

Overview on UWB standard 802.15.4-2024

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Abstract—The purpose of this survey is to understand and address these topics of the standard IEEE 802.15.4-2024, "IEEE Standard for Low-Rate wireless networks": Architecture, where we will s

I. INTRODUCTION

The standard covers many physical layers and one Medium Access Control layer (MAC) for low rate wireless personal area networks (LR-WPAN). There are some special applications such as Smart Utility Network, Rail Communications and Control, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Medical Body Area Networks. Among many others it covers the one we are interested in, the Ultra Wide Band (UWB) technology. UWB is a technology generally defined like others in the standard as a Wireless Personal Area Network (WPAN). So we will give an quick overview of the standard and then focus on the UWB technology.

II. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

A. Network Topologies

Topologies for LR-WPAN are two, star and peer-to-peer. In the star topology, the coordinator is the central device and the other devices are the end devices. The coordinator is the only device that can communicate with the end devices, and is usually wall powered, whilst end devices are battery powered. Suited for home automation, personal health care and games. The peer-to-peer topology is a network of devices that can communicate with each other, thus allowing for more complex networks, such as mesh networks, using multiple hops, implemented at higher level, thus not discussed in this standard. Suited for sensor networks, enabling smart agriculture, industrial control and monitoring and asset and inventory tracking.

Each independent PAN selects a UID (PAN Identifier) thus allowing for multiple PANs to coexist, moreover each device in a PAN can communicate within with a short address, permits to communicate also with another device from another PAN.

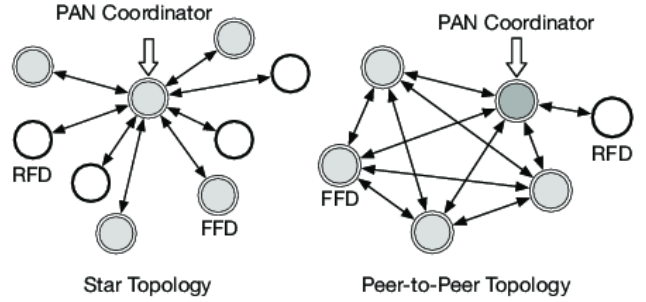


Fig. 1. Star and peer-to-peer topologies

B. Architecture

The architecture is composed of three layers:

- Physical Layer (PHY)
- Medium Access Control (MAC)
- Higher layers

Only PHY and MAC are defined in the standard, the higher layers, such as network, that involves its configuration, message routing and manipulation are left to the implementer, as well as the application layer.

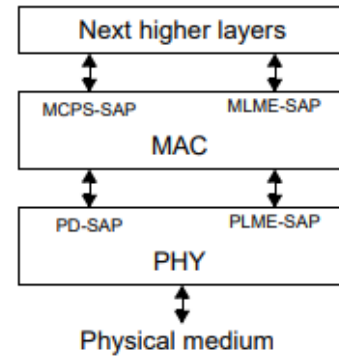


Fig. 2. IEEE 802.15.4-2024 architecture

1) *Physical Layer (PHY)*: The PHY layer has its main focus on the activation and deactivation of the radio transceiver,

energy detection, link quality indication, channel freq. selection, clear channel assessment, precision ranging (UWB) and data transmission and reception. In the specific case of High Rate Pulse repetition frequency UWB, it also serves the purpose of precision ranging.

2) *Medium Access Control (MAC)*: The MAC overlay provides 2 services:

- Data service
- Management service

The data service is responsible for the MAC protocol data units transmission and reception, whilst the management service is responsible for the interfacing with the MAC sublayer management entity service access point (MLME-SAP fig.2). In particular the MAC overlay provides the possibility to manage beacons, channel access, association and disassociation, acknowledged frame delivery, guaranteed time slots management and frame validation. In addition can provide security features (TODO: UWB?).

C. Functional overview

1) *Scheduled access*: Access is managed by different implementations of the superframe structure.

