

Cracking Open What Makes Apple's Low-Latency WiFi So Fast

A Deep Dive into Tracing the Network Stack on macOS and iOS

Henri Jäger

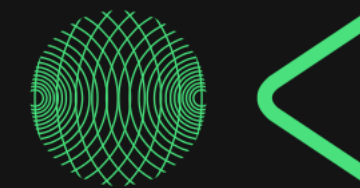
whoami

Student @ Hasso Plattner Institute
Mobile and Wireless Security



Researcher @ OpenKRITIS

EU / German Cyber Security Regulations



[OpenKRITIS](#) [NIS2](#) [Europa](#) [Betreiber](#) [Security](#) [School](#)

KRITIS – auf den zweiten Blick

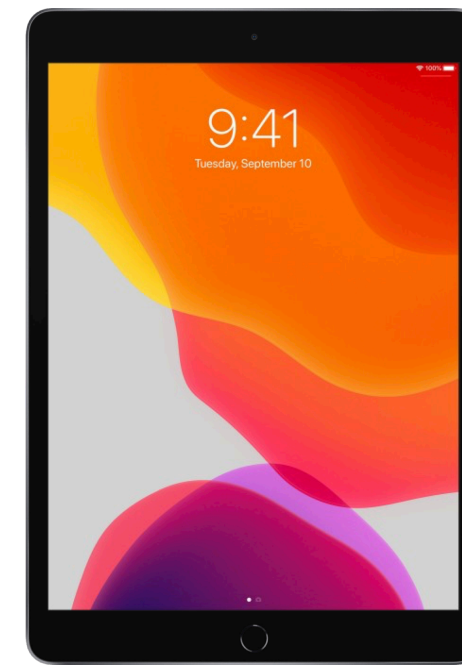
OpenKRITIS ist eine unabhängige Plattform für den Schutz Kritischer Infrastrukturen. Wir unterstützen Betreiber und Prüfer in der KRITIS und NIS2-Regulierung: Klare Strukturen zur Umsetzung von Cybersecurity, Governance und Prüfungen.



KRITIS und NIS2



Kritische Infrastrukturen





Sidecar Display





Universal Control





Continuity Camera





iPhone Mirroring



Continuity features and requirements for Apple devices

Continuity features make it seamless to move between your Mac, iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Apple TV, and Apple Vision Pro devices that meet the system requirements.

[AirDrop](#) ⌵

[AirPlay to Mac](#) ⌵

[Apple Pay](#) ⌵

[Auto Unlock](#) ⌵

[Continuity Camera: Use iPhone as a webcam for Mac](#) ⌵

[Continuity Camera: Use iPhone or iPad as a webcam for Apple TV](#) ⌵

[Continuity Camera: Use iPhone or iPad to take photos or scan documents on Mac](#) ⌵

[Continuity Sketch and Continuity Markup](#) ⌵

[Handoff](#) ⌵

[Instant Hotspot](#) ⌵

[iPhone Cellular Calls](#) ⌵

[iPhone Mirroring](#) ⌵

[iPhone widgets on Mac](#) ⌵

[Mac Virtual Display](#) ⌵

[Mirror My View](#) ⌵

[Sidecar](#) ⌵

[Text Message Forwarding](#) ⌵

[Universal Clipboard](#) ⌵

[Universal Control](#) ⌵

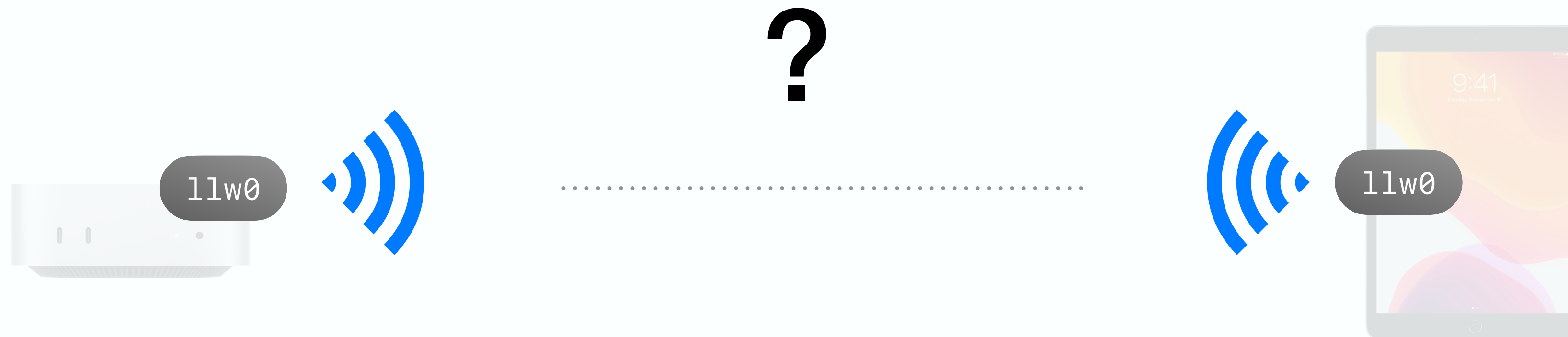


Mostly Video Data

Real-Time Constraints

Low-Latency WiFi ✨





How is this interface opened?

Are other devices LLW-compatible?

What makes LLW *low-latency* WiFi?



Logging

Kernel Traces

XPC Communication

Backtraces

Packet Captures

`en0, awdl0, llw0, BLE, ...`

Logging

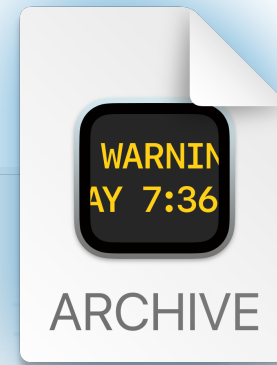
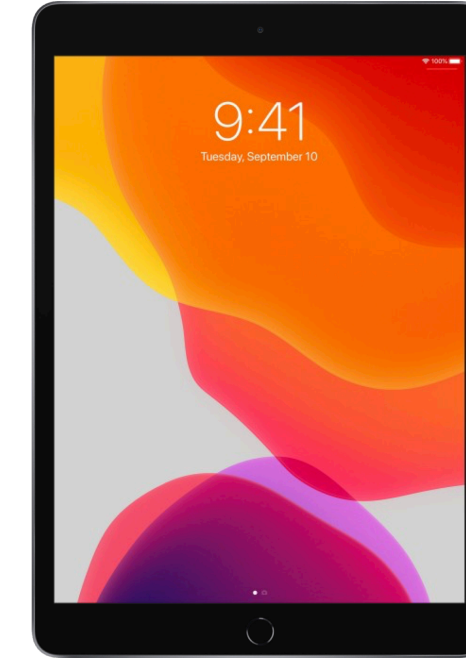
Kernel Traces

XPC Communication

Backtraces

Missing Solution

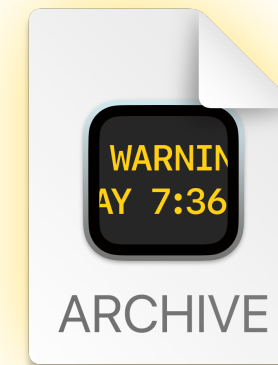
to correlate log information from different log sources in a timely manner



```

17:24:16.704 SidecarDisplayAgent    === Sidecar
17:24:16.772 rapportd      Added policy: order = 9 re
17:24:16.792 kernel.development  SK[1]: channe
17:24:17.542 avconferenced      VCMediaStream
17:24:18.565 kernel.development  SK[7]: ch_eve
17:24:18.566 airportd      [corewifi] @[13190.661012]
17:24:22.688 SidecarRelay nw_channel_create_with_nex
17:24:24.563 mDNSResponder SysEventCallback -- event
17:24:24.563 configd      Process interface link up:
17:24:24.566 nsattributedstringagent  SLSTransactio

```



```

17:24:17.127 SidecarRelay === IDS F090DC4A:remote:73
17:24:17.128 kernel      wlan0:com.apple.p2p: AWDLS
17:24:17.130 rapportd      48: SendEventID 'com.apple
17:24:17.133 runningboardd      _checkForSusp
17:24:28.103 wifip2pd      XPCSession[avconferenced 1
17:24:19.931 +0200      avconferenced [C96 IPv6#5c
17:24:20.588 kernel      rt_lookup_common:3376 (::,
17:24:23.170 kernel      wlan0:com.apple.p2p: I0802
17:24:25.972 kernel      cacheVerifiedACM <- reset:
17:24:27.973 kernel AppleBiometricServices::message

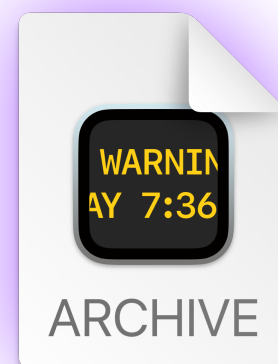
```



+



=



```
17:24:16.704 SidecarDisplayAgent      === Sidecar C
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17:24:17.128 kernel      wlan0:com.apple.p2p: AWDLS
17:24:16.792 kernel.development      SK[1]: channe
17:24:17.130 rapportd      48: SendEventID 'com.apple
17:24:17.133 runningboardd      _checkForSusp
17:24:18.103 wifip2pd      XPCSession[avconferenced 1
17:24:17.542 avconferenced      VCMediaStream
17:24:18.565 kernel.development      SK[7]: ch_eve
17:24:19.931 +0200      avconferenced [C96 IPv6#5c
17:24:18.566 airportd      [corewifi] @[13190.661012]
17:24:20.588 kernel      rt_lookup_common:3376 (::,
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17:24:24.563 mDNSResponder SysEventCallBack -- event
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```

Log Aggregator

Network Stack on macOS and iOS

Low-Latency in LLW

Building a Log Aggregator

Challenges

Log Aggregation & Collection

Availability of forensic sources (iOS)

Clock offsets

Collection on multiple devices

Aggregation of varying file formats

Noise filtering



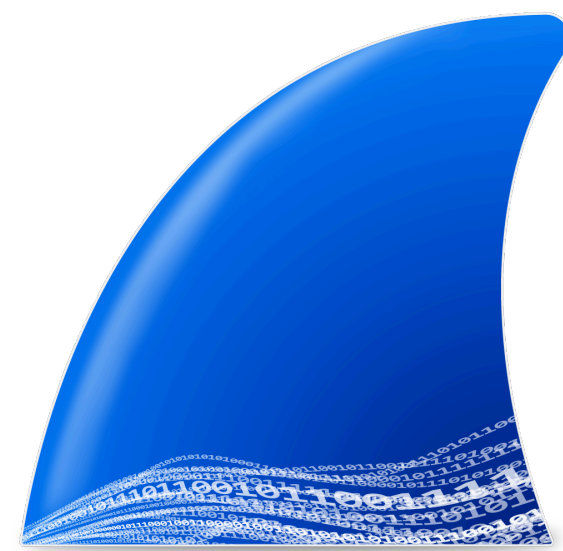
Console



dtrace



ktrace




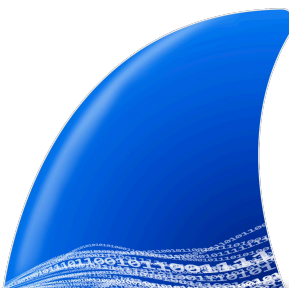


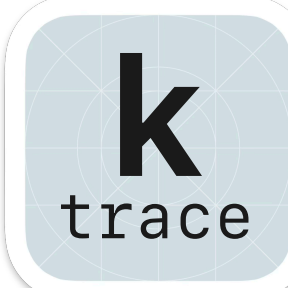

Wireshark




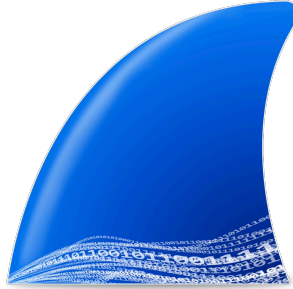




cctool



PacketLogger

						
macOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
iOS	✓ log	✓ tcpdump*	✓	🤔	🤔	🤔

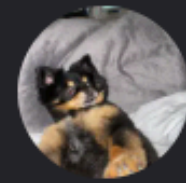
* Jailbreak required — our setup includes an iPad (7th generation)

						
macOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
iOS	✓ log	✓ tcpdump*	✓	✗	✓ from source*	✓ reimplementation*

* Jailbreak required — our setup includes an iPad (7th generation)

9. November 2022

@saagarjha Does iOS have a system trace instrument?



daniel 09.11.22, 10:55

I had to double check whether it's included or not (it is not) but `ktrace` works on iOS when building from `system_cmds`. Although it dumps `.trace` files, most of the symbols aren't symbolicated because iOS lacks `/System/Library/Kernels`



saagarjha 09.11.22, 10:56

the specific thing I would point at is context switches here rather than `ktrace` events

@daniel I had to double check whether it's included or not (it is not) but `ktrace` works on iOS when building ...



Nick Chan 4141 09.11.22, 12:37

you should consider putting the decoded kernelcache there

@Nick Chan 4141 you should consider putting the decoded kernelcache there



daniel 09.11.22, 18:10

I don't think iOS even loads them from that directory. If I were to make an assumption they're loaded from `/mach.dev.etc..` and `/private/var/kern_loader.conf/` (and that's not even considered an educated guess at that)

@daniel I don't think iOS even loads them from that directory. If I were to make an assumption they're loaded ...



Nick Chan 4141 09.11.22, 18:21

they are loaded from `/private/preboot/$(cat /private/preboot/active)/System/Library/Caches/com.apple.kernelcaches/kernelcache` which is wrapped an `img4` (edited)



Hack Different



Boost Goal

15/28 Boosts



Browse Channels

NEW



rules

announcements



the basics

general

security

apple-knowledge

re

fw

programming

hw

misc

Off-topic

gaming

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system_cmds

rather than ktrace events

(not) but `ktrace` works on iOS when building ...

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Hack Different



Boost Goal 15/28 Boosts

Browse Channels NEW

- rules
- announcements

the basics

- # general
- # security
- # apple-knowledge
- # re
- # fw
- # programming
- # hw
- # misc

Off-topic

gaming



Platform

Solutions

Resources

Open Source

Enterprise

Pricing



Sign in

Sign up



apple-oss-distributions / system_cmds Public

Notifications

Fork 8

Star 39

Code

Pull requests

Security

Insights

main



Go to file

Code

About

opensource.apple.com/releases

Activity

Custom properties

39 stars

4 watching

8 forks

Report repository

Releases

72 tags

AppleOSSDistributions system_cmds-10... e0c267e · 2 months ago 30 Commits

GCOREFrameworkTests system_cmds-1039 2 months ago

ac system_cmds-970.0.4 2 years ago









accton system_cmds-970.0.4 2 years ago

arch system_cmds-1012 last year

at system_cmds-1012 last year

atrunk system_cmds-1012 last year

chkpasswd system_cmds-970.0.4 2 years ago

 getty	system_cmds-970.0.4	4 years ago
 hostinfo	system_cmds-970.0.4	2 years ago
 iosim	system_cmds-970.0.4	2 years ago
 iostat	system_cmds-970.0.4	2 years ago
 kpgo	system_cmds-970.0.4	2 years ago
 latency	system_cmds-970.0.4	2 years ago
 login	system_cmds-1012	last year
 lskq	system_cmds-979.100.8	last year

???





Platform

Solutions

Resources

Open Source

Enterprise

Pricing



Sign in

Sign up



apple-oss-distributions / system_cmds Public

Notifications

Fork 8

Star 39

Code

Pull requests

Security

Insights

Releases

Tags

system_cmds...

559f661

Compare

system_cmds-918.100.3

AppleOSSDistributions tagged this Apr 26, 2022

Imported from system_cmds-918.100.3.tar.gz

Assets 2

Source code (zip)

Apr 26, 2022

Source code (tar.gz)

Apr 26, 2022



Platform

Solutions

Resources

Open Source

Enterprise

Pricing



Sign in

Sign up



apple-oss-distributions / system_cmds Public

Notifications

Fork 8

Star 39

Code

Pull requests

Security

Insights

Files

559f661

Go to file

- > ac.tproj
- > accton.tproj
- > arch.tproj
- > at.tproj
- > atrun.tproj
- > chkpasswd.tproj

system_cmds / trace.tproj



AppleOSSDistributions system_cmds-916

16245aa · 3 years ago History

Name	Last commit message	Last commit date
..		
trace.1	system_cmds-916	3 years ago
trace.c	system_cmds-854.11.2	4 years ago

Makefile

Makefile

Makefile > ios

