

# ZIL Performance: How I Doubled Sync Write Speed

# Agenda

1. What is the ZIL?
2. How is it used? How does it work?
3. The problem to be fixed; the solution.
4. Details on the changes I made.
5. Performance testing and results.

# 1 – What is the ZIL?

# What is the ZIL?

- ZIL: Acronym for (Z)FS (I)ntent (L)og
  - Logs synchronous operations to disk, before `spa_sync()`
  - What constitutes a "synchronous operation"?
    - most *modifying* ZPL operations:
      - e.g. `zfs_create`, `zfs_unlink`, `zfs_write` (some), etc.
    - doesn't include non-modifying ZPL operations:
      - e.g. `zfs_read`, `zfs_seek`, etc.

# When is the ZIL used?

- Always<sup>\*</sup>
  - ZPL operations (itx's) logged via in-memory lists
  - lists of in-memory itx's written to disk via `zil_commit()`
  - `zil_commit()` called for:
    - *any* sync write
    - other sync operations (e.g. create, unlink), **and** `sync=always`
    - *some* reads (`sync=always` or `FRSYNC` set)

<sup>\*</sup>Except when dataset configured with: `sync=disabled`

# What is the SLOG?

- SLOG: Acronym for (S)eparate (LOG) Device
  - An SLOG is not necessary
  - An SLOG can be used to improve latency of ZIL writes
- Conceptually, SLOG is different than the ZIL
- ZIL is used, even if no SLOG attached

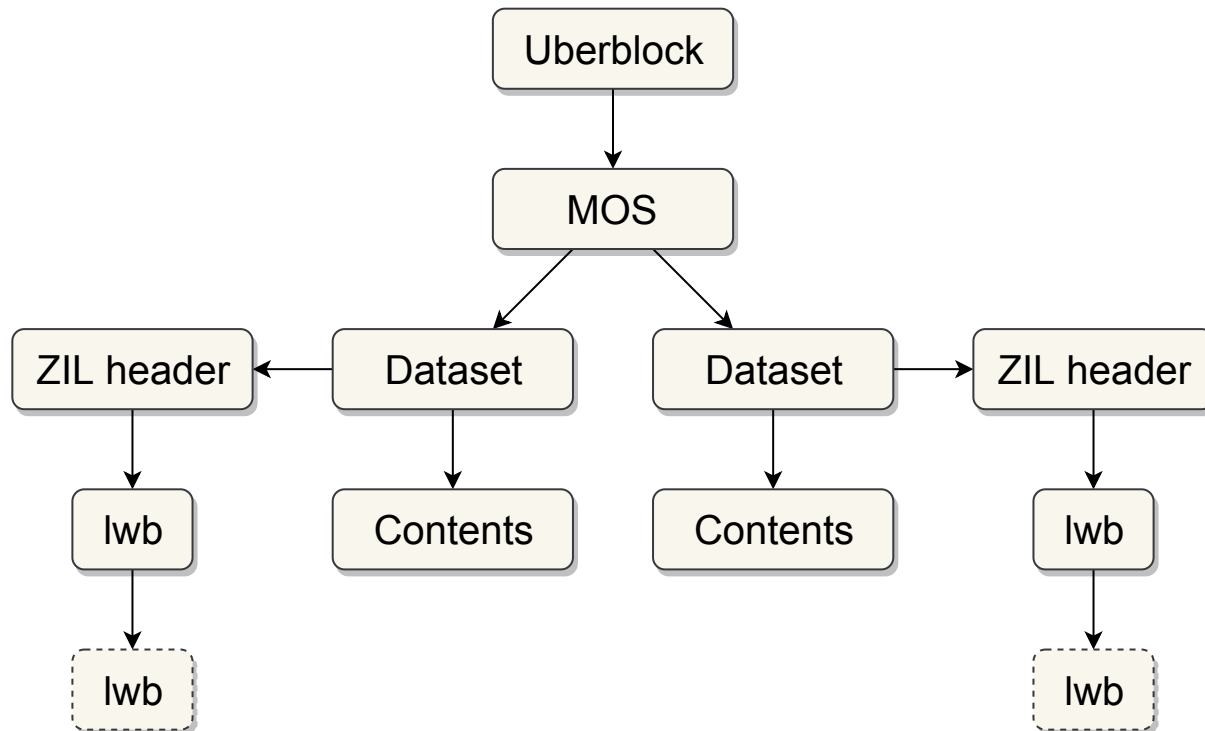
# Why does the ZIL exist?

- Writes in ZFS are "write-back"
- Without the ZIL, sync operations inherit latency of `spa_sync()`<sup>\*</sup>
  - `spa_sync()` can take tens of seconds (or more) to complete
- Further, with the ZIL, write amplification can be mitigated
- ZIL is essentially a performance optimization

<sup>\*</sup>All operations inherit this latency, but only sync operations wait for completion

# ZIL On-Disk Format

- Each dataset has it's own unique ZIL on-disk
- ZIL stored on-disk as a singly linked list of ZIL blocks (lwb's)





## 2 – How is the ZIL used?

# How is the ZIL used?

- ZPL will generally interact with the ZIL in two phases:
  1. Log the operation(s) — `zil_itx_assign`
  2. Commit the operation(s) — `zil_commit`

# Example: zfs\_write

- `zfs_write` → `zfs_log_write`
- `zfs_log_write`
  - `zil_itx_create`
  - `zil_itx_assign`
- `zfs_write` → `zil_commit`
- Most ZPL operations have a corresponding `zfs_log_*` function
  - `zfs_log_create`
  - `zfs_log_remove`
  - `zfs_log_link`
  - `zfs_log_symlink`
  - `zfs_log_truncate`
  - `zfs_log_setattr`
  - ...

# Example: zfs\_fsync

- `zfs_fsync` → `zil_commit`
  - no *new* operations to log... no `zfs_log_fsync` function

# Contract between ZIL and ZPL.

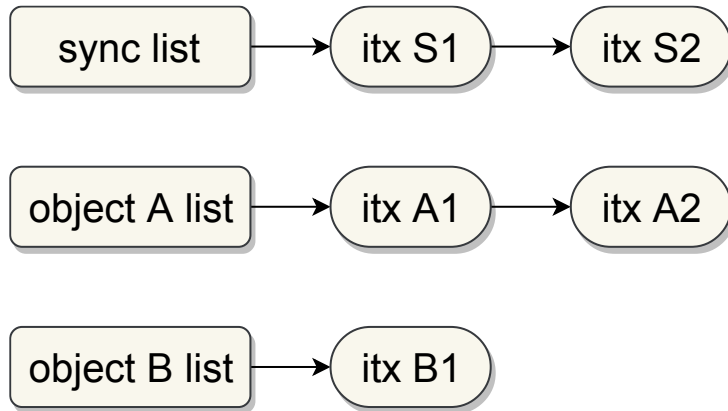
- Parameters to `zil_commit`: ZIL pointer, object number
  - These uniquely identify an object whose data is to be committed
- When `zil_commit` returns:
  - Operations *relevant* to the object specified, will be *persistent* on disk
  - relevant – all operations that would modify that object
  - persistent – Log block(s) written (completed) → disk flushed
- Interface of `zil_commit` doesn't specify *which* operation(s) to commit

## 2 – How does the ZIL work?

# How does the ZIL work?

- In memory ZIL contains per-txg `itxg_t` structures
- Each `itxg_t` contains:
  - A single list of sync operations (for all objects)
  - Object specific lists of async operations

# Example: itx lists





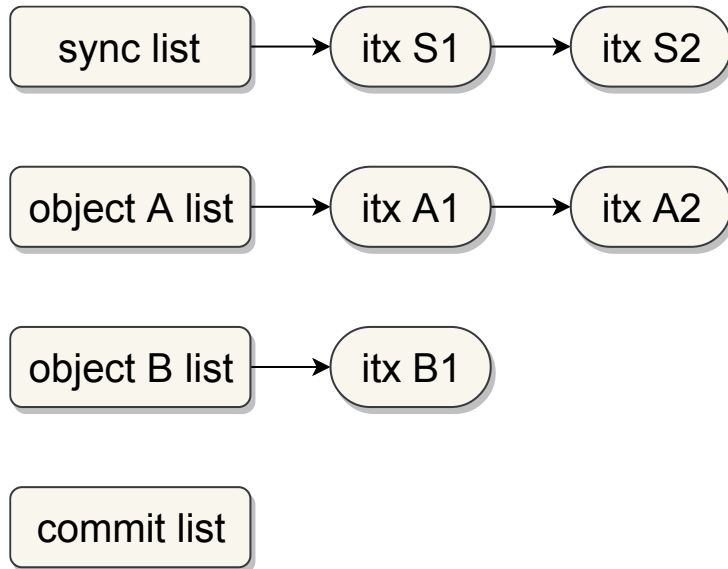
# How are itx's written to disk?

- `zil_commit` handles the process of writing `itx_t`'s to disk:

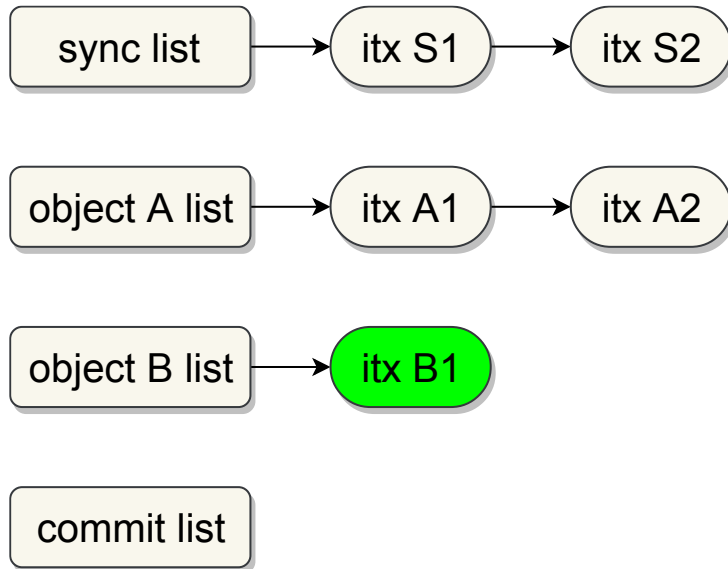
# How are itx's written to disk?

- `zil_commit` handles the process of writing `itx_t`'s to disk:
  1. find all relevant `itx`'s, move them to the "commit list"

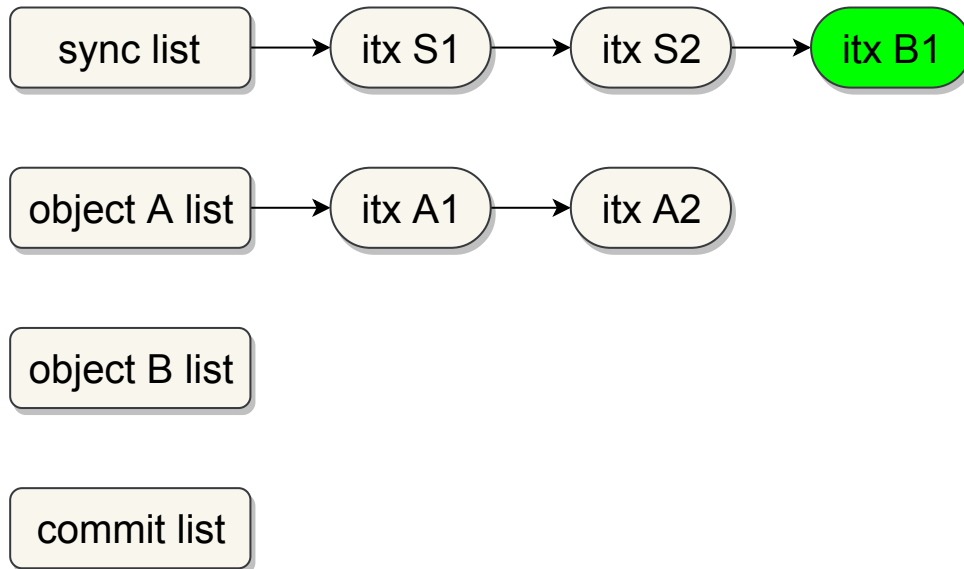
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



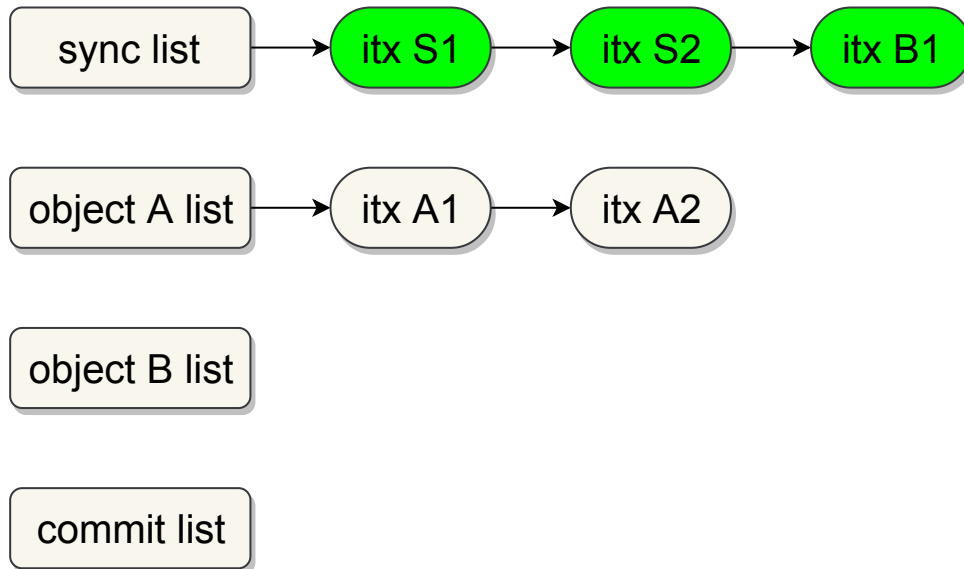
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



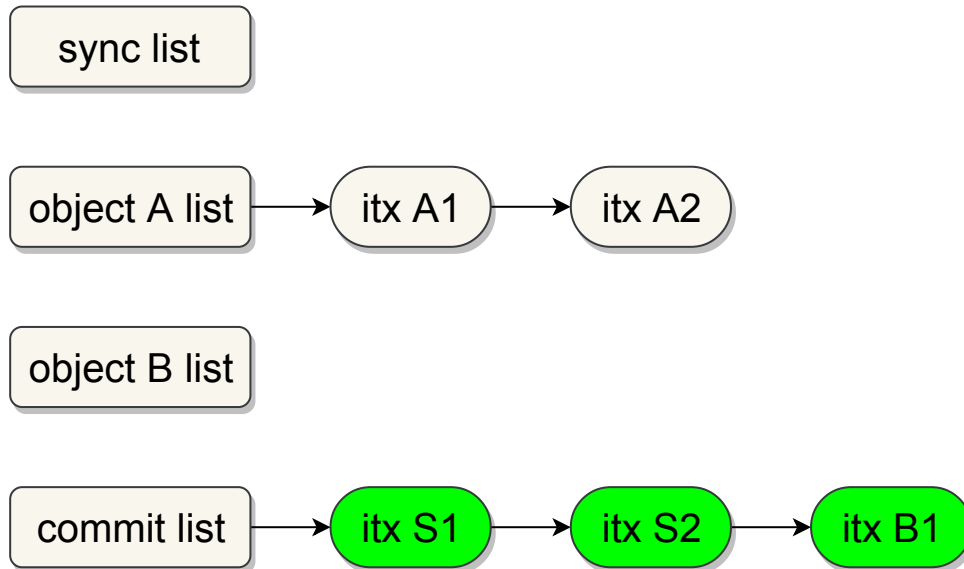
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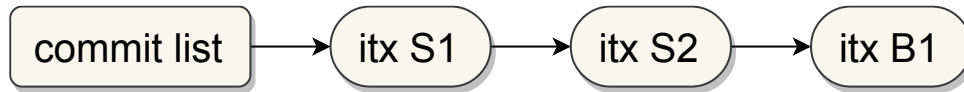


# How are itx's written to disk?

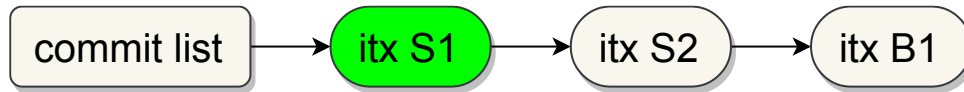
- `ztl_commit` handles the process of writing `itx_t`'s to disk:
  1. Move async itx's for object being committed, to the sync list
  2. Write all commit list itx's to disk



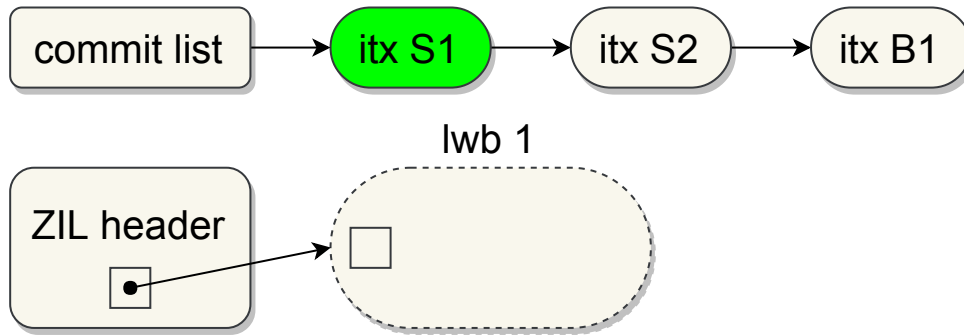
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



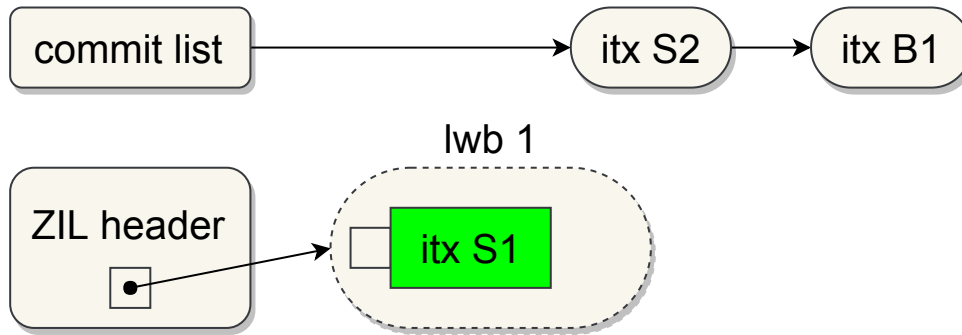
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



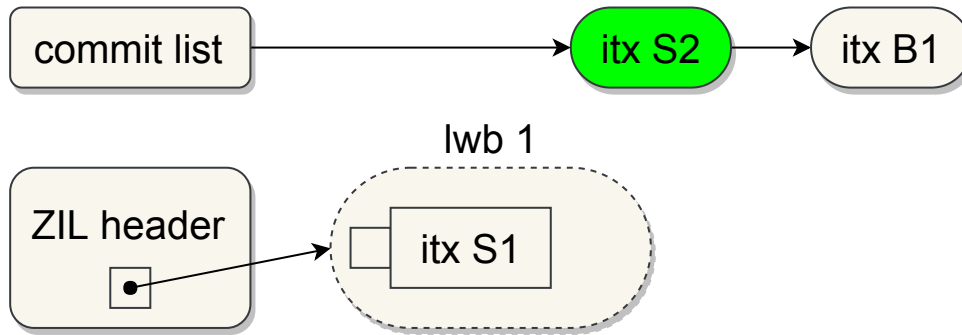
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



