the channel will be able to support $F \cdot T$ simultaneous calls. Recall that we saw in Section 5.3.4 that cable access networks also use a combined FDM/TDM approach. GSM systems consist of 200-kHz frequency bands with each band supporting eight TDM calls. GSM encodes speech at 13 kbps and 12.2 kbps.

A GSM network's **base station controller (BSC)** will typically service several tens of base transceiver stations. The role of the BSC is to allocate BTS radio channels to mobile subscribers, perform **paging** (finding the cell in which a mobile user is resident), and perform handoff of mobile users—a topic we'll cover shortly in Section 6.7.2. The base station controller and its controlled base transceiver stations collectively constitute a GSM **base station system (BSS)**.

As we'll see in Section 6.7, the **mobile switching center (MSC)** plays the central role in user authorization and accounting (e.g., determining whether a mobile device is allowed to connect to the cellular network), call establishment and teardown, and handoff. A single MSC will typically contain up to five BSCs, resulting in approximately 200K subscribers per MSC. A cellular provider's network will have a number of MSCs, with special MSCs known as gateway MSCs connecting the provider's cellular network to the larger public telephone network.

## 6.4.2 3G Cellular Data Networks: Extending the Internet to Cellular Subscribers

Our discussion in Section 6.4.1 focused on connecting cellular voice users to the public telephone network. But, of course, when we're on the go, we'd also like to read email, access the Web, get location-dependent services (e.g., maps and restaurant recommendations) and perhaps even watch streaming video. To do this, our smartphone will need to run a full TCP/IP protocol stack (including the physical link, network, transport, and application layers) and connect into the Internet via the cellular data network. The topic of cellular data networks is a rather bewildering collection of competing and ever-evolving standards as one generation (and half-generation) succeeds the former and introduces new technologies and services with new acronyms. To make matters worse, there's no single official body that sets requirements for 2.5G, 3G, 3.5G, or 4G technologies, making it hard to sort out the differences among competing standards. In our discussion below, we'll focus on the UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications Service) 3G standards developed by the 3rd Generation Partnership project (3GPP) [3GPP 2012], a widely deployed 3G technology.

Let's take a top-down look at 3G cellular data network architecture shown in Figure 6.19.

### 3G Core Network

The 3G core cellular data network connects radio access networks to the public Internet. The core network interoperates with components of the existing cellular voice