```
1 IOS_SDK := $(shell xcrun --sdk iphoneos --show-sdk-path)
2
3 all: ios macos
4
5 macos:
6     clang trace.c -arch arm64e -lutil -I./libutil-main -o trace.arm64e
7
8 ios:
9     clang trace.c -arch arm64 -isysroot ${IOS_SDK} -lutil -I./libutil-main -I
10     ios-missing-headers -o trace.arm64
11     codesign --entitlements entitlements.xml -f -s - trace.arm64
```



Favorites

- AirDrop
- Recents
- Applications
- Desktop
- Documents
- Downloads





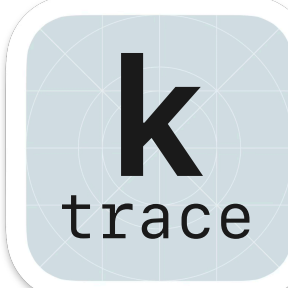

iCloud

Locations

Tags

< > trace-for-ios

Name	Date Modified	Size	Kind
entitlements.xml	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	425 bytes	XML Document
▼ ios-missing-headers	Today at 08:05	--	Folder
▼ sys	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	--	Folder
kdebug.h	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	48 KB	C Head...Source
mbuf.h	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	67 KB	C Head...Source
ptrace.h	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	5 KB	C Head...Source
kdebug_private.h	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	18 KB	C Head...Source
> libutil-main	Today at 08:05	--	Folder
Makefile	11. Nov 2025 at 07:37	327 bytes	Makefile
trace.1	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	9 KB	Document
trace.arm64	10. Jul 2025 at 19:34	91 KB	Document
trace.arm64e	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	75 KB	Document
trace.c	17. Jun 2025 at 10:19	73 KB	C Source

						
macOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
iOS	✓ log	✓ tcpdump*	✓	✗	✓ from source*	✓ reimplementation*

* Jailbreak required — our setup includes an iPad (7th generation)

Challenges

Log Aggregation & Collection

Availability of forensic sources (iOS)

Clock offsets

Collection on multiple devices

Aggregation of varying file formats

Noise filtering



Logging

Kernel Traces

XPC Communication

Backtraces

Packet Captures

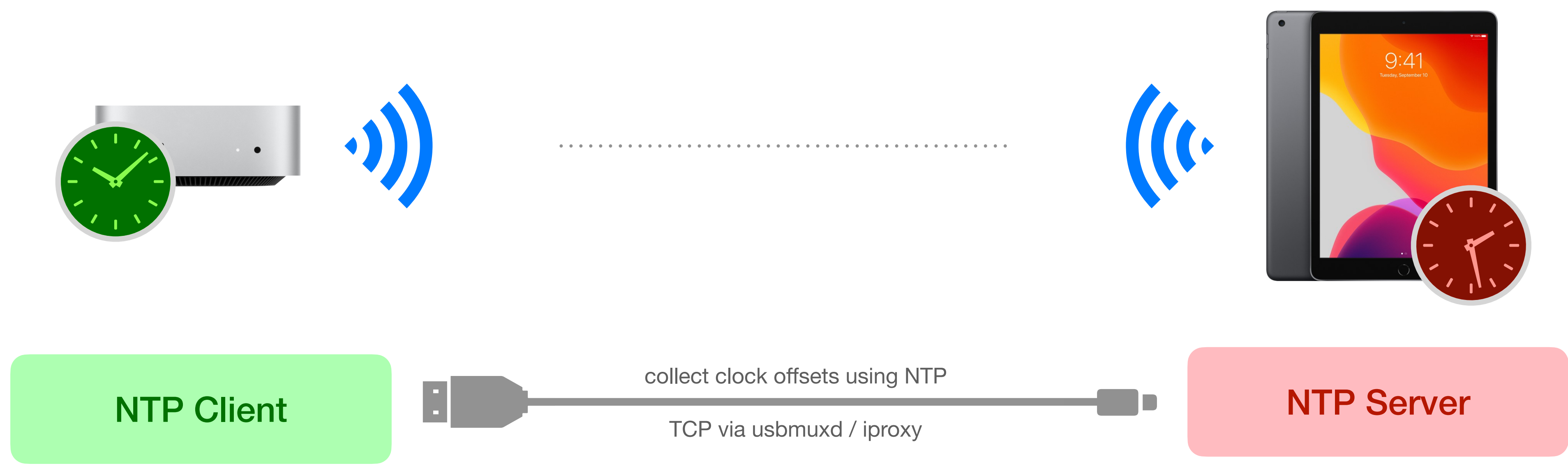
`en0, awd10, llw0, BLE, ...`

Logging

Kernel Traces

XPC Communication

Backtraces



Challenges

Log Aggregation & Collection

Availability of forensic sources (iOS)

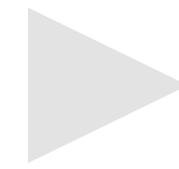
Clock offsets

Collection on multiple devices

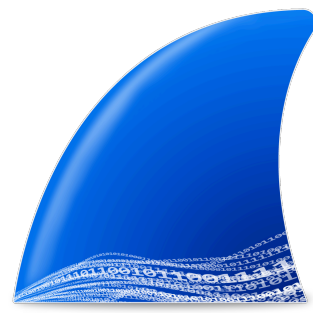
Aggregation of varying file formats


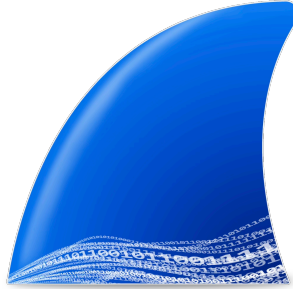




Noise filtering

Collect Logs



Aggregate Logs



						
macOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
iOS	✓ log	✓ tcpdump*	✓	✗	✓ from source*	✓ reimplementation*

* Jailbreak required — our setup includes an iPad (7th generation)



.....



log-acquisition.sh

User Interface

log-acquisition.sh --format=pcap

log-acquisition-
idevice-lib.sh

Remote Device Management

get_latest_dir_on_iPad(), ...

log-idevice-ssh-
interface.sh

SSH communication

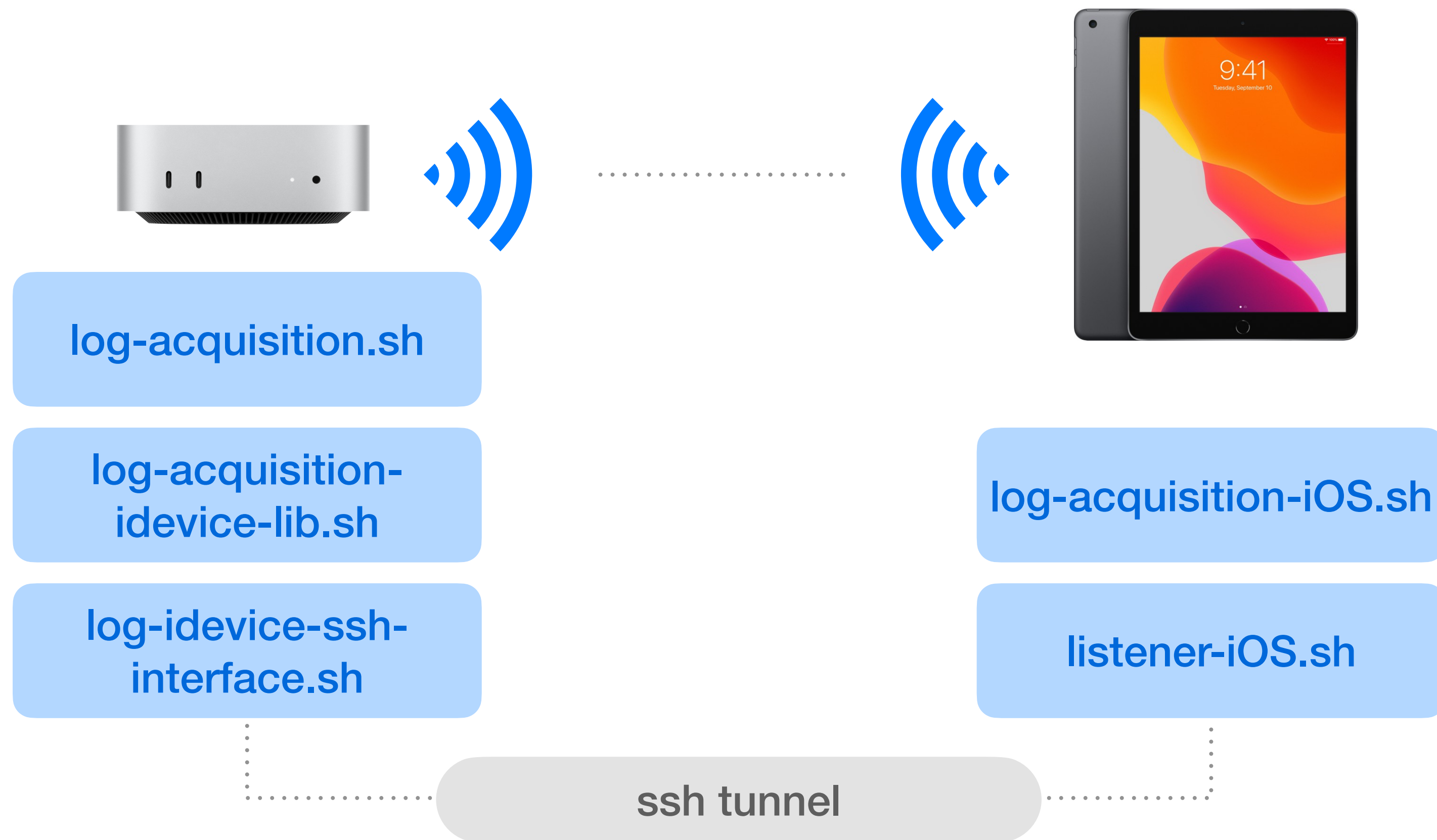
start_iproxy(), send_to_iPad(), ...

log-acquisition-iOS.sh

listener-iOS.sh

ssh tunnel





Process Management
`start_pre_session_commands(), ...`

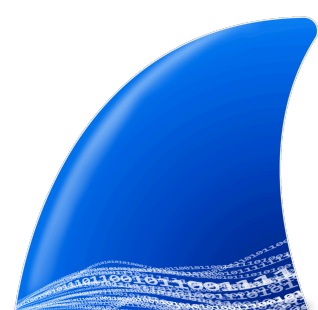
Command Injection
 Relay remote commands to upper layer



log-acquisition.sh

log-acquisition-
idevice-lib.sh

log-idevice-ssh-
interface.sh



tunnel



cc
tool



d
trace



k
trace



log-acquisition-iOS.sh

listener-iOS.sh

- 1 Connect iPad to Mac
- 2 Script starts captures on iPad and Mac (`tcpdump`, `trace` | `tshark`, `dtrace`, `ktrace`, `PacketLogger`)
- 3 Start Sidecar Display session
- ...
- 4 End Sidecar Display session
- 5 Script collects log information on iPad and Mac (`cctool` | `cctool`, `log`)
- 6 Script transfers captures to Mac
- 7 Run log aggregation

Challenges

Log Aggregation & Collection


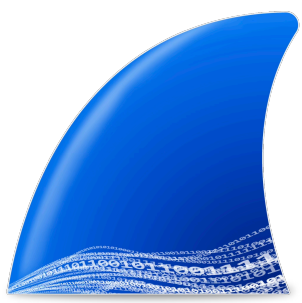




Availability of forensic sources (iOS)

Clock offsets

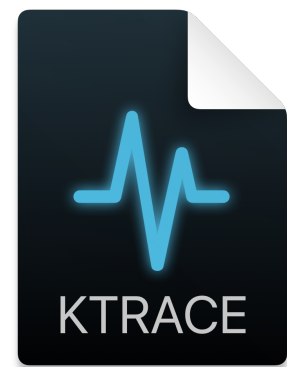
Collection on multiple devices

Aggregation of varying file formats

Noise filtering

						
macOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
iOS	✓ log	✓ tcpdump*	✓	✗	✓ from source*	✓ reimplementation*
File format	.json	.pcapng .pcap	.pklg	custom	.json	.txt .pcapng

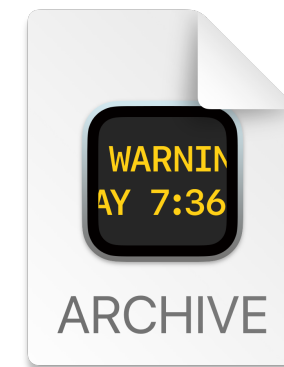
* Jailbreak required — our setup includes an iPad (7th generation)



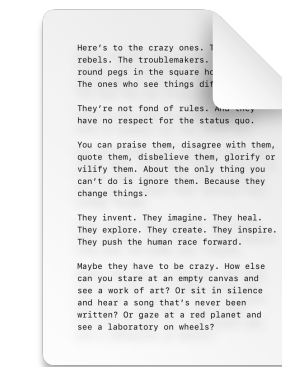
ktrace output



Packet Captures



Log Archive



Text Files & Custom Output

ktrace parser

pcapng parser

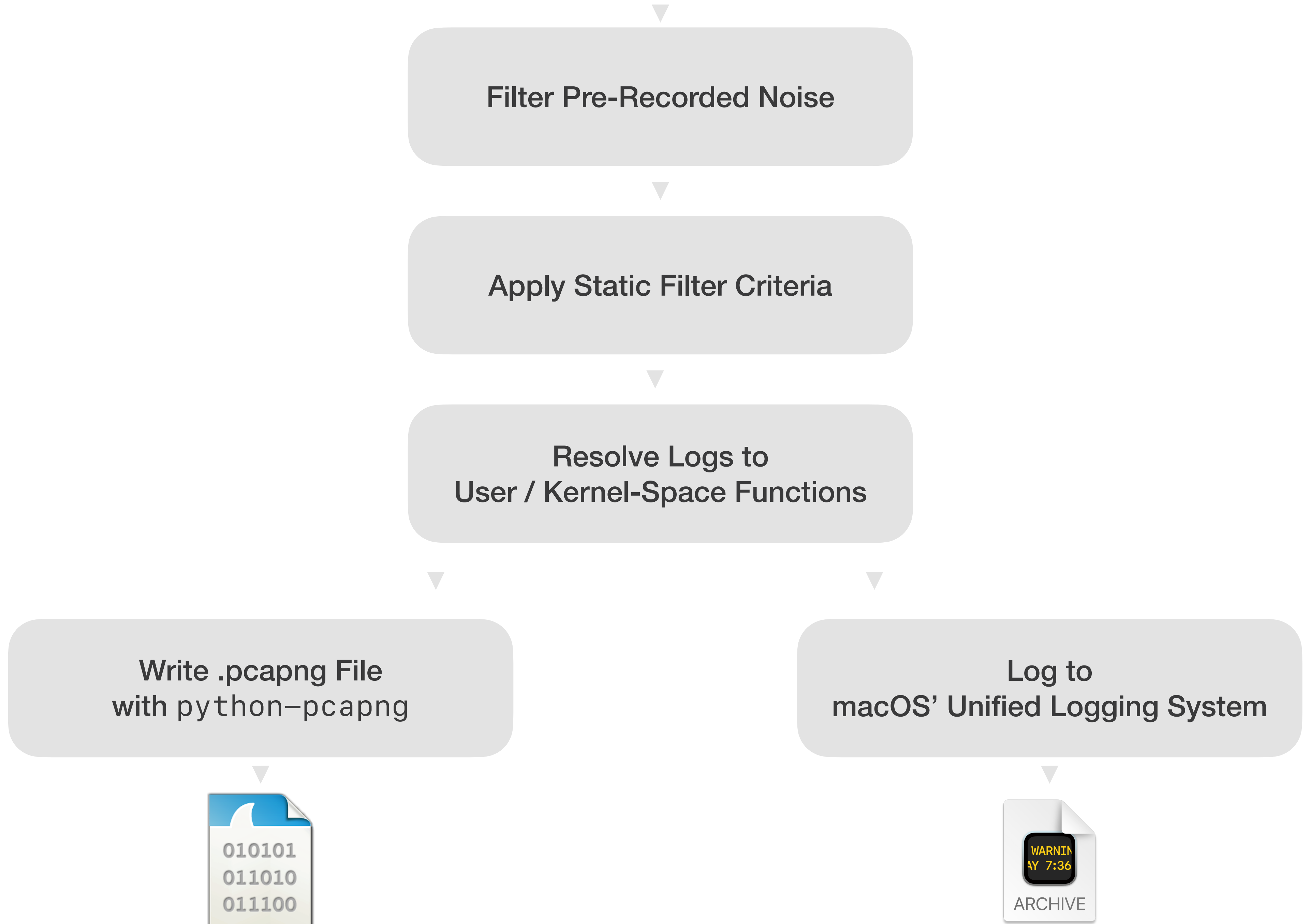
logarchive parser

dtrace parser

txt parser

Parse Input Files into Business Logic





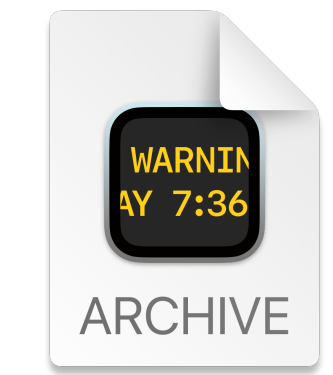
Filter Pre-Recorded Noise

Apply Static Filter Criteria

Resolve Logs to
User / Kernel-Space Functions

Write .pcapng File
with python-pcapng

Log to
macOS' Unified Logging System



Challenges

Log Aggregation & Collection

Availability of forensic sources (iOS)

Clock offsets

Collection on multiple devices

Aggregation of varying file formats

Noise filtering



boring traces
(regular OS stuff)

Record boring traces

boring traces
(regular OS stuff)

Record boring traces



Noise Reference Data

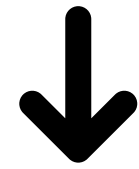


boring traces
(regular OS stuff)

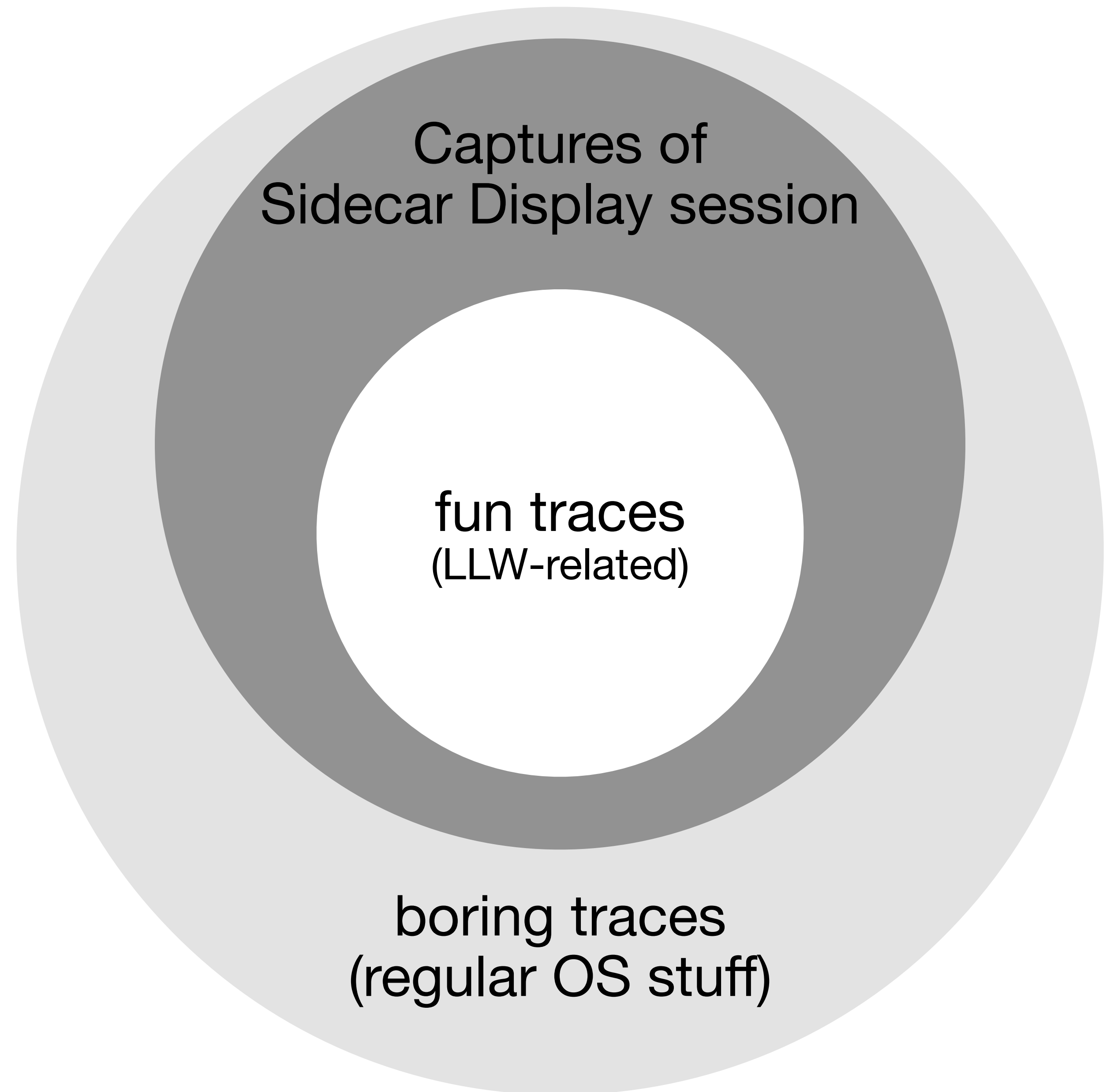
Record boring traces

boring traces
(regular OS stuff)

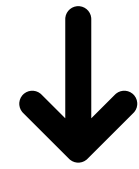
Record boring traces



Record Sidecar Display captures



Record boring traces



Record Sidecar Display captures

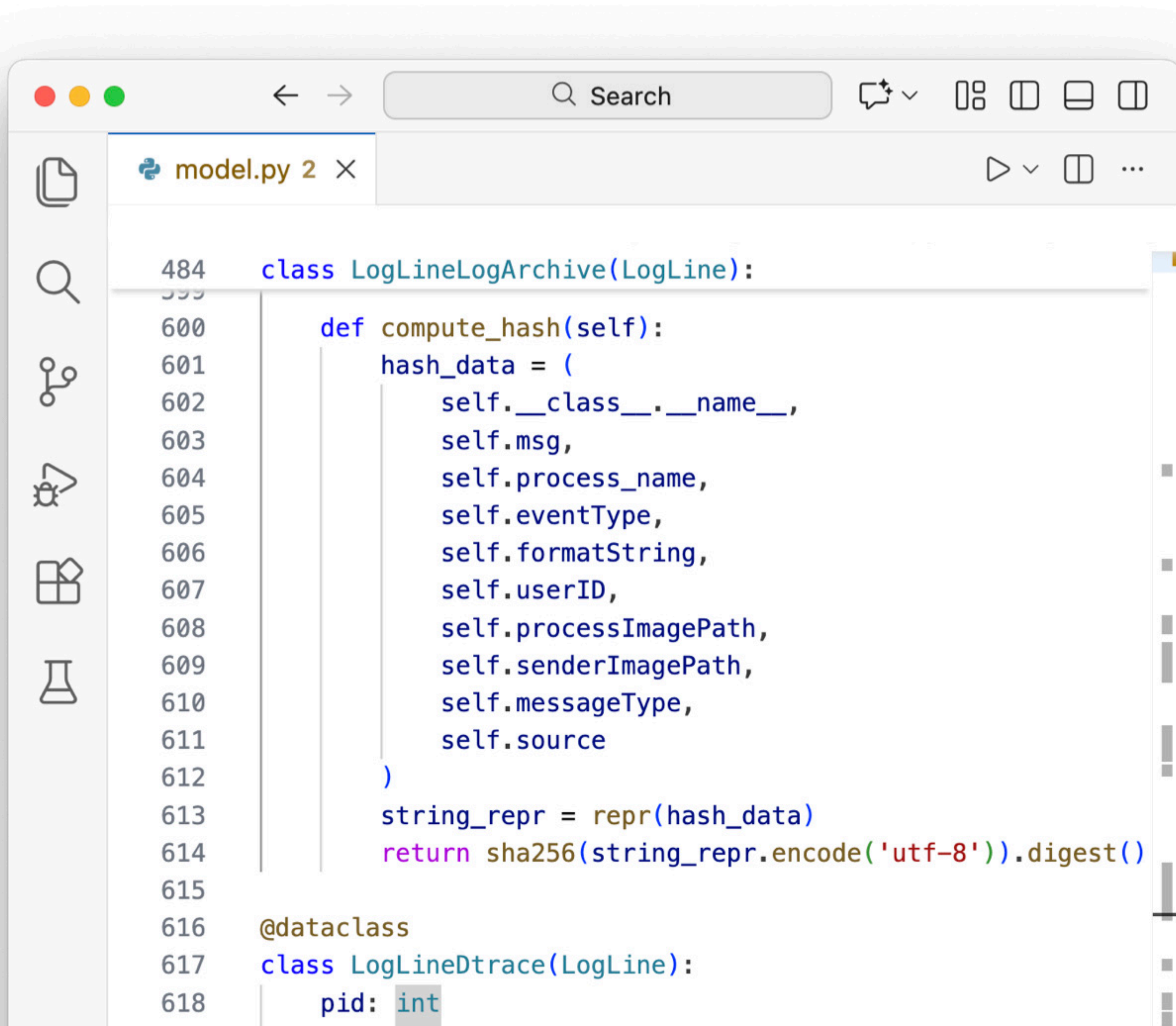


Keep the interesting ones

Captures of Sidecar Display session

fun traces
(LLW-related)

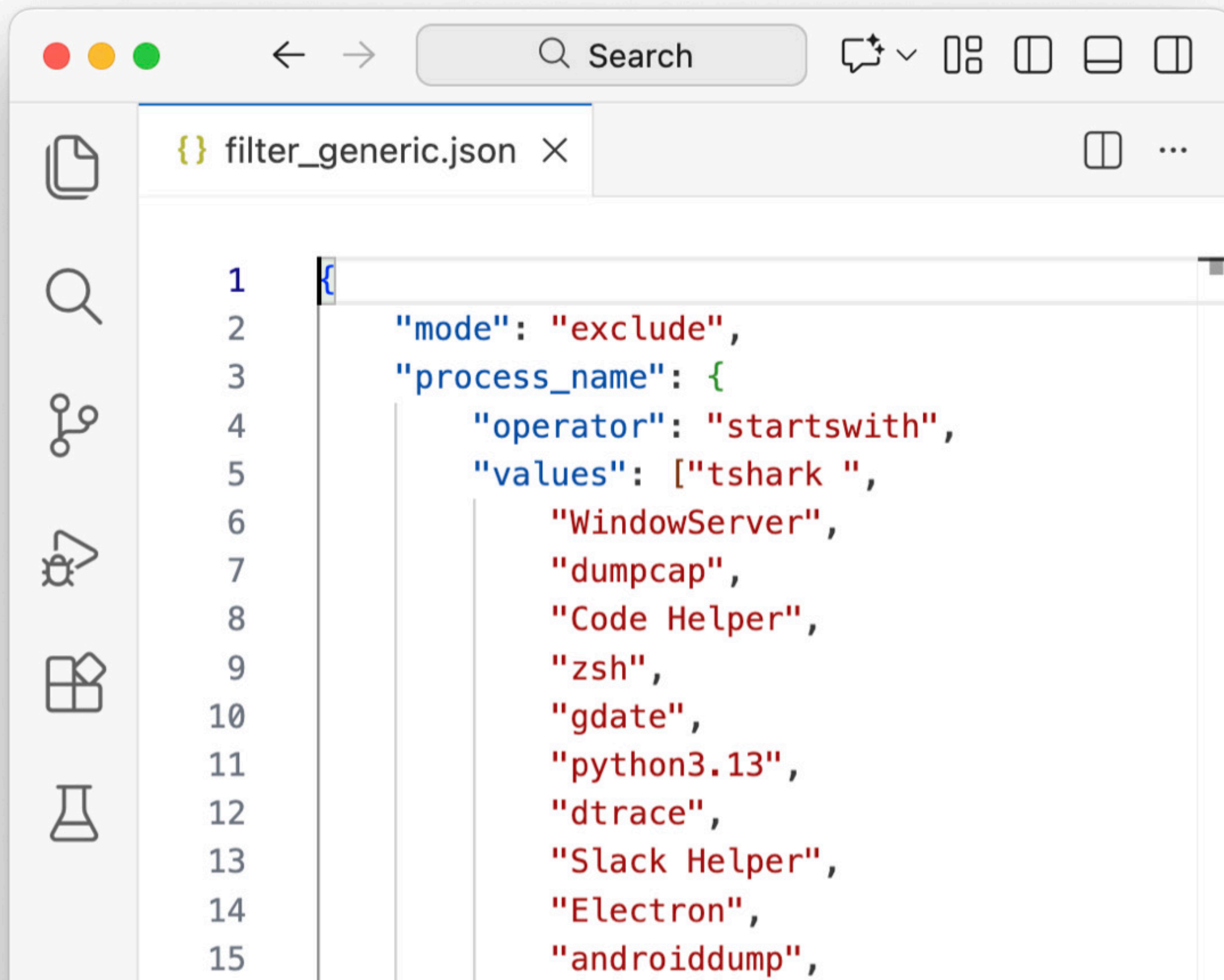
boring traces
(regular OS stuff)



The image shows a code editor window with a title bar containing window control buttons (red, yellow, green), navigation arrows, a search bar with the text "Search", and several utility icons. The editor has a tab labeled "model.py 2" and a sidebar on the left with icons for file, search, and other functions. The main area displays Python code with line numbers 484 through 618. The code defines a class `LogLineLogArchive` that inherits from `LogLine`. It includes a `compute_hash` method that constructs a tuple of instance attributes and returns a SHA256 hash of its string representation. Below this, a `@dataclass` decorator is used to define `LogLineDtrace`, which inherits from `LogLine` and has a `pid` attribute of type `int`.

```
484 class LogLineLogArchive(LogLine):
599
600     def compute_hash(self):
601         hash_data = (
602             self.__class__.__name__,
603             self.msg,
604             self.process_name,
605             self.eventType,
606             self.formatString,
607             self.userID,
608             self.processImagePath,
609             self.senderImagePath,
610             self.messageType,
611             self.source
612         )
613         string_repr = repr(hash_data)
614         return sha256(string_repr.encode('utf-8')).digest()
615
616 @dataclass
617 class LogLineDtrace(LogLine):
618     pid: int
```

Static Filters



