

Practical Resource Allocation Algorithms for QoS in OFDMA-based Wireless Systems

Tolga Girici[†], Chenxi Zhu^{*}, Jonathan R. Agre^{*}, Anthony Ephremides[†]

[†] Institute for Systems Research
A.V. William Building
University of Maryland

Email: {tgirici, etony}@eng.umd.edu

^{*} Fujitsu Labs of America
8400 Baltimore Ave., Suite 302
College Park, Maryland 20740
Email: {czhu, jagre}@fla.fujitsu.com

Abstract—In this work we propose an efficient resource allocation algorithm for OFDMA based wireless systems supporting heterogeneous traffic. The proposed algorithm provides proportionally fairness to data users and short term rate guarantees to real-time users. Based on the QoS requirements, buffer occupancy and channel conditions, we propose a scheme for rate requirement determination for delay constrained sessions. Then we formulate and solve the proportional fair rate allocation problem subject to those rate requirements and power/bandwidth constraints. Simulations results show that the proposed algorithm provides significant improvement with respect to the benchmark algorithm.

I. INTRODUCTION

Broadband wireless networks are designed to be able to provide high rate and heterogeneous services to mobile users that have various quality of service (QoS) requirements. Two notable examples of broadband wireless technologies are 3GPP and Mobile WiMax(802.16e). Transmissions in Long Term Evolution (3GPP) and 802.16-based wireless technologies are based on OFDM, where several modulation, coding and power allocation schemes are allowed to give more degrees of freedom to resource allocation [1]. Fully taking advantage of this degree of freedom is an important problem and has been studied previously in [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]. Papers [2] and [4] address maximizing total throughput subject to power and subcarrier constraints. Above works consider maximizing total capacity for data traffic but do not address fairness for data traffic or QoS for real time traffic. The authors in [3], [5], [6] studied proportional fair scheduling. However these schemes also do not guarantee any short or long term transmission rates. The scheduling rules do not apply sufficiently to different QoS requirements and heterogeneous traffic.

In OFDMA, a wideband channel is divided into a number of narrow-band carriers and these carriers are allocated to users. Typically the carriers that are close in the frequency spectrum have correlated channel conditions. In order to make the allocation easier carriers are grouped into subchannels. There are various ways of subchannelization, e.g. contiguous grouping (i.e. Band AMC), where adjacent carriers are grouped into a single subchannel. By this method it is safe to assume

that each subchannel is subject to independent and identically distributed fading. This method fully takes the advantage of OFDMA by frequency selectivity. Another method is the distributed grouping (i.e. PUSC/FUSC) where a subchannel is formed by sampling carriers across the whole range of subcarriers according to a permutation, or randomly, so that each subchannel has the same average fading with respect to a user. Most of the previous works has considered the first method in their models, however it has two main disadvantages for mobile networks. First, the proposed algorithms become too complex when each subchannel has different fading. We choose permutational method for subchannelization. Therefore our question becomes how many subchannels to allocate instead of which subchannels, which makes our resource allocation algorithms more practical. Second, for a mobile channel with fast fading, channel estimation and feedback becomes more practical using distributed grouping.

Motivated by the above issues we propose a resource allocation algorithm, that satisfies delay requirements for real time traffic, while providing proportional fair rate allocation for elastic traffic. Our algorithm is based on user selection and rate requirement determination for voice users and solution of a proportional fair rate allocation problem subject to those rate requirements and power/bandwidth constraints.

II. SYSTEM MODEL

We consider a cellular system consisting of a single base station transmitting to N mobile users. Time is divided into frames of length T_f and at each time frame base station allocates the total bandwidth W and total power P among the users. In the simulations we keep the users fixed, however we simulate mobility by fast and slow fading. Fast fading is Rayleigh distributed and slow fading is log-normal distributed. Total channel gain is the product of distance attenuation, fast and slow fading. Let $h_i(t)$ be the channel gain of user i at time t . For an AWGN channel with noise p.s.d. N_0 , signal to interference plus noise ratio (SINR) is,

$$SINR_i = \frac{P_i(t)h_i(t)}{N_0w_i(t)}, \quad (1)$$

where $p_i(t)$ and $w_i(t)$ are the power and bandwidth allocated to user i at time t .

