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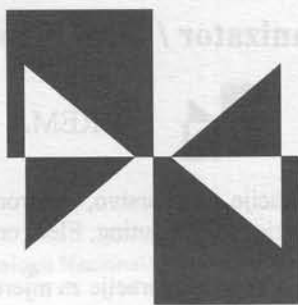
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Tridesetdrugi skup o prometnim sustavima  
s međunarodnim sudjelovanjem  
**AUTOMATIZACIJA  
U PROMETU 2012**

32<sup>nd</sup> Conference on Transportation Systems  
with International Participation  
**AUTOMATION IN  
TRANSPORTATION 2012**

November 14-18, 2012

Zagreb – Croatia / Vienna – Austria



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**Cestovni promet / Road Transportation**

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**Pomorski i riječni promet / Maritime and River Transportation**

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## SADRŽAJ / CONTENTS

### CESTOVNI PROMET / ROAD TRANSPORTATION

CIP zapis dostupan u računalnome katalogu Nacionalne i sveučilišne knjižnice u Zagrebu pod brojem 823186

M. Arasović, T. Kaser, H. Červak: Public Accessible Meteorological Systems Network Model for Road Traffic Weather Conditioned Safety Improvement	1
M. Gragović: Model adaptivnog upravljanja saobraćajnom mrežom baziran na neizotomnom sistemu zaključivanja / Model of Adaptive Control for Road Intersection Based on Fuzzy Reasoning System	2
I.J. Krpan, R. Maršanić, M. Maršić: Mogućnost primjene postupaka višekriterijske optimizacije u prometnom planiranju i projektiranju / Possibility of Applying Multi-criteria Optimization Process in Transport Planning and Design	13
H. Červak, M. Ivanković, T. Kaser: Energetska učinkovitost u cestovnom prometu / Energy Efficiency of Road Traffic	19
S. Soković, H. Baričević, Ž. Štampar: Benchmarking u cestovnom prijevozu putnika / Benchmarking in Passenger Road Transport	26
M. Širić, T. Božić, R. Džanić: Prijevoz osoba s invaliditetom u gradu Zagrebu / Transport of Persons with Disabilities in the City of Zagreb	31

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Zračni promet / AIR TRANSPORTATION	
R. Bruck: Future Trends in Passenger Services – an Airport Perspective	69
R. Šturić Babić, M. Ozančić: Implementacija elektroničkog otpisa putovanja na tržištu zračnog prometa / Implementation of Electronic Ticket in the Croatian Air Cargo Market	73
V. Vojnić: Model planiranja Zračne luke Split / Split Work Planning Model of Airport Ground Handling – Case Study Split Airport	77
Ž. Marušić, D. Štanić, M. Opačič: Impact of Aircraft Utilisation Intensity on Technical Dispatch Reliability	83