```
1 {
2   "mode": "exclude",
3   "process_name": {
4     "operator": "startswith",
5     "values": ["tshark ",
6               "WindowServer",
7               "dumpcap",
8               "Code Helper",
9               "zsh",
10              "gdate",
11              "python3.13",
12              "dtrace",
13              "Slack Helper",
14              "Electron",
15              "androiddump",
```

Challenges

Log Aggregation & Collection

Availability of forensic sources (iOS)

Clock offsets

Collection on multiple devices

Aggregation of varying file formats

Noise filtering

Backtrace Reconstruction

Log Aggregator TraceBlender

Multi-Device Support



Multi-Device Log Aggregation & Collection

.pcap .json .pcapng

Support for 6+ Input Formats

custom output .pkg .txt

Clock Offset Correction

Log Collection Toolkit

Noise Filtering



ARCHIVE

Support for
logarchive
Output

Support for
pcapng
Output

010101
011010
011100

Extensible to More Tracing Tools

WARNIN
AY 7:36

Log Aggregator

Network Stack on macOS and iOS

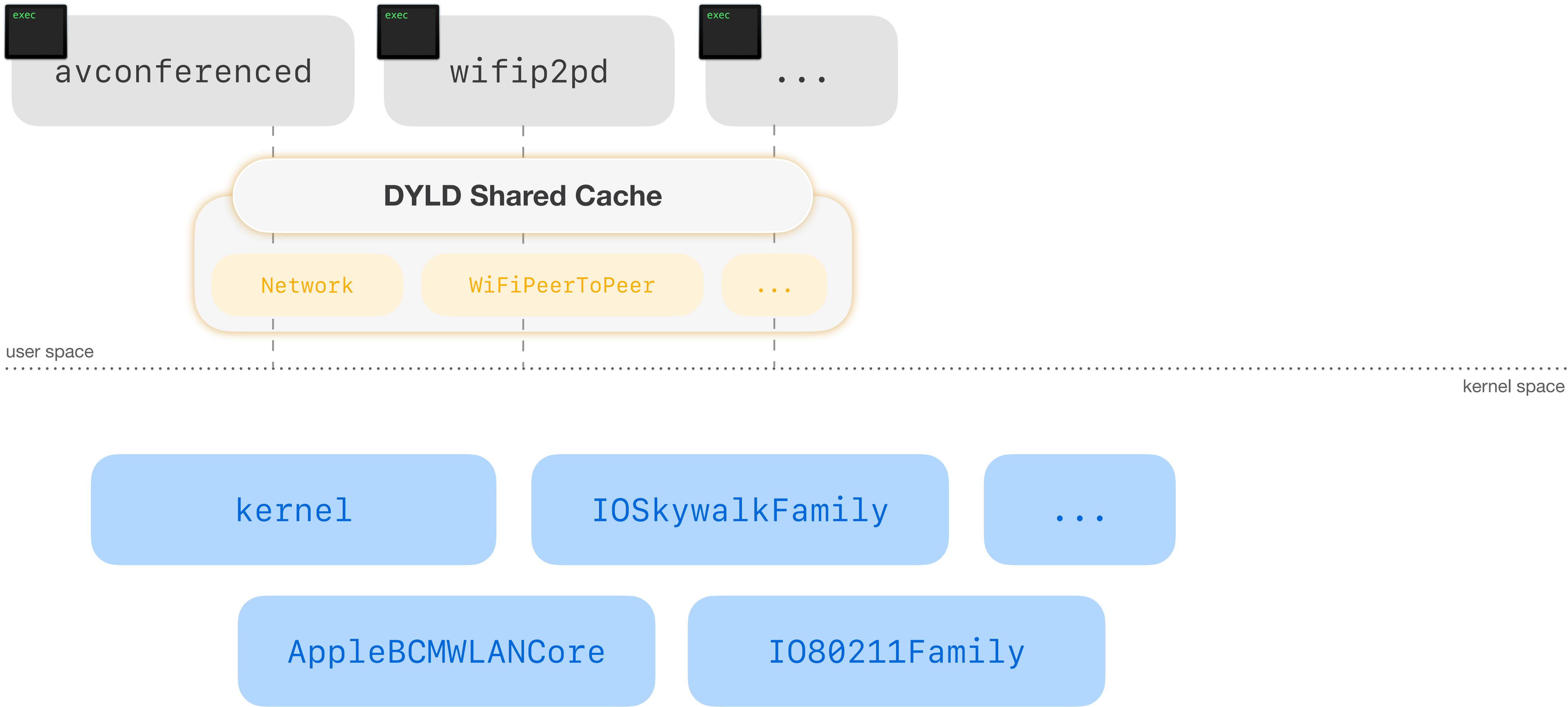
Low-Latency in LLW

Network Stack on macOS and iOS

System Components

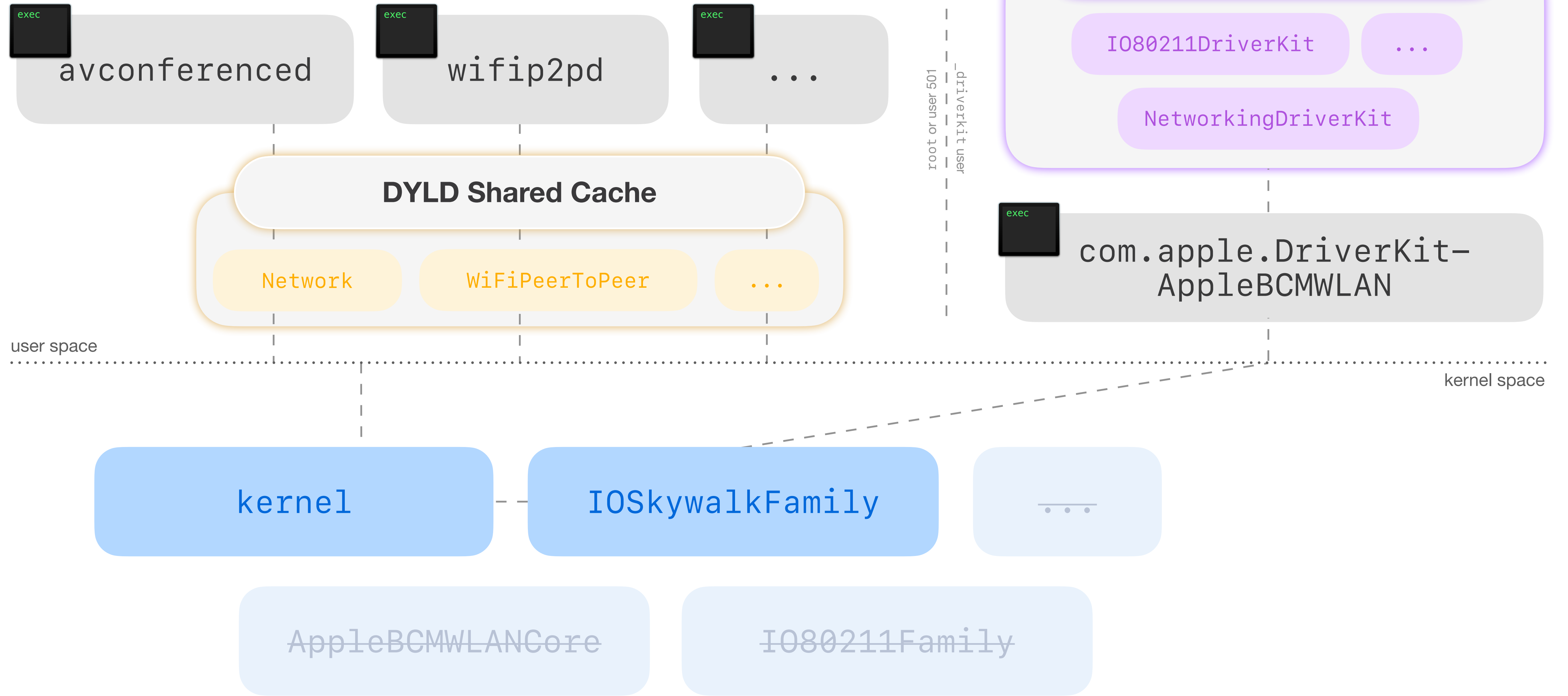
Interface Lifecycle Management

Tracing the Network Stack on macOS and iOS



* User space processes (left-hand side) were identified by Jan Röper [A] and Inga Dischinger [B]

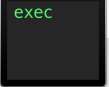
Tracing the Network Stack on macOS and iOS



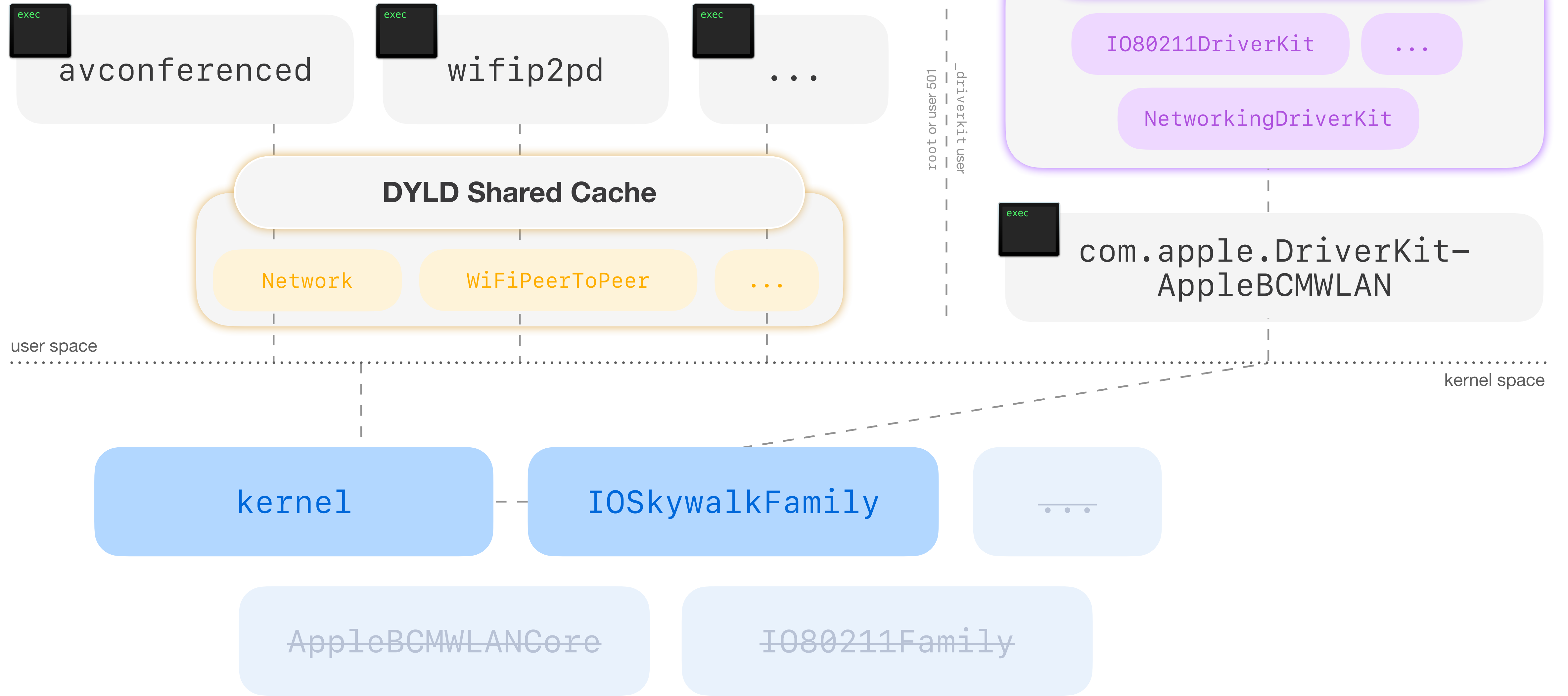
* User space processes (left-hand side) were identified by Jan Röper [A] and Inga Dischinger [B]

Frameworks

DriverKit

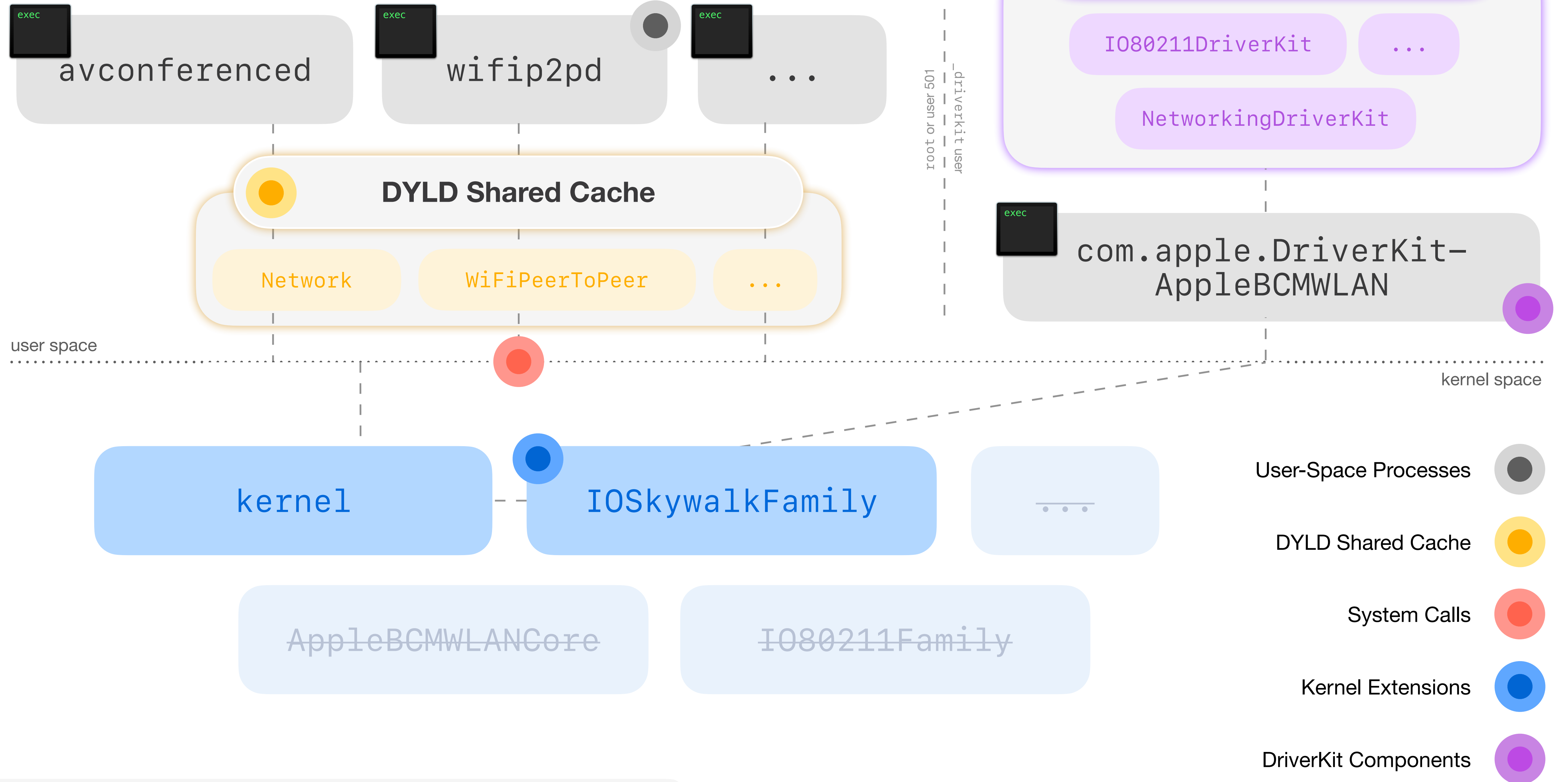
 DriverKit-AppleBCM WLAN	Manages interfaces, queues, configures wireless chips; substitutes AppleBCM WLANCore
DriverKit	Public Framework providing foundational concepts for interacting with drivers