Beacon superframe, defined and sent by the coordinator, dependant on beacons. Can have an active and inactive portion, during the latter the coordinator is able to enter low-power mode (sleep), thus saving energy. Beacon transmission is executed at the beginning of each superframe by the coordinator, in order to synchronize and identify the devices of the PAN. It can be avoided by the coordinator bypassing the beacon transmission. The Superframe Duration \leq Beacon Interval, is divided in two parts:

- Contention Access Period (CAP)
- Contention Free Period (CFP)

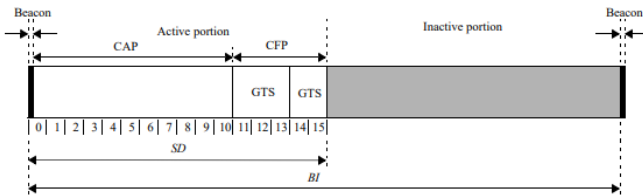


Fig. 3. Beacon superframe with Guaranteed Time Slots (GTS) in the CFP

Deterministic and synchronous multichannel extension (DSME) multi-superframe, as in beacon, starts with the PAN coordinator sending an Enhanced Beacon frame, containing DSME PAN Descriptor Information Element (IE). The multi-superframe is divided in cycles of repeated superframes 4, composed as usual, of enhanced beacon frame, CAP and CFP.

Time Slotted Channel Hopping (TSCH) sees the substitution of the superframe with a slotframe, also containing guaranteed or CSMA-CA periods. The difference is the shared notion of time between participants, thus allowing for automatic repetition of the slotframe, without

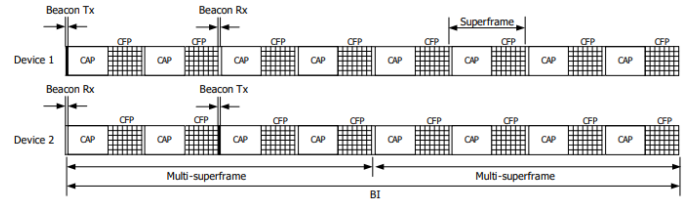


Fig. 4. DSME multi-superframe

involving beacon transmission. It can also communicate the device's assigned timeslot(s) in the slotframe by beacon, but typically is handled at higher layers. Since all devices are synchronized and share channel information, they can hop over channels decreasing interference and multipath fading, doing so in slotted channels to avoid collisions, thus avoiding retransmissions, usefull in industrial environments.

TWVS multichannel cluster tree PAN (TMCTP). A cluster tree network is a mesh of clusters, each with a coordinator, that can communicate with other clusters, forming a tree. The easiest is a single cluster, with a coordinator and end devices, but can be extended to multiple clusters by the first PAN coordinator, that instructs a device to become a coordinator of a new cluster. This augment the coverage area, with the downside of augmenting the message latency. The TMCTP is a cluster tree network with a Master PAN coordinator(Super Pan Coordinator), that synchronizes other PAN coordinators over different channels, that in turn synchronize their clusters. Parent PAN coordinator(s) communicate with their PAN-coordinator child(s) in its own channel CAP or CFP, whilst childs send beacons to their parent in a dedicated channel, Dedicated Beacon Slot (DBS) assigned by the coordinator in the Beacon Only Phase (BOP). So the TMCTP has an enhanced superframe structure, with a BOP, a CAP and a CFP.

2) *Data Transfer Model*: The transfer models of the standard are:

- Transfer to a Coordinator from a device.
- Indirect transfer from a coordinator in which the device recives the data.
- Transfer between two peer devices. (TODO: UWB?)

On a correctly recived frame, if requested, the receiver sends an acknowledgment frame that can be of 3 types:

- Immediate acknowledgment
- Enanced acknowledged
- Fragment acknowledgment

Data transfer to a coordinator is managed in two ways depending on beacon enabled or not. If synchronization *beacons are enabled*, the device listens for the beacon, when found it synchronizes to the PAN, and sends the data frame to the coordinator at an appropriate time.

If *not enabled* it transmits directly to the coordinator.

Indirect data transfer using the superframe structure, the coordinator that has data for a device, indicates in the beacon that a data message is pending. Since devices are synchronized through the beacon, they can listen for pending messages, if present, they send a Data Request command to the coordinator, that in turn sends the data frame and when successfully completed, removes the message from the pending list in the beacon.