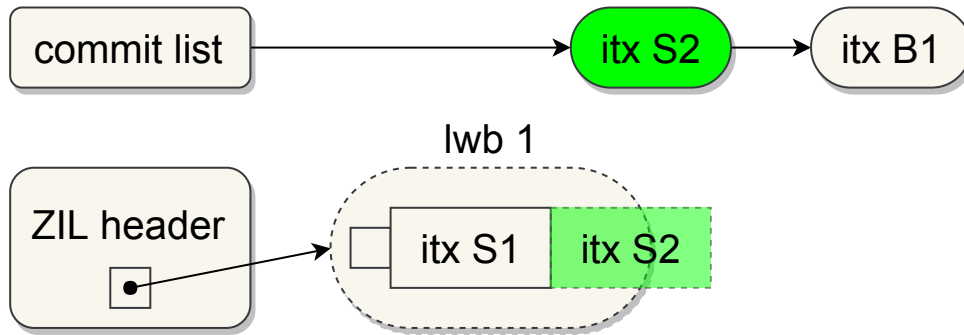
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



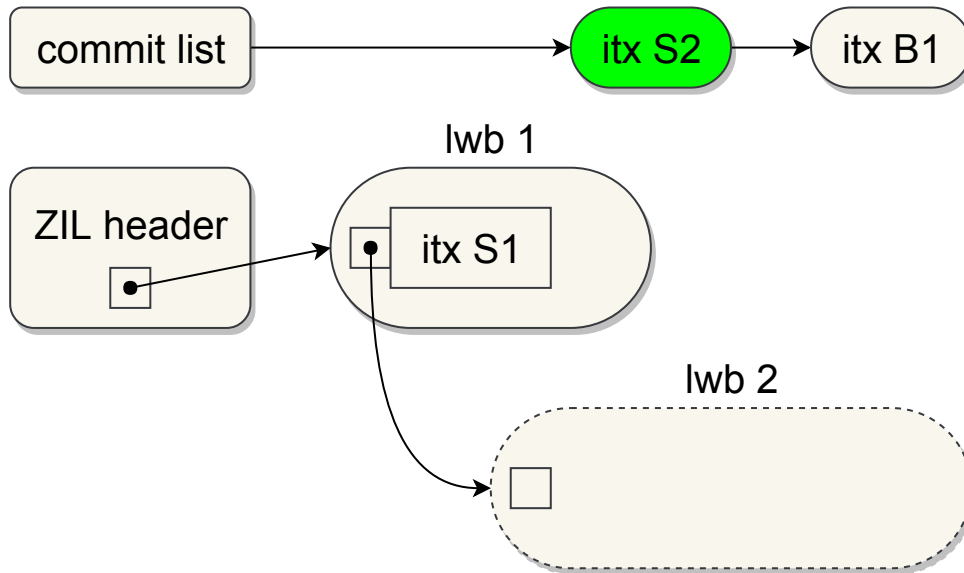
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



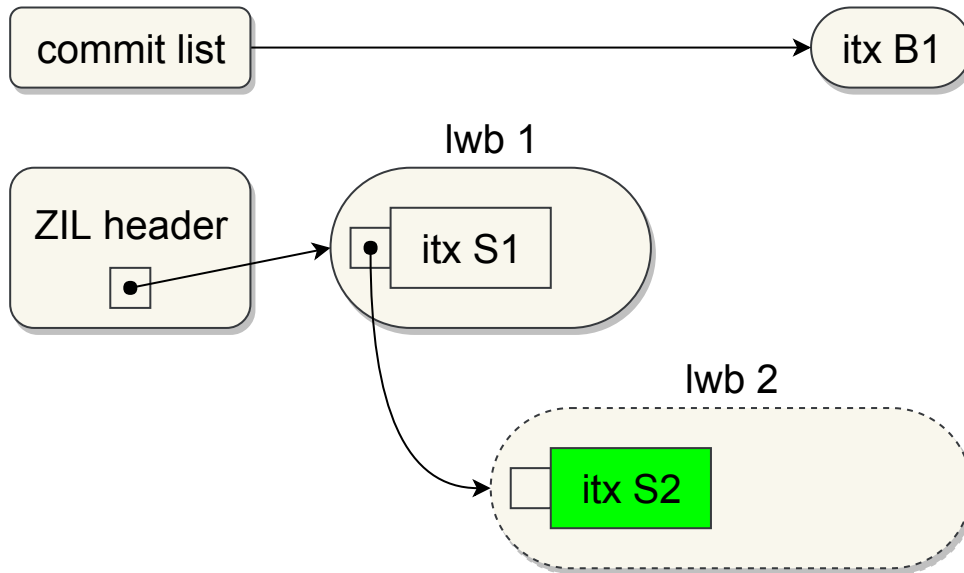
# Example: zil\_commit Object B



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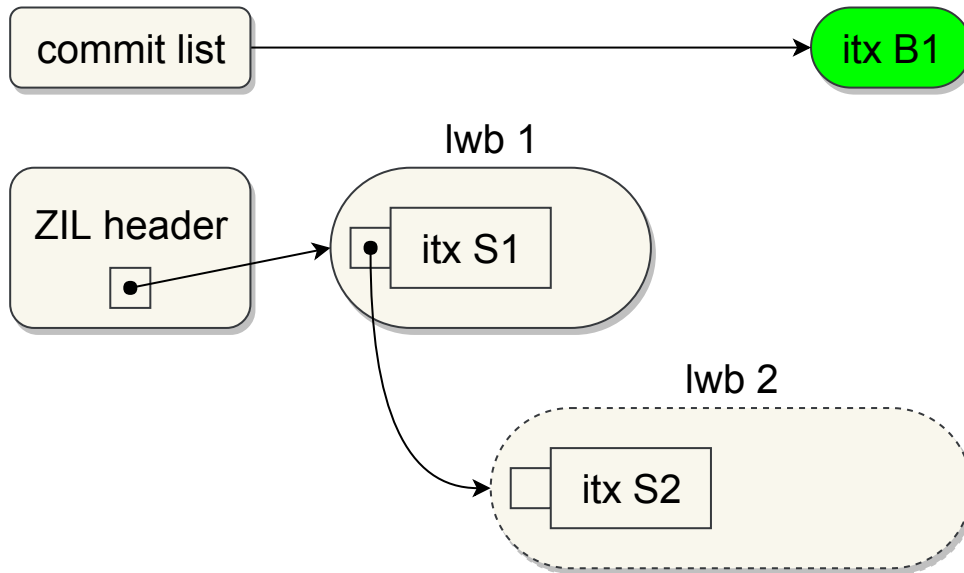


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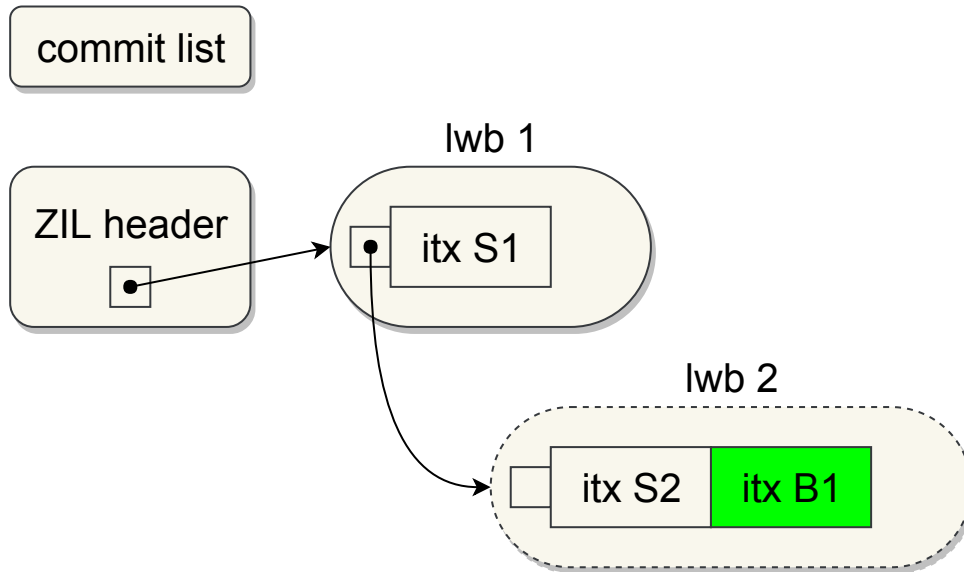




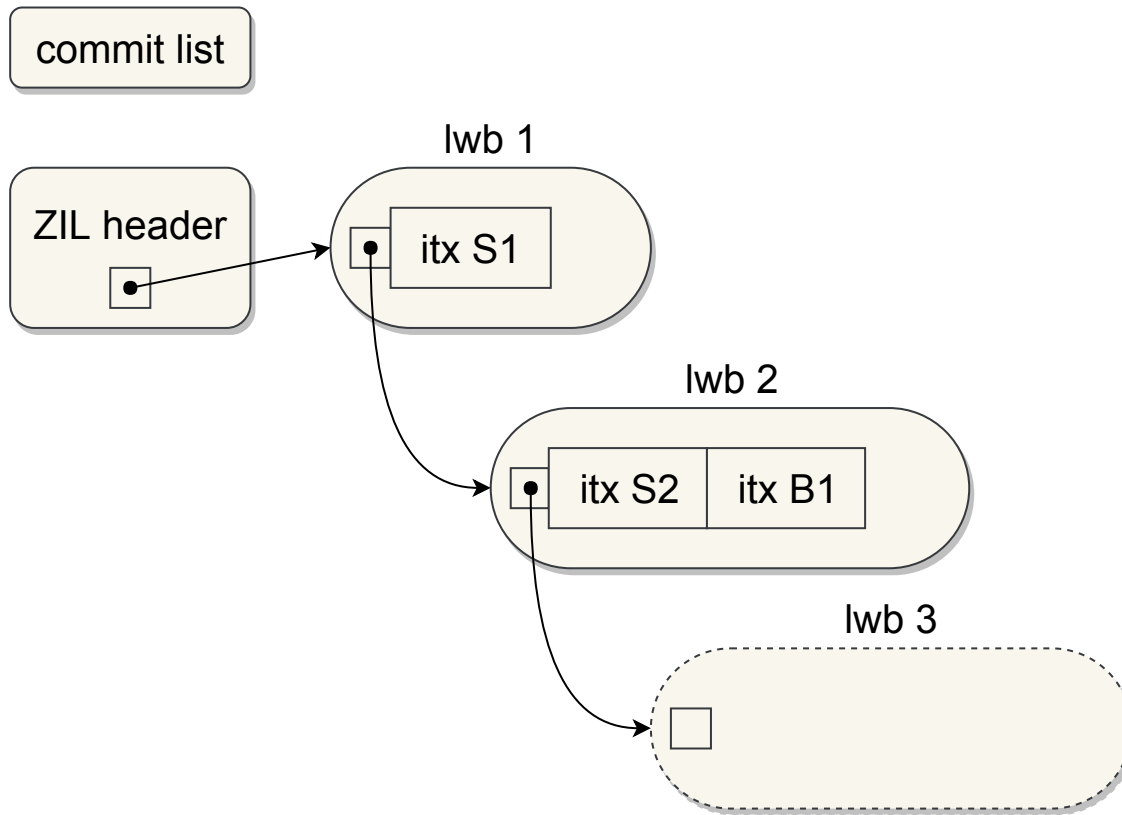
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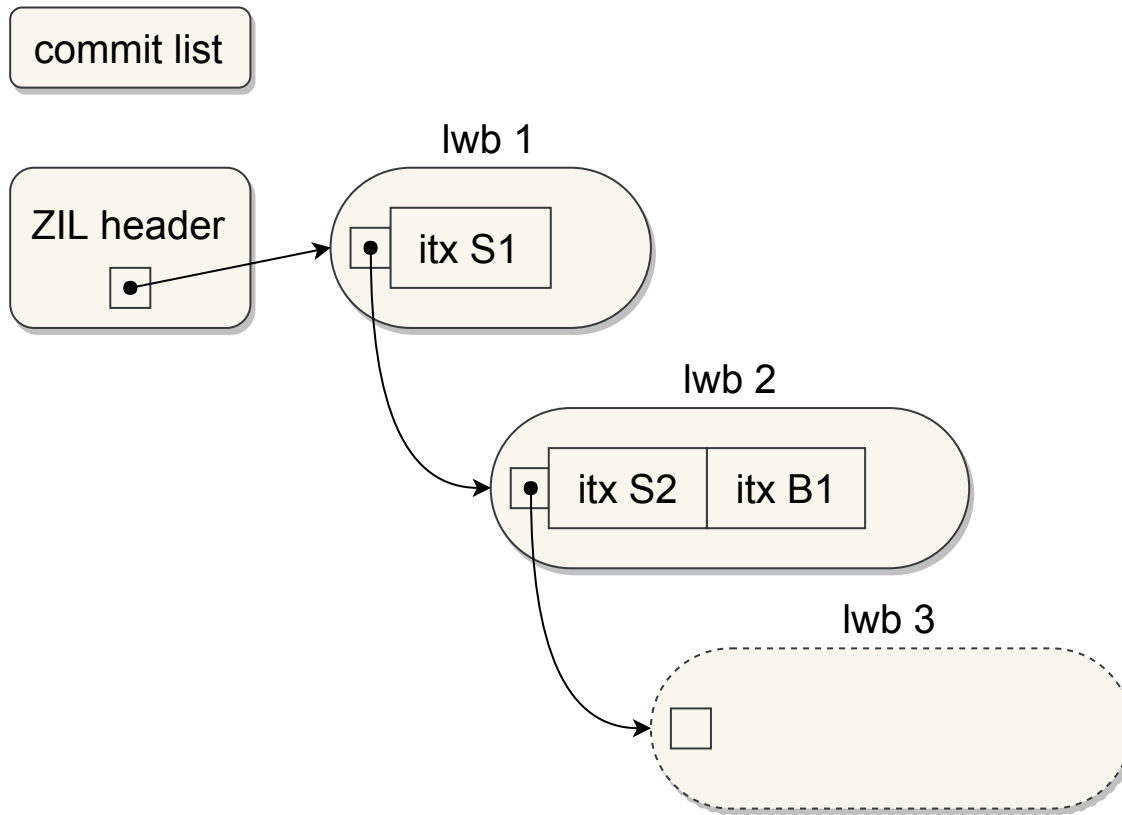
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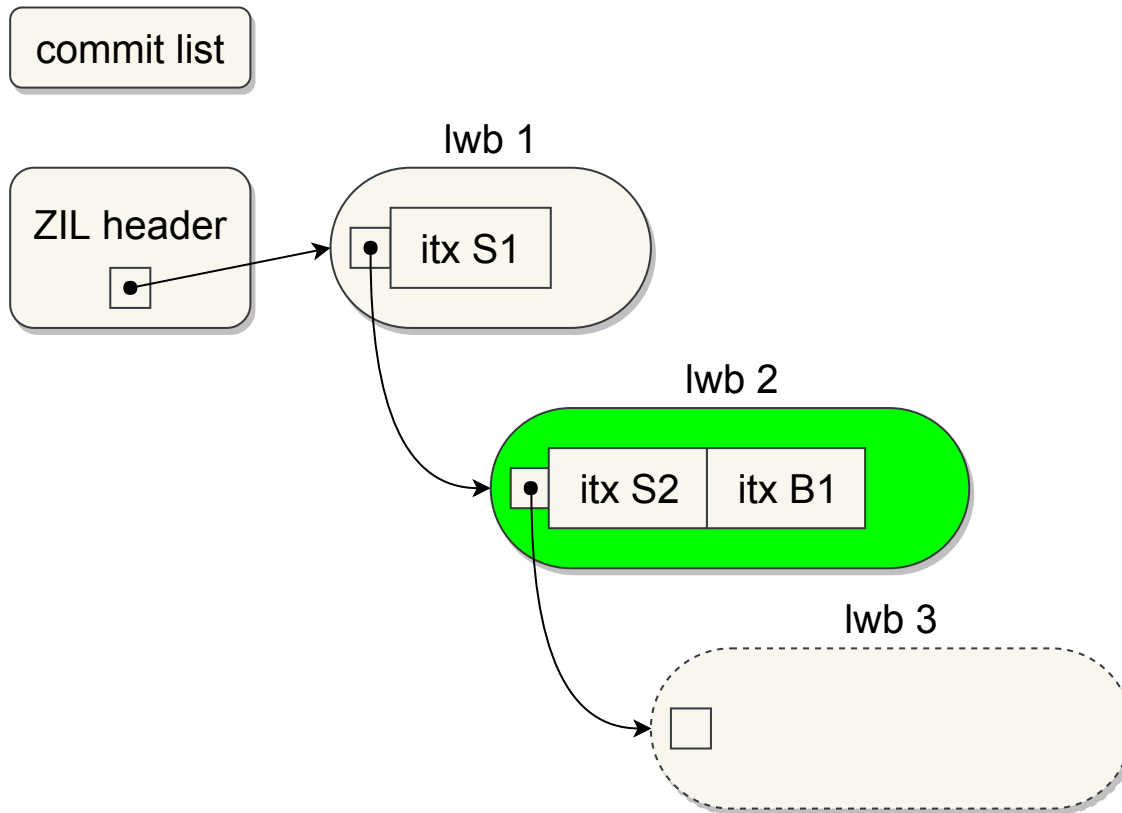
# How are itx's written to disk?