NetworkingDriverKit	Public Framework for interacting with drivers related to networking
I080211DriverKit	Handles IEEE 802.11 concepts and states; substitutes I080211Family
core80211DriverKit	Empty (so far?)
BroadcomWLANDriverKit	Empty (so far?)
...	

Tracing the Network Stack on macOS and iOS



* User space processes (left-hand side) were identified by Jan Röper [A] and Inga Dischinger [B]

Tracing the Network Stack on macOS and iOS



* User space processes (left-hand side) were identified by Jan Röper [A] and Inga Dischinger [B]

Network Stack on macOS and iOS

System Components

Interface Lifecycle Management

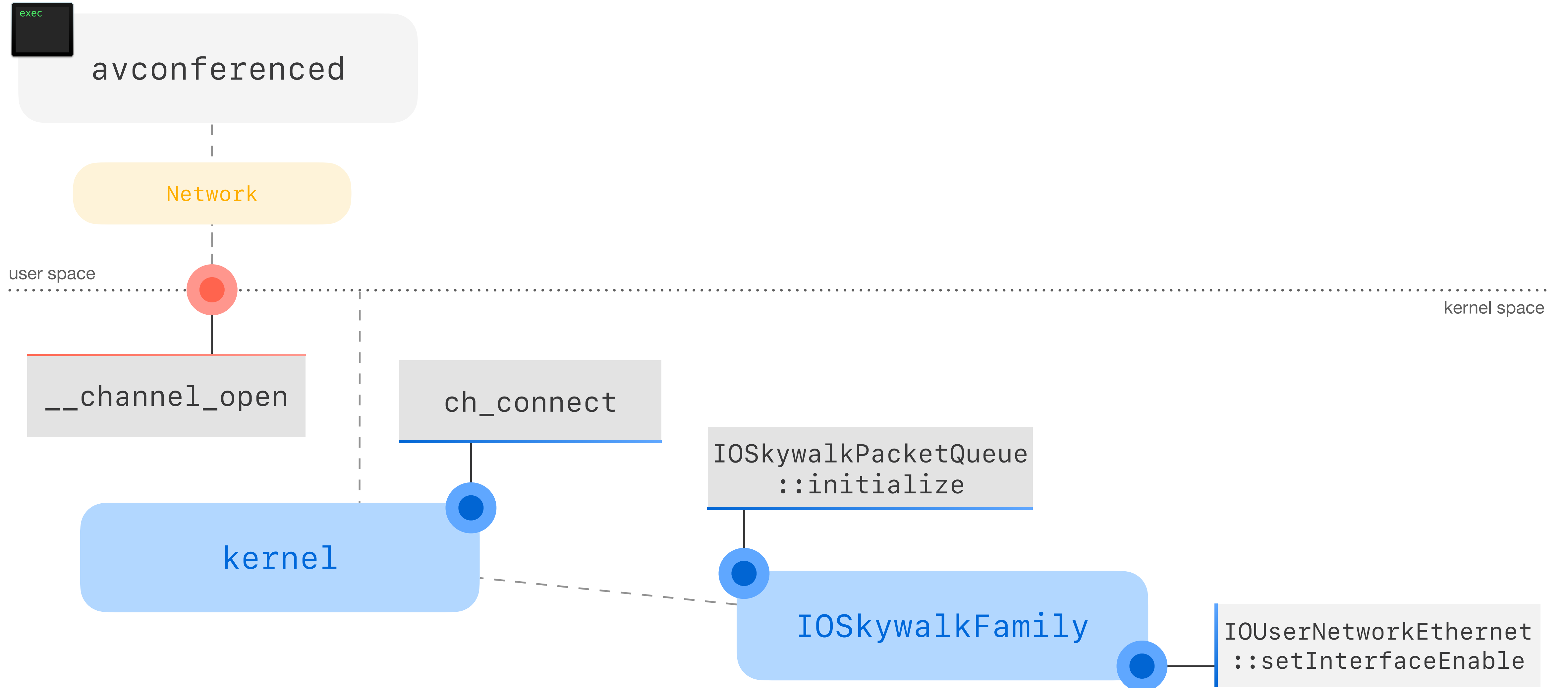
Enabling 11w0



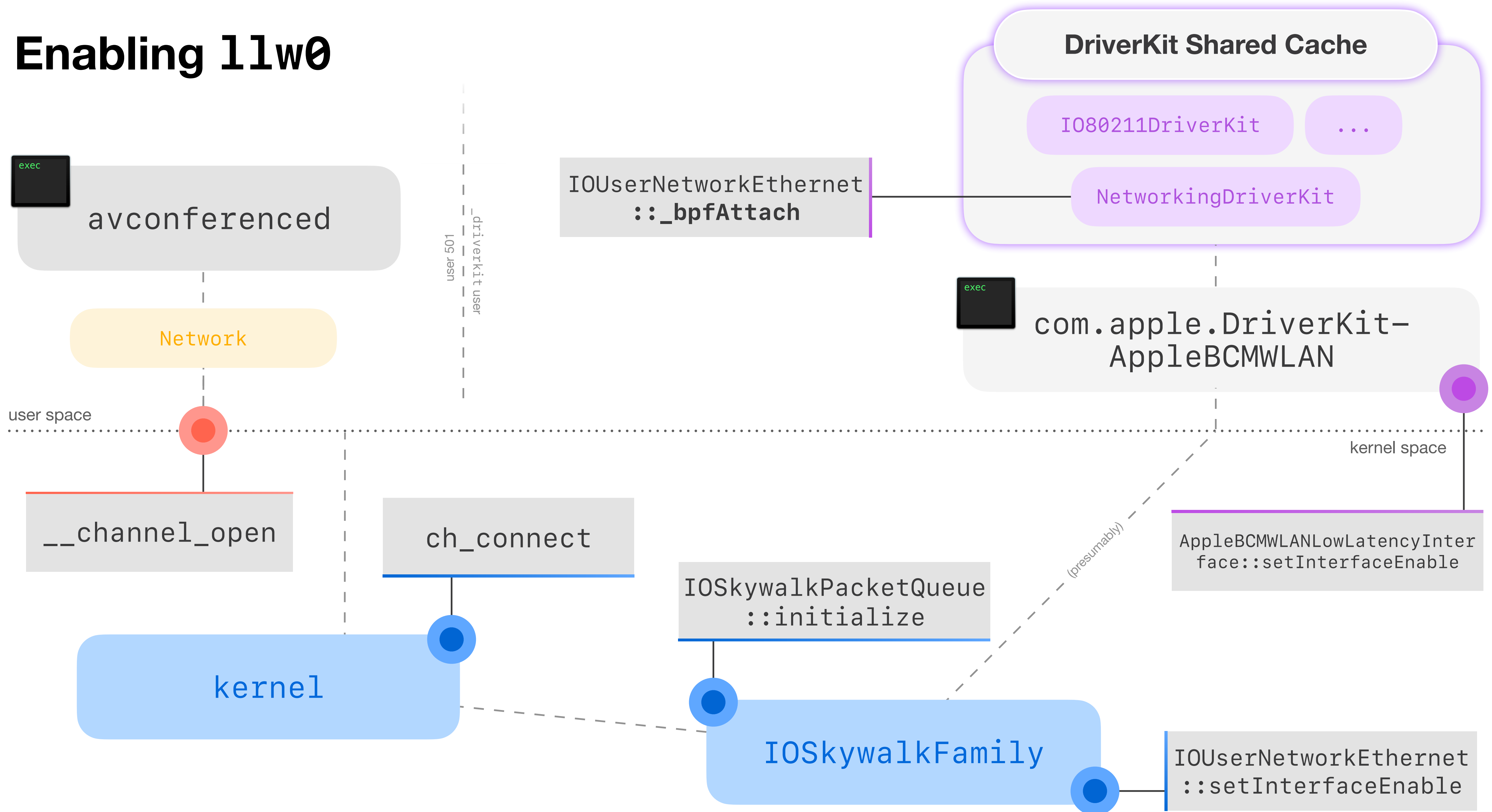
Enabling 11w0



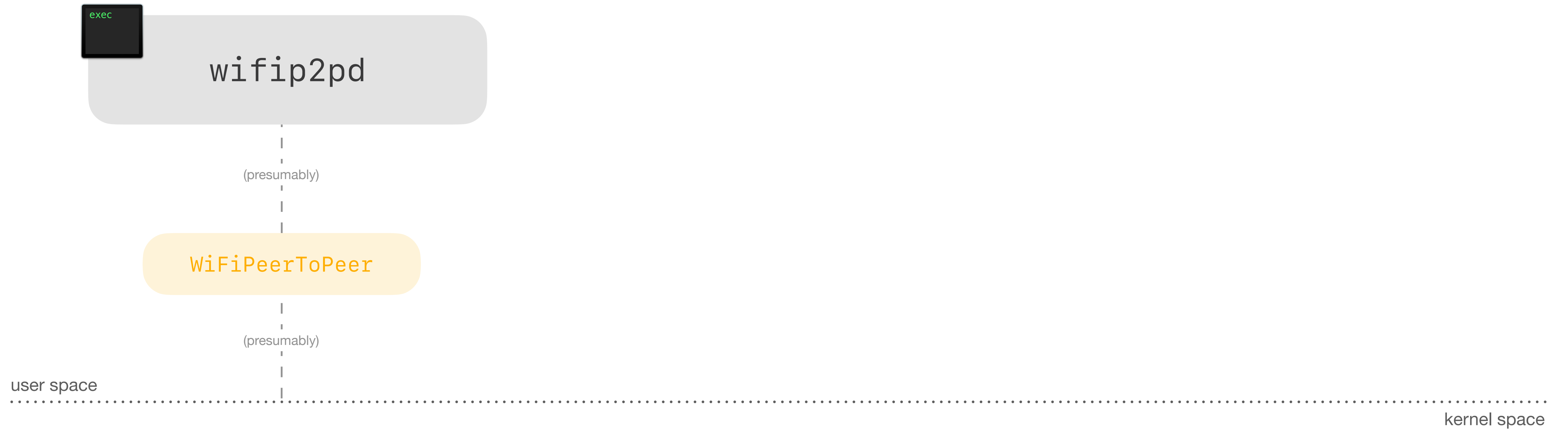
Enabling 11w0



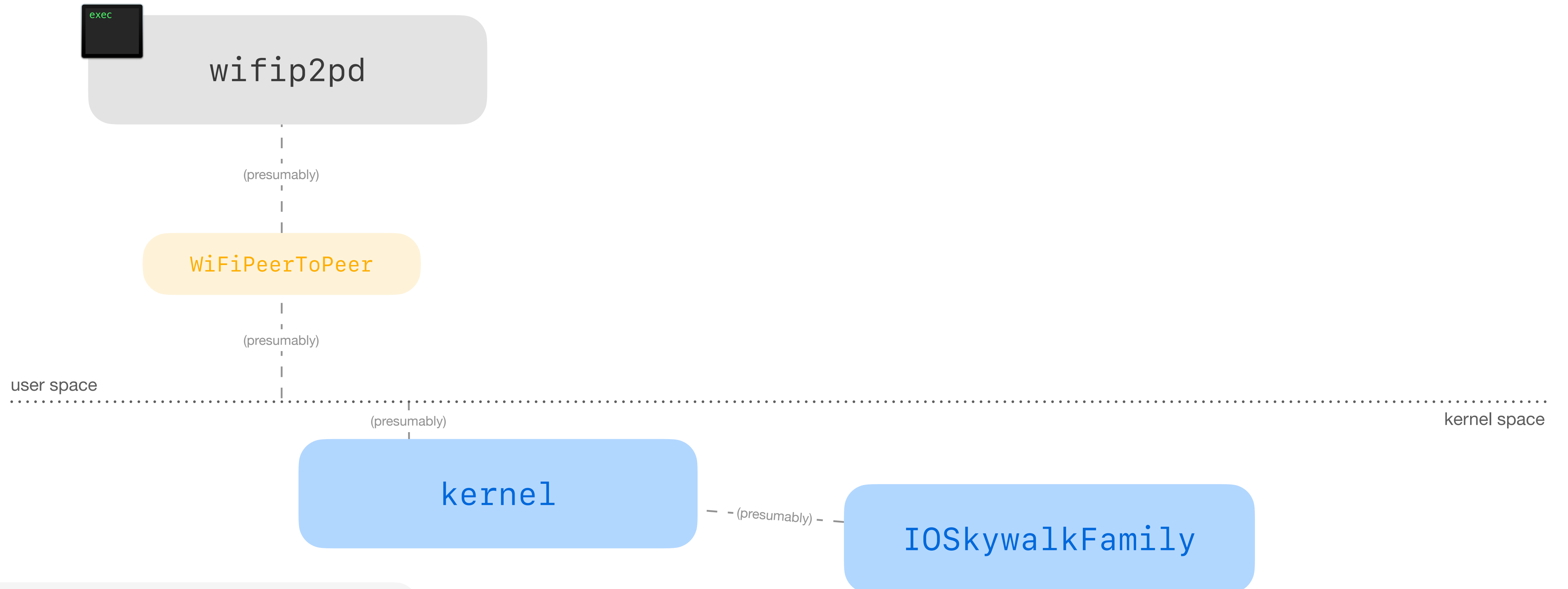
Enabling 11w0



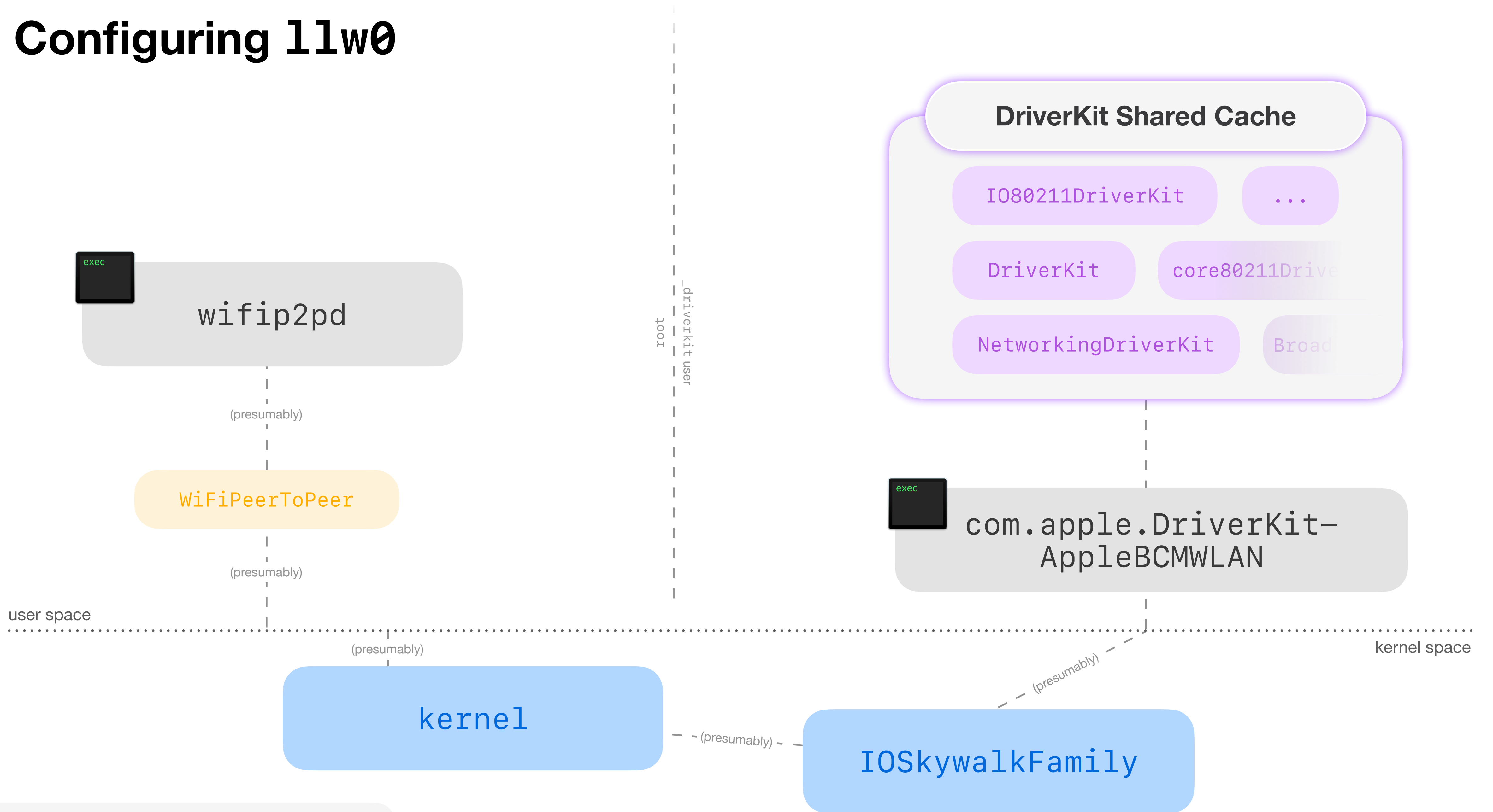
Configuring 11w0



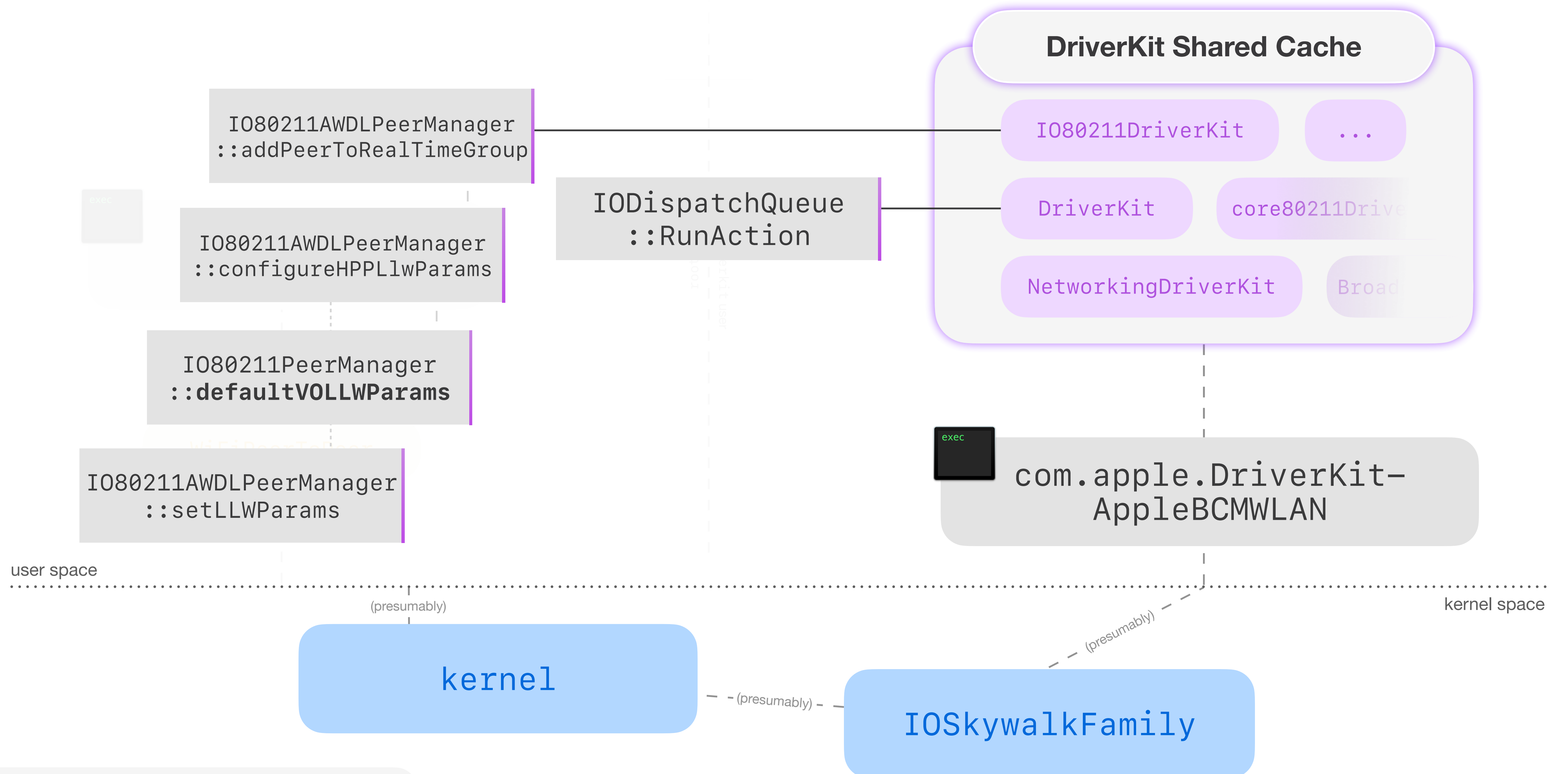
Configuring 11w0



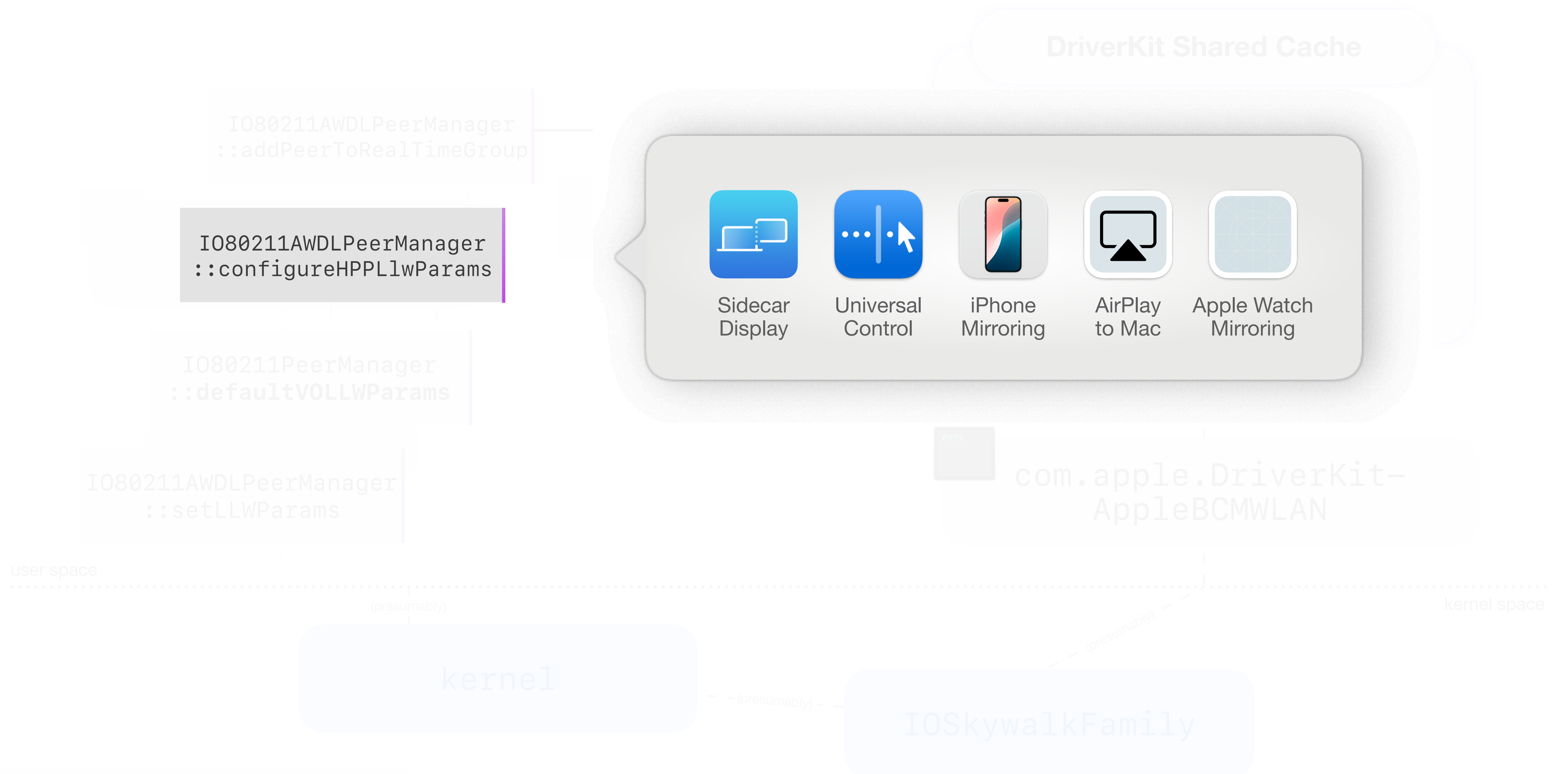
Configuring 11w0



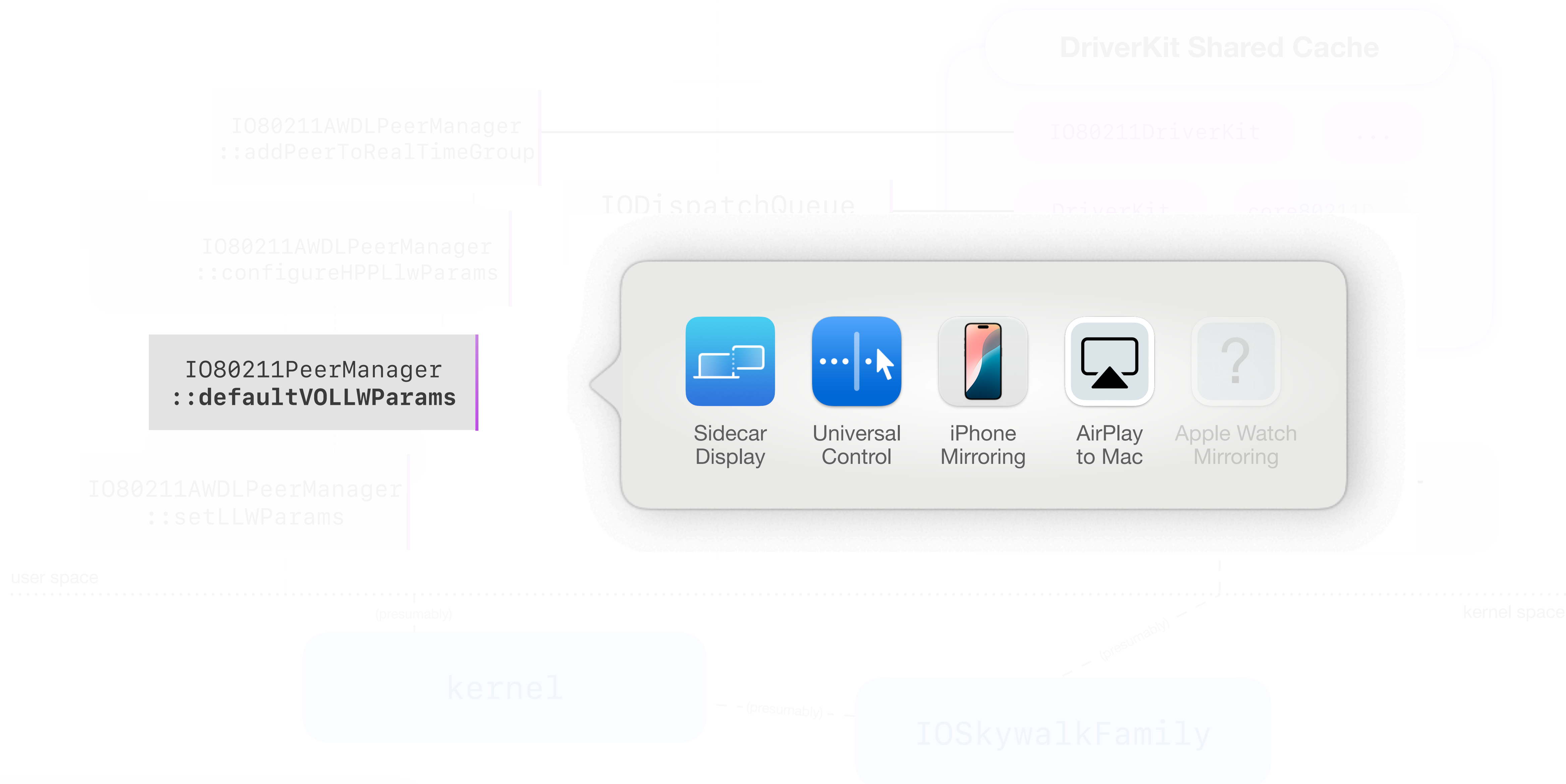
Configuring 11w0



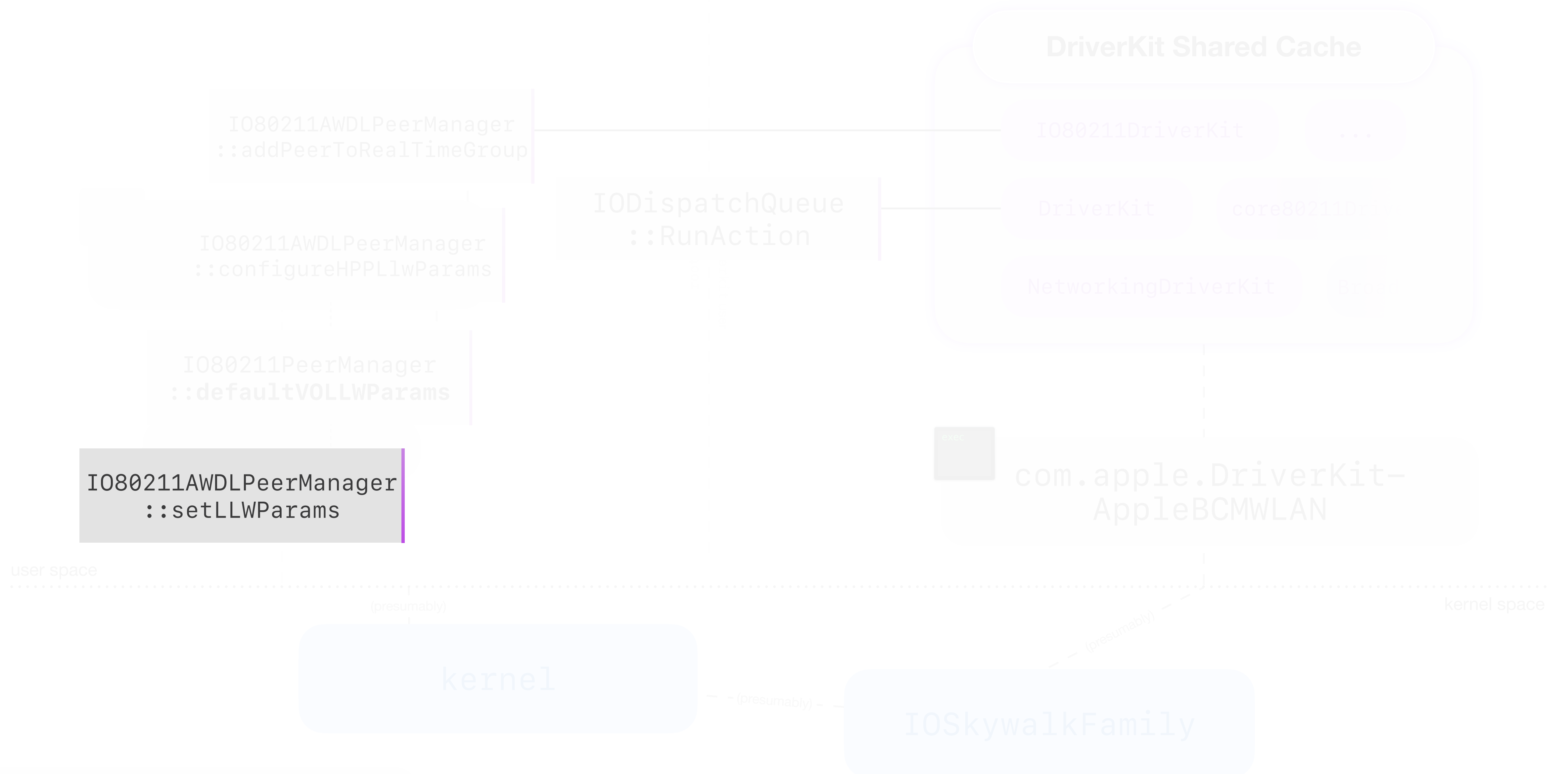
Configuring 11w0



Configuring 11w0



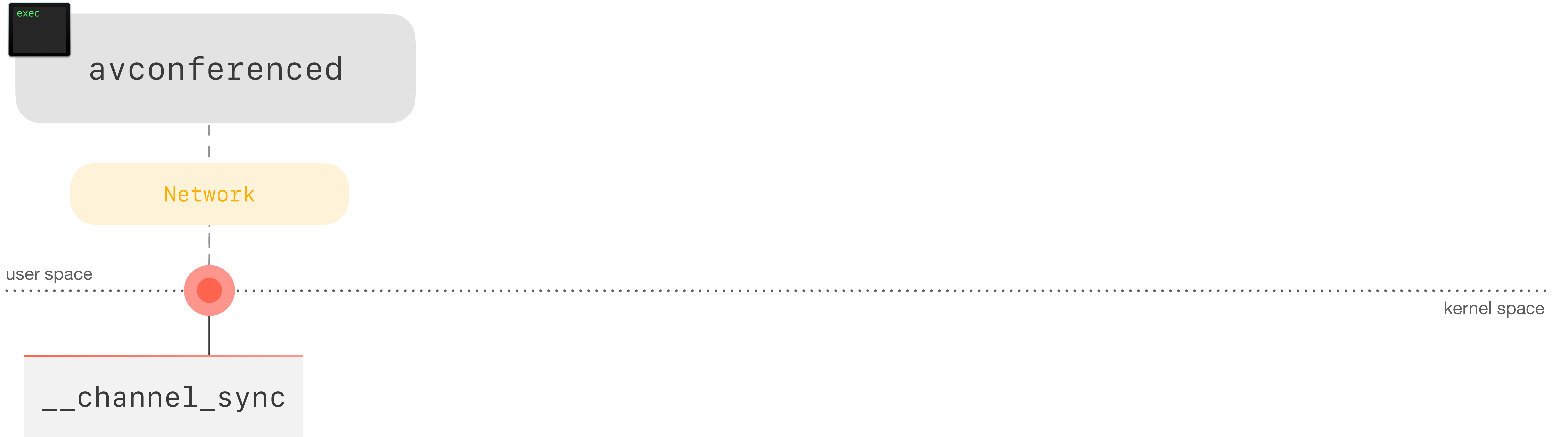
Configuring 11w0



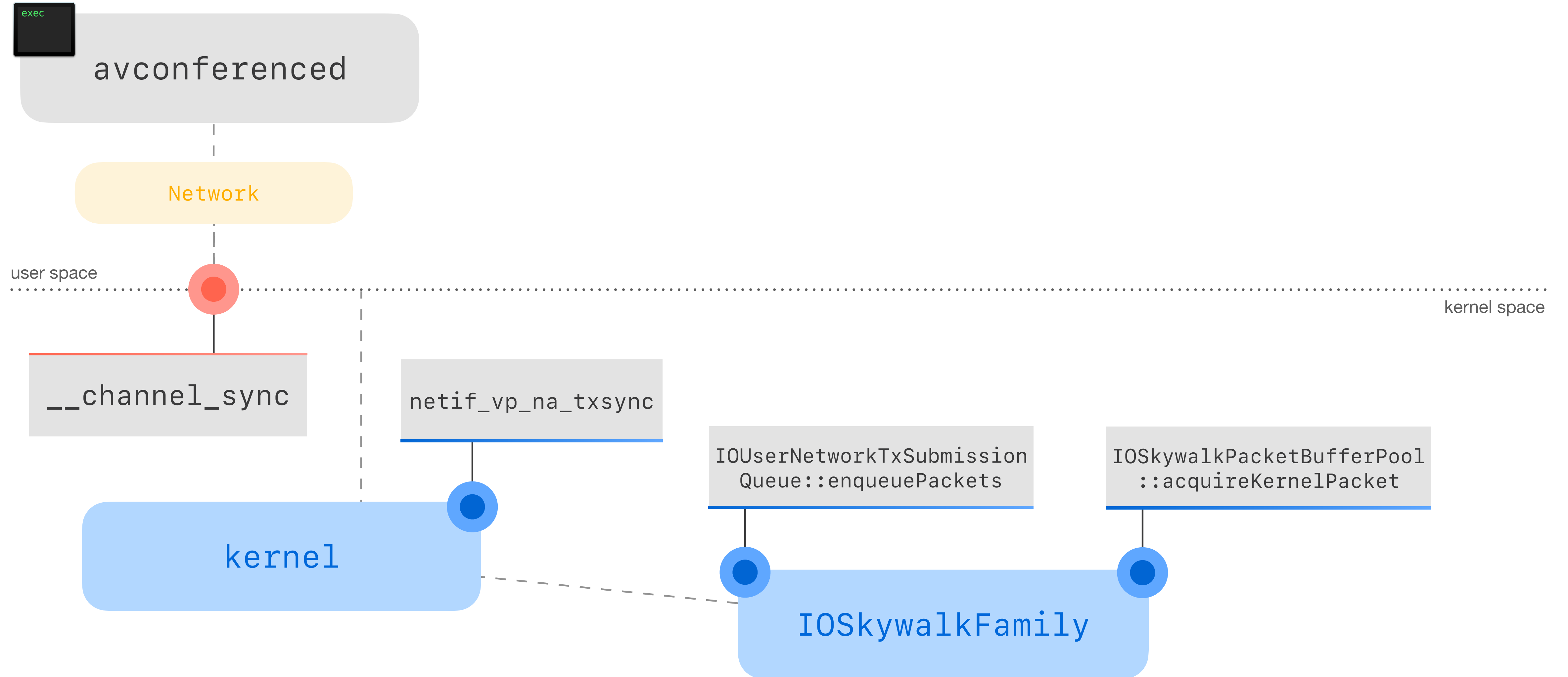
Transmitting via 11w0



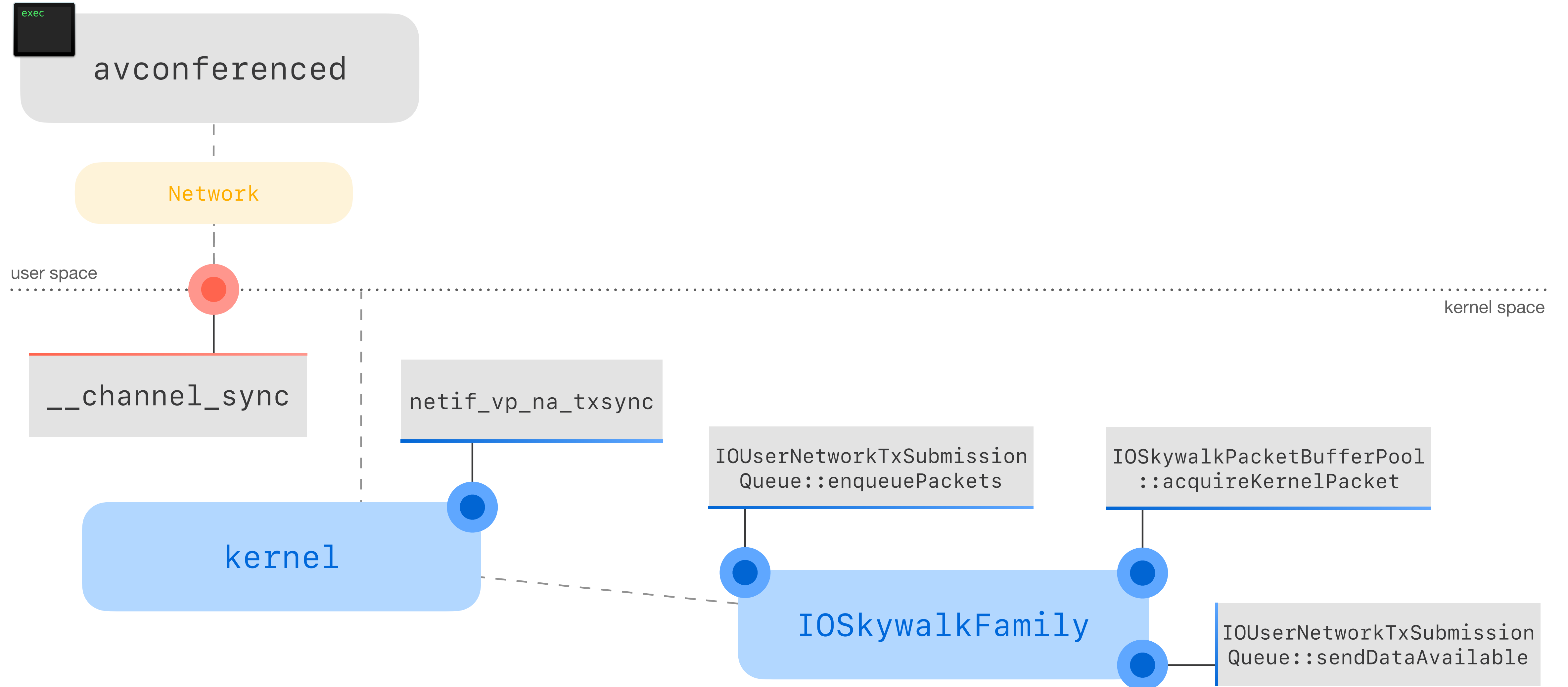
Transmitting via 11w0



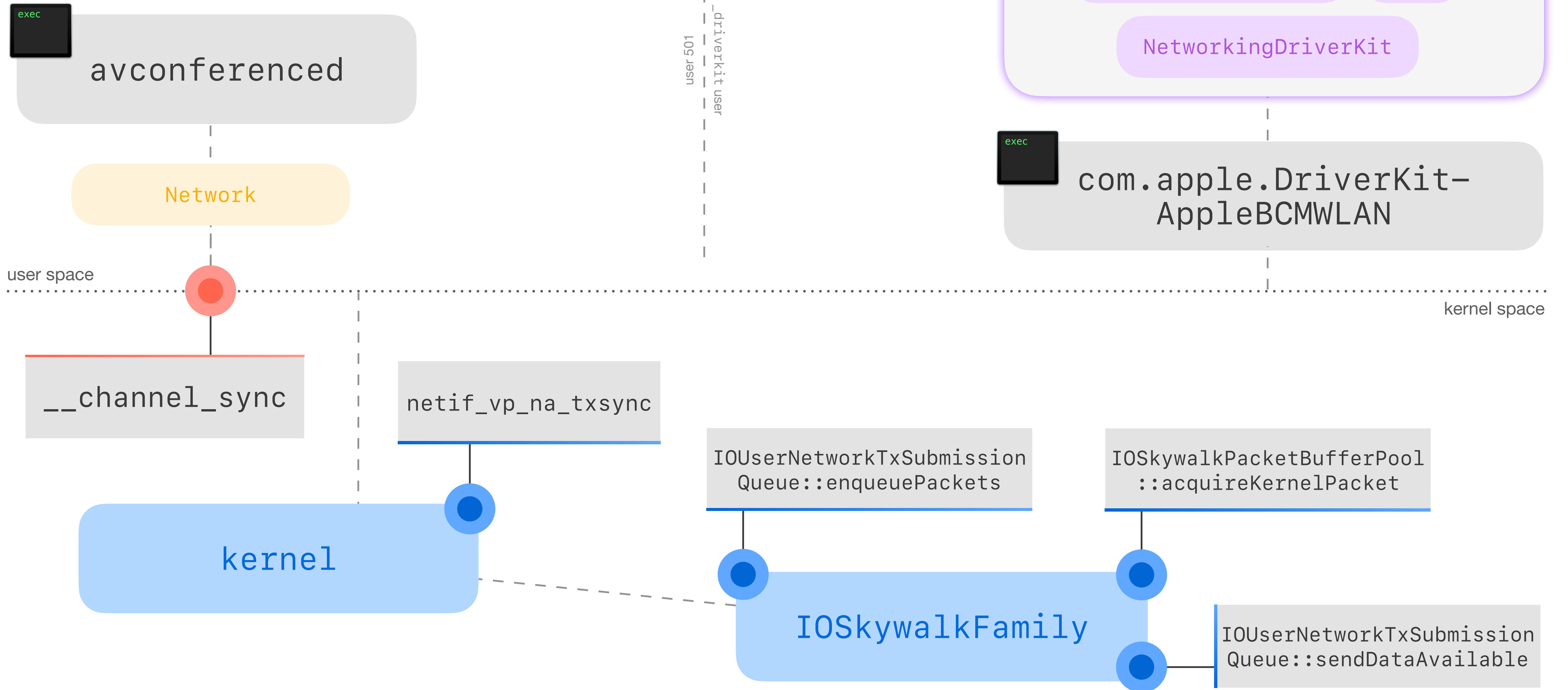
Transmitting via 11w0



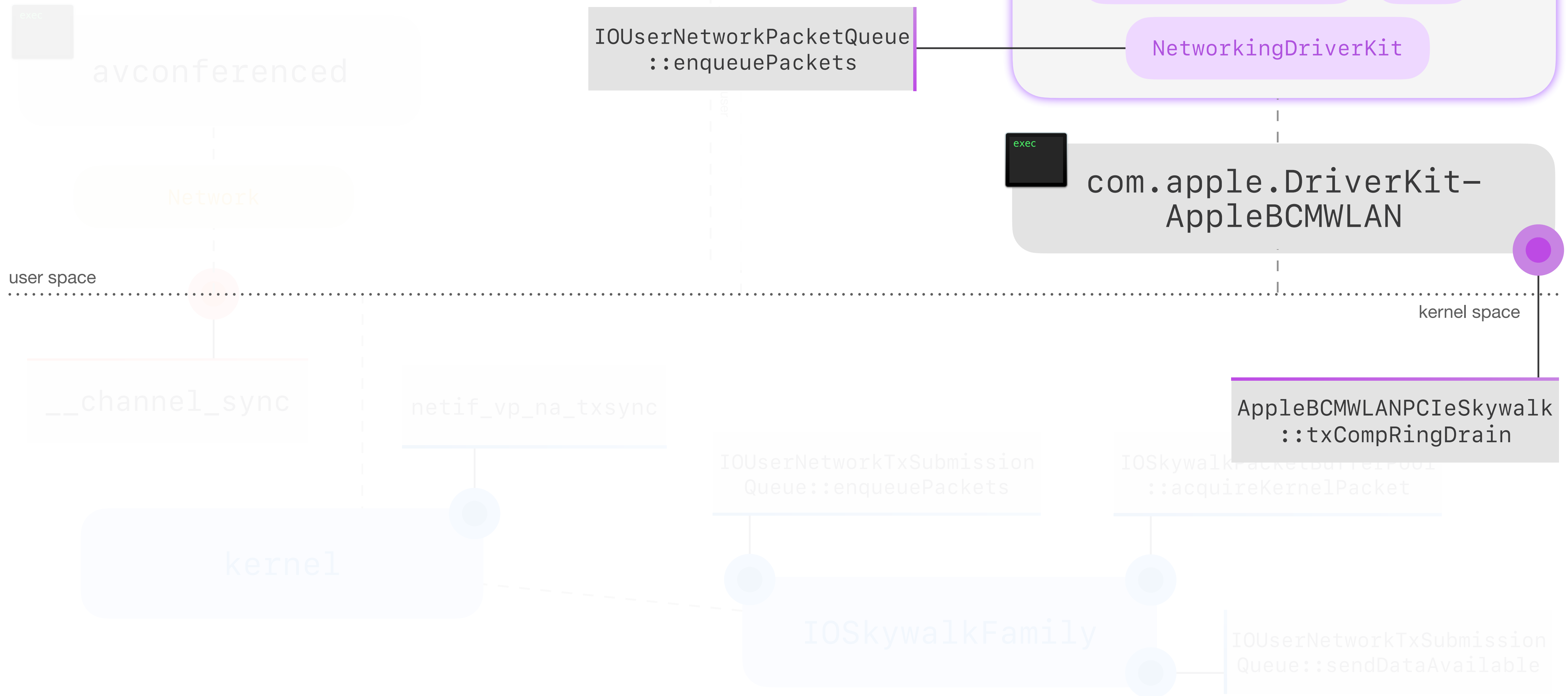
Transmitting via 11w0



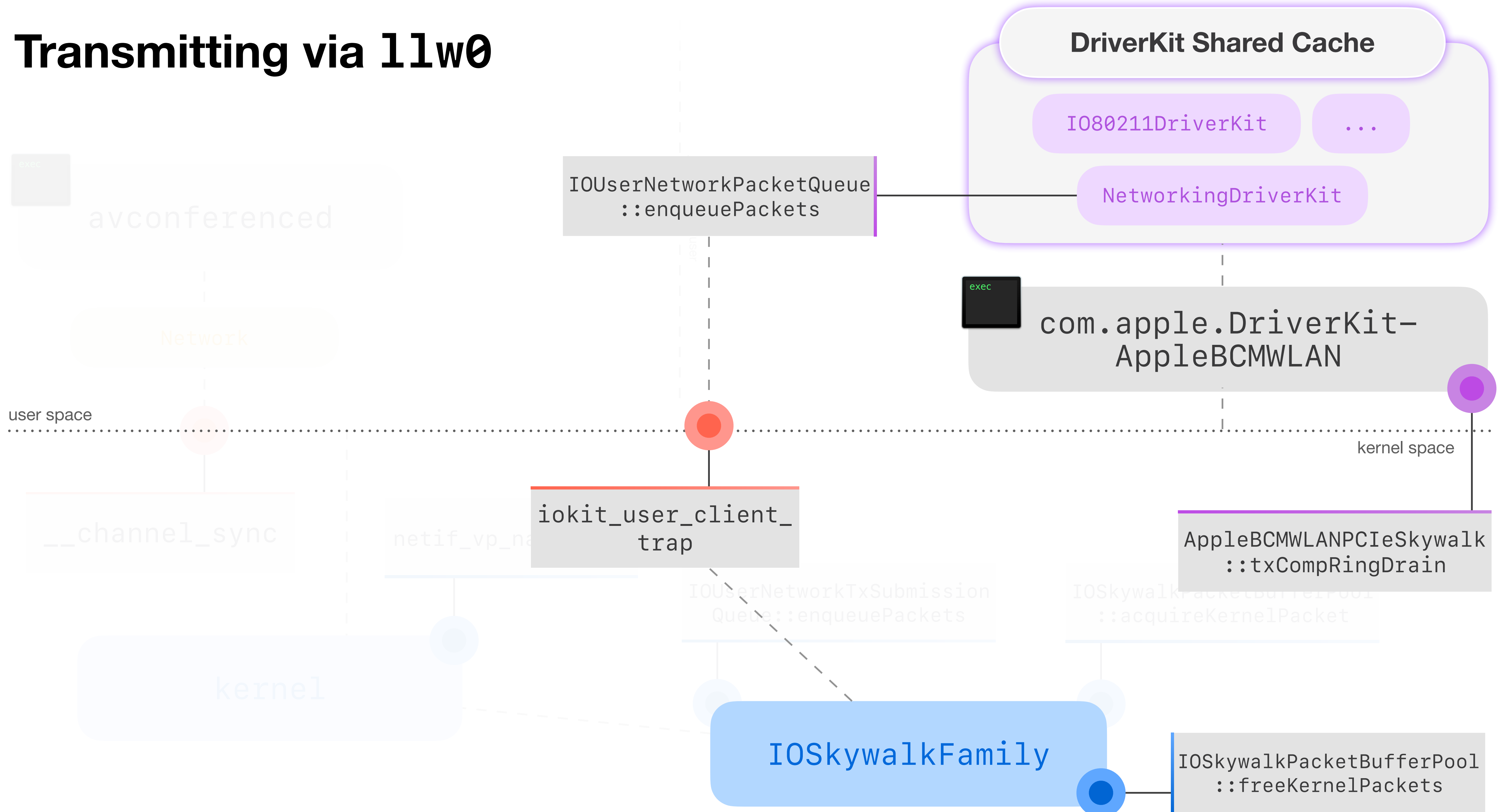
Transmitting via 11w0



Transmitting via 11w0



Transmitting via 11w0



DYLD Shared Cache

Network

WiFiPeerToPeer

exec

avconferenced

exec

wifip2pd

DriverExtension

exec

com.apple.DriverKit-AppleBCM WLAN

Berkley Packet Filter

User Packet Pool

System Components Involved in Data Transmission with Low-Latency WiFi