If not using the superframe structure, and a Data Frame is pending, the coordinator stores the data and sends it to the device up on request by the latter. Else the coordinator that has no data, either indicates it on the returned ACK if requested by the device that sent the Data Request, or in a Data Frame with zero payload.

Data transfer **between two peer** devices is managed either by a device that constantly receives or synchronizes with the sending device. In the first case the device attempts to send data when channel access is gained, in the second case other measures are taken to achieve sync.

3) *Frame Structure*: Thought to be reliable in noisy environments while keeping complexity low, the frames are passed from the MAC to the PHY layer as the PHY Service Data Unit (PSDU), that is then converted to the PHY Protocol Data Unit (PPDU) and transmitted. PPDU for HRP-UWB on UWB chapter.

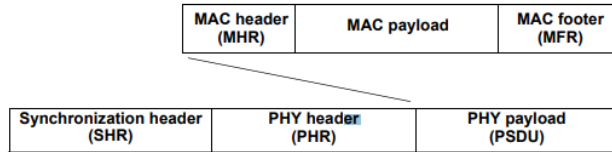


Fig. 5. PHY Protocol Data Unit (PPDU)

4) *Information Elements*: To transmit information between layers and devices, the standard uses Information Elements (IEs), that consist of an ID and a length field, followed by the information itself. If the IE is not recognized, it is ignored, else it can be accepted or discarded.

5) *Access Methods*: The standard defines the following access methods:

- Unslotted carrier sense multiple access with collision avoidance (CSMA-CA), used where is not used the superframe structure.
- Slotted CSMA-CA, used in the superframe structure.
- TSCH CCA (TSCH Clear Channel Assessment) in non shared slots where the MAC layer requests a CCA to the PHY layer at a designated time in the timeslot, that in turn returns the result.
- TSCH CSMA-CA, in shared slots (multiple devices can transmit in that assigned timeslot 10.3.2.2-10.3.9.2 section of the standard). Collisions are detected by not re-

civing an acknowledgment frame. In shared links if there is a collision, retransmission is implemented along with an exp. backoff mechanism to avoid further collisions (backoff exponent increased on every collision).

- CSMA-CA with Priority Channel Access (PCA), used in presence of MAC Service Data Units containing CriticalEventMessage parameter flag set to true
- LECIM (Low Energy Critical Infrastructure Monitoring) ALOHA with PCA.

Frame acknowledgment is optionally sent if requested, to confirm reception and validation of a frame. The receiving device can add content as enhanced acknowledgment frame encapsulated as information elements, then if the originator does not understand the IE content of the Enh-Ack, is ignored but considering the transmission successful.

Frak is used in a fragment sequence to determine which fragments have been received and which are missing explicating the status of one or more fragments.

Octets: 2	variable	2/4
Frak Header	Fragment Status	Frak Validation

Fig. 6. Frak format

Data verification is achieved in MAC service data units through a cyclic redundancy check (CRC). For fragment sequences, is implemented a fragment identity check sequence (FICS) included in each fragment, used also to determine along with the fragment number, which fragments are missing and which are received.

Octets: 2	variable	2/4
Fragment Header	Fragment Data	FICS

Fig. 7. Fragment packet

6) *Power Consumption*: Mainly, devices that are battery powered will require duty-cycling, that is the device is active for a short period of time listening on the RF channel for incoming messages and then goes to sleep the majority of the time, thus saving energy. Sleep and listen periods are decided by the application designer, who finds a compromise between message latency and battery consumption. Devices can also continuously listen.

In URP UWB, the standard also provides a hybrid modulation that permits noncoherent architectures in order to reduce power consumption and implementation complexity.

7) *Security*: The cost objectives of ad nature of hoc networks impose additional security constraints, but also

result difficult to achieve. The problems are low cost devices, mostly with low computational power, available memory and battery power. Also there is the problem of the trusted computer base, or random number generation, that is difficult to achieve. Is furthermore not implied that there is a fixed infrastructure, thus implying that are possible communications between devices that have never communicated before.

Since most of the security features are implementable at higher layers, is out of scope for the standard. (for further info IEEE 802.15.9).

The mechanism used in this standard is based on symmetric key cryptography, and uses keys provided by the higher layer processes, that also provide establishment and maintenance of the latter, thus the MAC layer is not involved in the key management and assumes that the implementation is secure.