- `ztl_commit` handles the process of writing `itx_t`'s to disk:
  1. Move async itx's for object being committed, to the sync list
  2. Write all commit list itx's to disk
  3. Wait for all ZIL block writes to complete

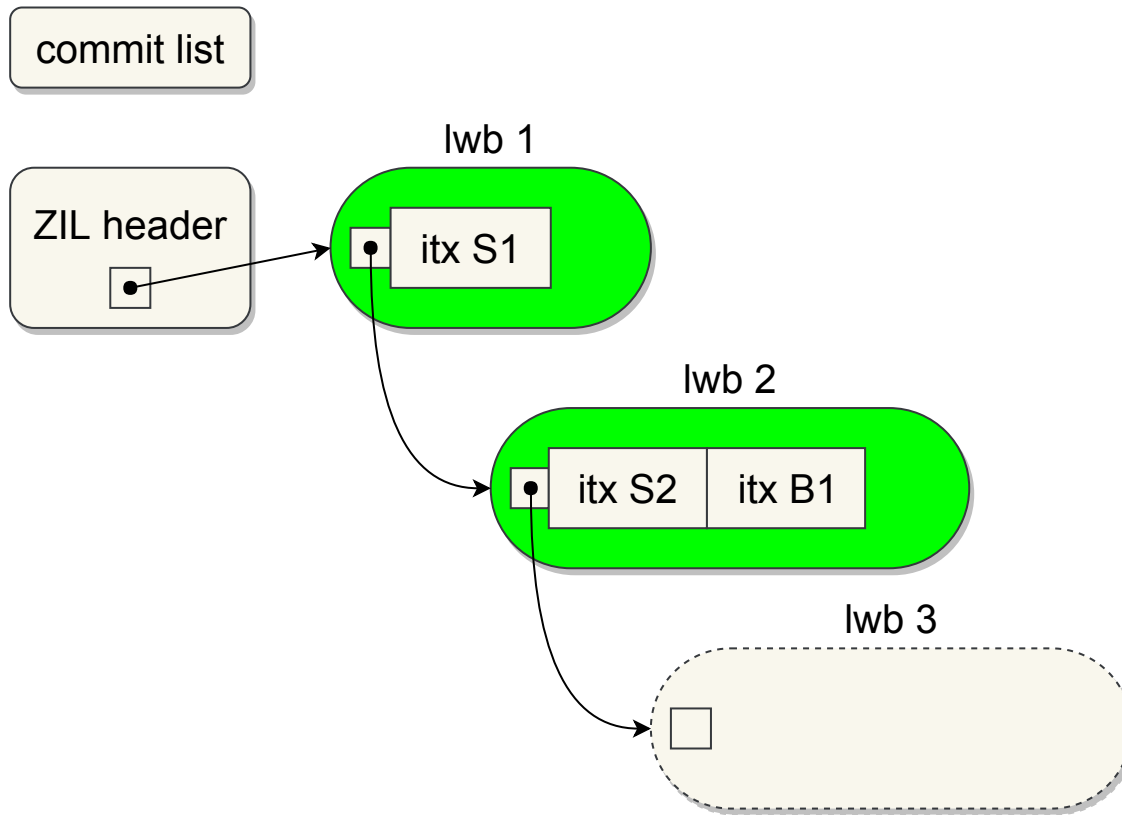
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- `ztl_commit` handles the process of writing `itx_t`'s to disk:
  1. Move async itx's for object being committed, to the sync list
  2. Write all commit list itx's to disk
  3. Wait for all ZIL block writes to complete
  4. Flush VDEVs and notify waiting threads



## 2 – ZIL Block Sizing + Performance

# ZIL Block Sizing + Performance

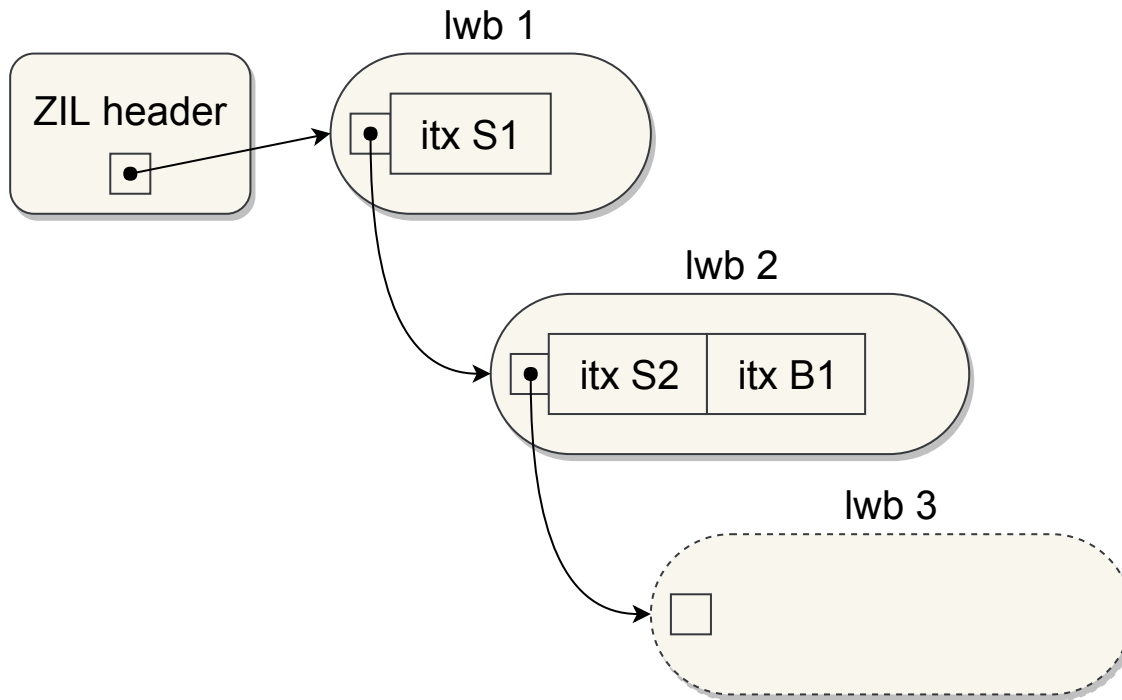
- ZIL blocks must be "pre-allocated", due to on-disk format
  - Block size chosen at time of allocation
- Allocated block size can dramatically impact performance:
  - "too big" – wasted space
  - "too small" – too many (small) IOPs issued to disk
  - "just right" – large IOPs filled with itx's

# 3 – Problem

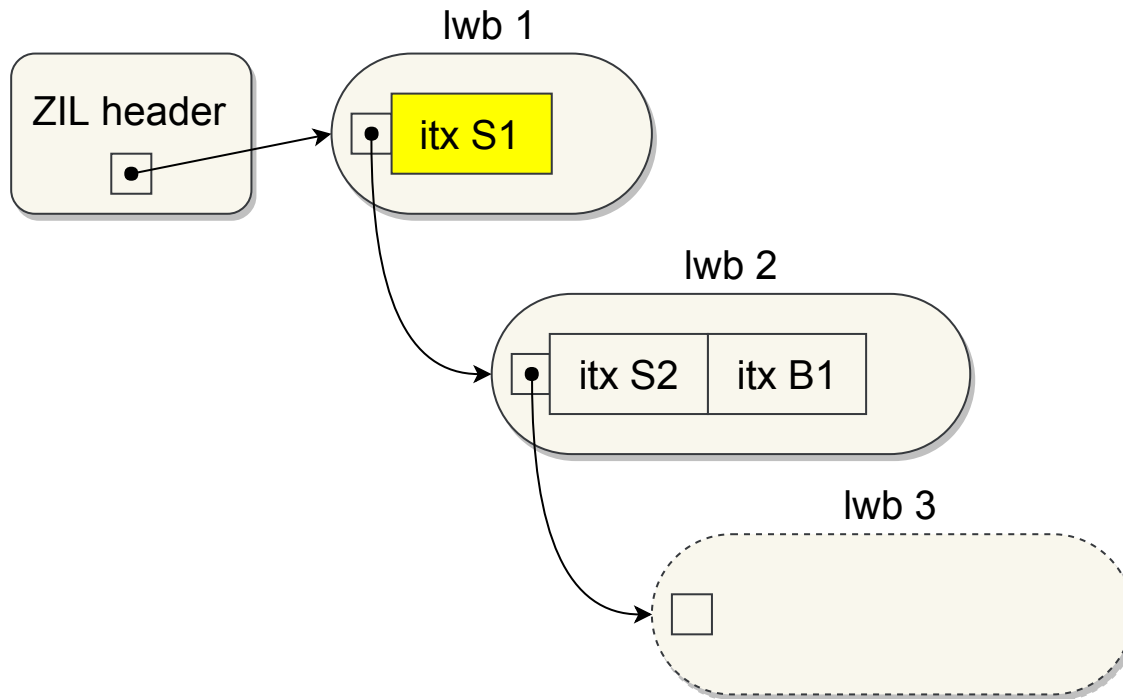
# Problem

1. itx's grouped and written in "batches"
  - The commit list constitutes a batch
  - Batch size proportional to sync workload on system
2. Waiting threads only notified when *all* ZIL blocks in batch complete
3. Only a single batch processed at a time

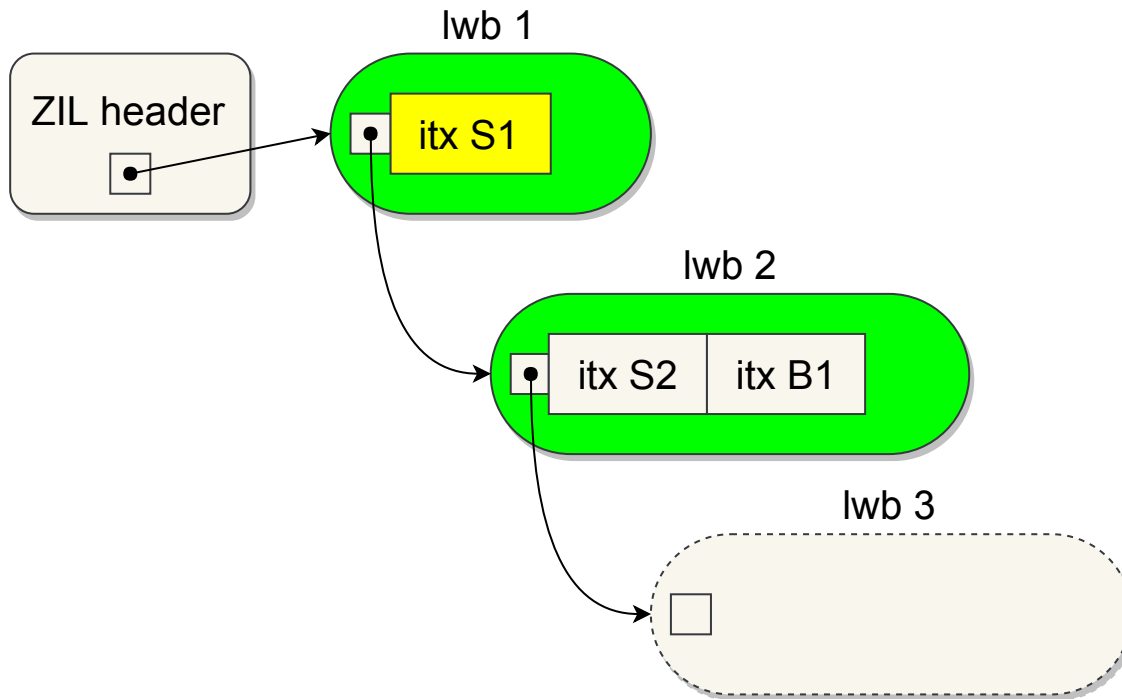
# Example Batch



# Example "itx S1"



# Example "itx S1"



# Implications

1. `zil_commit` latency proportional to system workload, *not* disk latency
2. Disk "anomalies" → larger batches → increased `zil_commit` latency
3. New calls to `zil_commit` wait for "current" batch, *and* "next" batch

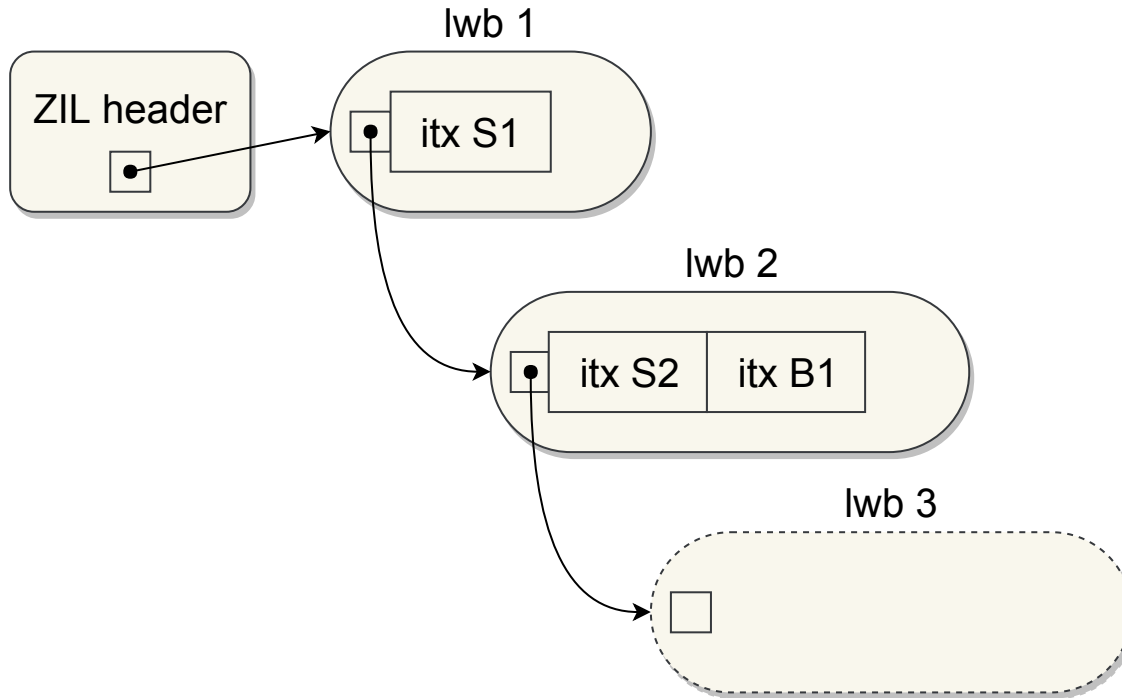


# 3 – Solution

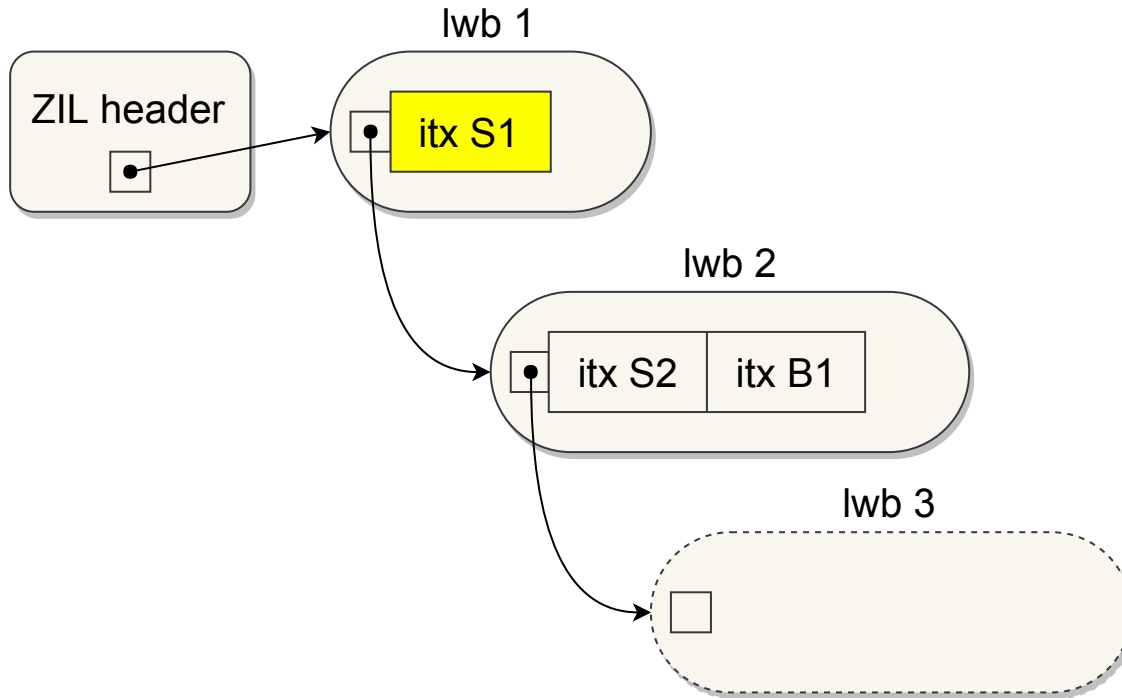
# Solution

- Remove concept of "batches":
  1. Allow `zil_commit` to issue new ZIL block writes immediately
  2. Notify threads immediately when *dependent* itx's on disk

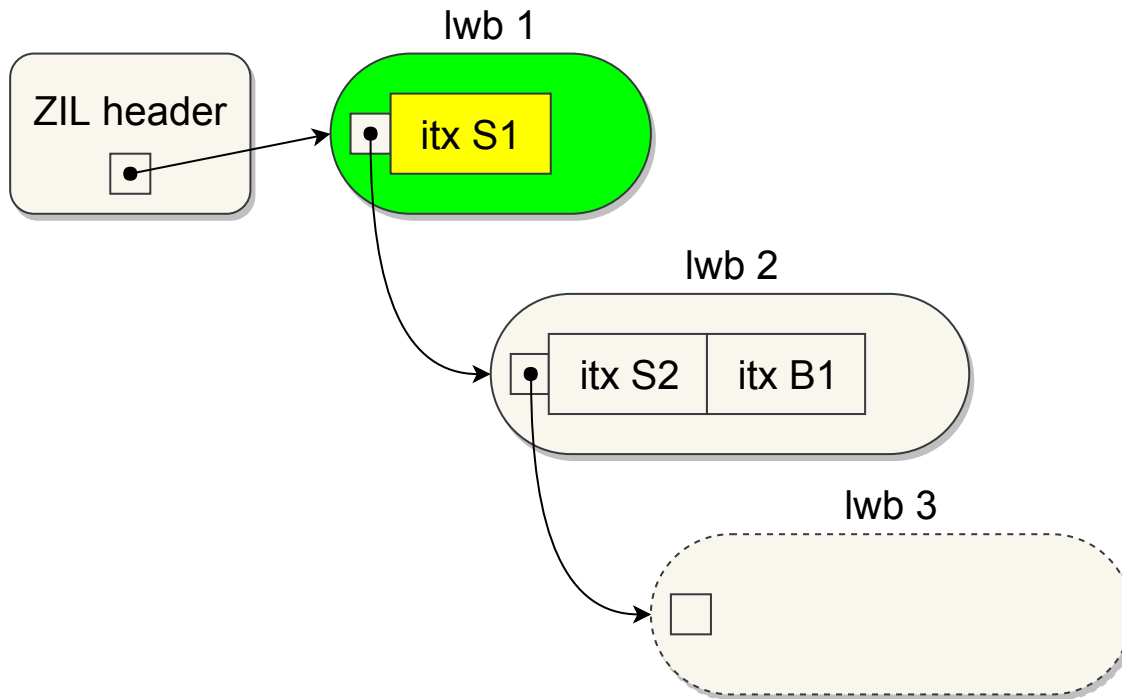
# Example "Batch"