- User-Space Processes
- DYLD Shared Cache
- System Calls
- DriverKit Components
- Kernel Extensions

__channel_open

__channel_sync

NVMe

Completion Queues | Submission Queues
in transmit and receive direction

kernel

IOSkywalk Family

DriverKit Shared Cache

I080211DriverKit

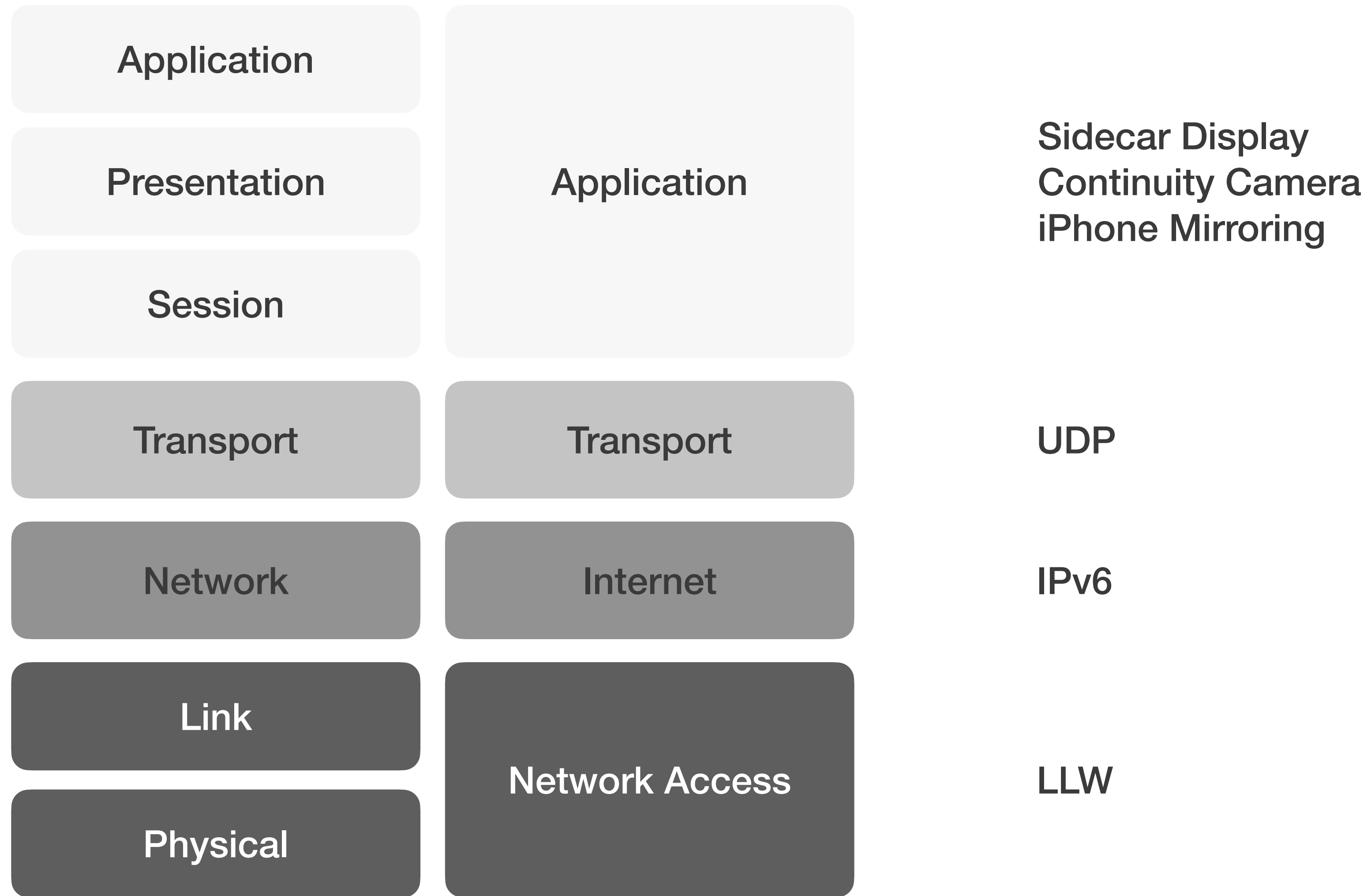
...

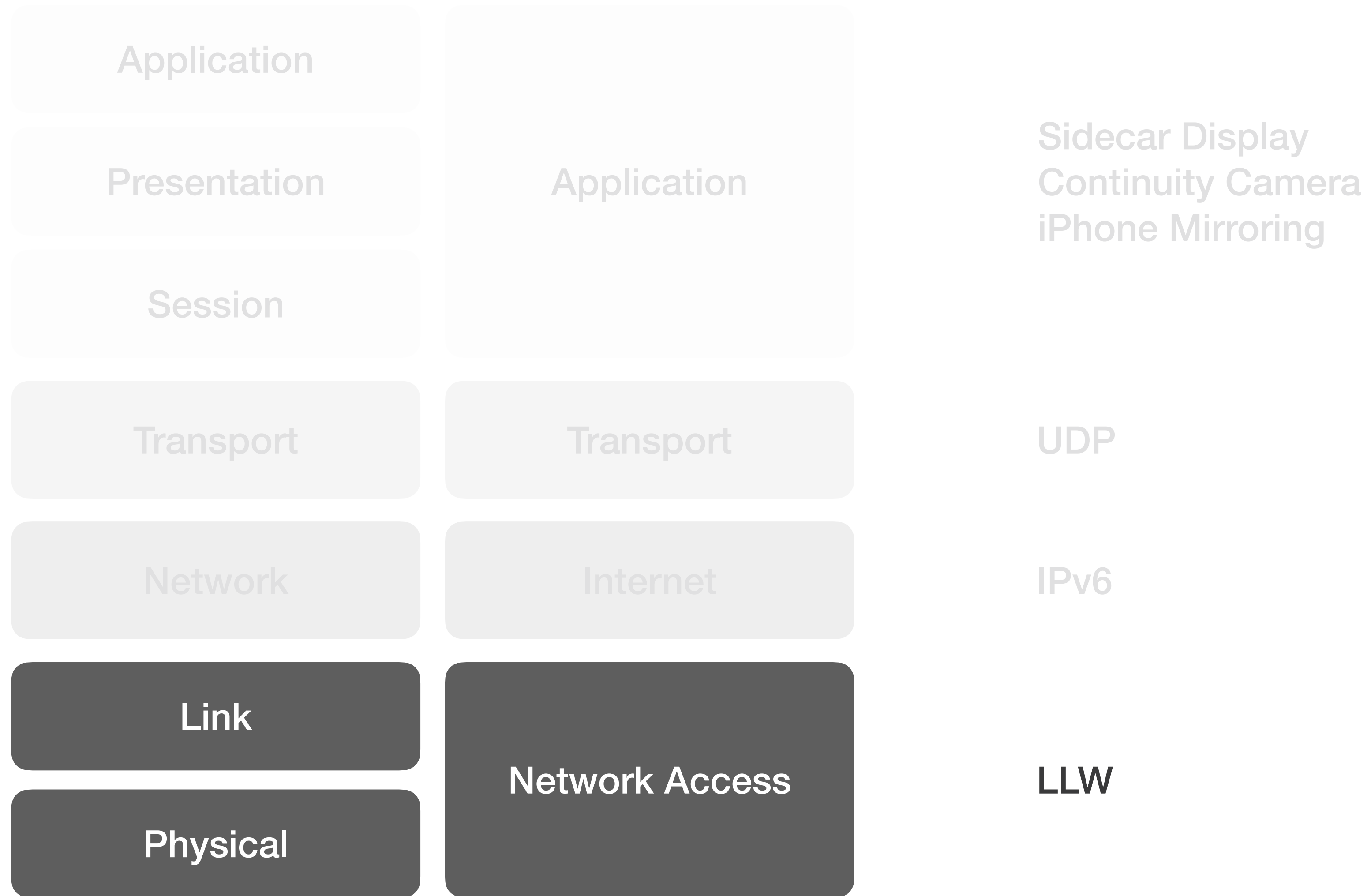
NetworkingDriverKit

Log Aggregator

Network Stack on macOS and iOS

Low-Latency in LLW





Low-Latency in LLW

IEEE 802.11e/n/ac Details

Hardware Capabilities

IEEE 802.11e

Quality of Service

Enhanced **Distributed Channel Access**
Access Categories
Arbitration **Inter-Frame Spacing**
Contention Window (max, min)
Transmission Opportunity (**TXOP**)
Block Acknowledgement

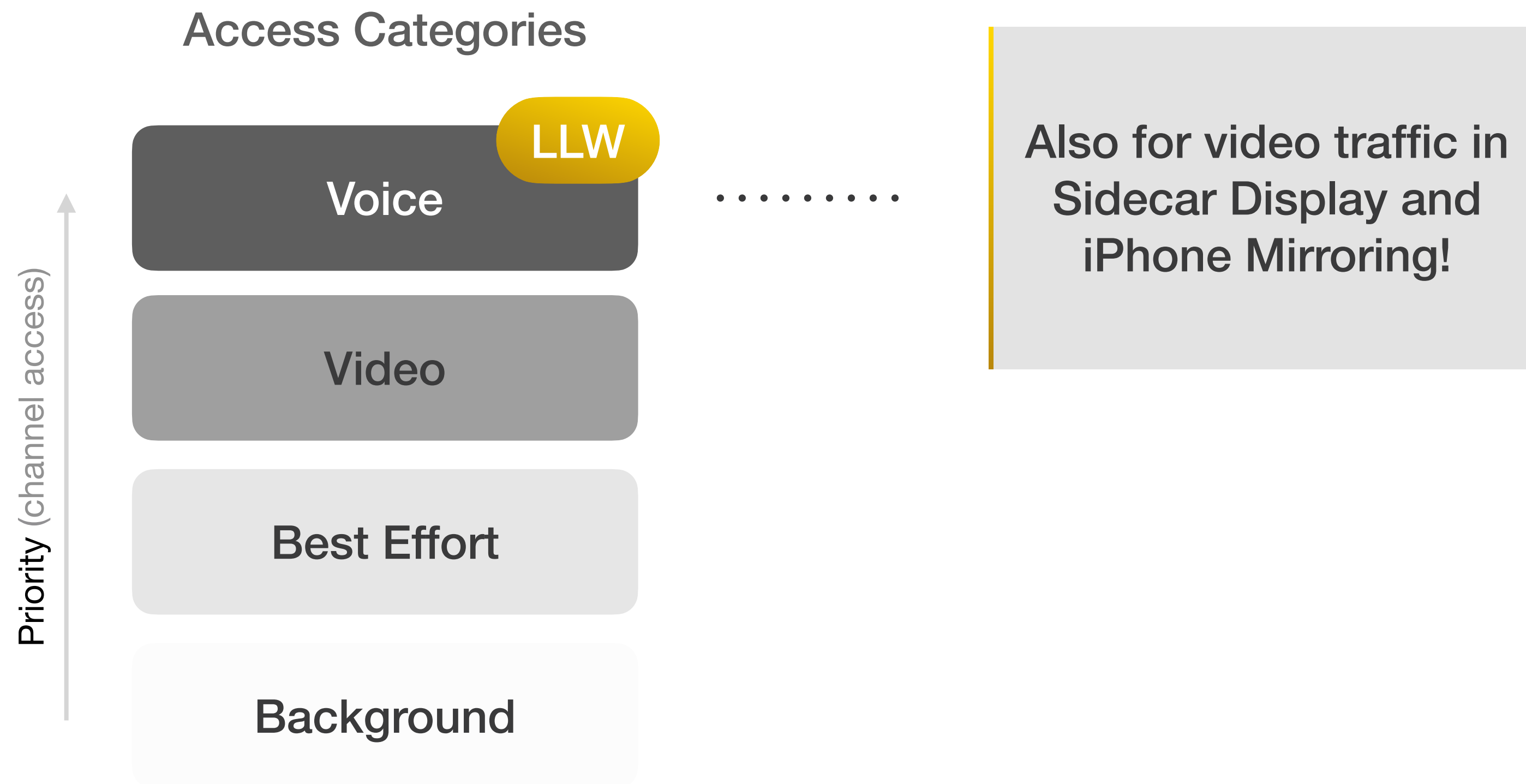
IEEE 802.11n

High Throughput

Aggregated MSDU
Aggregated MPDU
Reverse Direction Grant

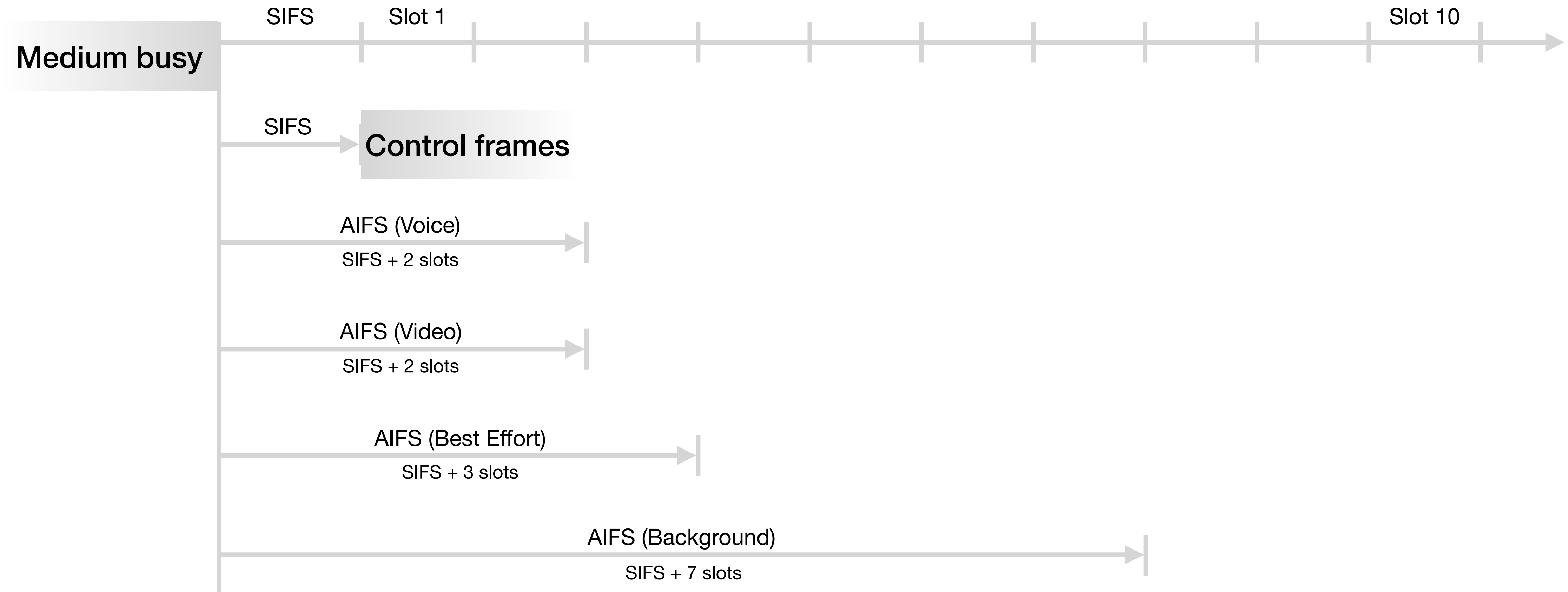
Enhanced Distributed Channel Access

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



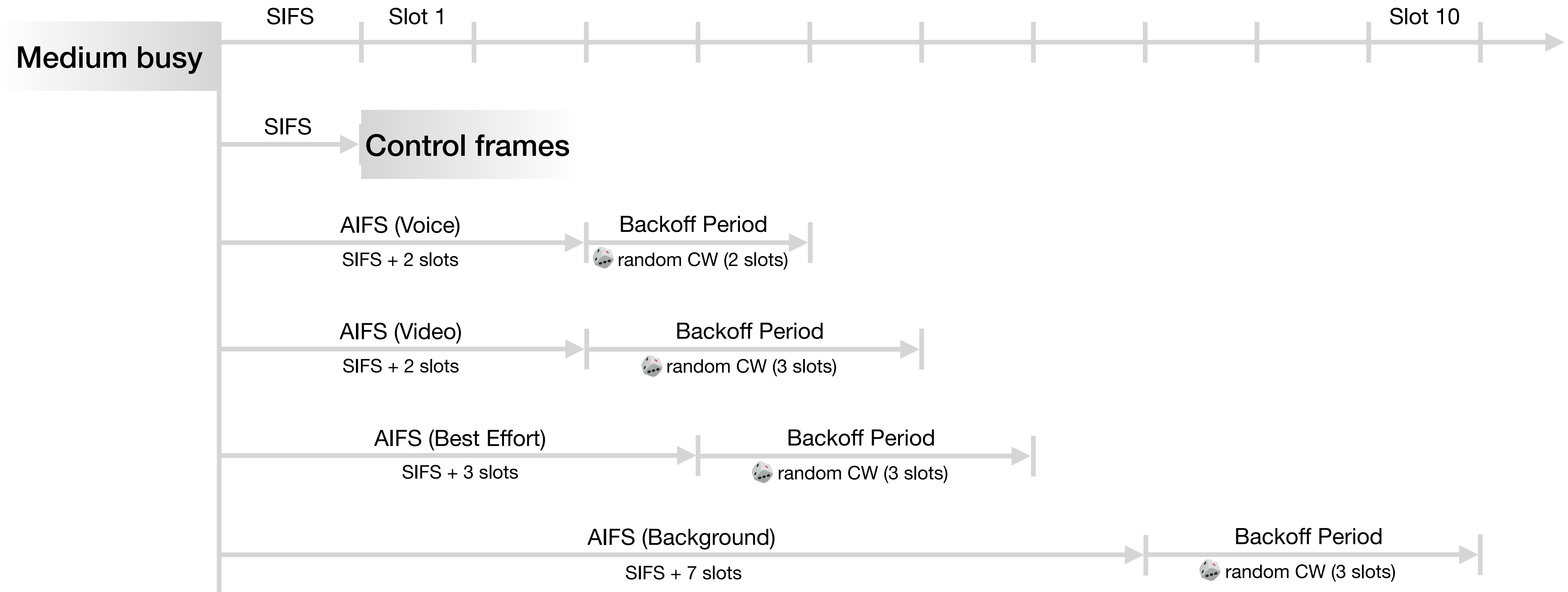
Enhanced Distributed Channel Access

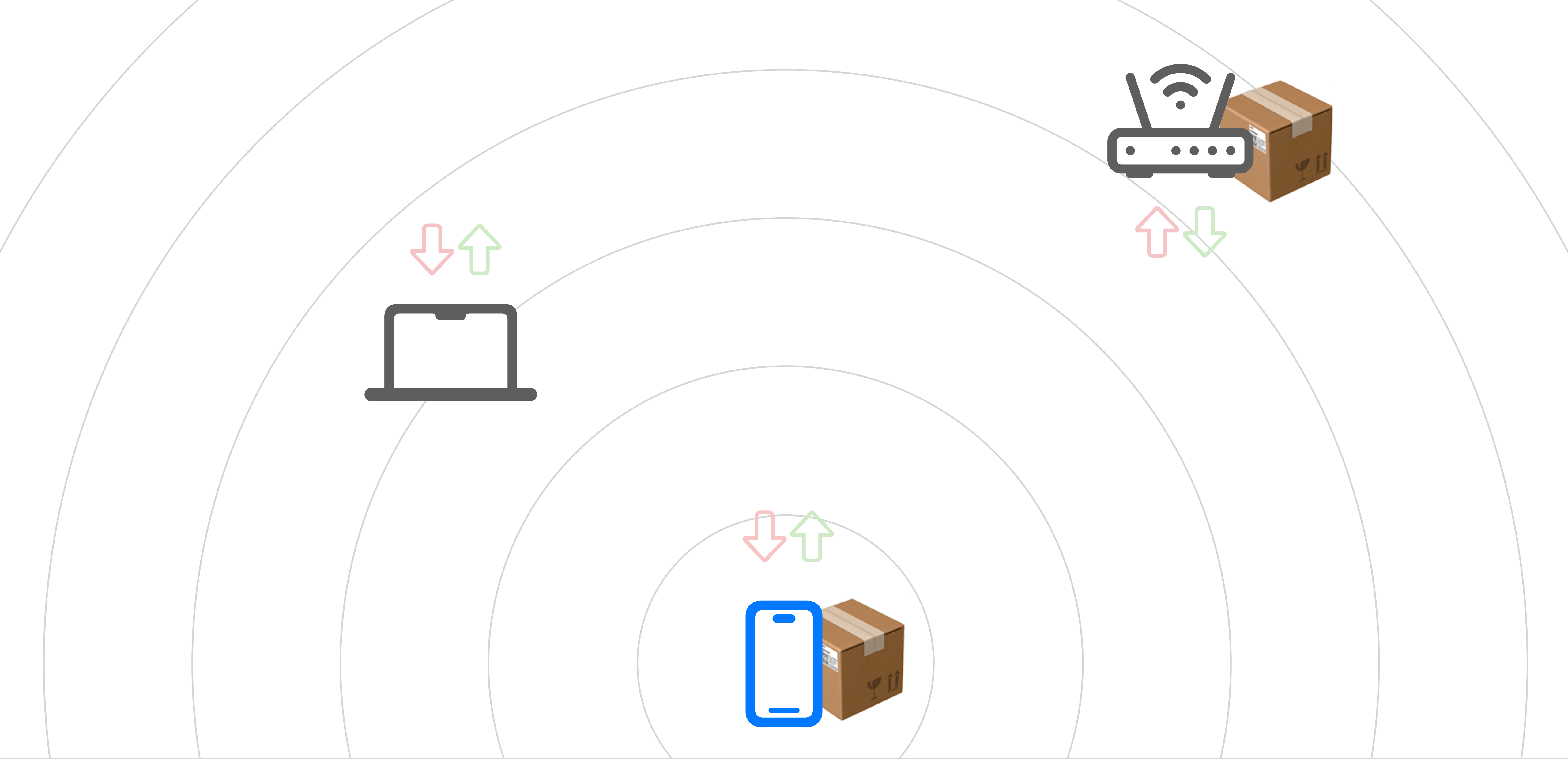
IEEE 802.11e Concepts



Enhanced Distributed Channel Access

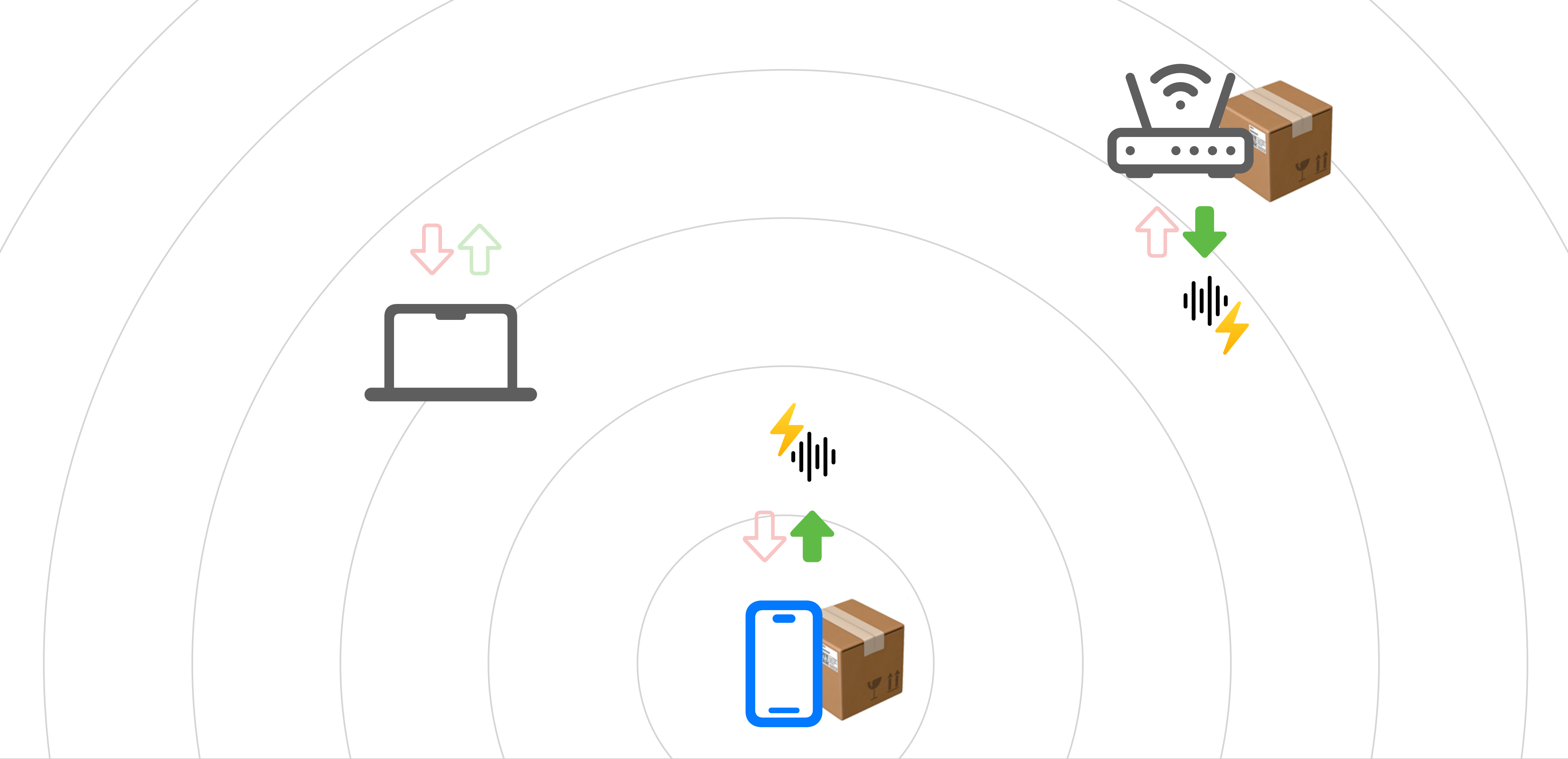
IEEE 802.11e Concepts





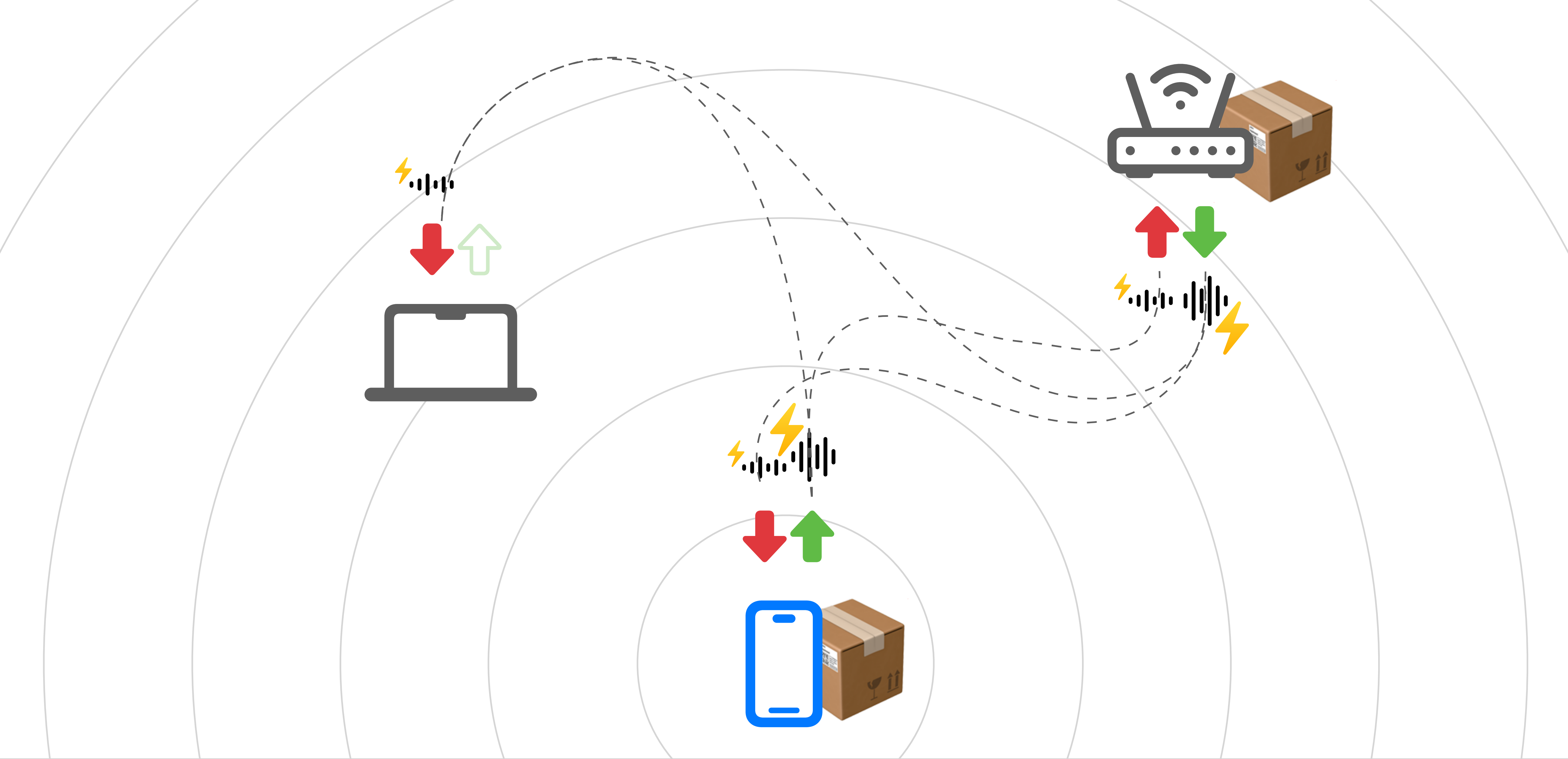
Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.



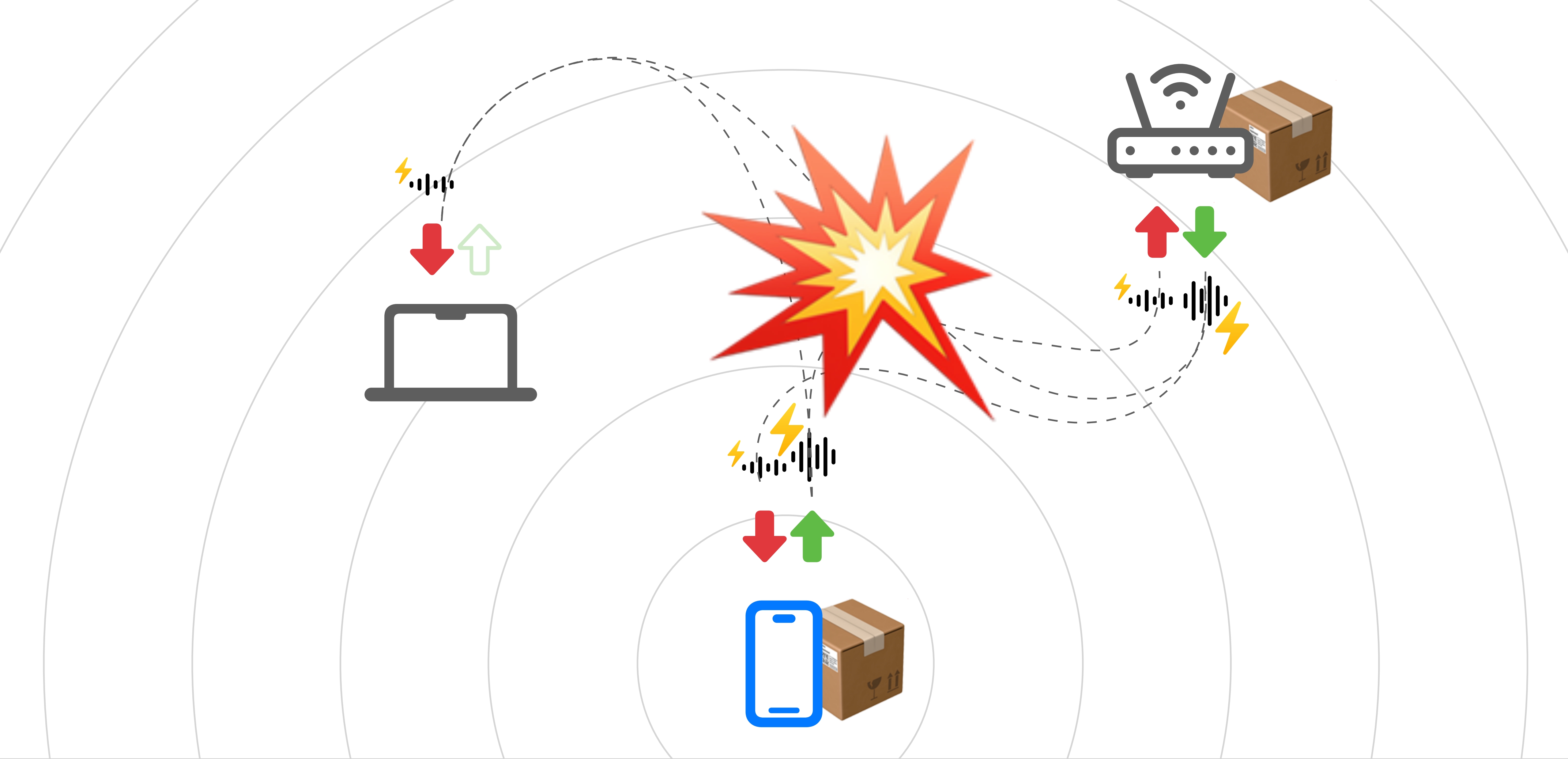
Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.



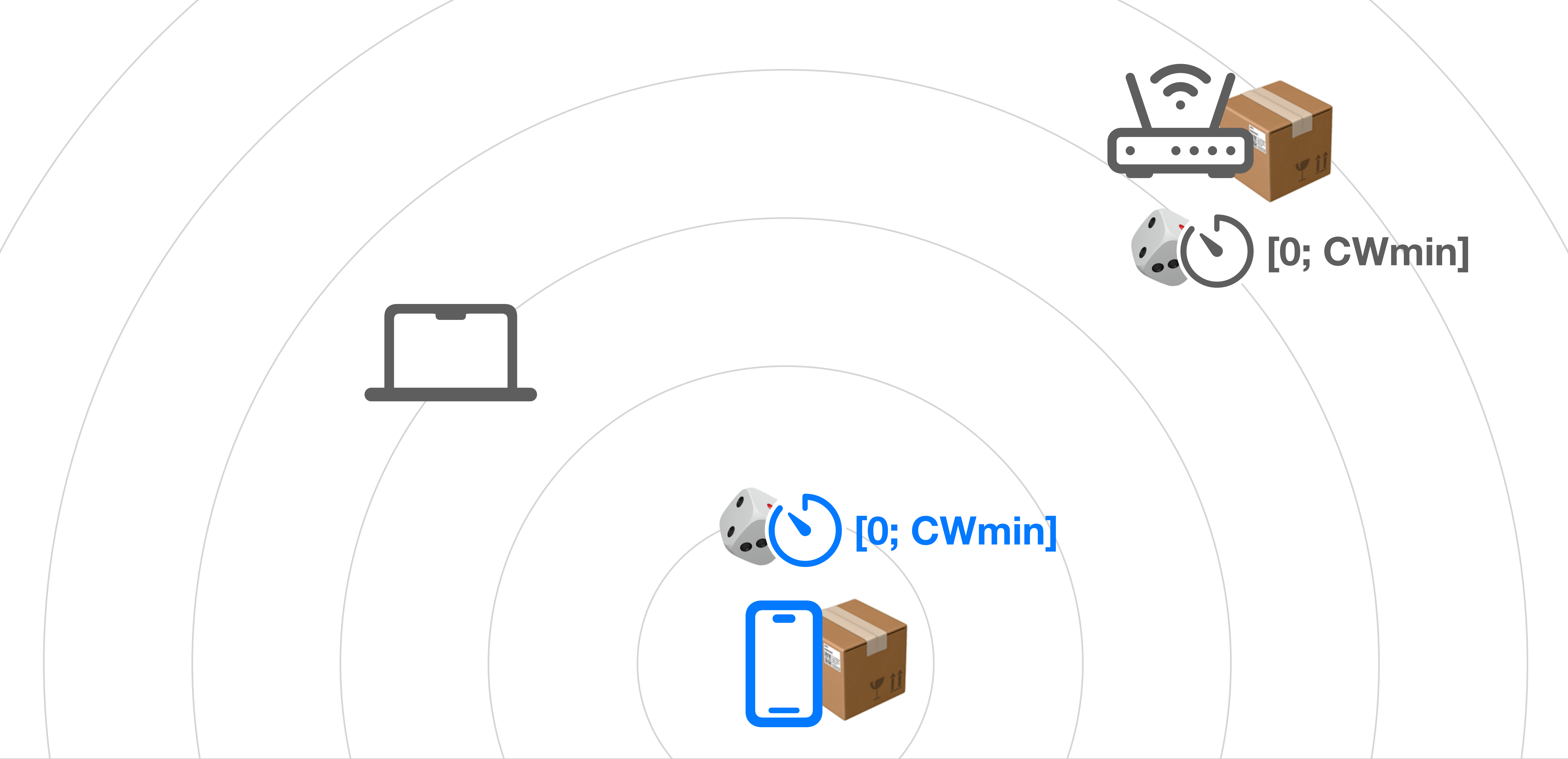
Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.



Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.

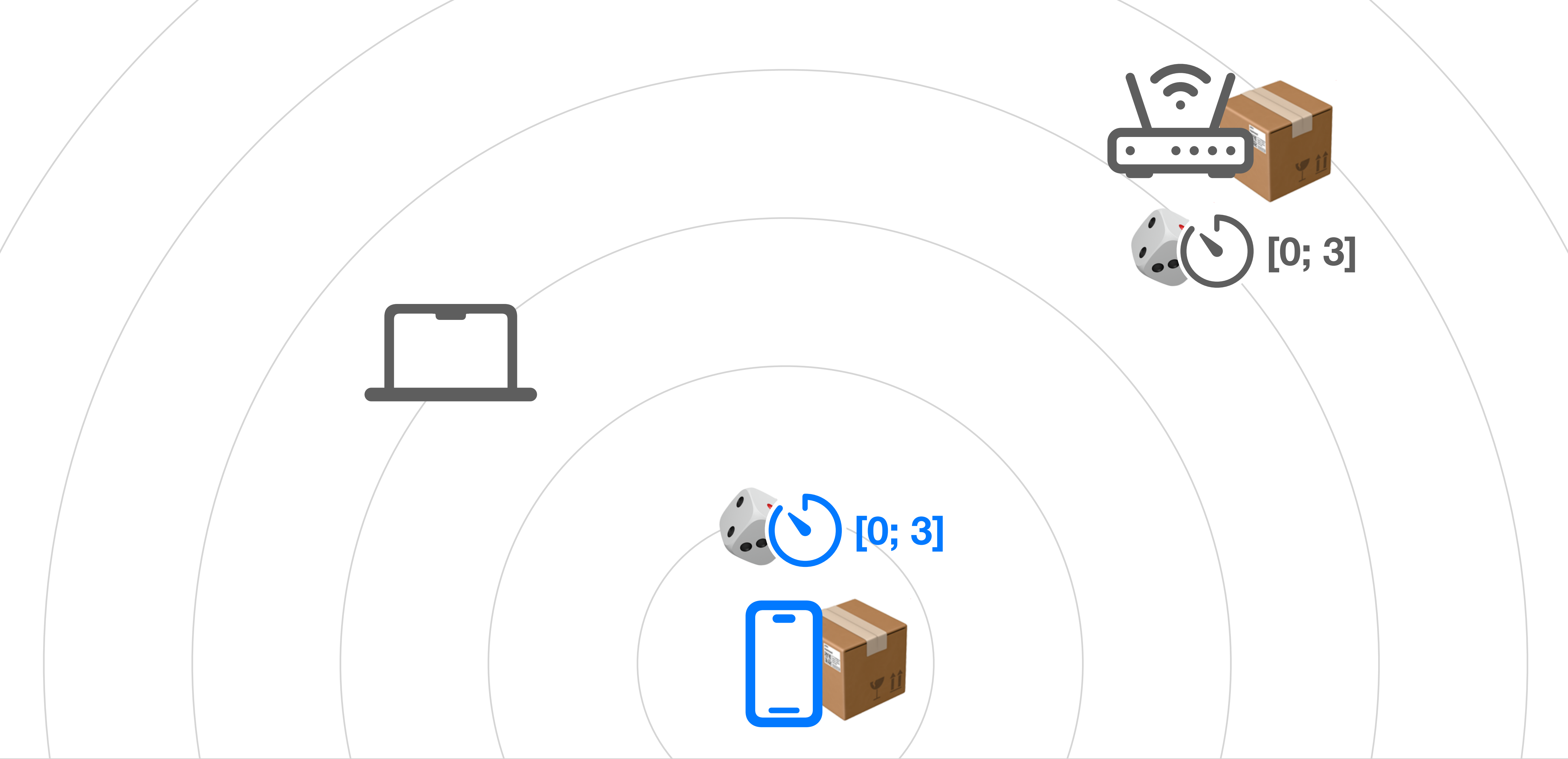


Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.

Solution

Randomize medium access to avoid collisions.

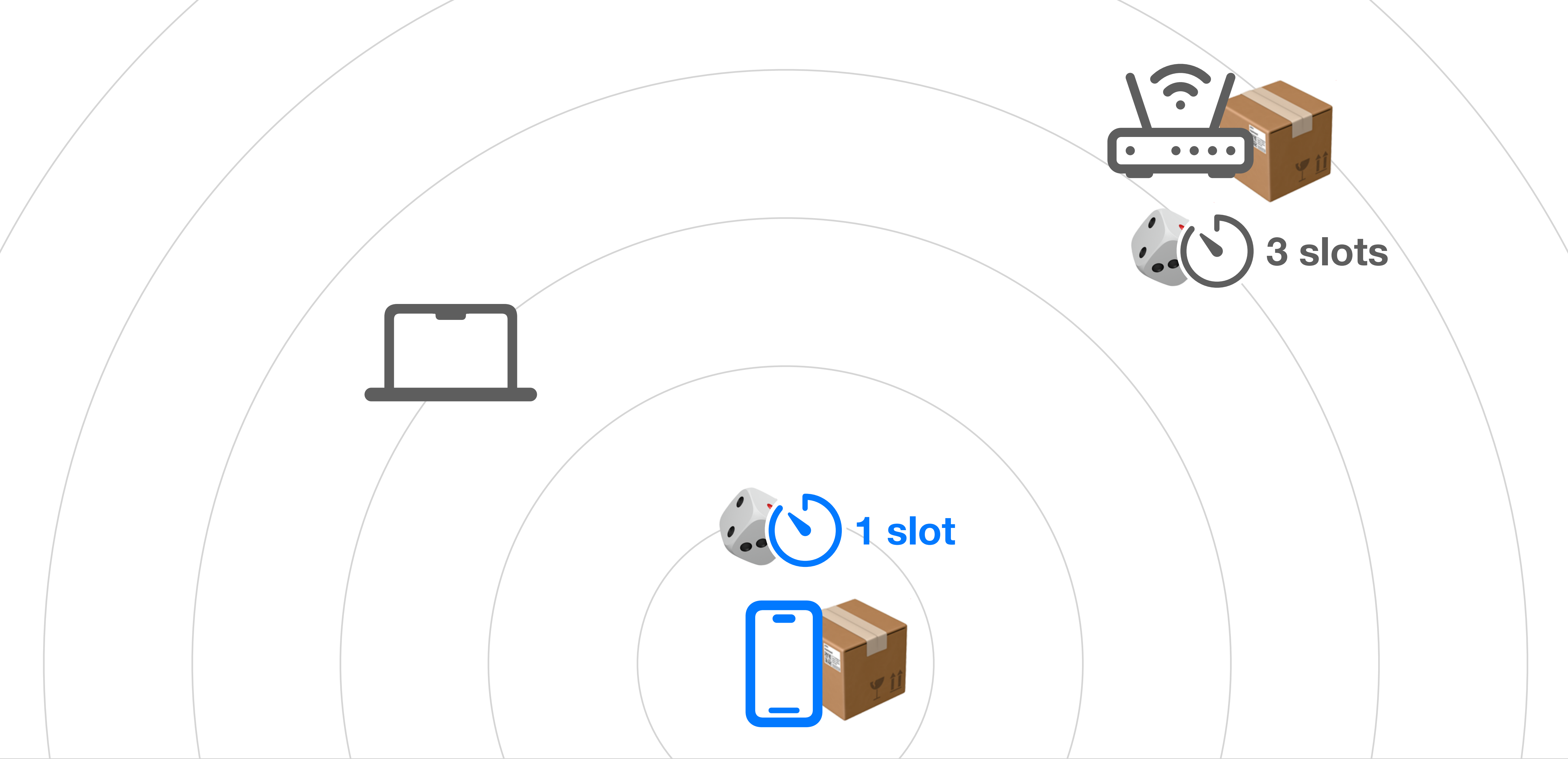


Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.