## SADRŽAJ / CONTENTS

### CESTOVNI PROMET / ROAD TRANSPORTATION

<b>R. Filjar, S. Kos, D. Huljević:</b> Role of Space Weather Impact Assessment on Sustainable Operation of GNSS-Based Transport Systems .....	1
<b>M. Antunović, T. Keser, H. Glavaš:</b> Public Accessible Micrometeorological Stations Network Model for Road Traffic Weather Conditioned Safety Supervision.....	5
<b>M. Gregurić:</b> Model adaptivnog upravljanja cestovnim raskrižjem temeljen na neizrazitom sustavu zaključivanja / Model of Adaptive Control for Road Intersection Based on Fuzzy Reasoning System.....	9
<b>Lj. Krpan, R. Maršanić, M. Mamić:</b> Mogućnost primjene postupka višekriterijske optimizacije u prometnom planiranju i projektiranju / Possibility of Applying Multicriteria Optimization Process in Transport Planning and Design.....	13
<b>H. Glavaš, M. Ivanović, T. Keser :</b> Energetska učinkovitost u cestovnom prometu / Energy Efficiency of Road Traffic.....	19
<b>S. Šolman, H. Baričević, Ž. Smojver:</b> Benchmarking u cestovnom prijevozu putnika / Benchmarking in Passenger Road Transport .....	26
<b>M. Mirić, Z. Bobuš, R. Džanić:</b> Prijevoz osoba s invaliditetom u gradu Zagrebu / Transport of Persons with Disabilities in the City of Zagreb .....	31
<b>S. Alispahić, M. Tešija:</b> Utjecaj rizičnih situacija vozača motocikla na sigurnost cestovnog prometa / Influence of Risk Situations of Motorcycle Riders on Road Safety .....	35
<b>R. Maršanić, D. Frka, S. Muschet:</b> Počeci organizirane naplate parkiranja u Gradu Rijeci / Beginning of Organized Payment for Parking Services in the City of Rijeka.....	39
<b>S. Matoš, S. Šimurina:</b> Razvoj sustava naplate parkiranja u Gradu Zagrebu promjenom korištenja povlaštenih parkirnih karata / City of Zagreb Parking Charging System Development by Parking Permits Usage Modification.....	45
<b>R. Maršanić, S. Muschet , D. Frka:</b> Primjena geografsko informacijskog sustava u upravljanju javnim parkiralištima / Application of the Geographical Information Systems in Managing Public Parking.....	52
<b>I. Vulić, Ž. Ivanović:</b> Razmišljanje o sadašnjem pristupu razvoja regionalnog prometa Dalmacije – primjer pogrešaka na obilaznici Omiša / A Observation about Today's Approach to Dalmatian's Regional Traffic Development, Example of Round of Omish .....	56
<b>G. Tomljenović, I. Ašćić:</b> Zimsko održavanje cesta kao čimbenik sigurnosti u cestovnom prometu / Winter Road Maintenance as Factor of Safety in Road Traffic.....	61
<b>U. Zorin, R. Rijavec, B. Gostiša, J. Pirc, S. Gorup:</b> Slovenian Traffic Management and Control Systems .....	65

### ZRAČNI PROMET / AIR TRANSPORTATION

<b>R. Rauch:</b> Future Trends in Passenger Self Service Processing on Airports .....	69
<b>R. Škurla Babić, M. Ozmec-Ban:</b> Implementacija elektroničkog cargo poslovanja na tržištu zračnog prometa Hrvatske / E-Freight Implementation in the Croatian Air Cargo Market.....	73
<b>V. Vetma:</b> Model planiranja smjenskog rada u prihvatu i otpremi zrakoplova na primjeru Zračne luke Split / Shift Work Planning Model of Aircraft Ground Handling – Case Study Split Airport .....	77
<b>Ž. Marušić, D. Šimunović, M. Opačak:</b> Impact of Aircraft Utilisation Intensity on Technical Dispatch Reliability .....	83

<b>M. Poljančić, E. Bazijanac, A. Domitrović:</b> Mjerenje i analiza ispušnih plinova zrakoplovnog klipnog motora / Measurement and Analysis of an Aircraft Piston Engine Exhaust Gasses.....	89
<b>I. Tukarić, A. Domitrović, E. Bazijanac:</b> Analiza problema prisustva ispušnih plinova u kabini zrakoplova s klipnim motorom / Analysis of Exhaust Gas Presence in a Cabin of an Aircraft With Piston Engine.....	93
<b>S. Krile, M. Krile:</b> Better Profitability of Multi-Stop Flight Routes.....	97
<b>S. Pavlin, M. Starčević, V. Vetma:</b> Povezivanje Zračne luke Zagreb i Grada Zagreba / Zagreb Airport and the City of Zagreb Connections.....	101
<b>T. Gradišar, D. Šimunović, M. Opačak:</b> Communication Loops within Organisation in Respect to Safety Culture.....	105

