubits of the first plurality of qubits is allocated for an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key; and
- encode the first portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of qubits.

**12.** The QCS of claim 11, further comprising:

a second set of QH, comprising:

- a second processor device; and
- a second plurality of qubits; and

wherein the second processor device is to:

- receive at least a second portion of the cryptographic key;
- determine that a second set of qubits of the second plurality of qubits is allocated for an encoding of the second portion of the cryptographic key; and
- encode the second portion of the cryptographic key in the second set of qubits.

**13.** The QCS of claim 11, wherein the first processor device is further to transmit, to a third set of QH, the first portion of the cryptographic key.

**14.** The QCS of claim 13, wherein, to transmit the first portion of the cryptographic key, the first processor device is further to transmit the first set of qubits via a first quantum channel (QC) that is enabled to transmit the first set of qubits from the first set of QH to the third set of QH.

**15.** The QCS of claim 13, wherein, to transmit the first portion of the cryptographic key, the first processor device is further to transmit, via a classical network, a first set of classical bits that enables a first quantum teleportation event that transfers a first set of quantum states from the first set of qubits to a third set of quantum states of a third set of qubits of the third set of QH.

**16.** The QCS of claim 11, wherein a first set of quantum states of the first set of qubits includes a first superposition of one or more qubits of the first set of qubits that encodes the first portion of the cryptographic key.

**17.** The QCS of claim **16**, wherein the QCS is to:  
determine the cryptographic key based on identifying a first minimum energy of the first superposition of the one or more qubits of the first set of qubits.

**18.** The QCS of claim **11**, wherein the first processor device is further to:

receive an indication of a classical encoding of the cryptographic key via a set of classical bits; and  
encode the portion of the cryptographic key in the first set of qubits based on a first portion of the classical encoding that corresponds to the first portion of the cryptographic key.

**19.** The QCS of claim **11**, further comprising:

a third set of QH, comprising:

a third processor device; and

a third plurality of qubits; and

wherein the third processor device is to:

receive, from the first set of QH, a first transmission that includes an encoding of the first portion of the cryptographic key;

receive, from a second set of QH, a second transmission that includes an encoding of at least a second portion of the cryptographic key;

generate a first encoding of the cryptographic key based on the first transmission from the first set of QH and the second transmission from the second set of QH, wherein the first encoding of the cryptographic key encodes at least the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key; and

provide, to a requesting party, a third transmission that is based on the first encoding of the cryptographic key.

**20.** The QCS of claim **19**, wherein, to generate the first encoding of the cryptographic key, the third processor device is to:

form a set of encoding qubits that encode the first portion and the second portion of the cryptographic key; and  
generate the third transmission based on the set of encoding qubits.

\* \* \* \* \*