Solution

Randomize medium access to avoid collisions.

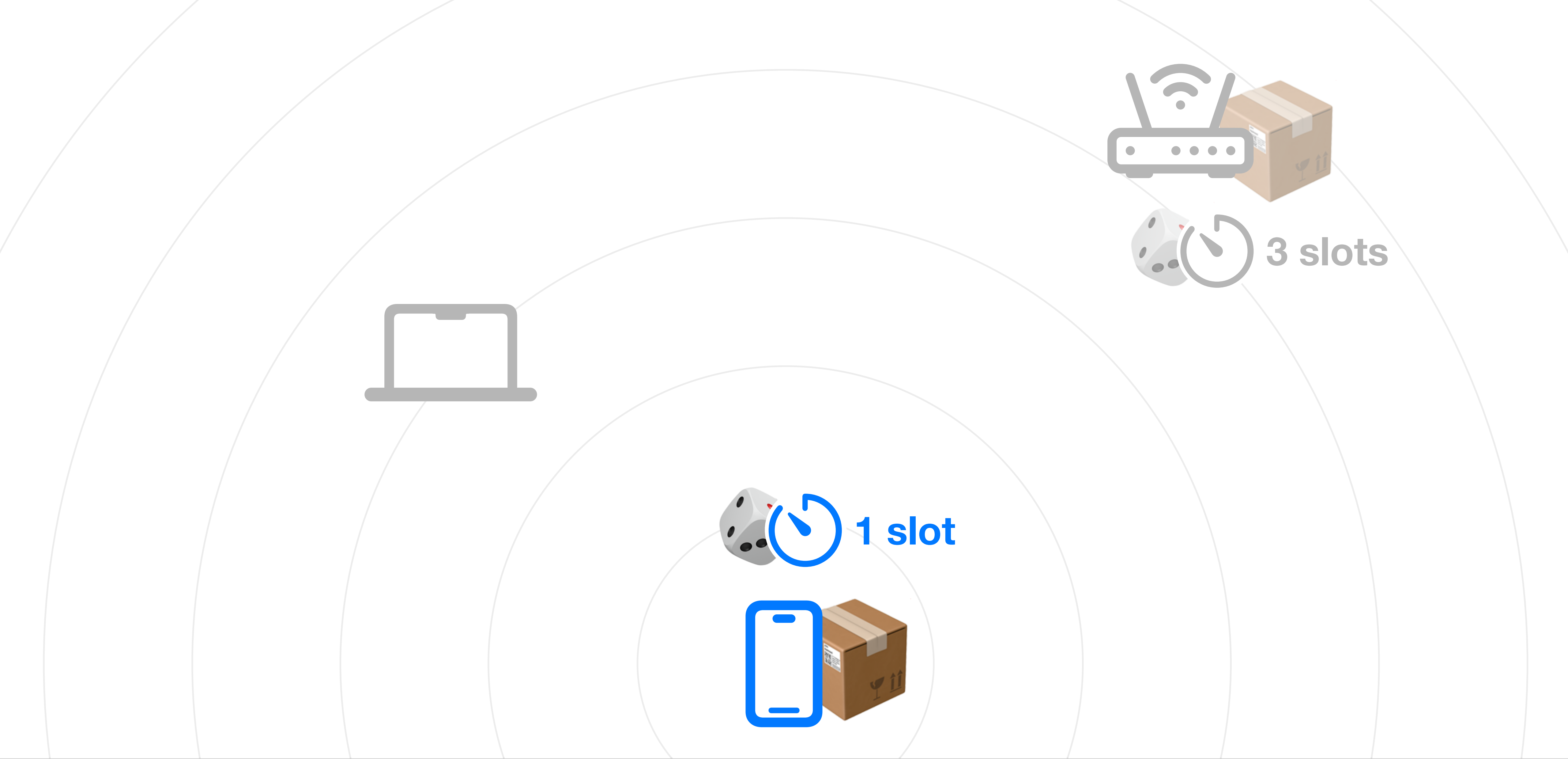


Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.

Solution

Randomize medium access to avoid collisions.

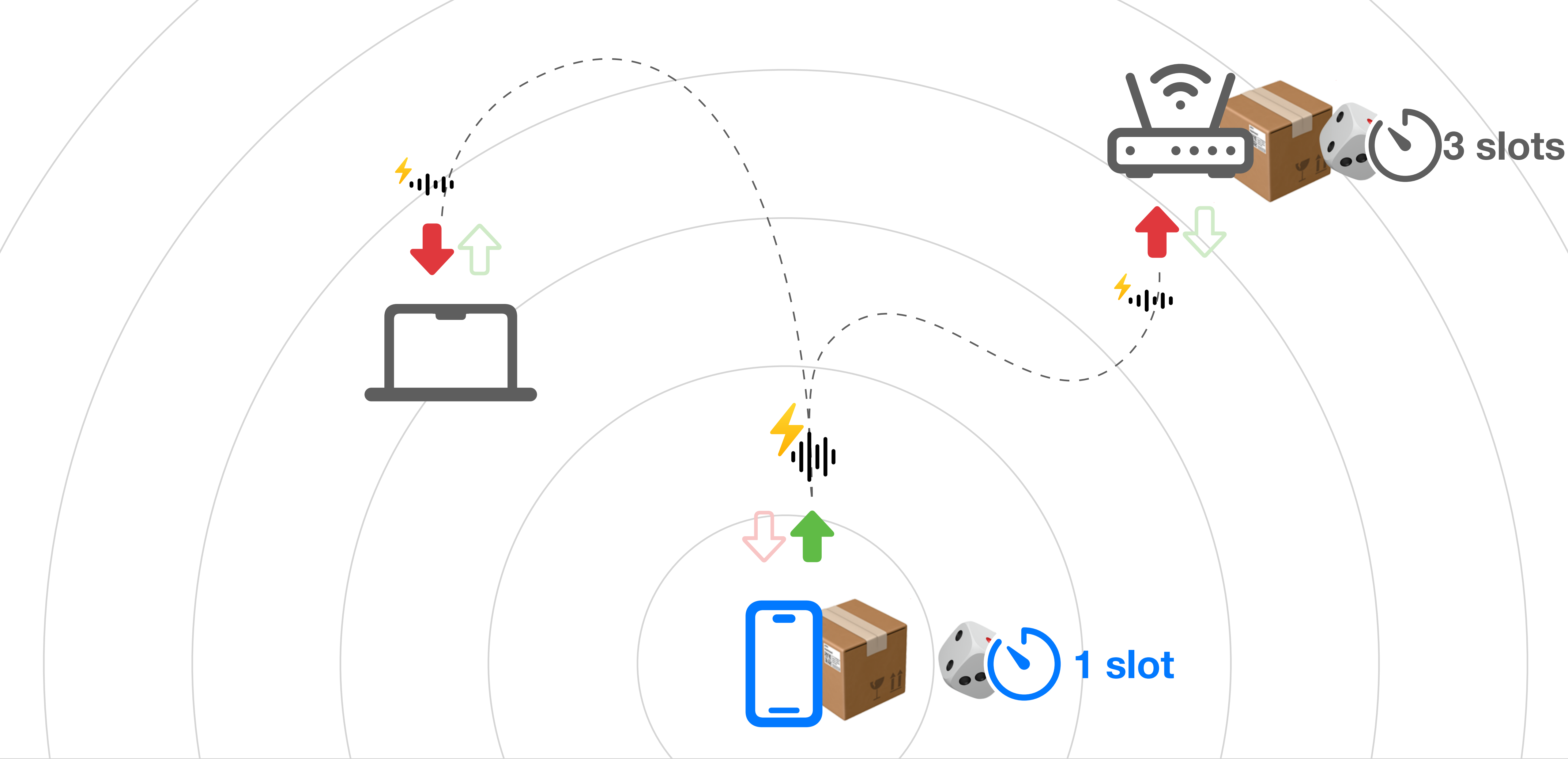


Problem

No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.

Solution

Randomize medium access to avoid collisions.



Problem

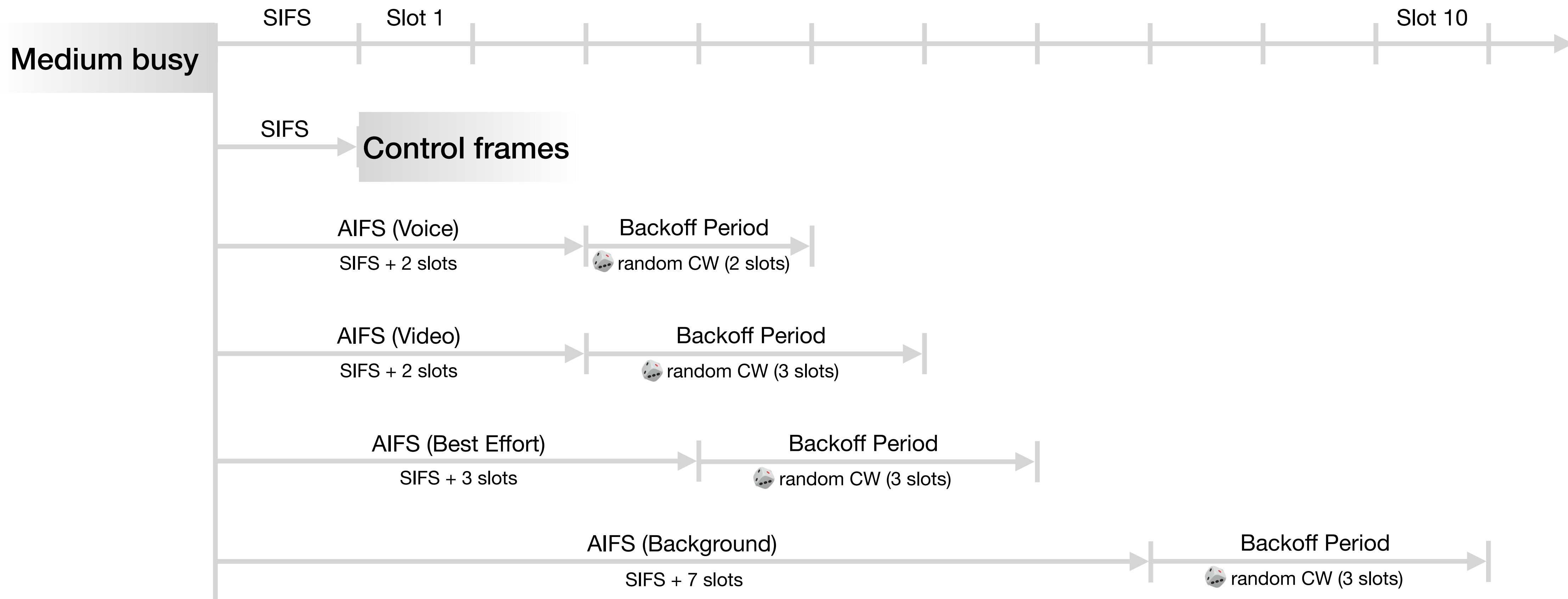
No collision *detection* due to half-duplex transceivers.

Solution

Randomize medium access to avoid collisions.

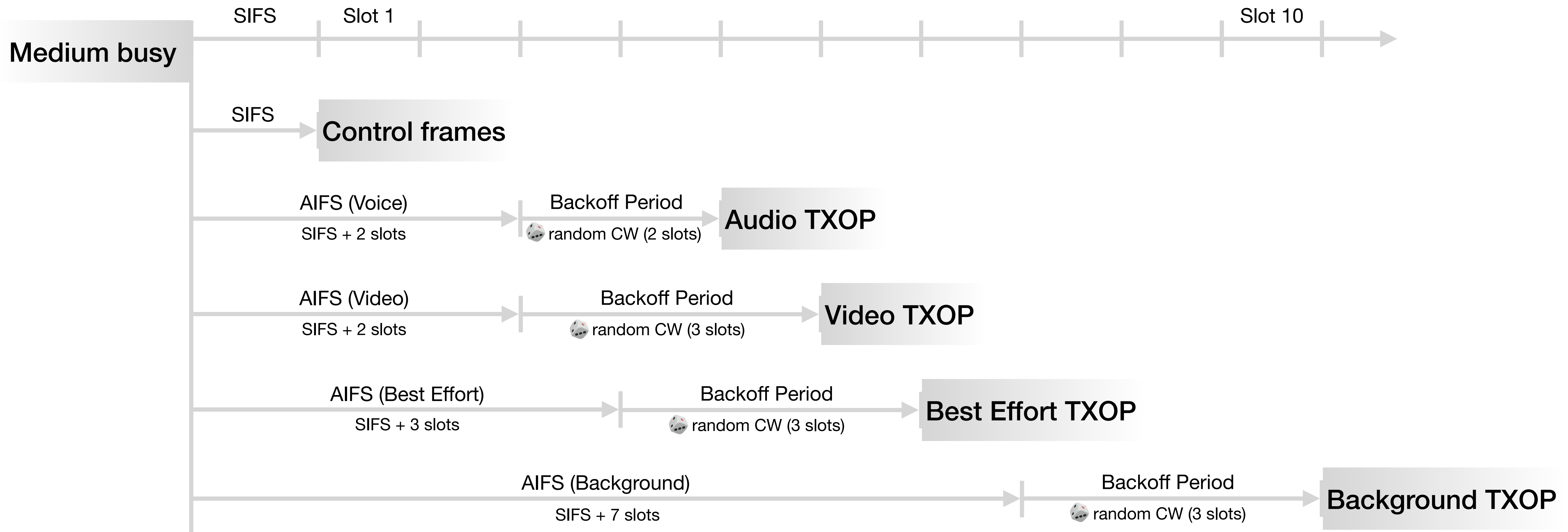
Enhanced Distributed Channel Access

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



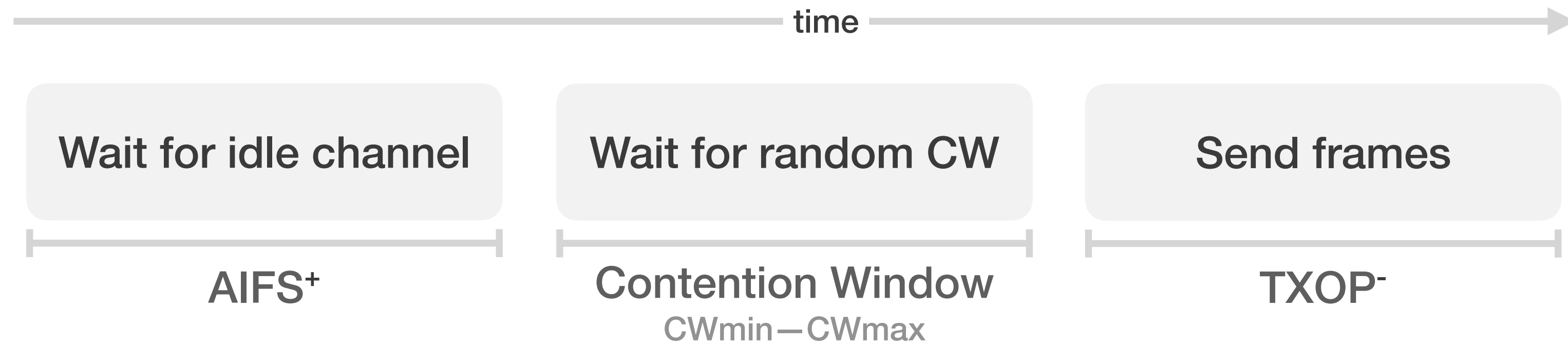
Enhanced Distributed Channel Access

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



LLW Parameters

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



Parameters for Voice

IEEE 802.11-2024

AIFSN#: 2 slots

3-7 slots

2.080 ms max.

LLW

defaultVOLLWParams

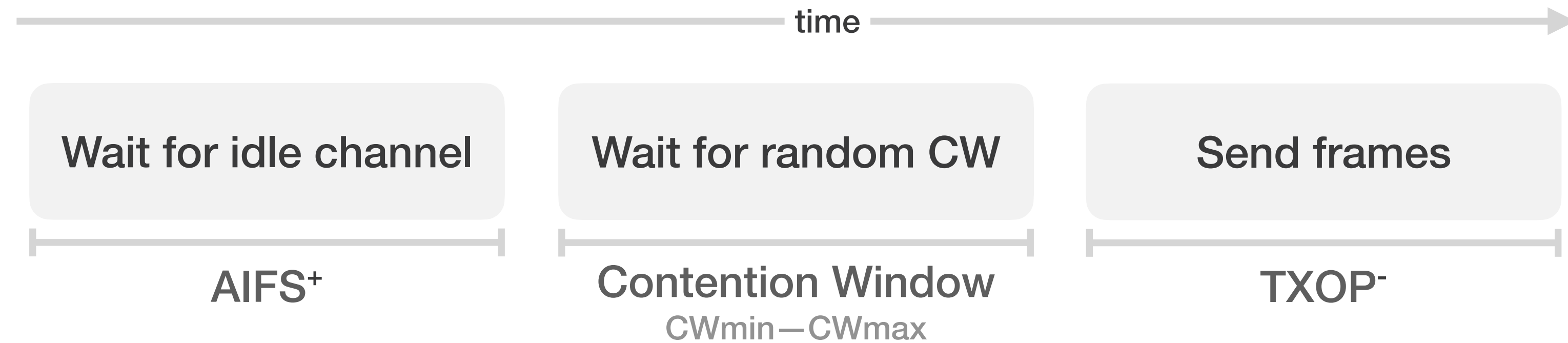
AIFSN: 2 slots

3-7 slots

1.504 ms

LLW Parameters

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



Parameters for Voice

IEEE 802.11-2012

AIFSN[#]: 2 slots

3–7 slots

1.504 ms max.

LLW

defaultVOLLWParams

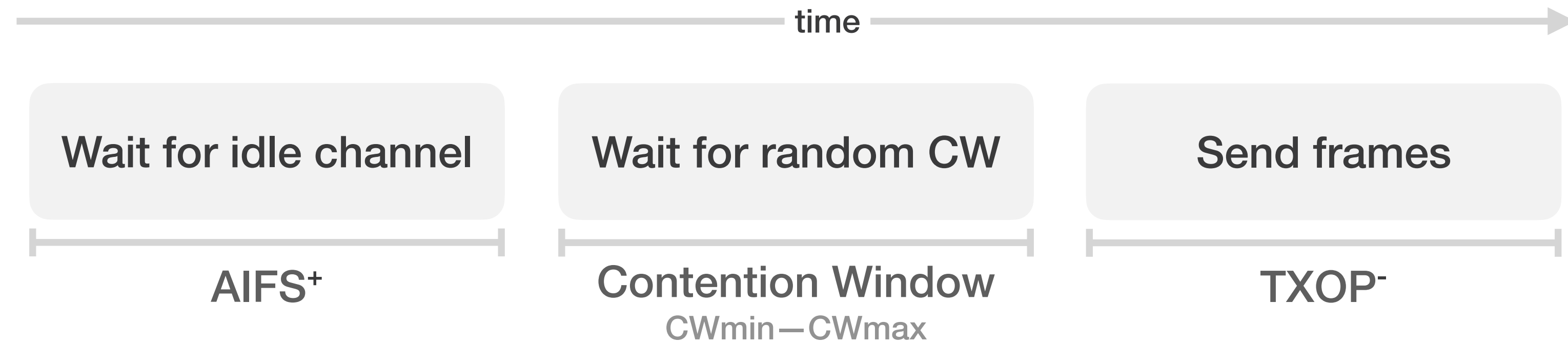
AIFSN: 2 slots

3–7 slots

1.504 ms

LLW Parameters

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



Parameters for Voice

IEEE 802.11-2012

AIFSN[#]: 2 slots

3–7 slots

1.504 ms max.

LLW

defaultVOLLWParams

AIFSN: 2 slots

3–7 slots

1.504 ms

LLW

defaultLLWParams

AIFSN: 2 slots

non-ETSI countries

0–1 slots

ETSI countries

3–7 slots

non-ETSI countries

8.160 ms

(255 * 32 μs)

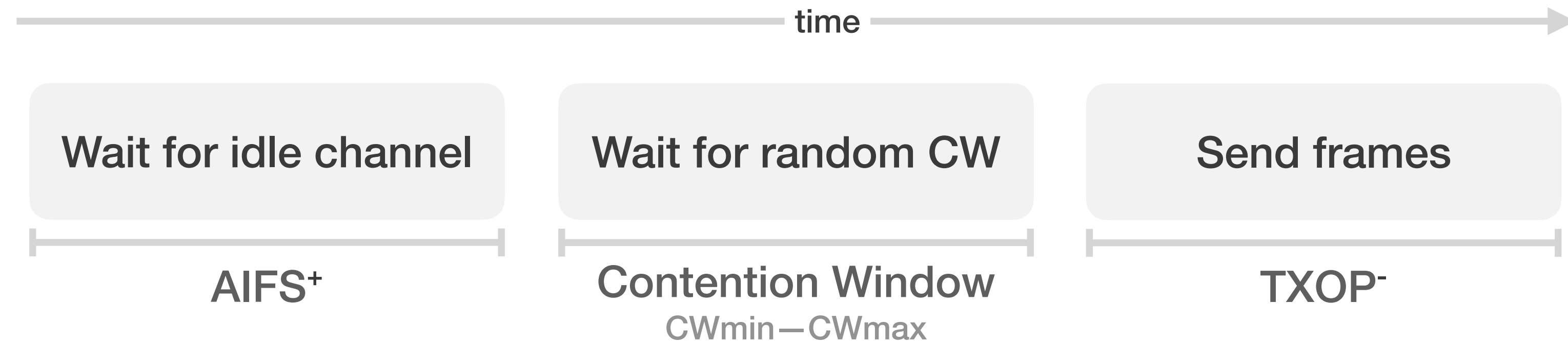
ETSI countries

1.984 ms

(62 * 32 μs)

LLW Parameters

IEEE 802.11e Concepts



Parameters for Voice

IEEE 802.11-2012