## POMORSKI I RIJEČNI PROMET / MARITIME AND RIVER TRANSPORTATION

<b>I. Aleksi, Ž. Hocenski, D. Kraus:</b> Trajectory Planning Based on 3D CAD Models for Autonomous Underwater Vehicle Inspection .....	108
<b>V. Valković, J. Obhodaš, I. Šuker:</b> Underwater Surface Inspection of Infrastructure Objects .....	114
<b>S. Martinić-Cezar, D. Kezić, N. Račić:</b> Computer Control of Intelligent Ship Engine Sulzer RT-flex.....	121
<b>I. Krelja Perković, M. Bernobić, D. Perović:</b> Brod jaružar za usisavanje / Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger .....	126
<b>I. Krelja Perković, M. Bernobić, D. Andačić, M. Roce:</b> Opis sustava automatike i dinamičkog pozicioniranja na brodu tipa jaružar za usisavanje / Description of Automation and Dynamic Positioning System on Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger .....	130
<b>G. Jelčić, D. Perović, M. Vražić:</b> AC - sinus - frekvencijski pretvarači / AC - Sinus Frequency Converters .....	134
<b>M. Bernobić, A. Milić, M. Roce, I. Krelja Perković, D. Andačić:</b> Siguran povratak u luku / Safe Return To Port .....	140
<b>T. Rožić, A. Orlić Protega, J. Vrdoljak:</b> Određivanje optimalnog broja pristana kontejnerskog terminala Ploče / Optimal Berth Number Determination for Container Terminal Ploče .....	144
<b>R. Kovačević, I. Vulić, Ž. Ivanović:</b> Lukobran makarske luke, multidisciplinarni pogled / Jetty for Makarska's Port, a Multidiscipline Approach .....	150
<b>R. Kadrić, M. Tušek, I. Šuker:</b> CRORIS – hrvatski riječni informacijski servisi / CRORIS - Croatian River Information Services.....	155
<b>I. Bortas, M. Perko, J. Vrdoljak:</b> Utjecaj prostornog razvoja bečke luke na prostorno planiranje luke Zagreb / Influence of Vienna Port Spatial Development on Urban Planning Port of Zagreb .....	162

## ŽELJEZNIČKI PROMET / RAILWAY TRANSPORTATION

<b>Č. Glavaš:</b> Neke mogućnosti podizanja energetske učinkovitosti tramvajskog prijevoza u Zagrebu / Some Aspects of Improving the Energy Efficiency of Tram Traffic in City of Zagreb .....	169
<b>D. Brčić, M. Slavulj, D. Šojat:</b> Analysis of Tram Priority in the City of Zagreb.....	173
<b>D. Crnarić:</b> Sustav za mjerenje promjera i profila vijenca kotača na tračničkim vozilima / System for Wheel Diameter and Flange Profile Measurement on Rolling Stock .....	177

<b>Dž. Čelić:</b> Proračun magnetskog i električnog polja sustava električne vuče i procjena utjecaja na ljude / Calculation of Magnetic and Electric Fields of Electric Traction System and Influence on Humans .....	181
<b>M. Lukač, G. Ješe, J. Ungarov :</b> Zamjena sustava električne vuče 3 kV= sustavom 25 kV, 50 Hz na pruzi Moravice-Rijeka-Šapjane / Replacement of Electric Traction System 3 kV DC with 25 kV, 50 Hz AC on the Railway Line Moravice-Rijeka-Šapjane.....	186
<b>T.J. Mlinarić, H. Haramina, I. Raspudić, B. Duvnjak:</b> Uloga regionalnog prijevoza u razvoju putničkog prometa u Republici Hrvatskoj / Role of the Regional Railway Traffic in Development of Passenger Transport Service in Republic of Croatia.....	190
<b>I. Gršković, J. Ninić, I. Križanović:</b> Varijante novih željezničkih vozila baziranih na niskopodnom vlaku HŽ 6112 / A Range of the new Railway Vehicles Based on the Low Floor EMU HŽ 6112.....	196
<b>J. Kunac, B. Radoš, D. Ljubek:</b> Intermodalni vagoni / Intermodal Wagons.....	202
<b>H. Haramina, T.J. Mlinarić, D. Bilić:</b> Utjecaj sustava podrške u vožnji vlaka na učinkovitost željezničkog prometa / Impact of Train Driver Support System on Railway Traffic Efficiency .....	206
<b>M. Davidović:</b> Utjecaj pouzdanosti signalno-sigurnosnih uređaja na učinkovitost željeznice / Impact of Interlocking Systems Reliability on Railway Productivity .....	210
<b>A. Schöbel, B. Korbar:</b> Automated Hot Box Detection for Derailment Prevention .....	214
<b>M. Viduka:</b> Željeznički signalno sigurnosni uređaji dizajnirani za razinu sigurnosti (SIL) 4 / Railway Safety Signalling Devices Designed for Safety Integrity Level (SIL) 4.....	218
<b>L. Kos, M. Otrin:</b> New Legislative Framework and Conformity Assessment in "TSI" of Conventional Rail System.....	222
<b>M. Otrin, L. Kos:</b> Practical Experiences with the Railway Directive 2008/57/EC .....	228
<b>I. Spajić:</b> Modernizacija signalno sigurnosnog sustava - Zagreb Glavni kolodvor / Replacement of the Signalling and Interlocking System in Zagreb Main Railway Station .....	232