# Example "itx S1"



# Example "itx S1"

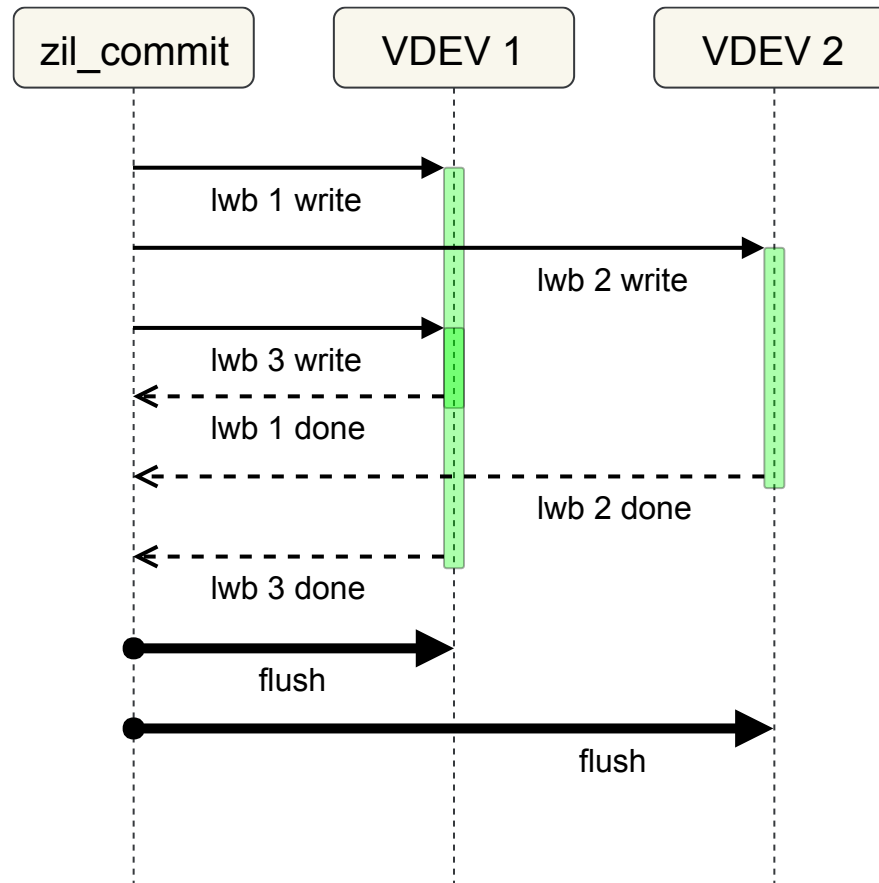


## 4 – Changes to VDEV Flush

# Details

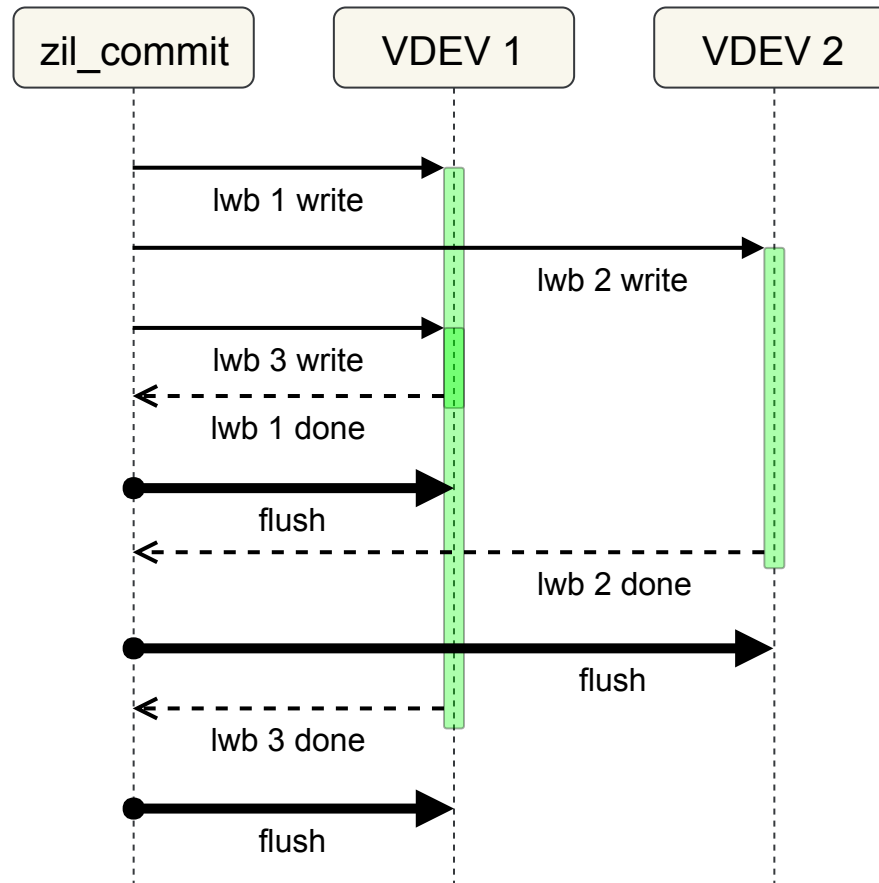
- A ZIL block is not "persistent" until the VDEV is flushed
- Prior mechanics:
  - Single VDEV flush for each VDEV, after batch completes
  - 1 flush per many lwb's
- New mechanics:
  - VDEV flush issued after each ZIL block written
  - 1 flush per 1 lwb

# Example: Before





# Example: After



## 4 – Changes to ZIL Block ZIO Tree

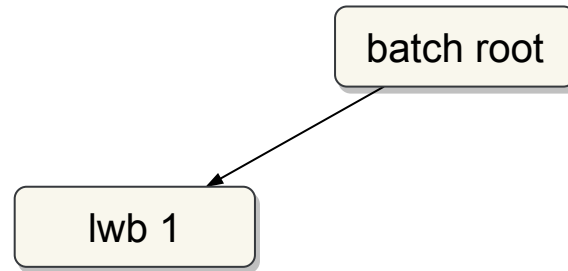
# Details

- ZIL blocks issued to disk using ZIOs
- Prior mechanics:
  - "root" ZIO created for each batch
    - "write" ZIOs, for all lwb's in batch, are children of root ZIO
  - "flush" ZIOs issued separately after root ZIO completes
- New mechanics:
  - "root" ZIO created for each lwb
    - "write" and "flush" ZIOs are child of root ZIO
  - "next" lwb root ZIO become parent of "current" lwb root ZIO