AIFSN[#]: 2 slots

3–7 slots

1.504 ms max.

LLW

defaultVOLLWParams

AIFSN: 2 slots

3–7 slots

1.504 ms

LLW

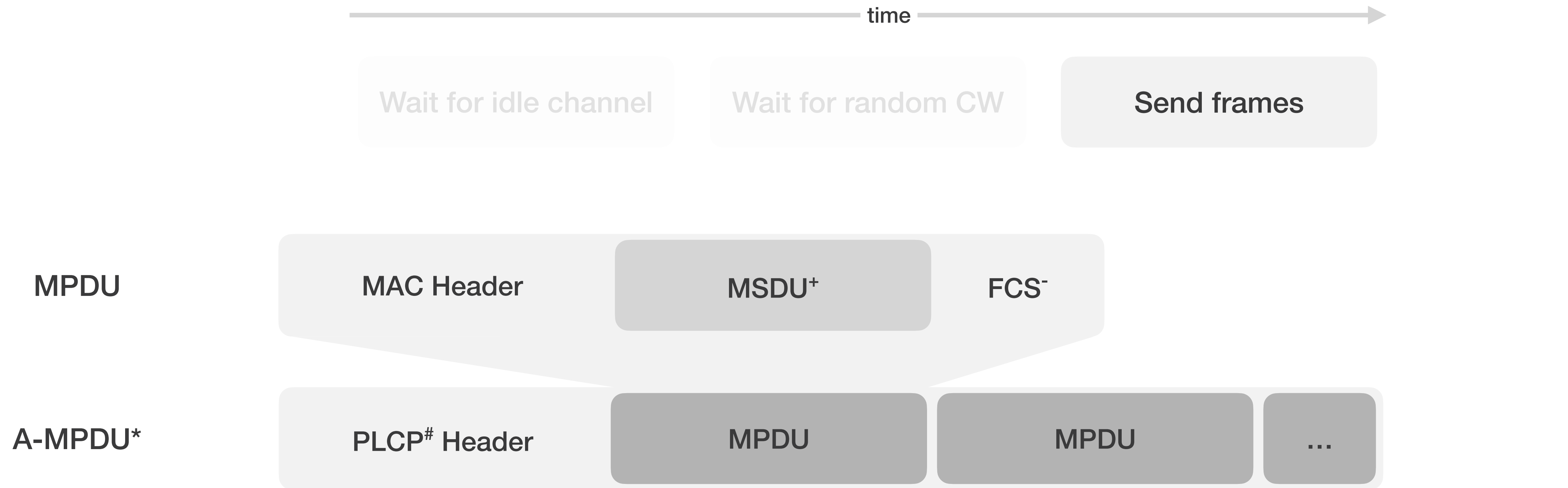
defaultLLWParams

Disclaimer

not observed in real-world network traffic but still defined in source code

Aggregated MPDU

IEEE 802.11n Concepts



Aggregated MSDU

IEEE 802.11n Concepts



A-MSDU*



✓ Less IFS

Latency Gains

✓ Less PHY headers, MAC headers, FCS

✓ Less acknowledgement frames

* A-MSDU: Aggregated MAC Protocol Data Unit

– FCS: Frame Check Sequence

+ MSDU: MAC service data unit

VHT Bandwidth

IEEE 802.11ac Concepts

MacBook Pro — IOService — AppleBCM WLANLowLatencyInterface

IOService

IOService:/AppleACPIPlatformExpert/PCI0@0/AppleACPIPCI/RP01@1C/IOPP/ARPT@0/AppleBCM WLANBusInterfacePCIe/AppleBCM WLANCore/AppleBCM WLANLowLatencyInterface

AppleBCM WLANLowLatencyInterface

Class Inheritance: AppleBCM WLANLowLatencyInterface : AppleBCM WLANSkywalkInterface : AppleBCM WLANInfraProtocol : IO80211InfraProtocol : IO80211InfraInterface : IO80211SkywalkInterface : IOSkywalkEthernetInterface : IOSkywalkNetworkInterface : IOSkywalkInterface : IOService :

Bundle: com.apple.driver.AppleBCM WLANCoreMac

Registered Retain Count: 9
 Matched Busy Count: 0
 Active

Property	Type	Value
BSD Name	String	llw0
IO80211InterfaceRole	String	LowLatency
built-in	Data	<00>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IOPowerManagement	Dictionary	6 values
ChildrenPowerState	Number	0x1
DevicePowerState	Number	0x1
CurrentPowerState	Number	0x1
CapabilityFlags	Number	0x8002
MaxPowerState	Number	0x1
DriverPowerState	Number	0x0
IOMACAddress	Data	<72 6d e9 2e 00 9d>
IOInterfaceType	Number	0x6
IO80211BSSID	Data	<74 06 35 10 90 74>
IO80211SSID	String	Vodafone-E76642760
IO80211ChannelBandwidth	Number	0x50
IOInterfaceName	String	llw0
IO80211Channel	Number	0x34
IO80211ChannelFrequency	Number	0x148c