We use the following (modulation,coding,repetition) pairs [QPSK,1/2,6× - QPSK,1/2,4× - QPSK,1/2,2× - QPSK,1/2,1×1 - QPSK,3/4,1× - 16QAM,1/2,1× - 16QAM,3/4,1× - 64QAM,2/3, 1× - 64QAM,3/4,1×] corresponding to the following SINR levels: [-2.78, -1.0, 2.0, 5, 6, 10.5, 14, 18, 20] dB [7]. For instance QPSK,1/2,6× corresponds to a bandwidth efficiency of 1/6 bps/Hz. In the problem formulation, we will use the following rate function.

$$r_i(p_i(t), w_i(t)) = w_i(t) \log \left(1 + \beta \frac{p_i(t)h_i(t)}{N_0w_i(t)} \right), \quad (2)$$

which is the Shannon capacity expression with an SINR factor $\beta < 1$. If we choose $\beta = 0.25$, this rate function approximates the above values quite well. After allocating the power and bandwidth we quantize the SINR to the values above. Bandwidth also is quantized to multiples of subchannel bandwidth, W_{sub} .

The network can support different traffic types such as real time (VoIP), video streaming, data applications with some rate requirements (FTP) and best effort traffic. We assume that each user demands a single type of traffic. We will consider the following traffic types: 1) Best Effort (BE): Non real time traffic with no minimum rate requirements. 2) Video Streaming: Bursty real time traffic with delay constraint. 3) VoIP: Constant bit rate (CBR) traffic with delay constraint.

We classify the traffic into two groups as elastic and non-elastic traffic. BE traffic is elastic, that is, a BE user can use any available traffic. Fairness and throughput are the performance objectives for BE traffic. Proportional fairness provides a good balances between the two. Voice traffic is non-elastic; it is a CBR traffic with strict delay requirements. If a voice user can receive its short term required rate level, it doesn't need excessive resources. On the other hand Video streaming traffic is in between the two types. It has a basic rate requirement with certain delay constraints, however it is possible to achieve higher quality video transmission if the user experiences good channel conditions. In this work we aim to satisfy the basic rate requirement for voice and video users, while treating excessive rate allocation for video users similarly as BE users. Typical rates for these traffic types are listed in Table II.

III. USER SELECTION

Our proposed scheduling algorithm consists of user selection and rate allocation. After selecting the users, the subchannels and power is allocated.

A. Modified Largest Delay First - Proportional Fairness

In single channel systems Largest Weighted Delay First (LWDF) is shown to be throughput optimal [8]. In this scheme at each frame the user maximizing the following quantity transmits

$$a_i D_i^{HOL}(t) r_i(P, W), \quad (3)$$

where $D_i^{HOL}(t)$ is the head of line packet delay and $r_i(P, W)$ is the channel capacity of user i at frame t (calculated from (2), where P and W is the fixed transmission power and channel bandwidth). The parameter a_i is a positive constant. If QoS is defined as

$$P(D_i > D_i^{max}) < \delta_i, \quad (4)$$

where D_i^{max} is the delay constraint and δ_i is the probability of exceeding this constraint (typically 0.05), then the constant a_i can be defined as $a_i = -\frac{\log(\delta_i)}{D_i^{max}R_i(t)}$, which is referred to as M-LWDF-PF [8]. Here, $R_i(t)$ is the average received rate. Averaged (filtered) values of long term received rates of users, which is computed as follows:

$$R_i(t+1) = \alpha_i R_i(t) + (1 - \alpha_i) r_i(p_i(t), w_i(t)) \quad (5)$$

The equation above can be considered as a filter with time constant $1/(1 - \alpha_i)$ for user i . The constant α_i should be chosen such that the average received rate is detected earlier than the delay constraint in terms of frame durations. We choose 100msec, 400 msec and 1000 msec as the delay constraints of voice, streaming and BE users. Converting these values into number of frames of 1msec we get the α values in Table II. M-LWDF-PF can be adapted to OFDMA systems as follows. Power is distributed equally to all subchannels. Starting from the first subchannel, the subchannel is allocated to the user maximizing (3). Then the received rate $R(t)$ is updated according to (5). All the subchannels are allocated one-by-one according to this rule. We will use this algorithm as benchmark in our simulations.