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## INDEX AUTORA / INDEX OF AUTHORS

Aleksi I. ....	108	Mamić M. ....	13
Alispahić S. ....	35	Maršanić R. ....	13, 39, 52
Andačić D. ....	130, 140	Martinić-Cezar S. ....	121
Antunović M. ....	5	Marušić Ž. ....	83
Aščić I. ....	61	Matoš S. ....	45
Baričević H. ....	26	Milić A. ....	140
Bazijanac E. ....	89, 93	Mirić M. ....	31
Bernobić, M. ....	126, 130, 140	Mlinarić T.J. ....	190, 206
Bilić D. ....	206	Muschet S. ....	39, 52
Bobuš Z. ....	31	Ninić J. ....	196
Bortas I. ....	162	Obhodaš J. ....	114
Brčić D. ....	173	Opačak M. ....	83, 105
Crnarić D. ....	177	Orlić Protega A. ....	144
Čelić Dž. ....	181	Otrin M. ....	222, 228
Davidović M. ....	210	Ozmec-Ban M. ....	73
Domitrović A. ....	89, 93	Pavlin S. ....	101
Duvnjak B. ....	190	Perko M. ....	162
Džanić R. ....	31	Perović D. ....	126, 134
Filjar R. ....	1	Pirc J. ....	65
Frka D. ....	39, 52	Poljančić M. ....	89
Glavaš Č. ....	169	Račić N. ....	121
Glavaš H. ....	5, 19	Radoš B. ....	202
Gorup S. ....	65	Raspudić I. ....	190
Gostiša B. ....	65	Rauch R. ....	69
Gradišar T. ....	105	Rijavec R. ....	65
Gregurić M. ....	9	Roce M. ....	130, 140
Gršković I. ....	196	Rožić T. ....	144
Haramina H. ....	190, 206	Schöbel A. ....	214
Hocenski Ž. ....	108	Slavulj M. ....	173
Huljević D. ....	1	Smojver Ž. ....	26
Ivanović M. ....	19	Spajić I. ....	232
Ivanović Ž. ....	56, 150	Starčević M. ....	101
Jelčić G. ....	134	Šimunović D. ....	83, 105
Ješe G. ....	186	Šimurina S. ....	45
Kadrić R. ....	155	Škurla Babić R. ....	73
Keser T. ....	5, 19	Šojat D. ....	173
Kezić D. ....	121	Šolman S. ....	26
Korbar B. ....	214	Šuker I. ....	114, 155
Kos L. ....	222, 228	Tešija M. ....	35
Kos S. ....	1	Tomljenović G. ....	61
Kovačević R. ....	150	Tukarić I. ....	93
Kraus D. ....	108	Tušek M. ....	155
Krelja Perković I. ....	126, 130, 140	Ungarov J. ....	186
Krile M. ....	97	Valković V. ....	114
Krile S. ....	97	Vetma V. ....	77, 101
Križanović I. ....	196	Viduka M. ....	218
Krpan Lj. ....	13	Vražić M. ....	134
Kunac J. ....	202	Vrdoljak J. ....	144, 162
Lukač M. ....	186	Vulić I. ....	56, 150
Ljubek D. ....	202	Zorin U. ....	65