```

graph TD
  IMEI@16 --> AppleIntelIMEIDriver
  IMEI@16 --> LPCB@1F
  IMEI@16 --> MCHC@0
  IMEI@16 --> pci8086,38ef@14,2
  IMEI@16 --> pci8086,8a03@4
  IMEI@16 --> RP01@1C
  RP01@1C --> IOPP
  IOPP --> ARPT@0
  ARPT@0 --> AppleBCM WLANBusInterfacePCIe
  AppleBCM WLANBusInterfacePCIe --> AppleBCM WLANCore
  AppleBCM WLANCore --> AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface
  AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface --> IO80211APIUserClient1[IO80211APIUserClient]
  AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface --> IO80211APIUserClient2[IO80211APIUserClient]
  AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface --> IO80211APIUserClient3[IO80211APIUserClient]
  AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface --> IO80211APIUserClient4[IO80211APIUserClient]
  AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface --> IOSkywalkNetworkBSDClient
  AppleBCM WLANIO80211APSTAInterface --> AppleBCM WLANLowLatencyInterface
  
```

VHT Bandwidth

IEEE 802.11ac Concepts

IO80211ChannelBandwidth	Number	0x50
IOInterfaceName	String	llw0
IO80211Channel	Number	0x34
IO80211ChannelFrequency	Number	0x148c
IOInterfaceUnit	Number	0x0
IOInterfaceNamePrefix	String	llw
IO80211Band	String	5 GHz

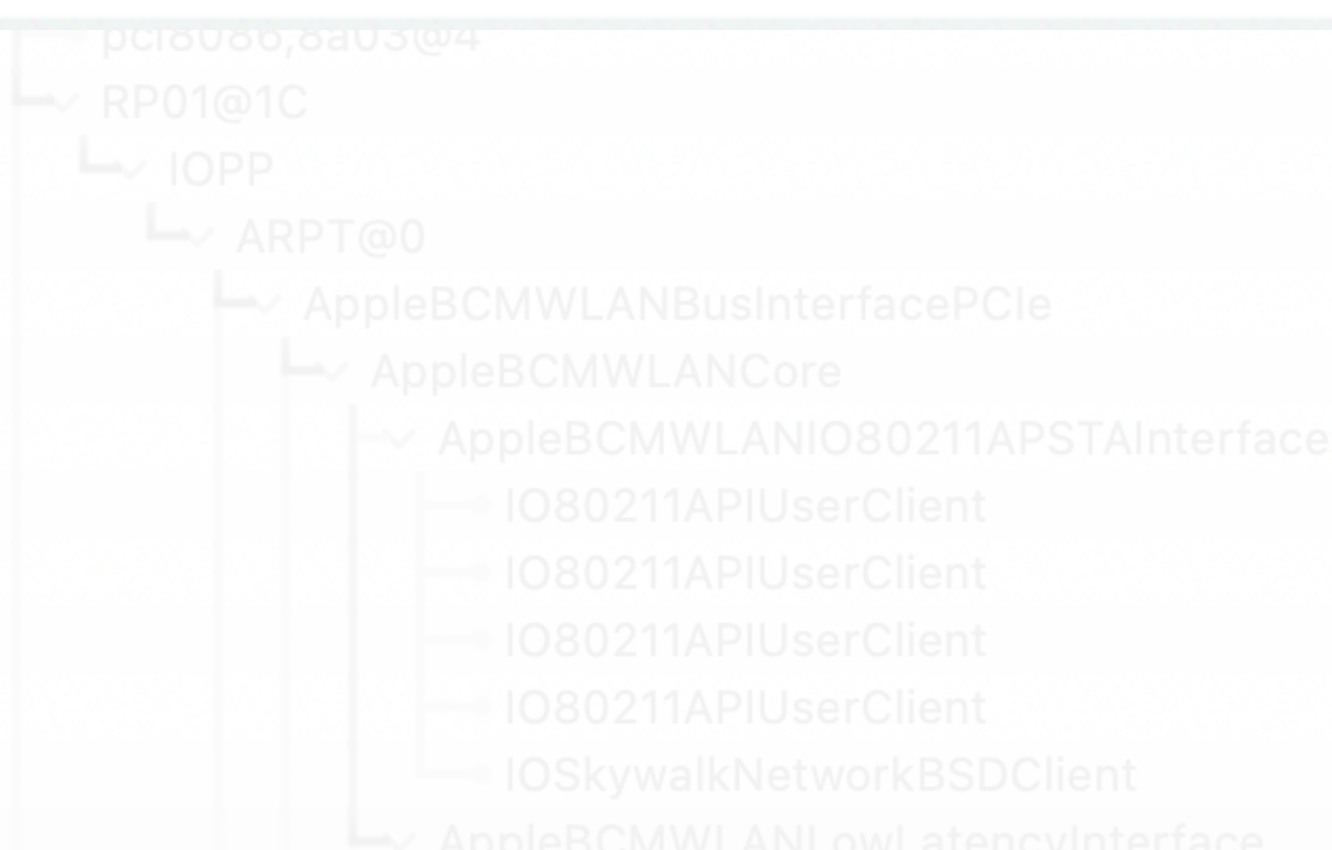
Low Latency Interface

AppleBCM WLANCore/AppleBCM WLANLow Latency Interface

IO80211InfraProtocol : Registered Retain Count: 9

SkywalkInterface : IOService : Matched Busy Count: 0

Active



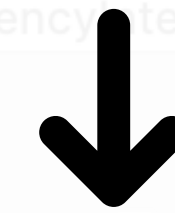
DevicePowerState	Number	0x1
CurrentPowerState	Number	0x1
CapabilityFlags	Number	0x8002
MaxPowerState	Number	0x1
DriverPowerState	Number	0x0
IOMACAddress	Data	<72 6d e9 2e 00 9d>
IOInterfaceType	Number	0x6
IO80211BSSID	Data	<74 06 35 10 90 74>
IO80211SSID	String	Vodafone-E76642760
IO80211ChannelBandwidth	Number	0x50
IOInterfaceName	String	llw0
IO80211Channel	Number	0x34
IO80211ChannelFrequency	Number	0x148c

VHT Bandwidth

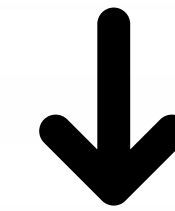
IEEE 802.11ac Concepts

IO80211ChannelBandwidth	Number	0x50
IOInterfaceName	String	llw0
IO80211Channel	Number	0x34
IO80211ChannelFrequency	Number	0x148c
IOInterfaceUnit	Number	0x0
IOInterfaceNamePrefix	String	llw
IO80211Band	String	5 GHz

→ 80 MHz Channel Bandwidth



IEEE 802.11ac

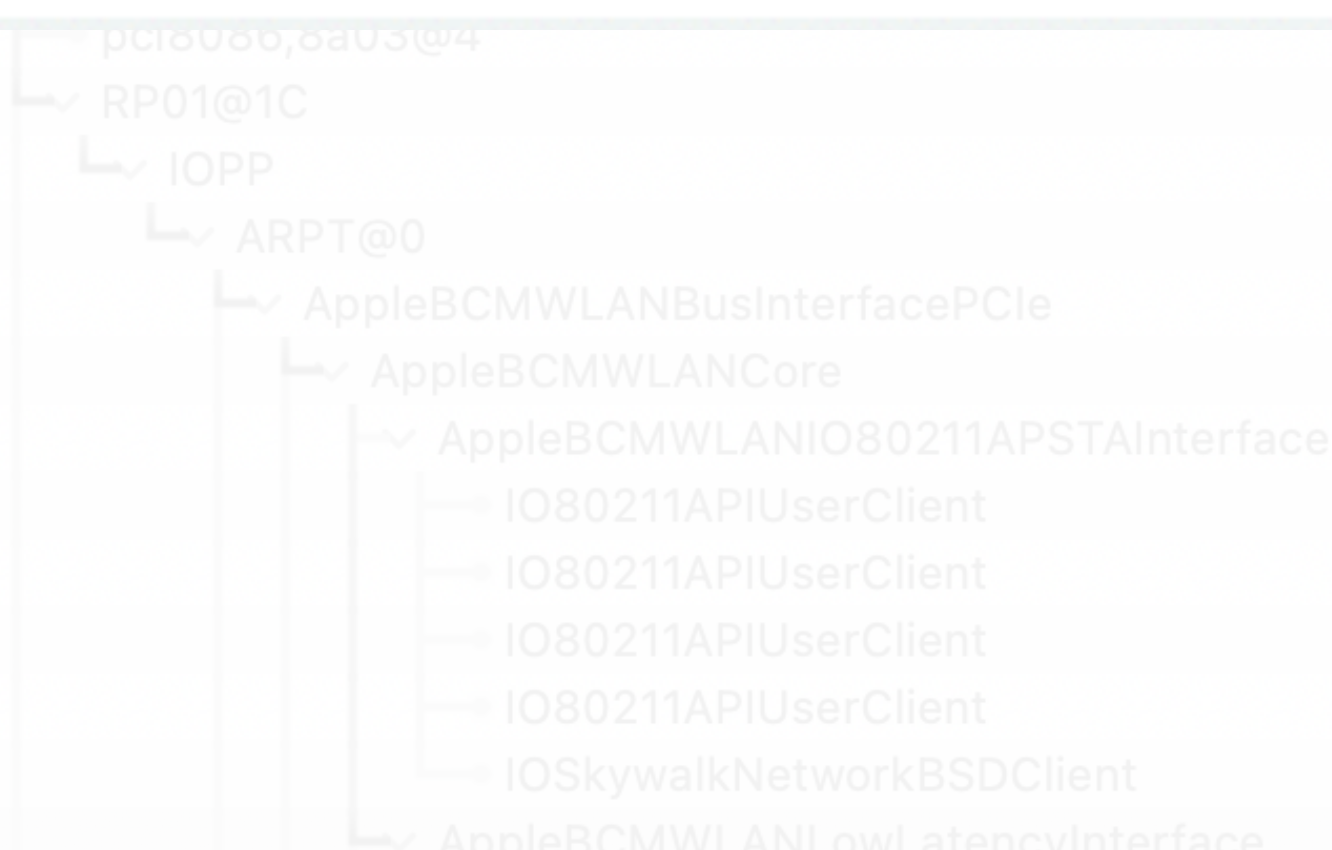


Very High Throughput (VHT) PHY

VHT Bandwidth

IEEE 802.11ac Concepts

IO80211ChannelBandwidth	Number	0x50	→ 80 MHz Channel Bandwidth
IOInterfaceName	String	llw0	
IO80211Channel	Number	0x34	→ Channel 52
IO80211ChannelFrequency	Number	0x148c	→ 5260 MHz
IOInterfaceUnit	Number	0x0	
IOInterfaceNamePrefix	String	llw	
IO80211Band	String	5 GHz	



DevicePowerState	Number	0x1
CurrentPowerState	Number	0x1
CapabilityFlags	Number	0x8002
MaxPowerState	Number	0x1
DriverPowerState	Number	0x0
IOMACAddress	Data	<72 6d e9 2e 00 9d>
IOInterfaceType	Number	0x6
IO80211BSSID	Data	<74 06 35 10 90 74>
IO80211SSID	String	Vodafone-E76642760
IO80211ChannelBandwidth	Number	0x50
IOInterfaceName	String	llw0
IO80211Channel	Number	0x34
IO80211ChannelFrequency	Number	0x148c

LowLatencyInterface

VLANCore/AppleBCM WLANLowLatencyInterface

11n/11niraProtocol : ✓ Registered Retain Count: 9

5GHz/5GHz : ✓ Matched Busy Count: 0

Active

Low-Latency in LLW

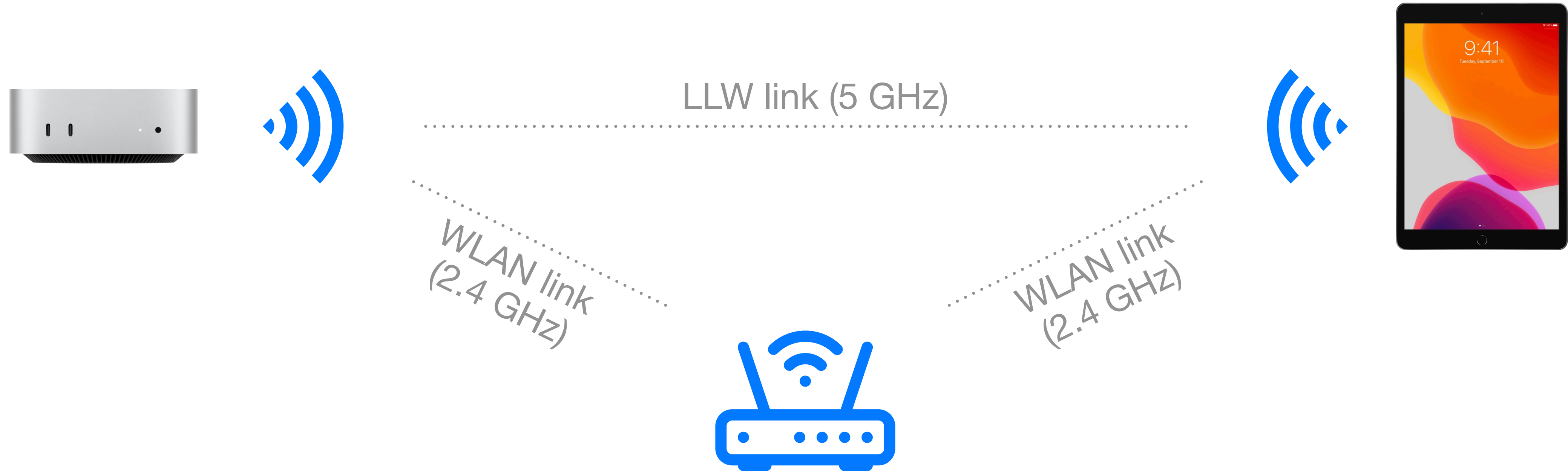
IEEE 802.11e/n/ac Details

Hardware Capabilities

Real Simultaneous Dual Band (RSDB) Hardware Capabilities

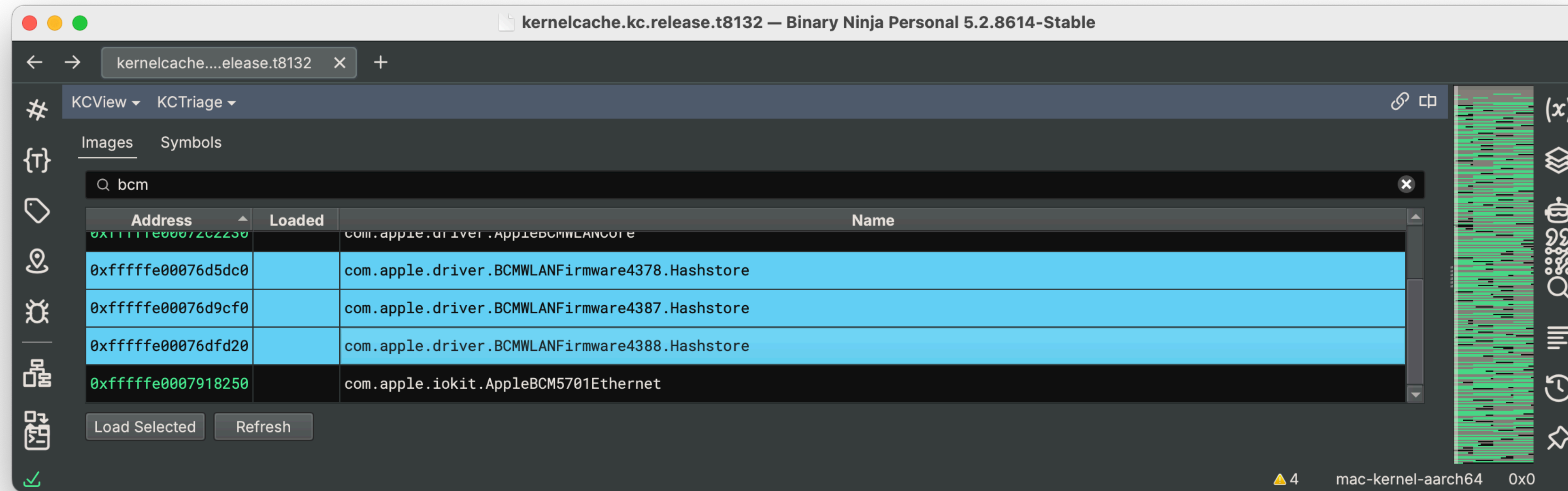
```
IO80211DriverKit — Binary Ninja Personal 5.2.8722-Stable
IO80211DriverKit
Symbols
sdb
Name
apple80211setAWDL_RSDB_CAPS(IO80211SkywalkInterface*, apple80211_rsdb
apple80211getAWDL_RSDB_CAPS(IO80211SkywalkInterface*, apple80211_rsdb
IO80211PeerManager::setRsdbSupported(bool)
IO80211PeerManager::isRsdbSupported()
IO80211PeerManager::getRsdbCaps(apple80211_rsdb_capability*)
IO80211PeerManager::getRsdbCap()
IO80211PeerManager::checkForSDBSupport() const
IO80211PeerManager::updateRsdbSupportForRSDB()
IO80211NANRadioPeerManager::prepareRsdbCapability()
IO80211NANPeerManager::nonSdbOn5GhzAvailabilityOnlyStatus()
IO80211NANPeerManager::lowlatencyStatsSetSdbState(uint8_t)
IO80211NANPeerManager::isSDBSupported()
IO80211NANPeerManager::enableNonSdbOn5GhzAvailabilityOnly()
IO80211NANPeerManager::disableNonSdbOn5GhzAvailabilityOnly()
IO80211NANPeer::setSDBCcapability(uint8_t)
IO80211NANPeer::isSDBCcapable()
IO80211NANPeer::isNonSDB()
IO80211NANDataPathSession::isNonSDBLLWSession()
IO80211ConfigStore::isStaticTxSDBEnabled() const
```

Real Simultaneous Dual Band (RSDB) Hardware Capabilities



Real Simultaneous Dual Band (RSDB)

Hardware Capabilities



BCM4378	PCIe 2.0 / SDIO 3.0	abgn+ac+ax	2x2:2 (1.43Gbps)	2019-02-06	Combo BT 5.0 LE/LR, RSDB , OFDMA, Wi-Fi 6, MU-MIMO, HE80, 1024QAM Smartphone Combo Chip	1 devices ↗	0 devices ↗	PR ↗ PR ↗ CNX ↗ PPage ↗
BCM4387	PCIe 2.0 / SDIO 3.0	abgn+ac+ax	2x2:2 (2.4Gbps)	(Q2 2020)	Combo ↗ BT 5.2 LE/LR, RSDB , OFDMA, Wi-Fi 6, MU-MIMO, HE160, 1024QAM WPA3+, TBS, 5GHz, mobile devices	0 devices ↗	0 devices ↗	PR ↗ PPage ↗ DR ↗
BCM4388	PCIe 2.0 / SDIO 3.0	abgn+ac+ax	2x2:2 (2.4Gbps)	(Q2 2022)	Combo ↗ BT 5.3 LE/LR, RSDB , OFDMA, Wi-Fi 6E, MU-MIMO, HE160, 1024QAM WPA3+, TBS, 6GHz, mobile devices	0 devices ↗	0 devices ↗	PR ↗ PPage ↗ DR ↗

Real Simultaneous Dual Band (RSDB)

Hardware Capabilities

BCM4375	PCIe 2.0 / SDIO 3.0	abgn+ac+ax	2x2:2 (1.43Gbps)	2019-02-15	Combo BT 5.0 LE/LR, RSDB, OFDMA, Wi-Fi 6, MU-MIMO, HE80, 1024QAM Smartphone Combo Chip	0 devices	1 devices	PR CNX PPage
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Type	FCC ID	Manuf	Manuf. mdl	CPU1	CPU1 clock speed	FLA1	RAM1	WI1 chip1	PHY modes	OUI	OUI (Eth)	Est. year
Samsung Galaxy S10 (SM-G973U)	A3LSMG973U A3LSMG975U A3LSMG970U	Samsung		SM8150	2.84 GHz	524,288 MiB	8,192 MiB	BCM4375	abgn+ac+ax	00:12:36		2019

Access Category
Voice

Access Control Mandatory Frame Reordering
NAV **MAC-Layer Efficiency** Threshold
Block Acknowledgements Reverse Direction Grant

80 MHz
Channel Bandwidth

Ultra **Real-time**
LLW LLW
More Operational Modes

Low-Latency Mechanisms of Low-Latency WiFi

Aggregated | Aggregated
MSDU | **MPDU**
Frame Overhead Reduction

IEEE 802.11e/n/ac
QoS | HT | VHT

1.504 ms | Long Transmission
TXOP | Intervals

3 slots | 7 slots | 2 slots
CWmin | CWmax | AIFSN
≡ **Fast Channel Access**

Traffic Identifier 7

**High-Priority
Network Traffic**

Real
Simultaneous
Dual-Band

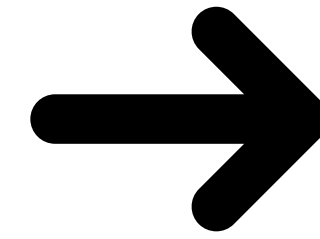


Why bother?

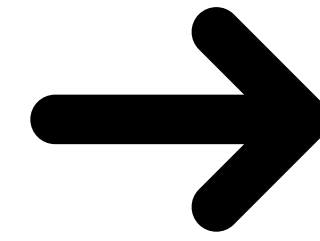
Interoperability.

Apple is implementing an open standard but leaves LLW undocumented and reserves it for proprietary features.

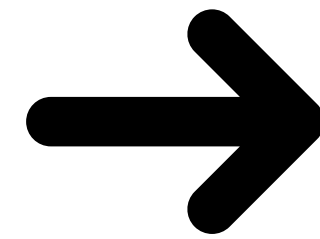
Interoperability is technically feasible.



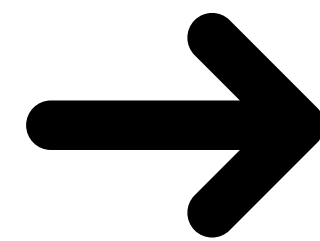
OpenDrop



WatchWitch



OpenHaystack



Pending?

python-pcapng

cctool

IEEE 802.11e

Log Aggregation

Real Simultaneous Dual-Band

Inter-Frame Space

Interoperability

DriverKit

Access Categories

A-MSDU

Questions?

NTP

System Calls

kdebug

dtrace

TXOP

Multi-Device Log Acquisition

Low-Latency WiFi

IEEE 802.11n

Contention Window

Kernel Traces

_driverkit user

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