B. Proposed Algorithm - Delay and Rate Based Resource Allocation

There are two main disadvantages of M-LWDF-PF algorithm. First, the power is divided equally to over subcarriers. Performance can be increased by power control. Secondly, data users are much different than video and voice in terms of QoS requirements. Therefore it is hard to use the same metric for data and real time users. We propose a Delay and Rate based Resource Allocation algorithm (DRA). We first choose the users to be served in the current frame according to the following user satisfaction value.

$$USV_i(t) = L_i D_i^{HOL} \log \left(1 + \frac{\beta p_i(t)h_i(t)}{N_0w_i(t)} \right) \frac{r_i^0}{R_i(t)} \quad (6)$$

Here $L_i = -\frac{\log(\delta_i)}{D_i^{max}}$ and r_i^0 is the basic rate requirement for user i . Let U_D , U_S and U_V be the BE, Video and Voice users. Let $U_R = U_S \cup U_V$ be the set of real time users. Let U_E and \bar{U}_E be the set of users demanding elastic traffic and the rest, respectively.

We use a simple formula to determine the fraction $F_R(t)$ of real time users scheduled in each time slot,

$$F_R(t) = \frac{1}{|U_R|} \sum_{i \in U_R} I(q_i(t) > 0.5D_i^{max}r_i^0) \quad (7)$$

Here $q_i(t)$ is the queue size in bits and $0.5D_i^{max}r_i^0$ denotes a queue size threshold in bits and $I(\cdot)$ is the indicator function

taking value one if the argument inside is true. As more users exceed this threshold, more fraction of real time users are scheduled. For data users, the BS simply chooses a fraction of 0.2 of users.

IV. JOINT POWER AND BANDWIDTH ALLOCATION

After the users are chosen, joint power and bandwidth allocation is performed. Let U'_D , U'_S and U'_V be the chosen users that belong to all three traffic classes. The algorithm is as follows:

A. Basic Rate Allocation for Real Time Users

For the selected real time users ($i \in U'_R$) the rate requirements are determined first. Rate requirement for real time user i is,

$$r_i^c(q_i(t), \omega_i(t)) = \left(\frac{q_i(t)}{T_s}, \frac{r_i^0}{\omega_i(t)} \right), \quad i \in U'_R \quad (8)$$

Here $q_i(t)$ is the queue size and $\omega_i(t)$ is the transmission frequency of user i , which is updated as follows:

$$\omega_i(t) = \alpha_i \omega_i(t-1) + (1 - \alpha_i) I(r_i(t) > 0), \quad (9)$$

where $I(r_i(t) > 0)$ is the function that takes value one if the node receives packets in time slot t , zero otherwise. Therefore this frequency decreases if the node transmits less and less frequently. Using this frequency expression in the basic rate function, we compensate for the lack of transmission in the previous time slots possibly due to bad channel conditions.

For the chosen real time users with non-elastic traffic ($i \in \overline{U}_E \cap U'_R$) basic resource allocation is enough to support the session. For these users we allocate the basic resource as follows, and don't include them in the rate allocation which will be defined later. First, the nominal SNR γ_i^0 is determined according to the uniform power per bandwidth allocation as $\gamma_i^0 = \frac{P h_i(t)}{N_0 W}$. Then γ_i^0 is quantized by decreasing $\frac{P h_i(t)}{N_0 W}$ to the closest SNR level in Section II. If γ_i^0 is smaller than the smallest SNR level, then the ceiling is taken. Based on this nominal SINR, nominal bandwidth efficiency $S_i^0(t)$ (in bps/Hz) is determined again using the values above. Using this basic rate and the nominal bandwidth efficiency, basic bandwidth for non-elastic traffic is determined as $w_i^{min} = \frac{r_i^{min}(t)}{S_i^0(t)}$, $i \in \overline{U}_E \cap U'_R$. Then this bandwidth is quantized to a multiple of subchannel bandwidth by $w_i^{min} = \max(1, \lfloor w_i^{min} \rfloor) W_{sub}$. Minimal power for this user is then $p_i^{min} = \gamma_i^0 w_i^{min} N_0 / h_i(t)$, $\forall i \in \overline{U}_E \cap U'_R$. Hence $p_i = p_i^{min}$ and $w_i = w_i^{min}$ for these users.¹

Let the residual power and bandwidth after non-elastic real time traffic allocations be $P' = \sum_{i \in \overline{U}_E \cap U'_R} p_i^{min}$ and $W' = \sum_{i \in \overline{U}_E \cap U'_R} w_i^{min}$. For real time users with elastic traffic ($i \in U'_R \cap U_E$) we include the basic rate as a constraint in joint residual bandwidth-power allocation, which will be explained next.

¹After the basic allocation, if the total bandwidth or power is greater than the available resource, the user with the largest power is chosen, bandwidth is decreased by one subchannel and the power is also decreased in order to keep the SINR fixed. This process is continued until the total bandwidth and power for voice and video users becomes smaller than the available resources.