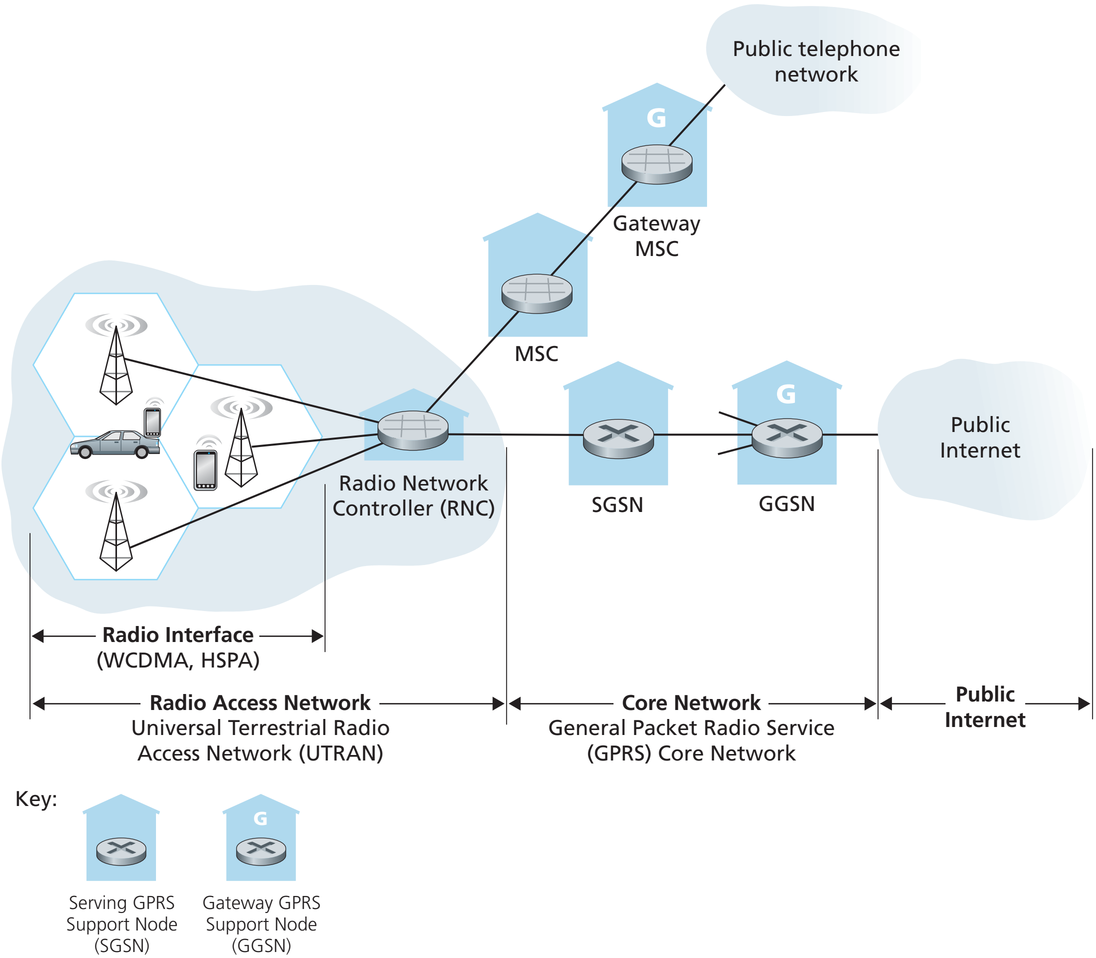


**Figure 6.19** ♦ 3G system architecture

network (in particular, the MSC) that we previously encountered in Figure 6.18. Given the considerable amount of existing infrastructure (and profitable services!) in the existing cellular voice network, the approach taken by the designers of 3G data services is clear: *leave the existing core GSM cellular voice network untouched, adding additional cellular data functionality in parallel to the existing cellular voice network*. The alternative—integrating new data services directly into the core of the existing cellular voice network—would have raised the same challenges encountered in Section 4.4.4, where we discussed integrating new (IPv6) and legacy (IPv4) technologies in the Internet.

There are two types of nodes in the 3G core network: **Serving GPRS Support Nodes (SGSNs)** and **Gateway GPRS Support Nodes (GGSNs)**. (GPRS stands for Generalized Packet Radio Service, an early cellular data service in 2G networks; here we discuss the evolved version of GPRS in 3G networks). An SGSN is responsible for delivering datagrams to/from the mobile nodes in the radio access network to which the SGSN is attached. The SGSN interacts with the cellular voice network's MSC for that area, providing user authorization and handoff, maintaining location (cell) information about active mobile nodes, and performing datagram forwarding between mobile nodes in the radio access network and a GGSN. The GGSN acts as a gateway, connecting multiple SGSNs into the larger Internet. A GGSN is thus the last piece of 3G infrastructure that a datagram originating at a mobile node encounters before entering the larger Internet. To the outside world, the GGSN looks like any other gateway router; the mobility of the 3G nodes within the GGSN's network is hidden from the outside world behind the GGSN.

### 3G Radio Access Network: The Wireless Edge

The 3G **radio access network** is the wireless first-hop network that we see as a 3G user. The **Radio Network Controller (RNC)** typically controls several cell base transceiver stations similar to the base stations that we encountered in 2G systems (but officially known in 3G UMTS parlance as a "Node Bs"—a rather non-descriptive name!). Each cell's wireless link operates between the mobile nodes and a base transceiver station, just as in 2G networks. The RNC connects to both the circuit-switched cellular voice network via an MSC, and to the packet-switched Internet via an SGSN. Thus, while 3G cellular voice and cellular data services use different core networks, they share a common first/last-hop radio access network.

A significant change in 3G UMTS over 2G networks is that rather than using GSM's FDMA/TDMA scheme, UMTS uses a CDMA technique known as Direct Sequence Wideband CDMA (DS-WCDMA) [Dahlman 1998] within TDMA slots; TDMA slots, in turn, are available on multiple frequencies—an interesting use of all three dedicated channel-sharing approaches that we earlier identified in Chapter 5 and similar to the approach taken in wired cable access networks (see Section 5.3.4). This change requires a new 3G cellular wireless-access network operating in parallel with the 2G BSS radio network shown in Figure 6.19. The data service associated with the WCDMA specification is known as HSP (High Speed Packet Access) and promises downlink data rates of up to 14 Mbps. Details regarding 3G networks can be found at the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) Web site [3GPP 2012].