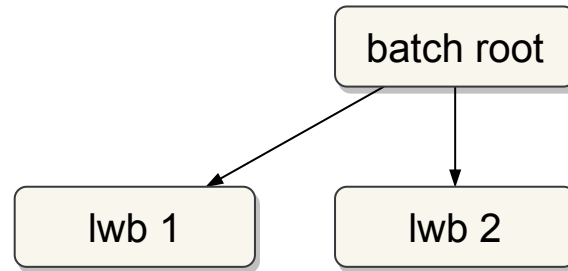
# Example: Before

batch root

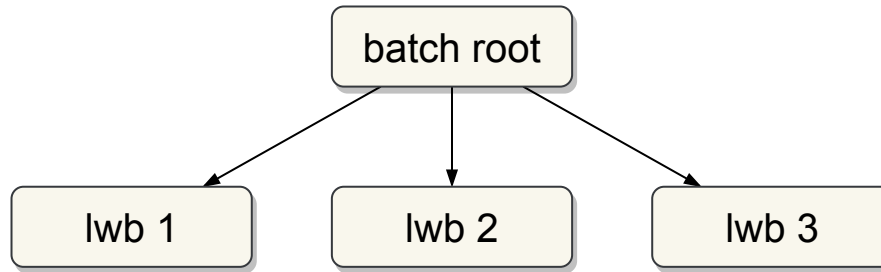
# Example: Before



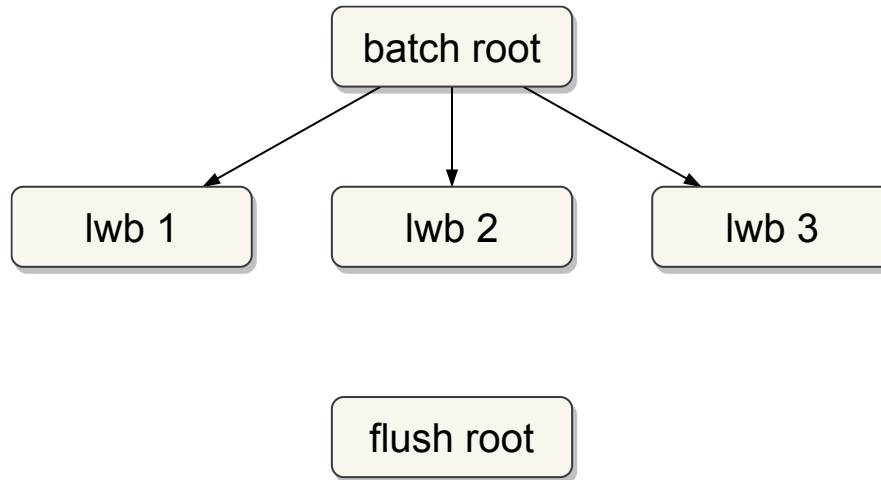
# Example: Before



# Example: Before

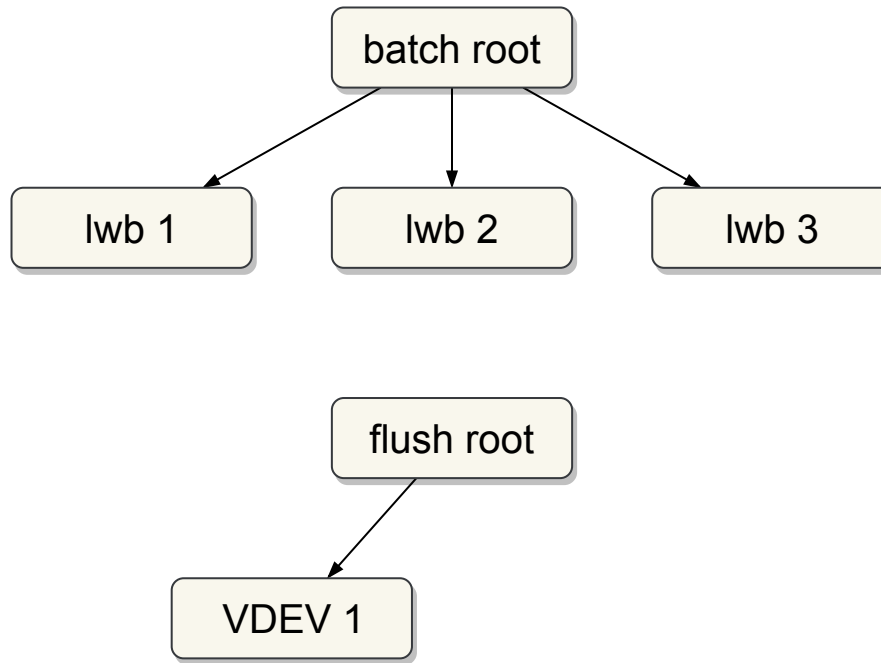


# Example: Before

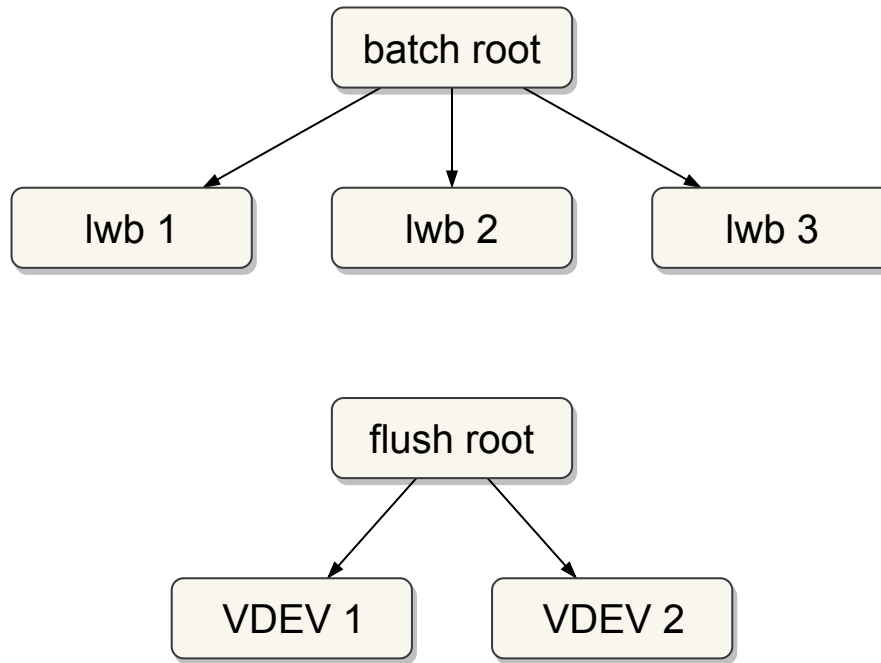




# Example: Before



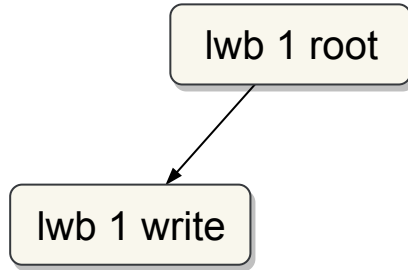
# Example: Before



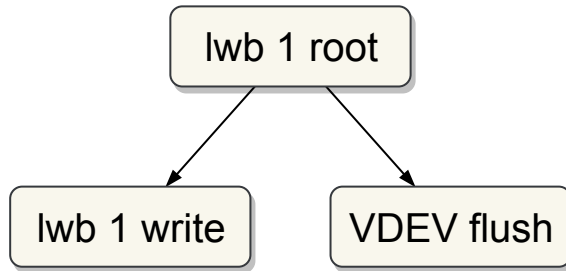
# Example: After

lwb 1 root

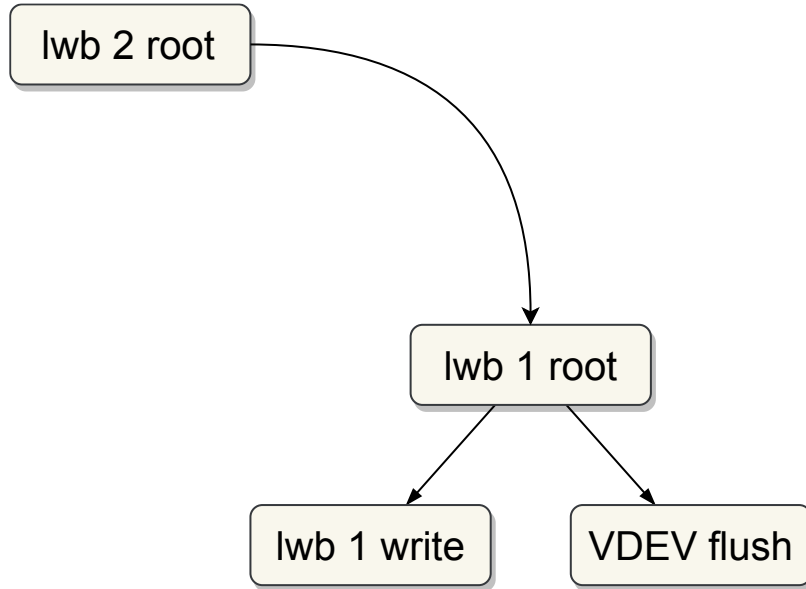
# Example: After



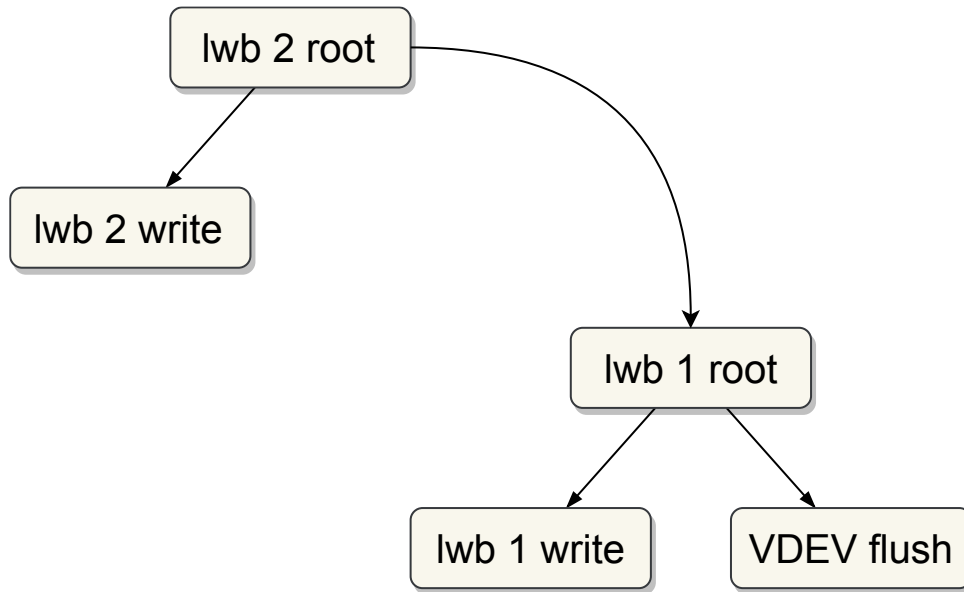
# Example: After



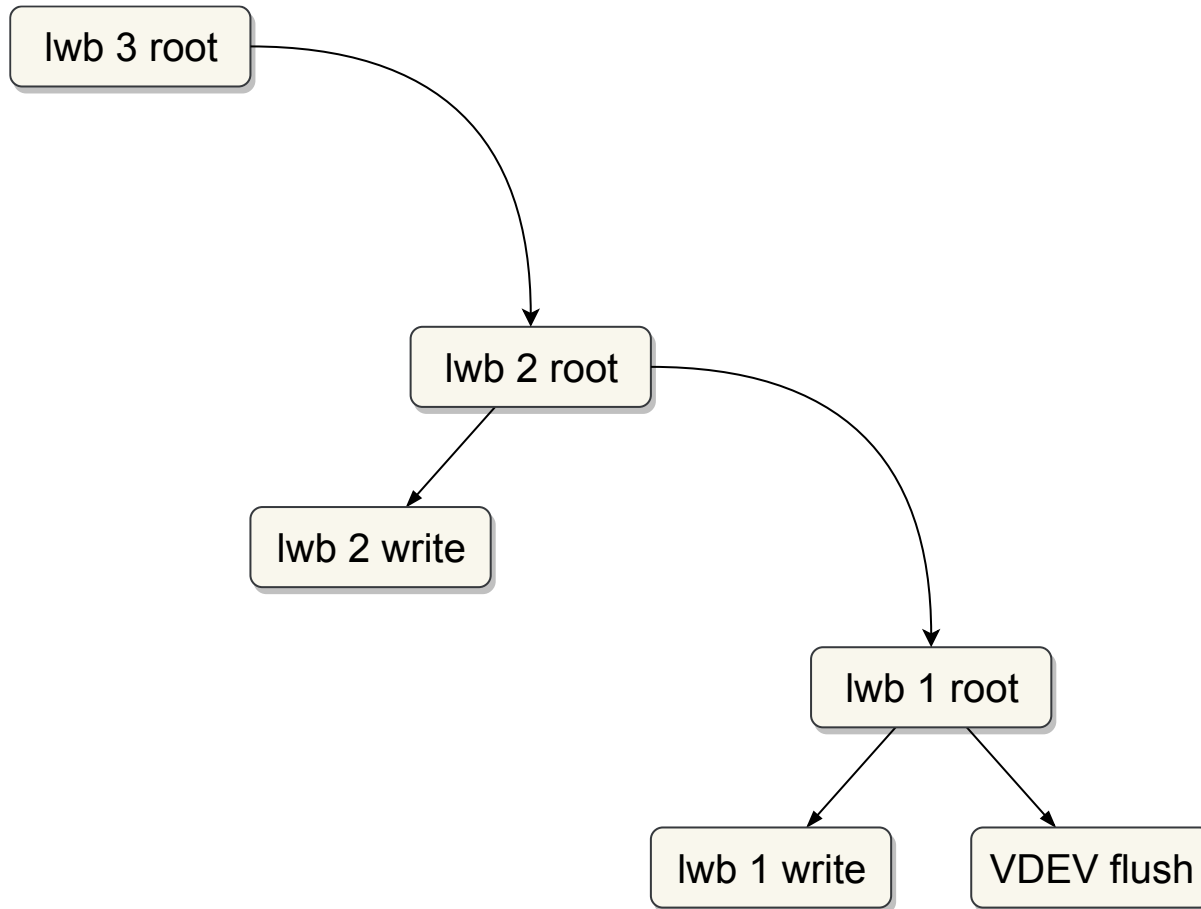
# Example: After



# Example: After

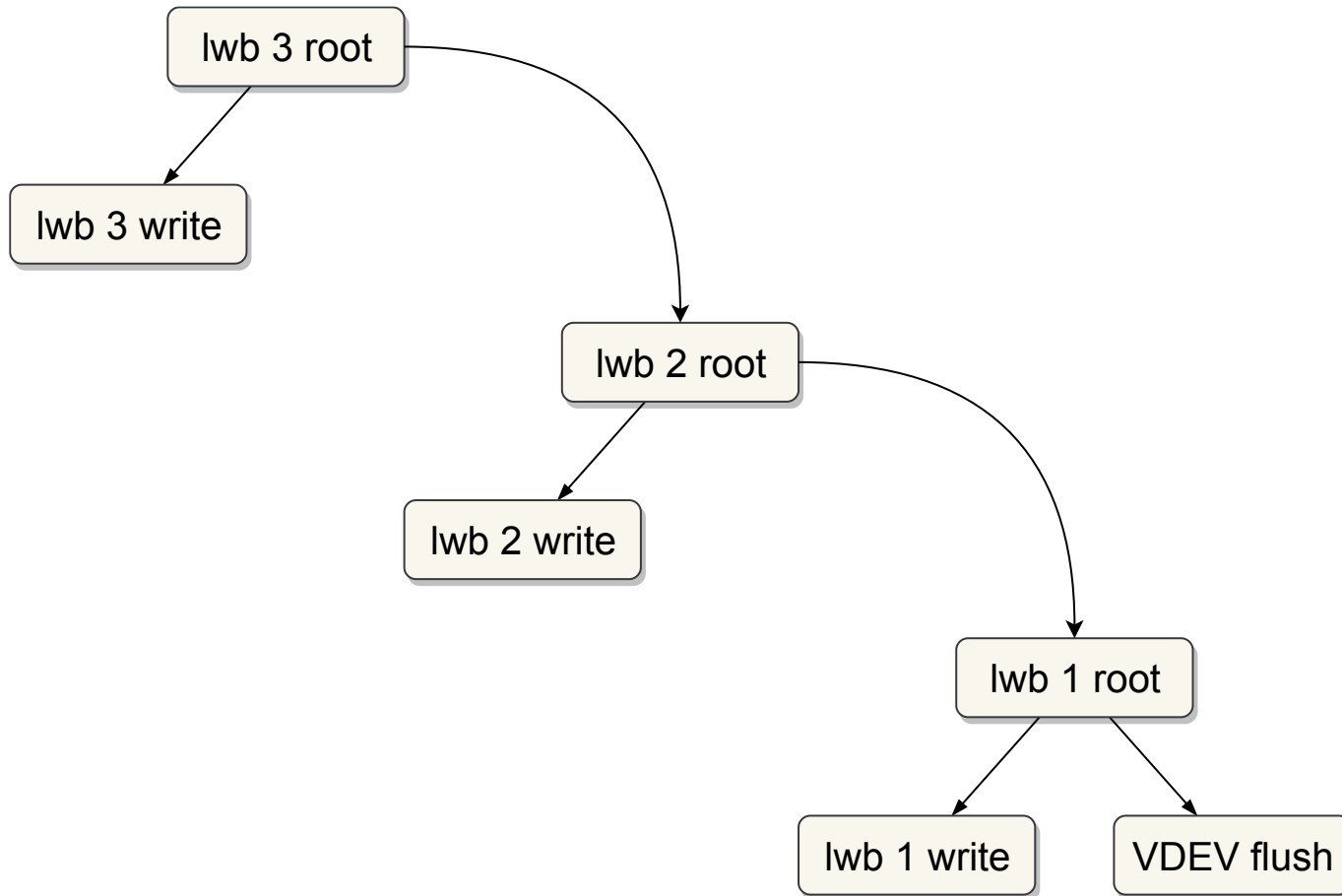


# Example: After

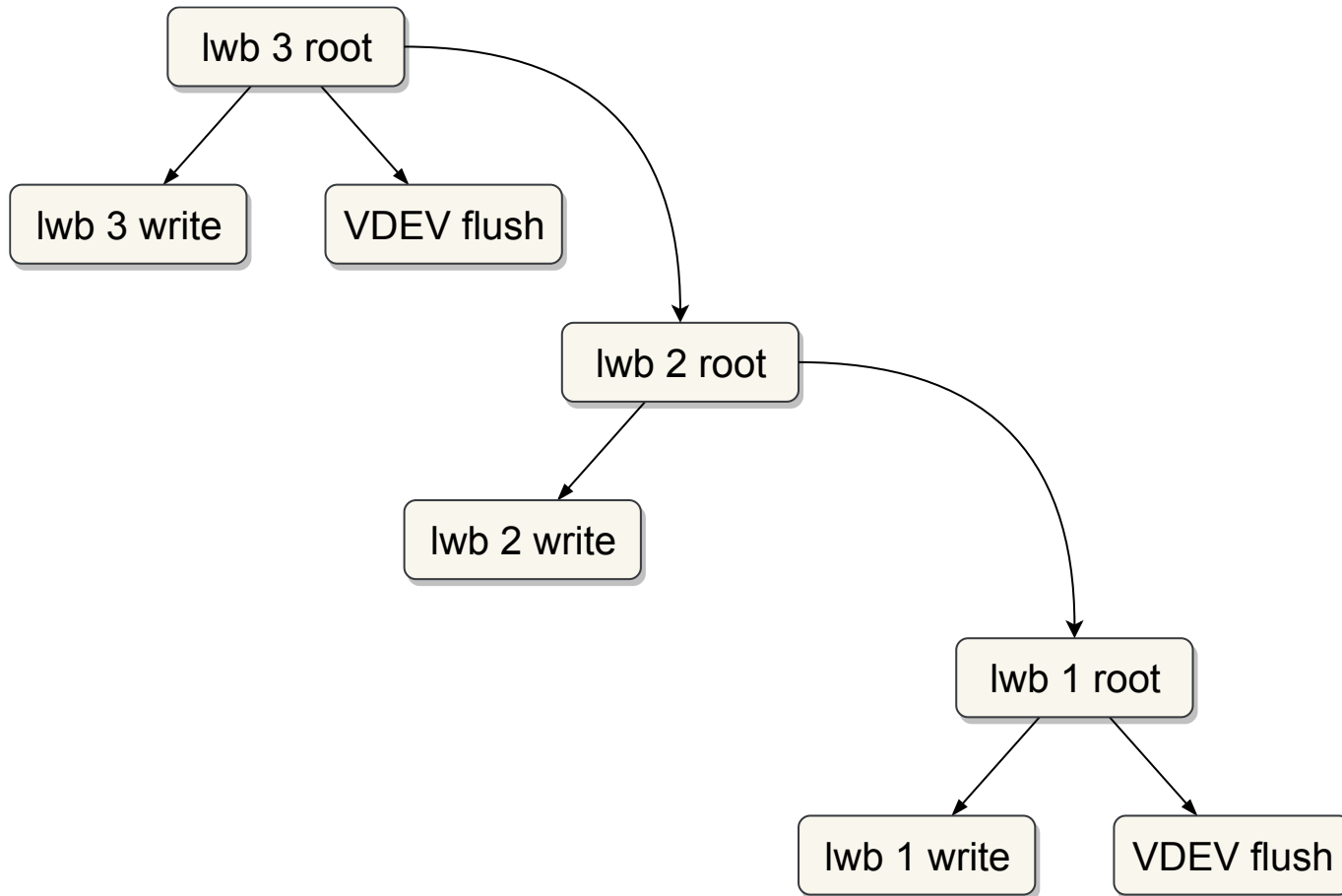




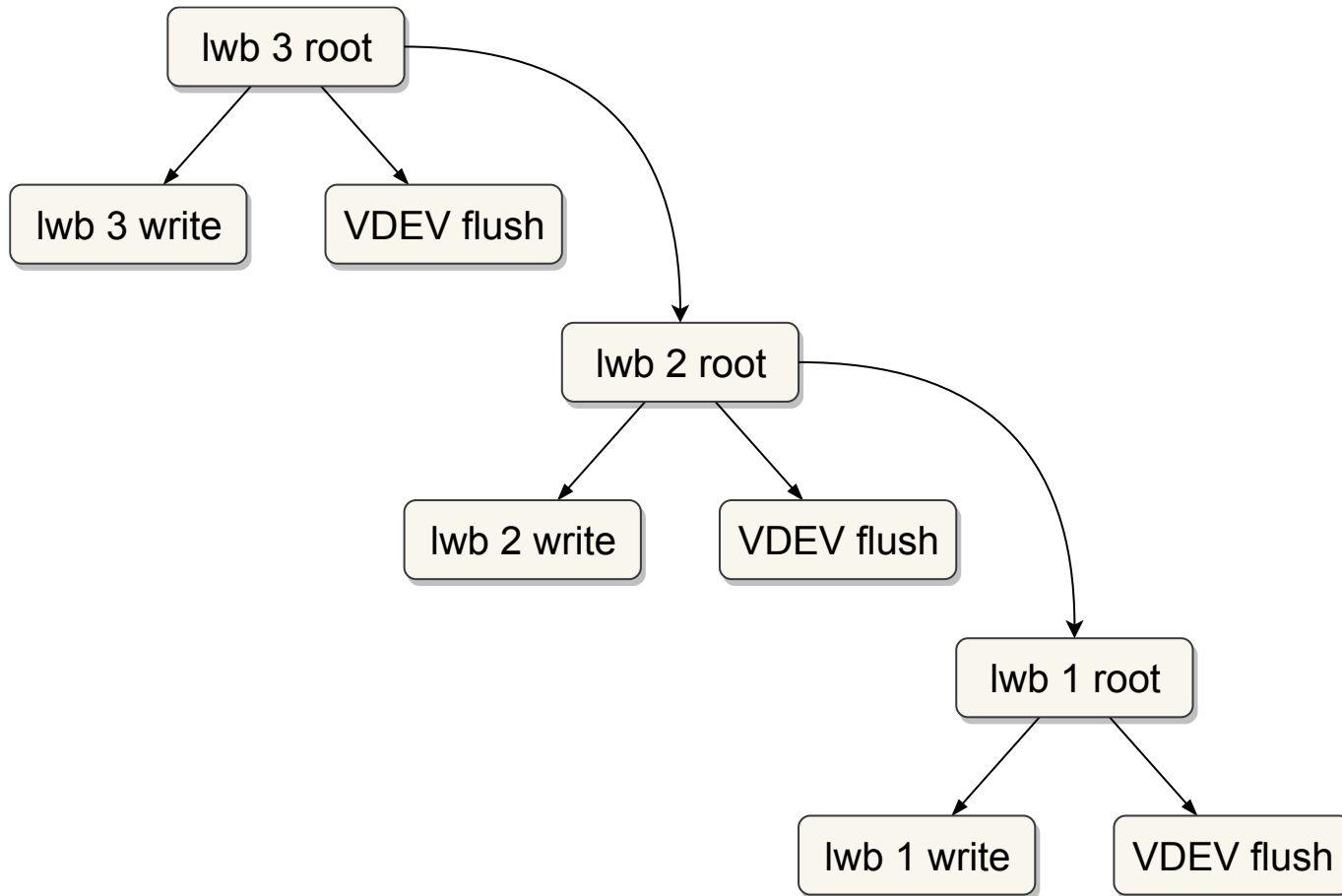
# Example: After



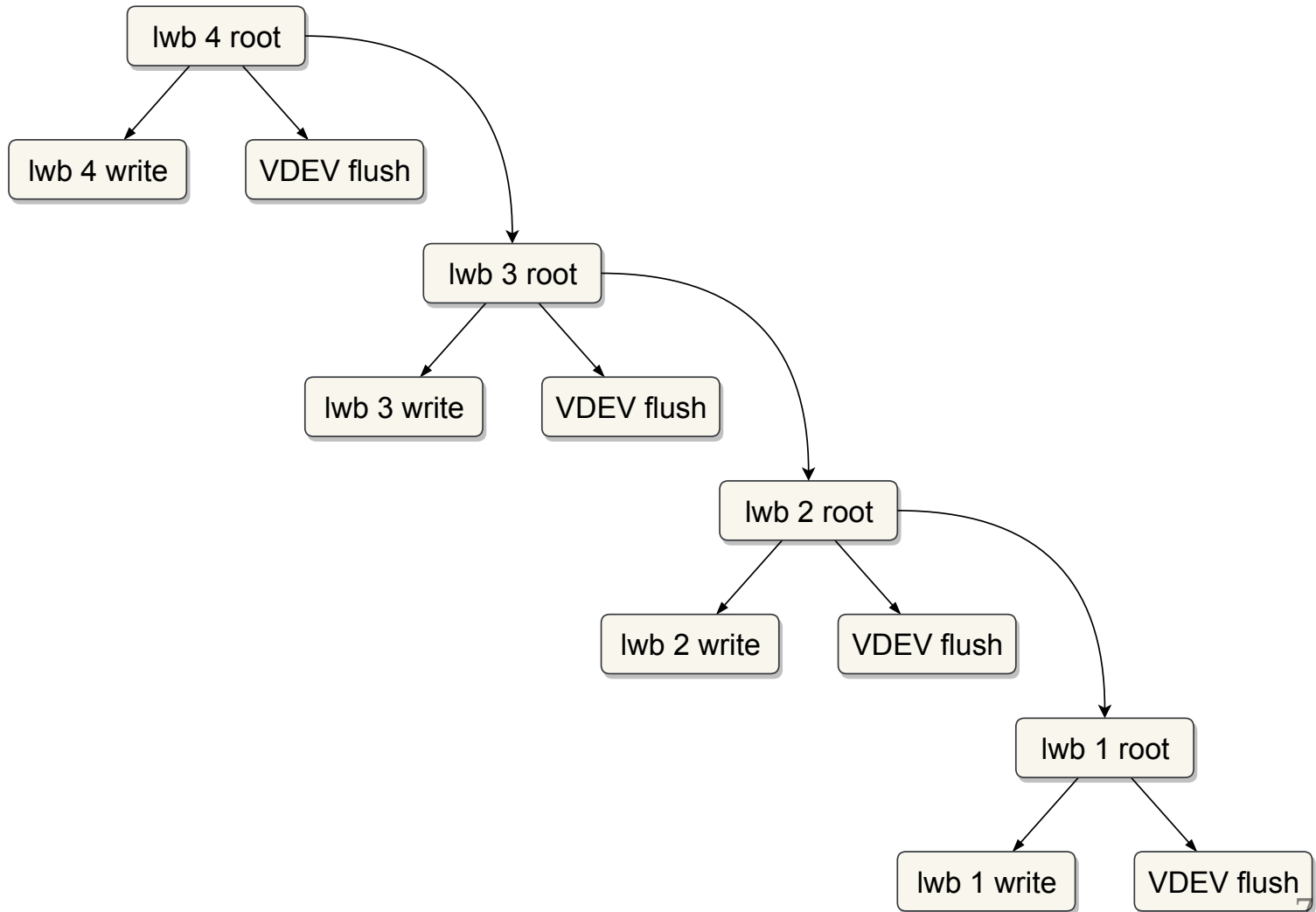