B. Proportional Fair Resource Allocation for Data and Video Streaming

At this stage the residual power (P') and bandwidth (W') is allocated among the chosen users demanding elastic traffic in a proportional fair manner. The PF resource allocation problem in (10) is solved among the chosen streaming and data users.

Find $(\mathbf{p}^*, \mathbf{w}^*)$ such that:

$$\max_{\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{w}} \prod_{i \in U_E \cap (U'_R \cup U'_D)} \left(w_i \log \left(1 + \frac{p_i}{n_i w_i} \right) \right)^{\phi_i} \quad (10)$$

subject to,

$$w_i \log \left(1 + \frac{p_i}{n_i w_i} \right) \geq r_i^{min}, \quad \forall i \in U_E \cap U'_R \quad (11)$$

$$\sum_{i \in U_E \cap (U'_R \cup U'_D)} p_i \leq P' \quad (12)$$

$$\sum_{i \in U_E \cap (U'_R \cup U'_D)} w_i \leq W' \quad (13)$$

$$p_i, w_i \geq 0, \quad \forall i \in U_E \cap (U'_R \cup U'_D) \quad (14)$$

Here log-sum is written as a product. The above problem is a convex optimization problem with a concave objective function and convex set [9]. In this optimization we also included the parameter ϕ_i , which depends on the traffic type. Since data users typically can tolerate more rate and video users are already allocated basic bandwidth, we can give higher ϕ_i for data users. We can solve this problem using the Lagrange multipliers.

C. Bandwidth and SINR quantization and Reshuffling

After the resources are allocated, first the bandwidth for data and video streaming users is quantized as $w_i = \max(1, \lfloor w_i \rfloor) W_{sub}$. Then the SINR is quantized and transmit power is determined. Unlike best effort transmission, queue size plays an important role in real time transmissions. As a result of the above optimization some streaming time users may get more rates than that is enough to transmit all bits in the queue. Some of the bandwidth is taken from video users in order to obey this queue constraint. After these modifications, if the total bandwidth is greater than the available, then the user with the highest power is found and its bandwidth decreased. Power is recalculated in order to keep the SINR fixed. This process is continued until bandwidth constraint is satisfied. If total power is still greater than the available then again choosing the user with highest power and decreasing bandwidth, power constraint is satisfied. If after these processes there is a leftover bandwidth, then choosing the user that has the highest channel a subchannel is added and power is increased accordingly (if there is enough power to do so). If there is some leftover power, then starting from the user with lower channel gains, SINR is boosted to the next power level (if there is enough power to do so). For the real time users we don't increase bandwidth or power if there isn't enough buffer content.

V. NUMERICAL EVALUATION

For the numerical evaluations we divide the users to 5 classes according to the distances, 0.3,0.6,0.9,1.2,1.5 km. There are equal number of users at each class. We use the parameters in Table I.

Parameter	Value
Cell radius	1.5km
User Distances	0.3,0.6,0.9,1.2,1.5 km
Total power (P)	20 W
Total bandwidth (W)	10 MHz
Frame Length	1 msec
Voice Traffic	CBR 32kbps
Video Traffic	802.16 - 128kbps
Best effort File	5 MB
AWGN p.s.d.(N_0)	-169dBm/Hz
Pathloss exponent (γ)	3.5
$\Psi_{dB} \sim N(\mu_{\Psi_{dB}}, \sigma_{\Psi_{dB}})$	N(0dB,8dB)
Coherent Time (Fast/Slow)	(5msec/300msec.)
Pathloss(dB, d in meters)	$-31.5 - 35 \log_{10} d + \Psi_{dB}$

TABLE I
SIMULATION PARAMETERS

We performed the simulations using MATLAB. We compared our algorithm with the benchmark M-LWDF algorithm with proportional fairness. Delay exceeding probability is taken as $\delta_i = 0.05$ for all users. The traffic and resource allocation parameters are listed in Table II. Since we choose data users separately from others, the parameters L_i and head of line delay D_i^{HOL} are not used for data users.

Traffic	$r^0(kbps)$	$r^{max}(kbps)$	$D^{max}(s)$	L_i	ϕ_i	α_i
VoIP	32	32	0.1	13	-	0.98
Streaming	128	1024	0.4	3.25	1	0.995
BE	0	∞	2	0.65	-	0.998

TABLE II
MINIMUM REQUIRED AND MAXIMUM SUSTAINED RATES FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRAFFIC.