The mechanism provides combinations for 3 security services:

- Data confidentiality: assumes informations are not disclosed to unauthorized parties.
- Data integrity: assures the data source, thus not altered during transmission.
- Replay protection: assures that a duplicate is detected. (important for UWB on keyless devices).

The frame protection can be adapted on a per frame basis, varying the security level depending on the requirement of security over security overhead. Keys are either shared between 2 devices (link key) or between a group of devices (group key). This implies lower maintenance and storage costs, but also implies that if a device in the group is compromised, the whole group is compromised.

III. GENERAL PHY REQUIREMENTS

A. Frequency ranges

Band designation	Frequency band MHz
HRP UWB sub-gigahertz	250-750
HRP UWB low band	3244-4742
HRP UWB high band	5944-10 234
LRP UWB	5624.32-10 435.2

TABLE I
FREQUENCY RANGES FOR UWBs (IN MHz)

B. Channel Assignment

C. Receiver Energy Detection (ED)

Is intended to be used as a part of a channel selection algorithm. The ED is an estimation of the received signal power within the channel bandwidth.

Channel number	Center Frequency	HRP UWB band
0	499.2	Sub-gigahertz
1	3494.4	Low band
2	3993.6	
3	4492.8	
4	3993.6	
5	6489.6	High band
6	6988.8	
7	6489.6	
8	7488.0	
9	7987.2	
10	8486.4	
11	7987.2	
12	8985.6	
13	9484.8	
14	9984.0	
15	9484.8	

TABLE II
CHANNEL ASSIGNMENTS FOR HRP UWBs

Channel number	Center Frequency
0	6489.6
1	6988.8
2	7987.2
3	8486.4
4	6681.6
5	7334.4
6	7987.2
7	8640.0
8	9292.8
9	9945.6

TABLE III
CHANNEL ASSIGNMENTS FOR LRP UWBs

D. Clear Channel Assessment (CCA)

UWB should implement one of the following CCA methods (last 2 only for HRP UWB):

- Mode 1: Energy above threshold, it reports the medium busy if the energy is above the ED threshold.
- Mode 2: Carrier sense only, it reports the medium busy if the signal detected is compliant with the standard and same modulation used by the detecting device.
- Mode 3:
 - Mode 3a: Carrier sense with Energy above threshold (either required), it reports busy whether Mode 1 or Mode 2 reports busy.
 - Mode 3b: Carrier sense with Energy above threshold (both required), it reports busy if both Mode 1 and Mode 2 report busy.
- Mode 4: ALOHA, CCA should always report an idle medium.

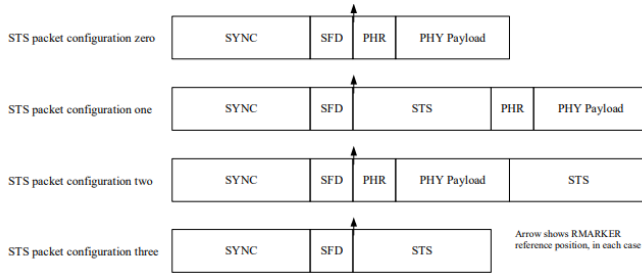


Fig. 8. STS position and Physical Protocol Data Unit (PPDU) format

- Mode 5: Known as preamble sense, it reports busy if after listnening finds the synchronization header of a frame. After it should wait atleast for the frame to be completely sent and acknowledged before reporting idle.
- Mode 6: Preamble sense based on the packet with the multiplexed preamble.

IV. HRP UWB PHY

A. General

To be compliant with the standard, the PHY layer must implement support for at least one between the channels 0, 3 and 9. Within each there is support for at least 2 complex channels that have unique lenght 31 preamble codes. So the device must support the lenght 31 codes for each channel it implements.

To increment ranging accuracy, reduced on-air time and power consumption, the standard also provides optional modes for example scrambled timestamp sequence (STS), these devices that use this additional modes are called HRP-ERDEV (Enhanced Ranging Devices) and must support:

- Operation at the Base Pulse Repetition Frequency (BPRF) of 64 MHz.
- Operation at higher PRF than BPRF, called HPRF.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion goes here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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