# Example: After



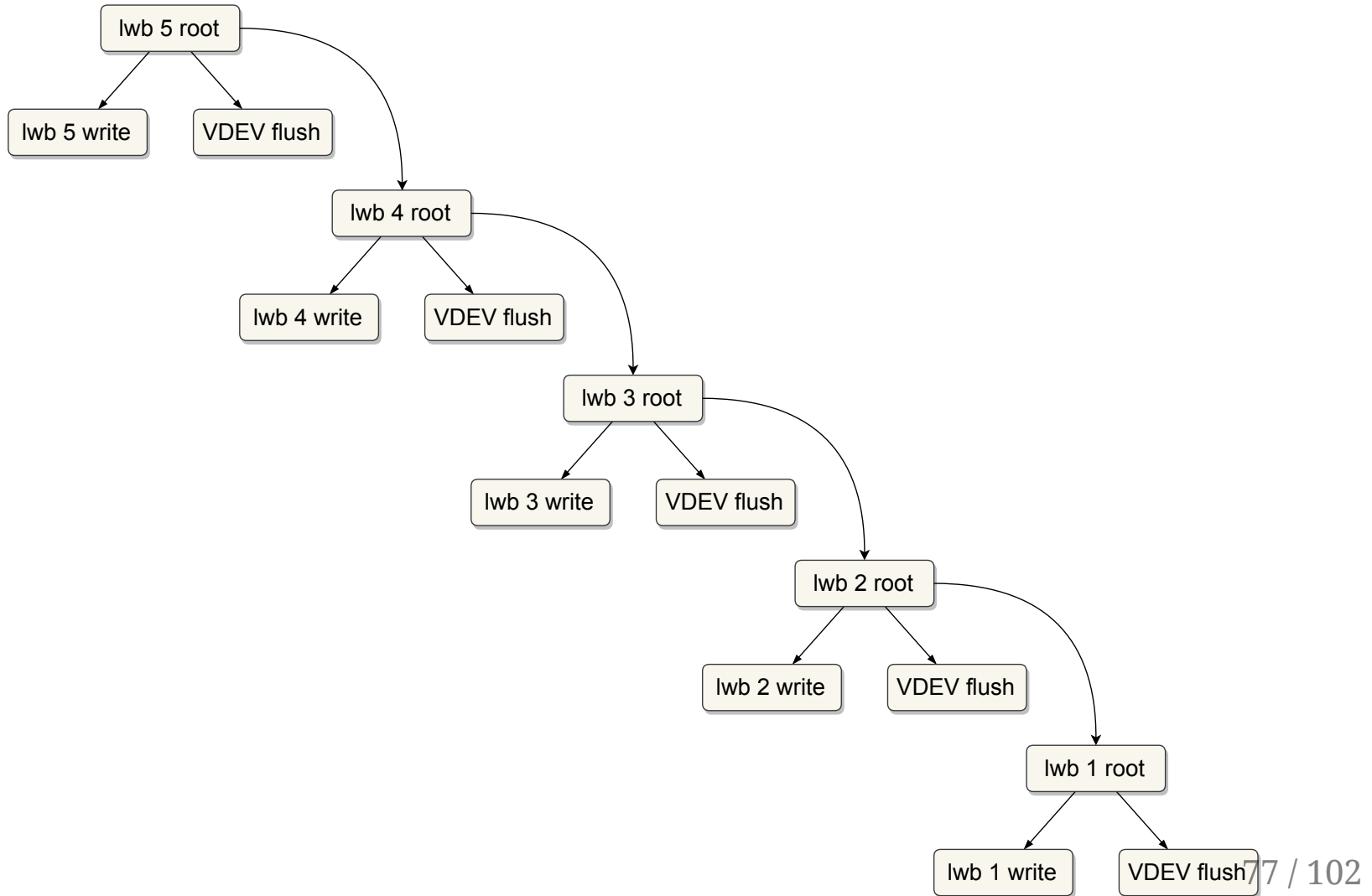
# Example: After



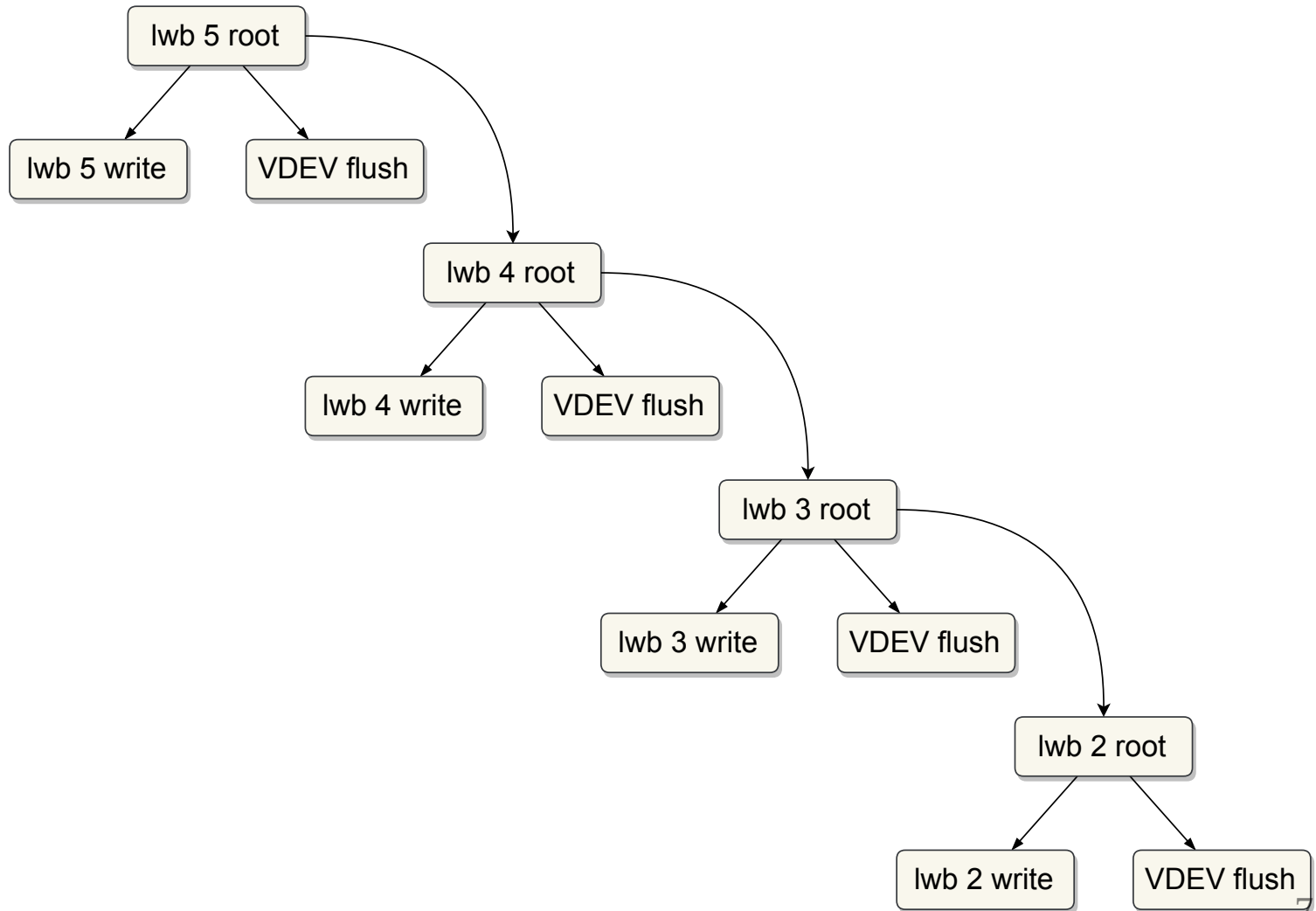
# Example: After



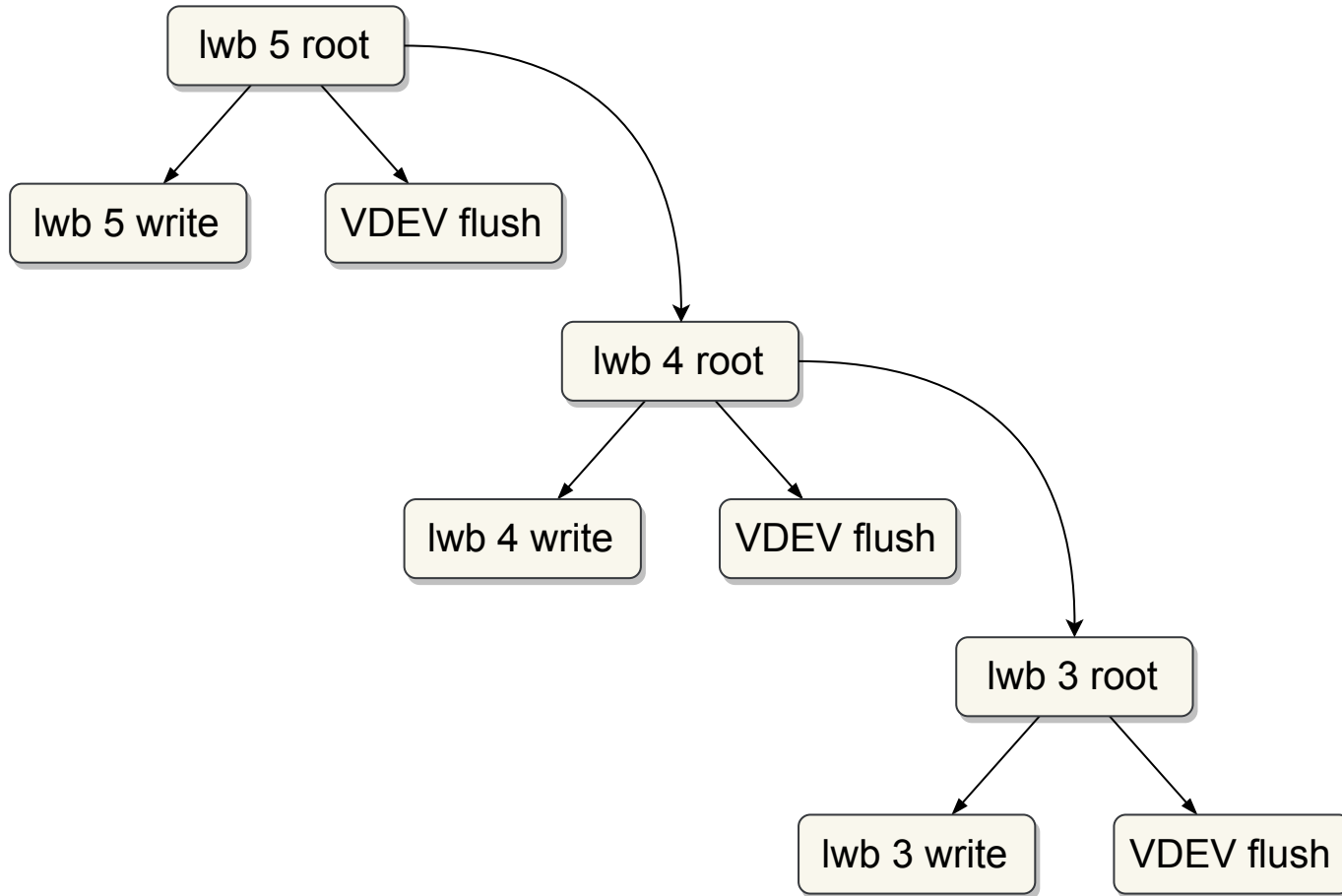
# Example: After



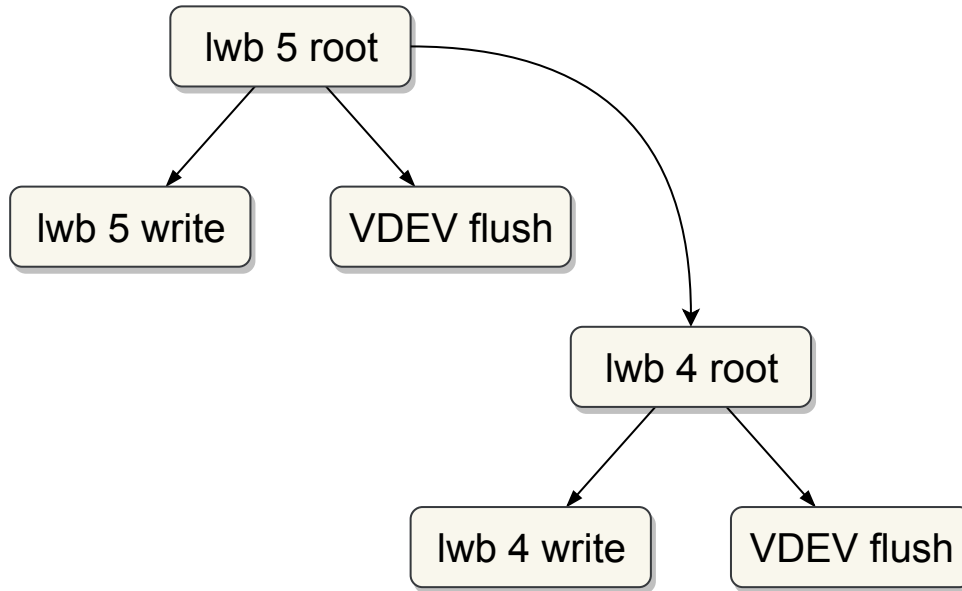
# Example: After



# Example: After



# Example: After



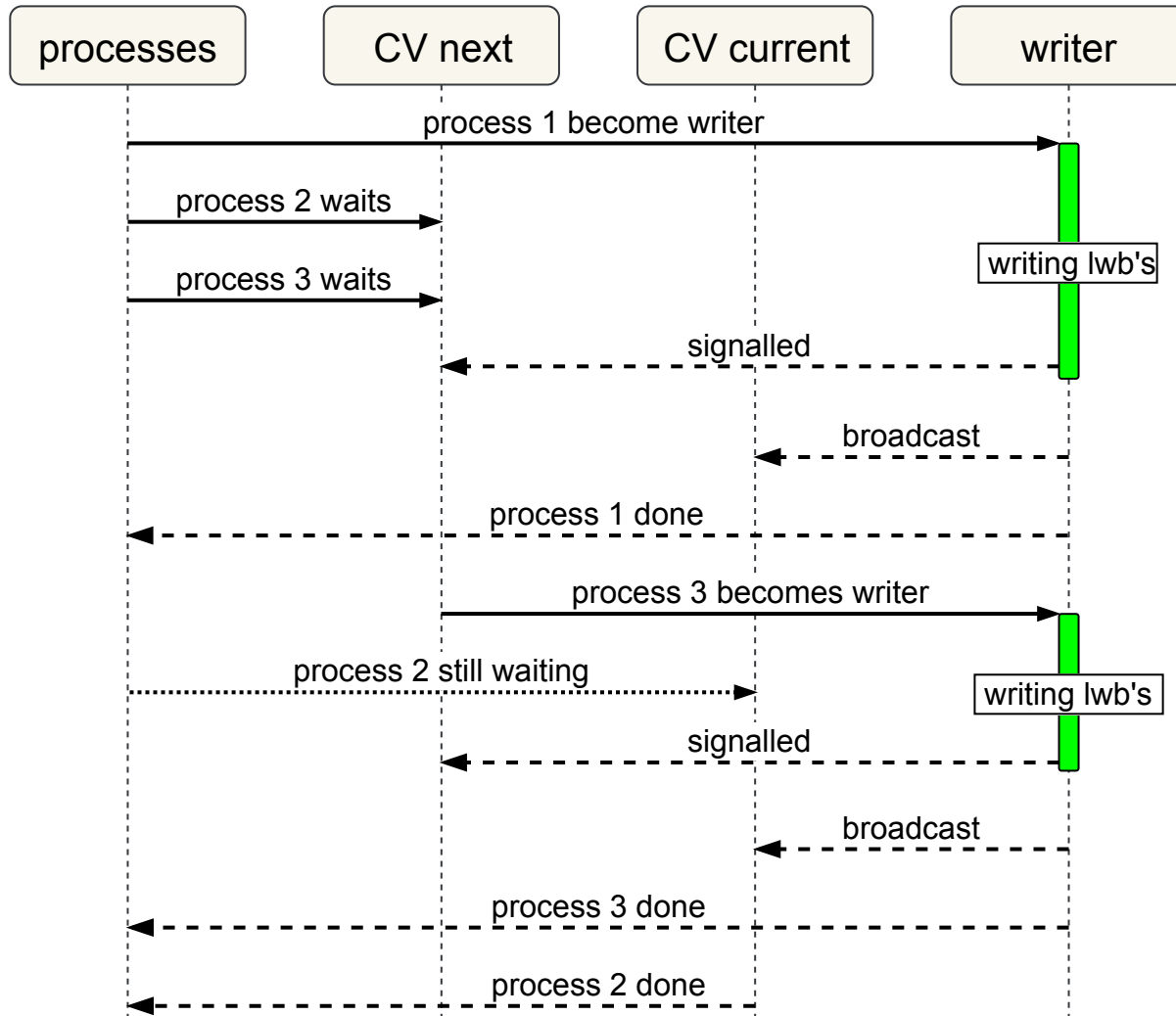


## 4 – Changes to Waiter Notification

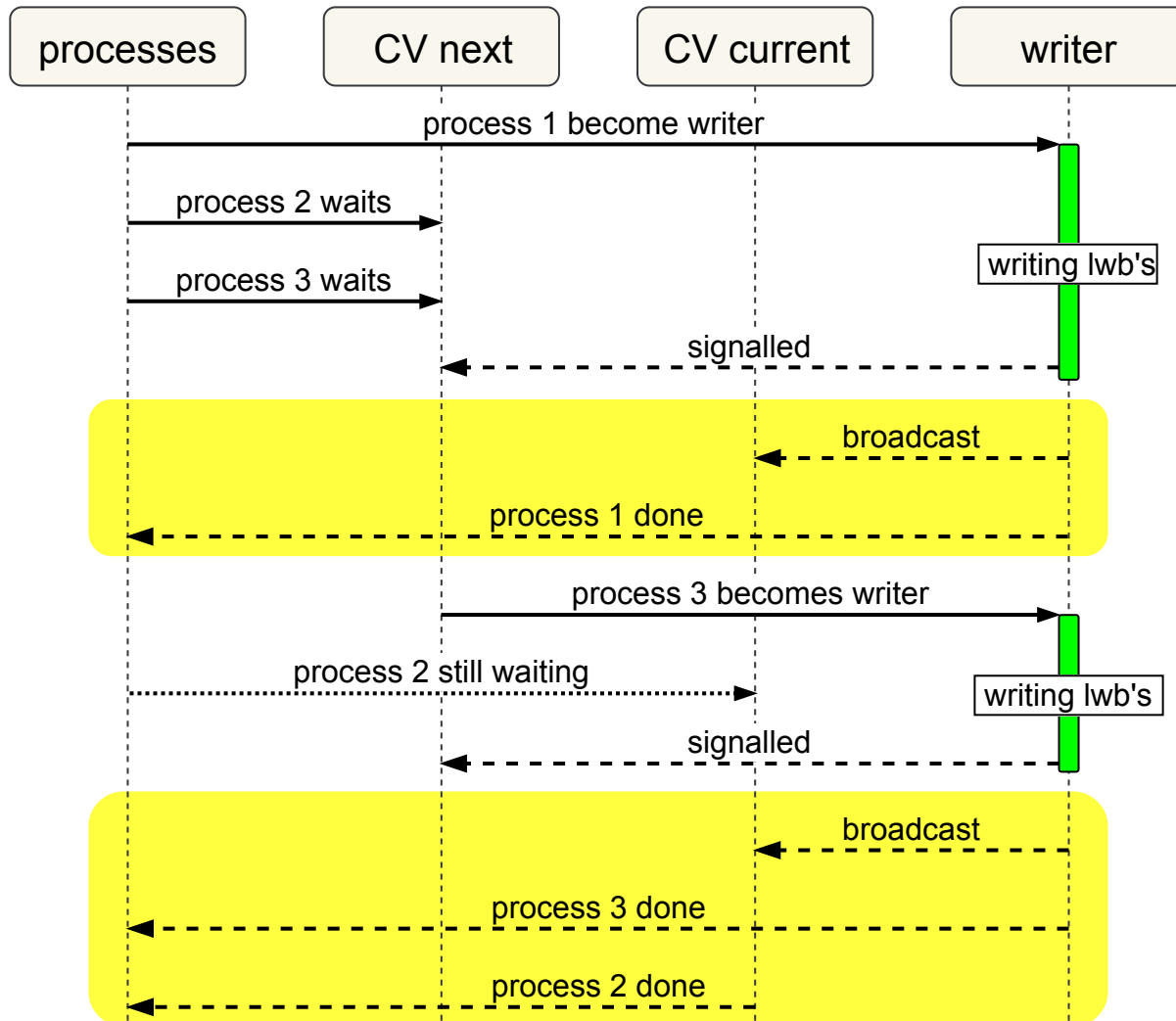
# Details: Before

- 2 condition variables (CV), for "current" and "next" batch
- Threads that called `zil_commit`:
  - Assigned to "next batch", wait on next batch's CV
- When "current" batch completes
  1. All threads waiting on "current" signalled, they'd return
  2. One thread waiting on "next" signalled, becomes "writer"
  3. "next" and "current" CV swapped
- Ultimately, these two CVs are the source of original problem