The measured performance metrics are 95th percentile delay for real time users and total throughput for data users. We will observe these parameters with respect to number of video users. For the delay, we observe the users in the range 0.3-1.2 separately as *good* users and the ones at 1.5km as *bad* users.

A. Fixed Rate Video Traffic

In the first part of the simulations we considered the video traffic rate fixed at 128kbps and treated it as non-elastic. We consider CBR voice traffic, where a fixed length packet arrives periodically. For the Video traffic we used the model in IEEE 802.16e system evaluation methodology. Packet lengths, and interarrival times truncated Pareto distributed such that average rate is 128kbps. For the BE traffic we assume that there are unlimited number of packets in the queue.

In Figure 1, we plotted the 95 percentile delays of real time users vs increasing number of video users. For this simulation we kept the number of data and Voice users fixed at 20. Again

we observe that 95th percentile delay for video users increases exponentially with number video users, while delays for the users at the edge is within the acceptable range for DRA unlike M-LWDF.

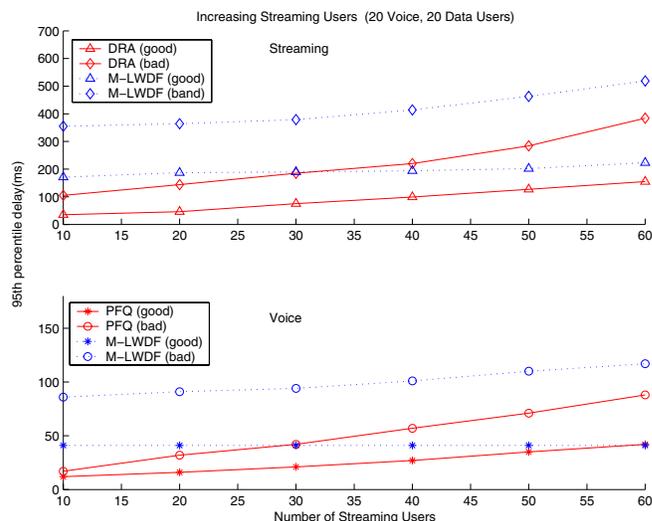


Fig. 1. 95 percentile delay(msec) vs. number of video users

In figure 2 we see that total data rate decreases linearly with increasing video users. Data performance of DRA is again better than M-LWDF.

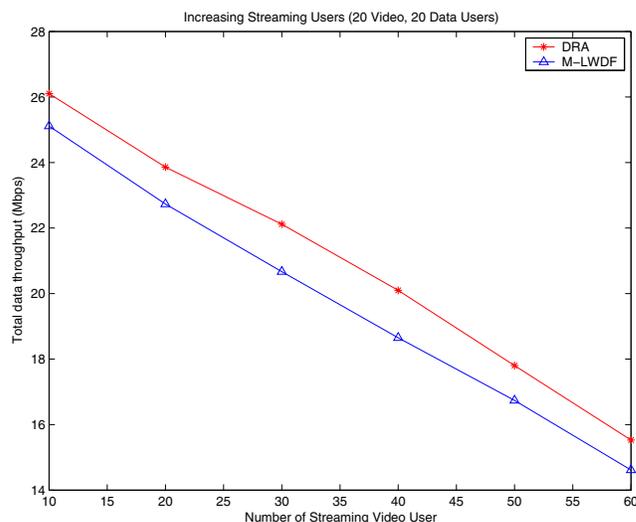


Fig. 2. Total throughput(Mbos) vs. number of video users

In Figure 3, 95th percentile delay for video and voice users are plotted for increasing number of data users. The number of Streaming and Voice users are kept fixed at 20. We observe a linear increase in the delay w.r.t. number of data users with M-LWDF. The delay increase is negligible for DRA.

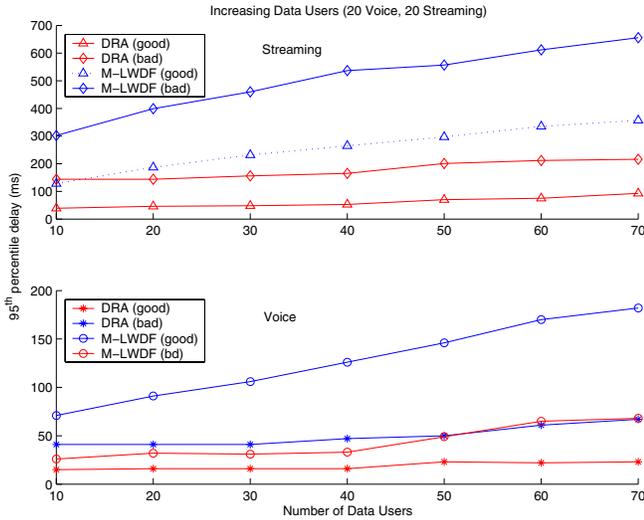


Fig. 3. 95 percentile delay(msec) vs. number of data users

B. Elastic Video Traffic

In the second part of the simulations we considered video traffic rate that varies with packet delays. We implemented a simple rate control scheme that looks at the average head of line packet delay and increases or decreases input rate according to a threshold policy. We defined rate levels $r_i^0 \lambda_i$, ($\lambda_i \in \{1, 2, \dots, 8\}$) that are integer multiples of 128kbps. Interarrival times are the same for level 1 and k , however for level k packet size is k times larger for each packet. For each user $i \in U_E \cap U_R$ and at each update instant.

- if $\overline{D}_i^{HOL}(t) < 0.125D_i^{max}$ then $\lambda_i = \min\{\lambda_i + 1, \lambda_i^{max}\}$
- if $\overline{D}_i^{HOL}(t) > 0.25D_i^{max}$ then $\lambda_i = \max\{\lambda_i - 1, 1\}$
- else, $\lambda_i = \lambda_i$

Here $\overline{D}_i^{HOL}(t)$ denotes mean HOL packet delay in the last 400 frames. The updates are made at each 200 frames.

Figure 4 shows the evolution of rate levels along with queue sizes for video users at distances 300, 900 and 1500 meters. We observe that users closer to the BS can achieve higher rates. In Figure 5 we observe the comparison of delay and throughput for the DRA and LWDF schemes. We see that DRA system satisfies delay constraints for voice users unlike LWDF. As for throughput, we see that DRA can provide significantly better throughput for video users at all distances. Total data/video throughput and log-sum throughput (proportional fairness) is also better for DRA scheme.

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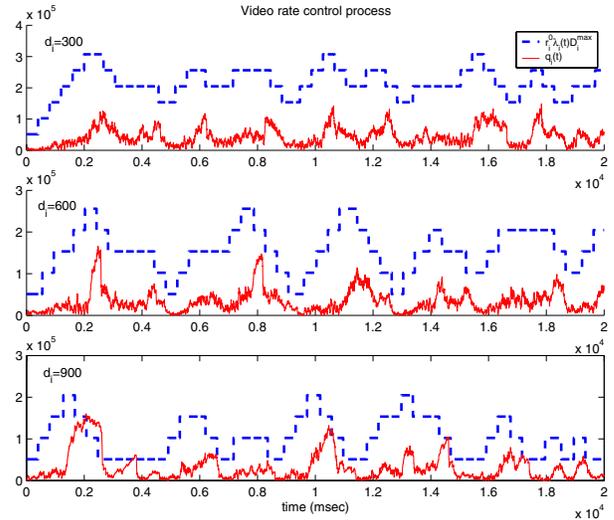


Fig. 4. Evolution of Video rate along with queue sizes for users at 300, 600 and 900meters

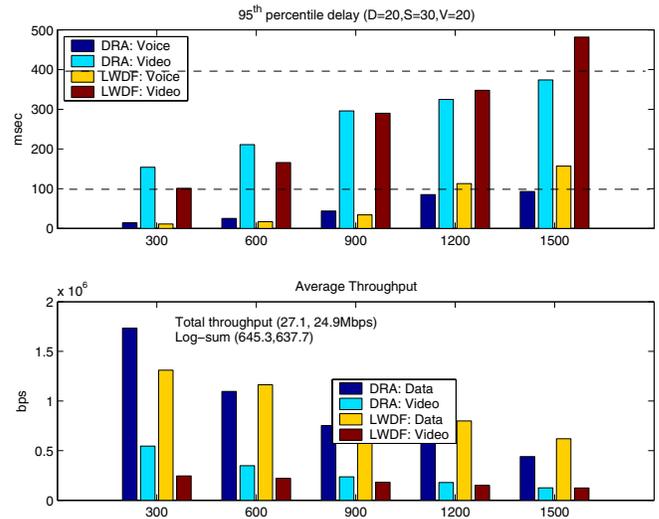


Fig. 5. 95th percentile delay and average throughput for users at different distances.

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