# Example: Before



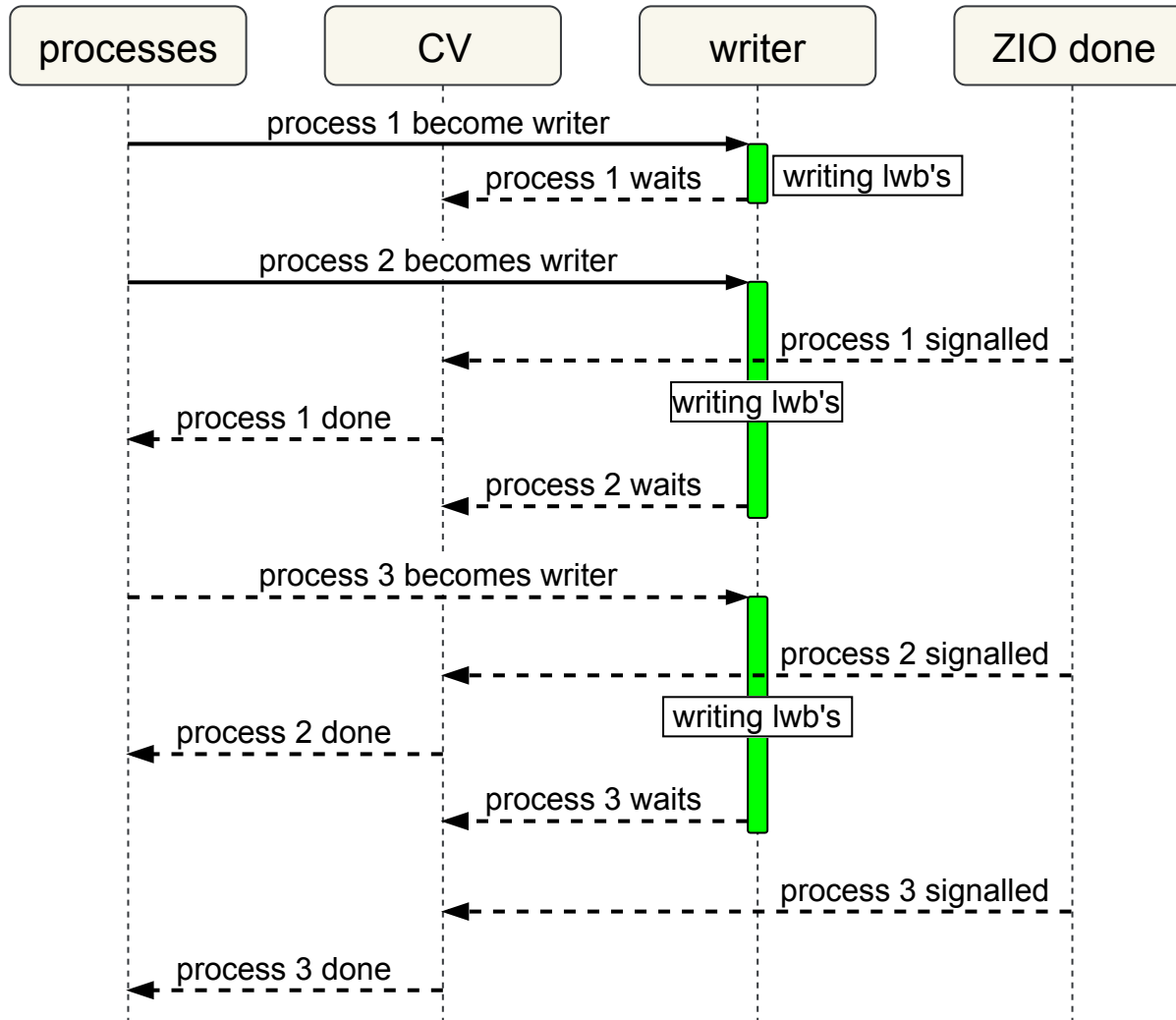
# Example: Before



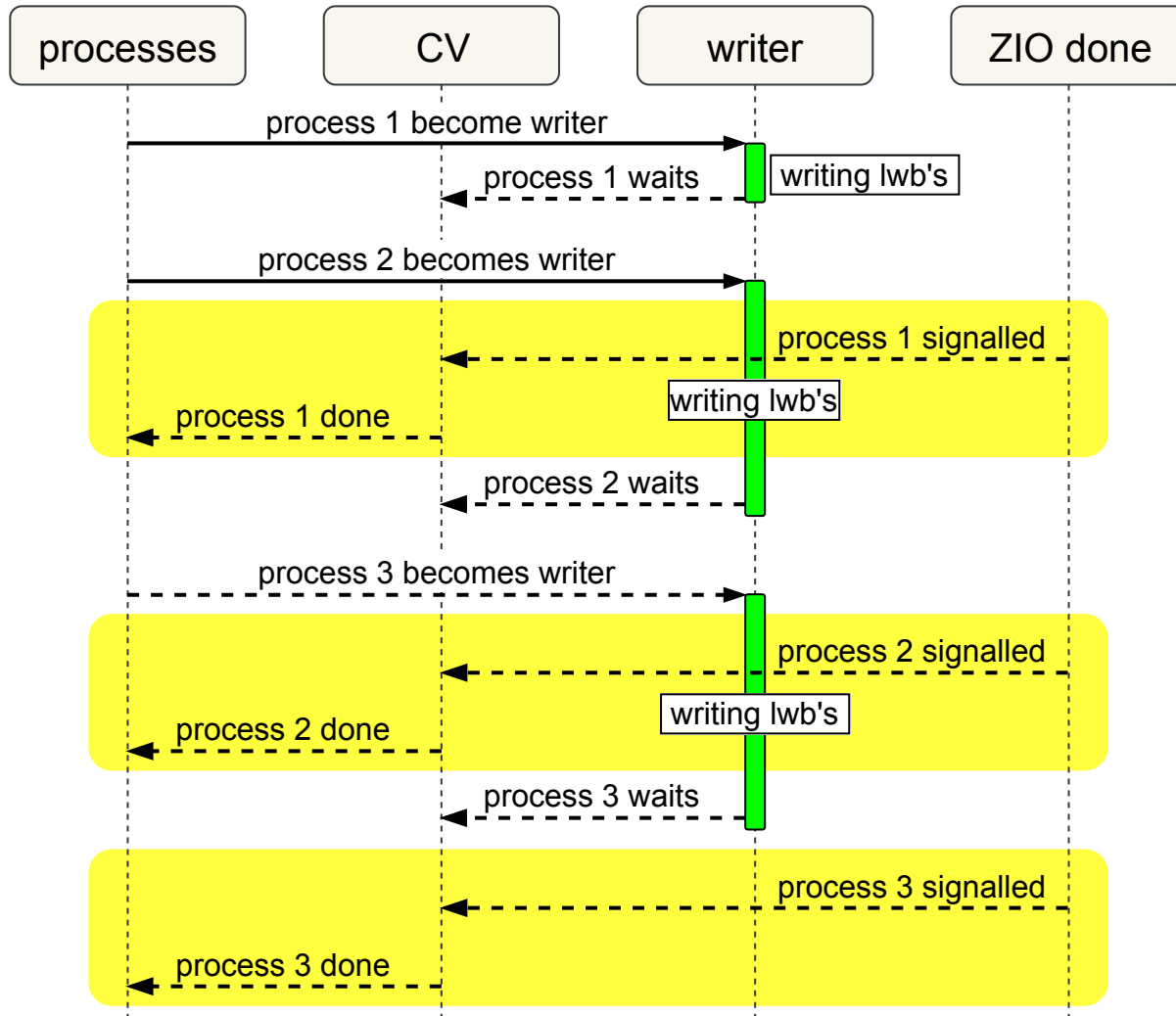
# Details: After

- Each time a process calls `zil_commit`:
  - A new CV is allocated for this specific process to wait on
  - A new `TX_COMMIT` itx is inserted into the ZIL itx tree
    - The "commit itx" has a pointer to the process's CV
- When a commit itx is copied to an lwb:
  - No data copied into the lwb's buffer
  - Instead, itx's CV added to lwb's list of CVs
- When lwb's ZIO completes, list of CVs iterated and signalled
  - This is how we map which lwb a process is waiting for

# Example: After



# Example: After



## 5 – Performance testing and results.

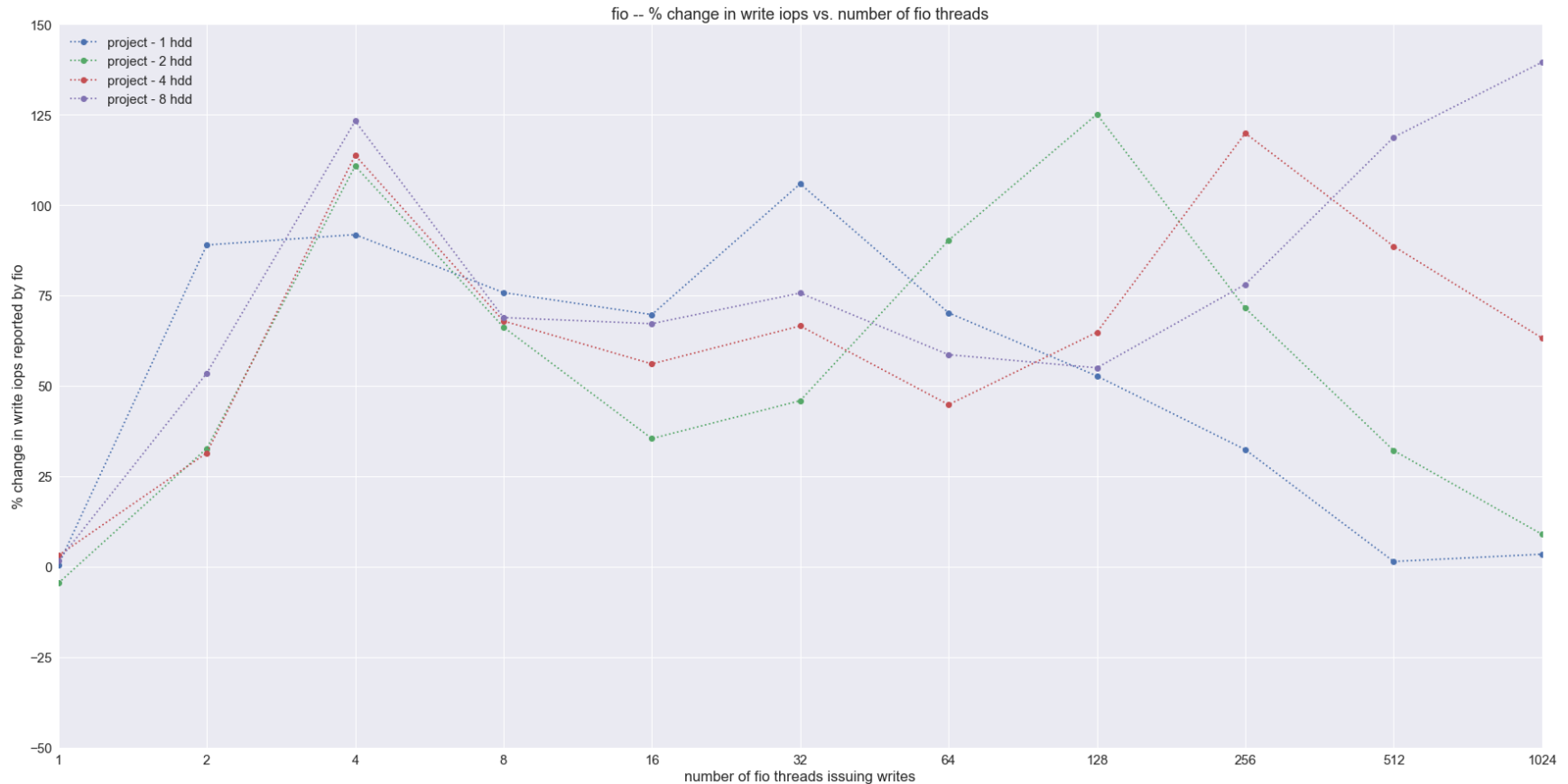


# Details

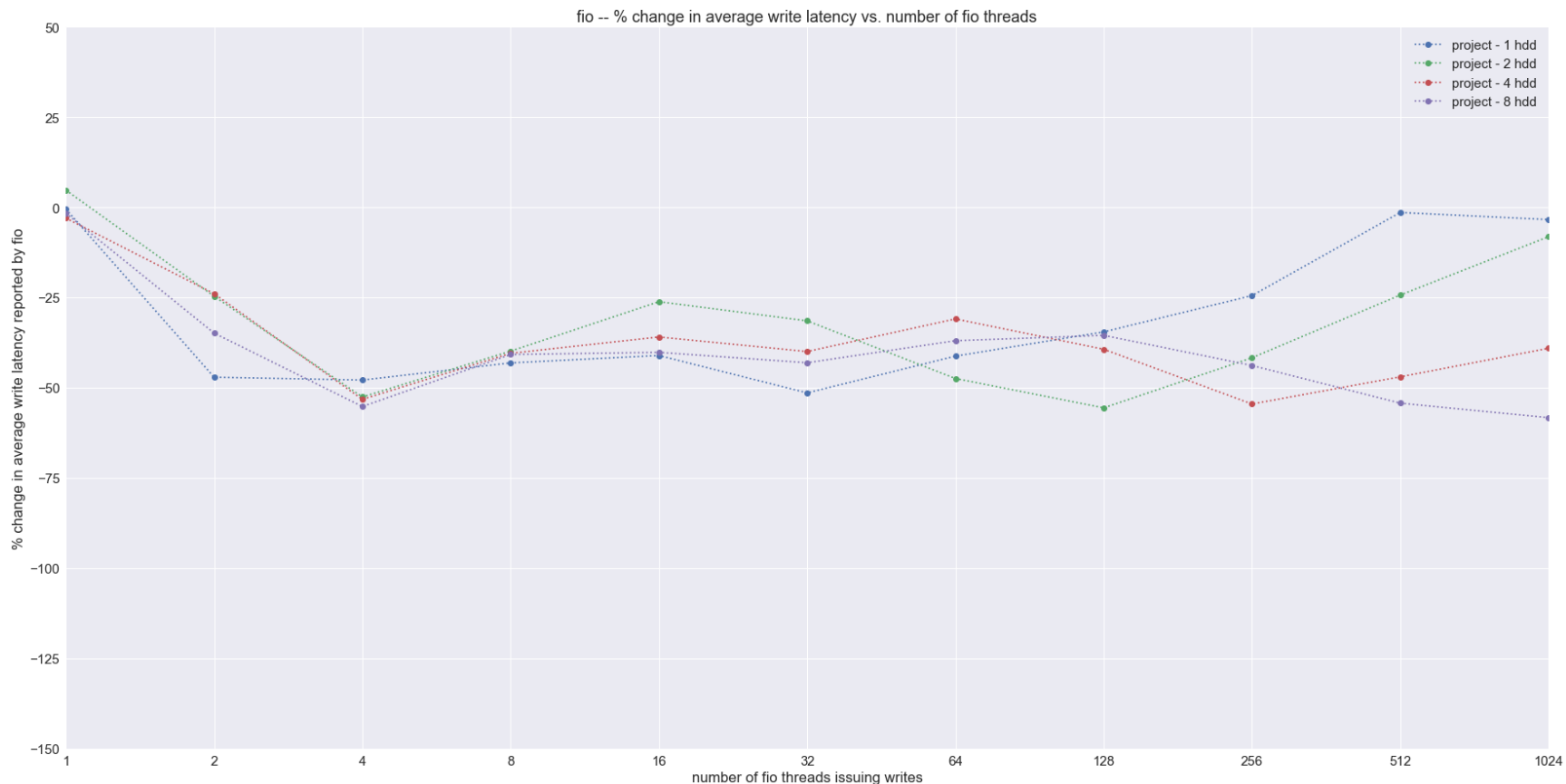
- Two fio workloads used to drive a sync write workload
  1. fio was trying to perform sync writes as fast as it could
  2. fio was trying to perform 64 sync writes per second
- IOPs and latency measured with and without my changes
  - Other metrics also observed (iostat, flamegraphs, lwb info, etc.)
- 1, 2, 4, and 8 disk zpools; tested both SSD and HDD
- Full details can be found [here](#)

## **5 – Max Rate Workload – HDDs**

# % Change IOPs – Max Rate – HDDs

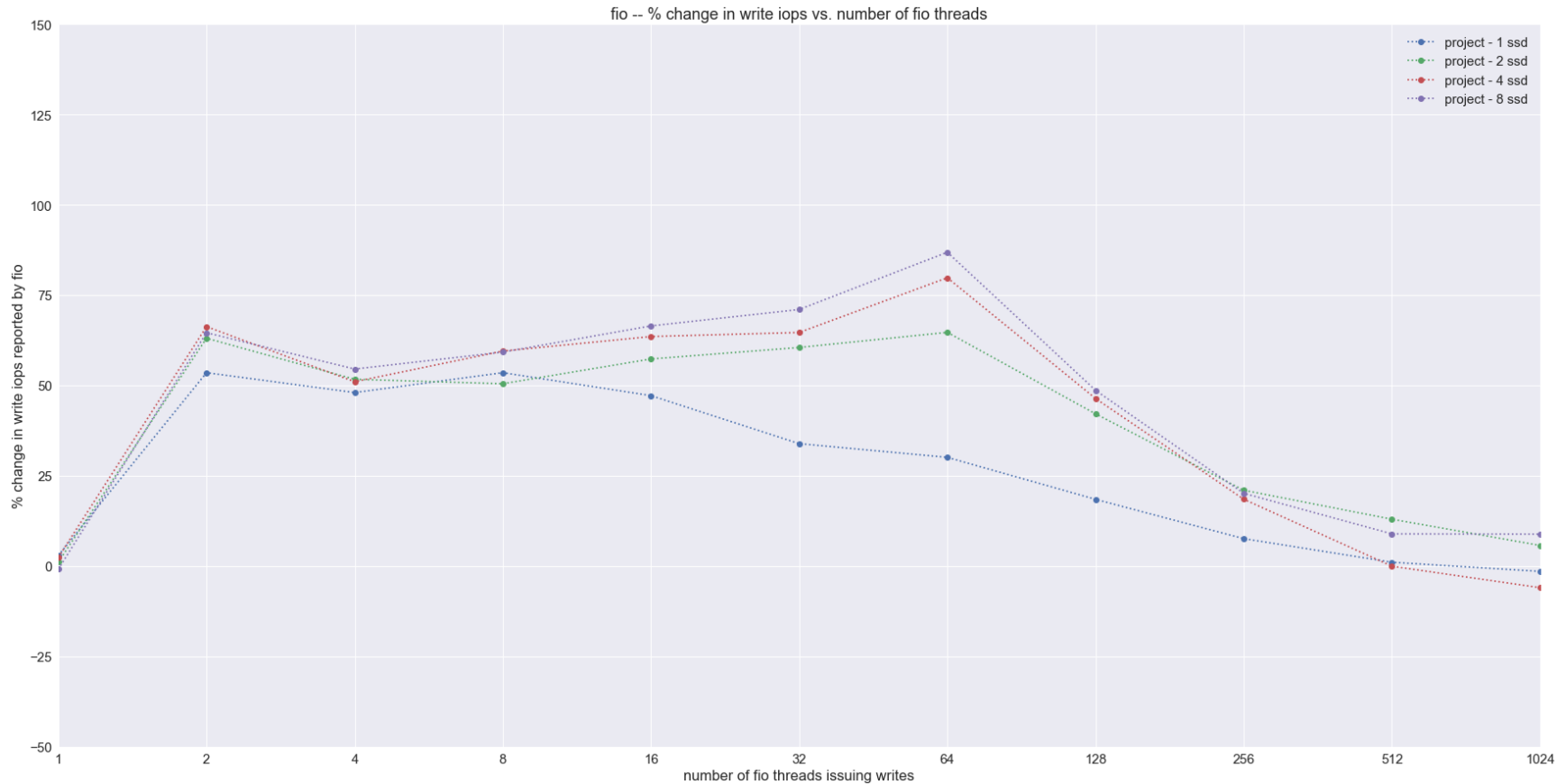


# % Change Latency – Max Rate – HDDs

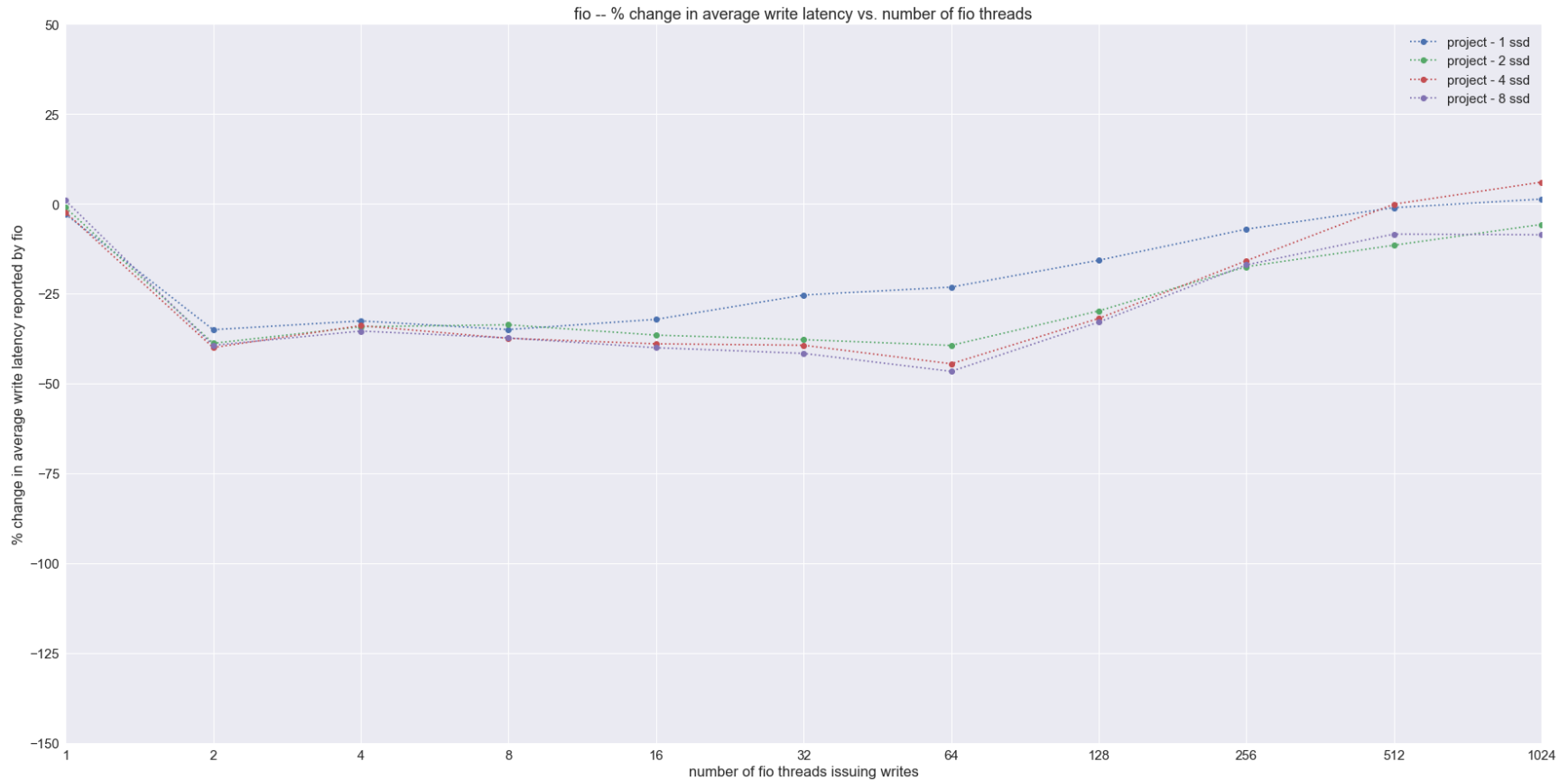


## 5 – Max Rate Workload – SSDs

# % Change IOPs – Max Rate – SSDs



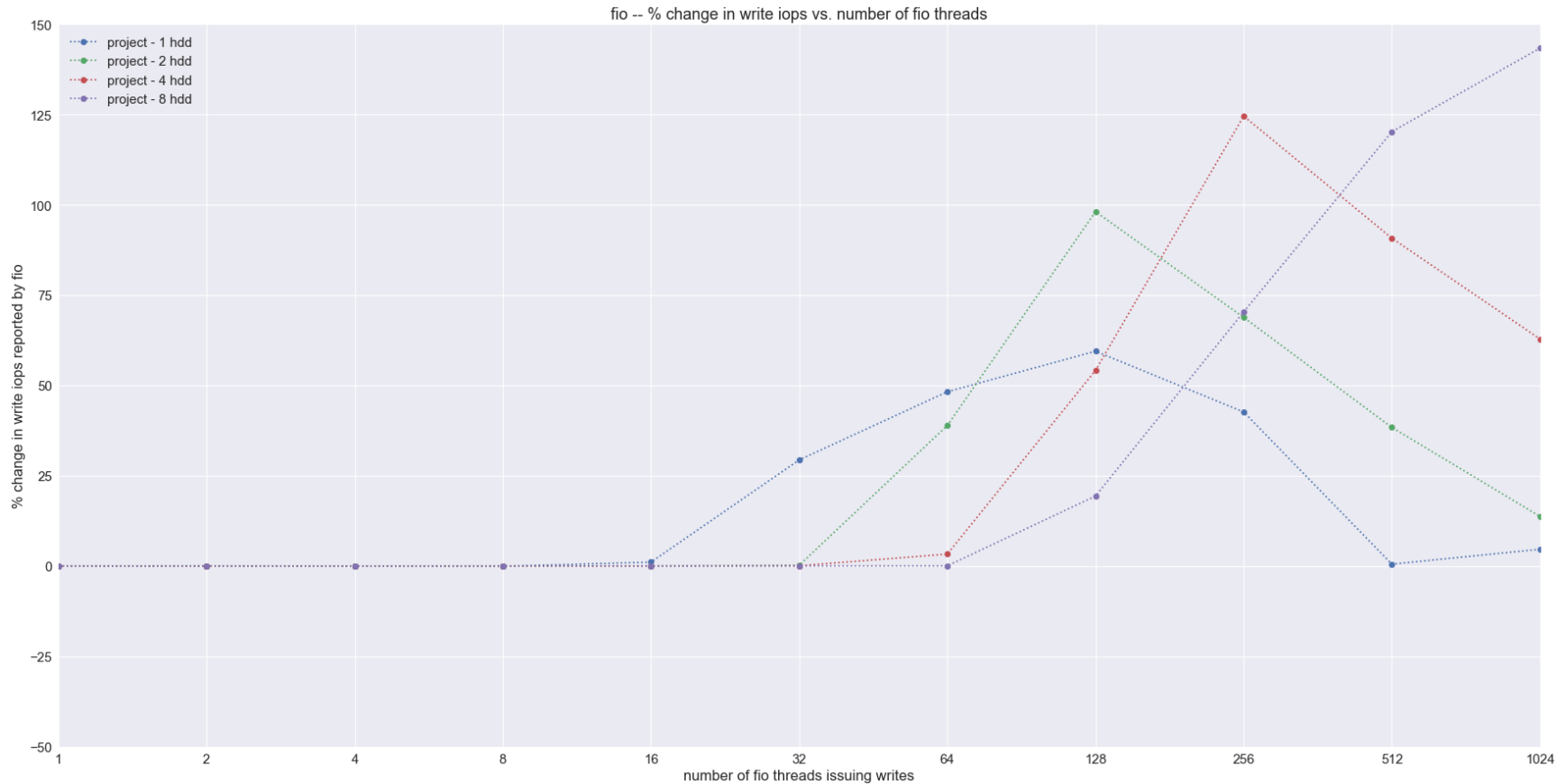
# % Change Latency – Max Rate – SSDs



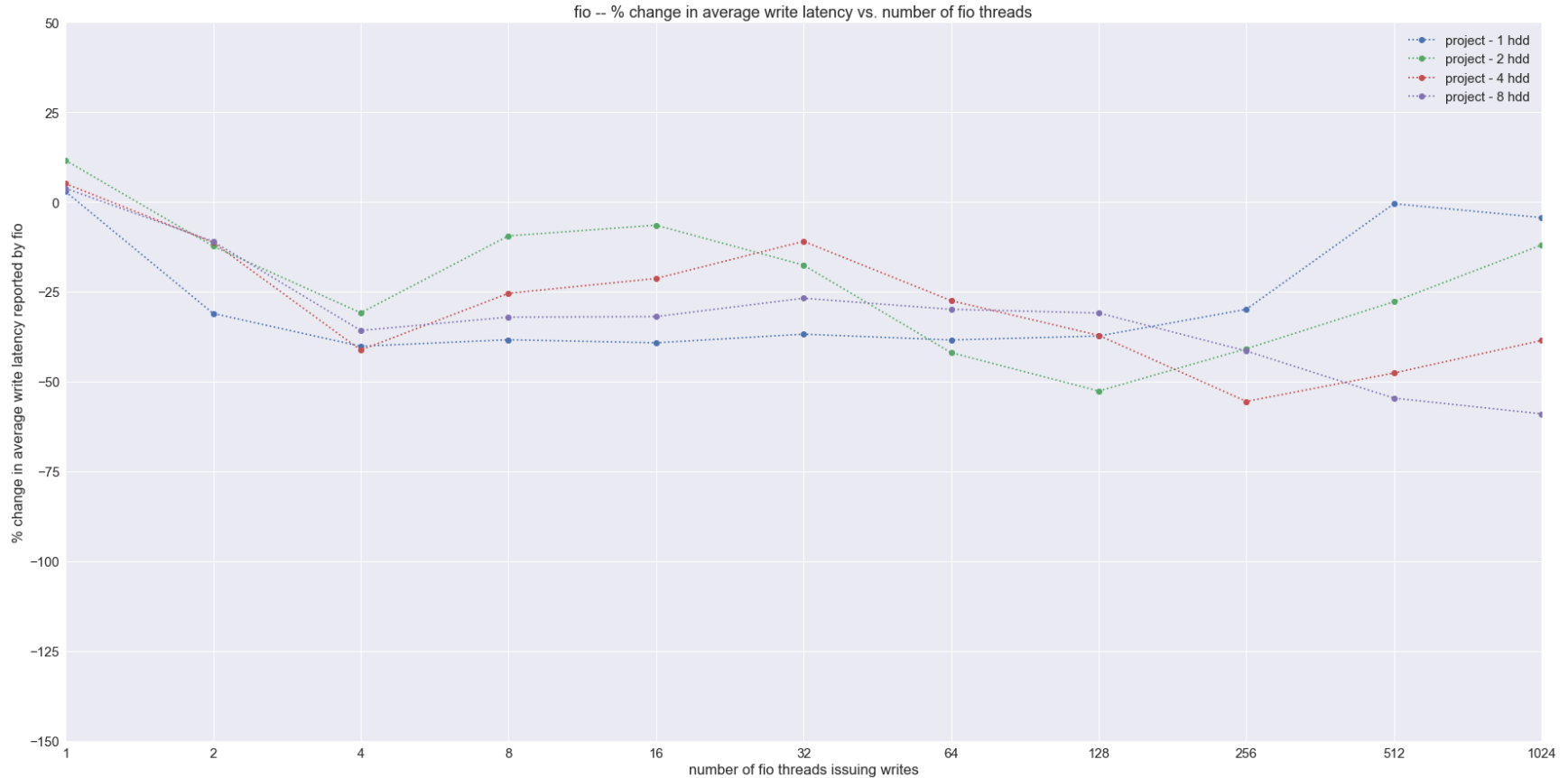
## 5 – Fixed Rate Workload – HDDs



# % Change IOPs – Fixed Rate – HDDs

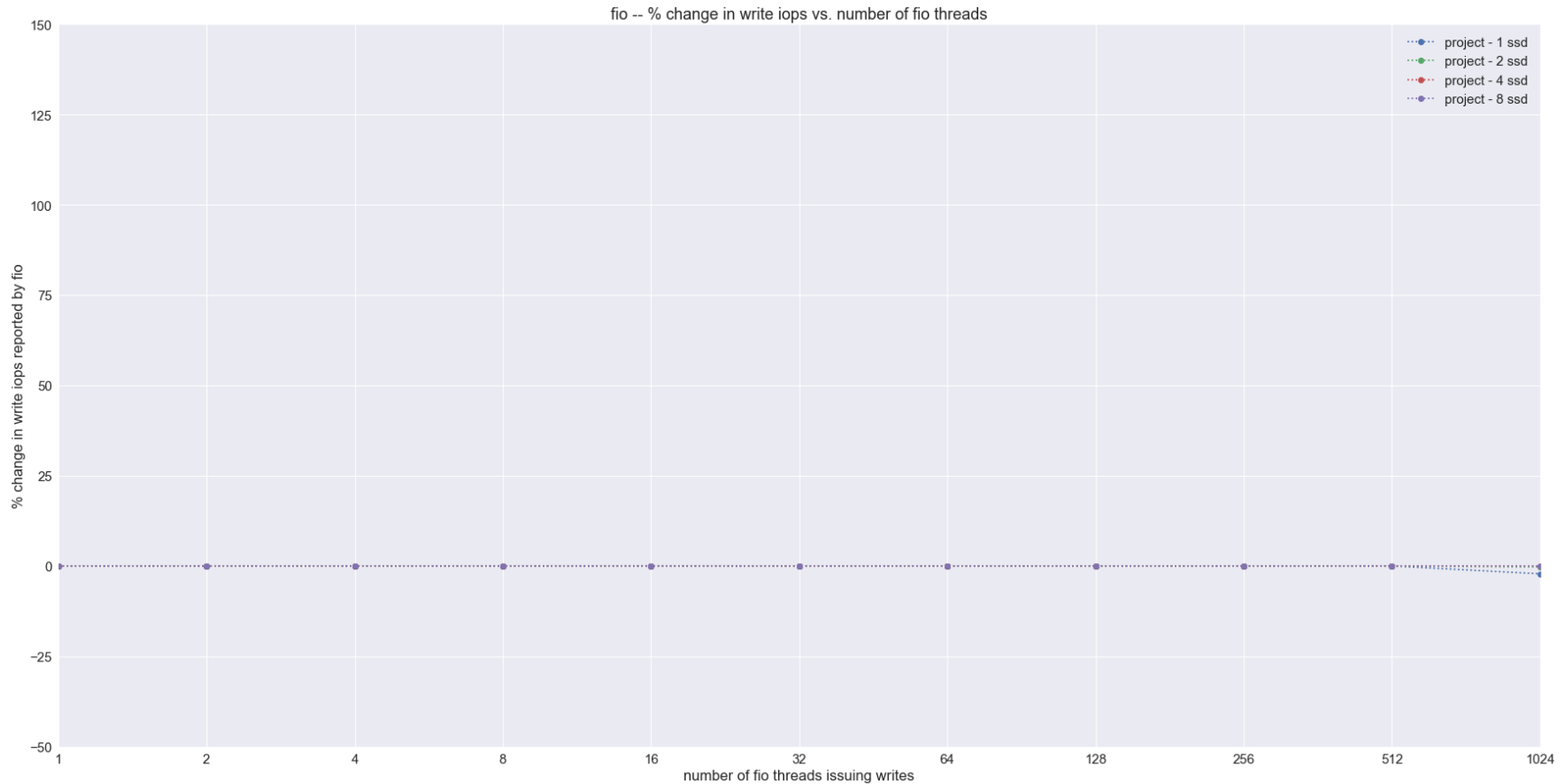


# % Change Latency – Fixed Rate – HDDs

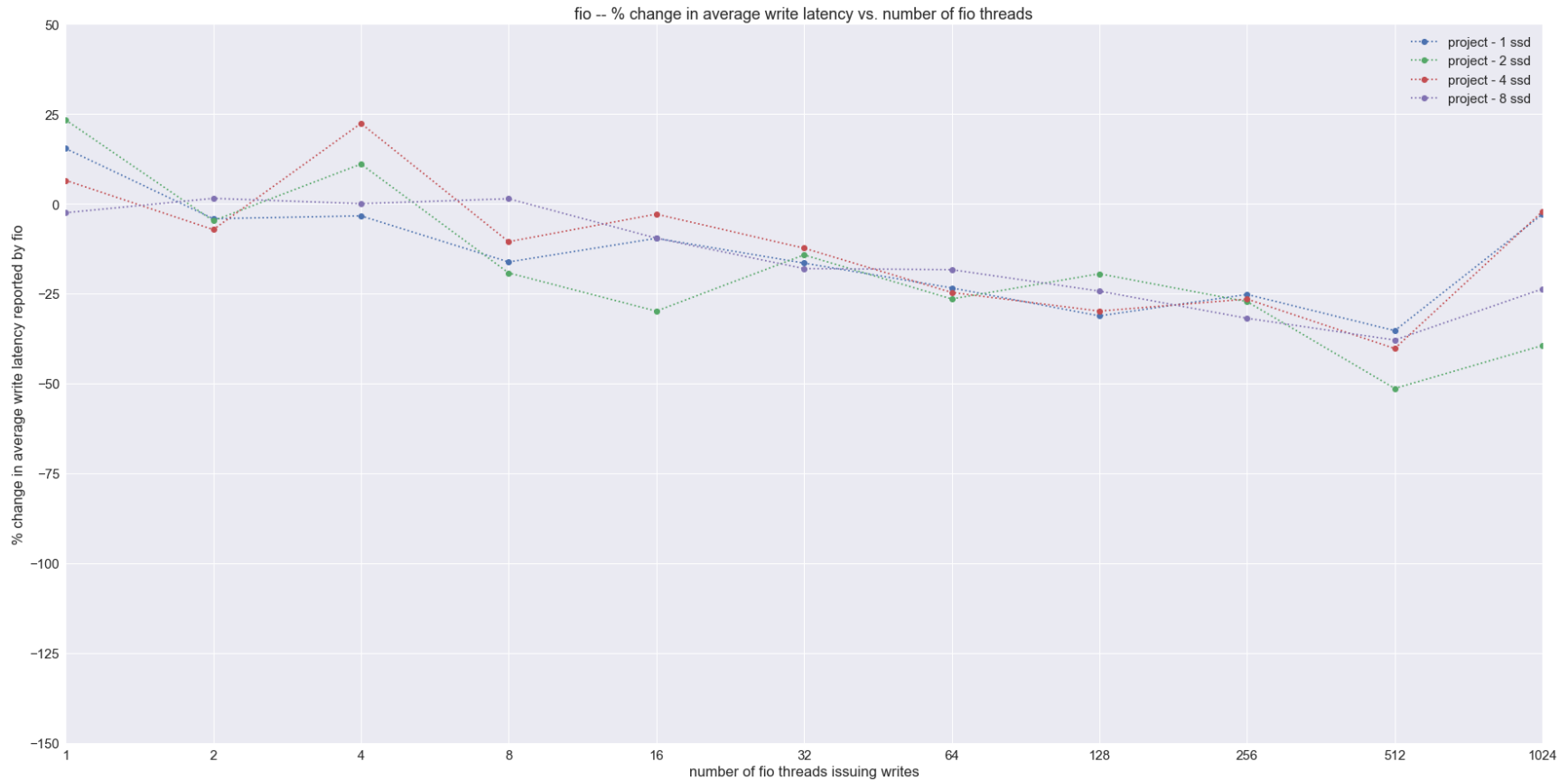


# 5 – Fixed Rate Workload – SSDs

# % Change IOPs – Fixed Rate – SSDs



# % Change Latency – Fixed Rate – SSDs



End