# PUBLIC ACCESSIBLE MICROMETEOROLOGICAL STATIONS NETWORK MODEL FOR ROAD TRAFFIC WEATHER CONDITIONED SAFETY SUPERVISION

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## Abstract

*One of important road traffic safety aspect is knowledge on road weather condition. Poor weather conditions are main cause of dangerous road traffic condition and make traffic unsafe generally. In function of traffic accident prevention and increasing traffic flow in safety aspect, a supervision of weather condition is necessary through road weather information gathering. Today those systems for weather condition monitoring exist but they are often very expensive in manner of applying in dense monitoring network. Also those systems are closed for public access and real time information gathering and distribution. In this paper is presented and developed a model for micro localized road weather condition supervision by utilizing cheap micro meteorological stations network based on existing GSM network data exchange with public access and informing through SMS.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Road traffic safety doesn't depend only on driving skills nor road surface quality and terrain configuration. Weather and time-space conditions are one of significant causes and factors that influences on traffic safety as inseparable and unavoidable traffic parameter. Especially, poor weather condition like strong wind, rain, fog, icy pavement or snow are main cause of making a dangerous road traffic condition and make traffic unsafe generally [1, 2]. Weather as traffic parameter often is hardly to predict due many dependent parameters of weather forming and sustaining mechanism. Today science tries to make long term weather prognosis which relies only on mathematical forecasting methods of known weather mechanism. Quality of prognosis strongly depends on quality of on-field weather parameter measurements [3]. A way to increase quality of weather forecasting is by increasing a number of weather stations in manner of applying these in sufficiently dense sensor network which regularly can be very costly. Traffic infrastructures such roads, bridges, tunnels and other large can cause an appearance of micro localized weather condition. That is common cause of making an unsafe traffic conditions and road accident occurrences, especially on roads that are spreaded over much

different terrain configurations. In function of traffic accident prevention and increasing traffic flow in safety aspect, a constant supervision of weather condition is necessary through road weather information gathering and control centers informing. Today these systems exist, such in [4], where a sensor network is formed and applied on road infrastructure. The systems for road weather condition supervision helps to on-time prevent weather related accidents and rises traffic safety easily through remotely control. Existing systems for weather condition monitoring are often very expensive in manner of applying in dense monitoring network for reliable supervision. Also those systems are closed for public access and real time information gathering and distribution. In this paper is presented and developed a model for micro localized road weather condition supervision by utilizing cheap micro meteorological stations network based on existing GSM network data exchange with public access and informing through SMS.

## 2. WEATHER MONITORING

As is stated in introduction chapter, traffic safety is tightly related to road and traffic weather

conditions. Also, the traffic safety law recognizes poor weather conditions and recommends or commands procedures for safely driving or sustaining traffic safety [5]. The foundation of such supervision system relies on weather station network alongside of road infrastructure combined with weather forecasting data which are regularly provided by national weather observation center.

## 2.1. Weather monitoring station

Weather station represents backbone of weather data gathering, [6], and distribution in weather based traffic safety supervision systems. A weather station gathers all related data that can cause unsafely traffic conditions like; rain appearance and its intensity, snow appearance and its intensity, surrounding air temperature, road surface temperature, ability of forming icy road surface, dew point temperature and ability of fog forming, wind direction and intensity and other relevant parameters.

Gathered data are distributed to supervision center over some kind of communication network, proprietary or existing one, and make a functional traffic supervision and control system, Fig. 1.

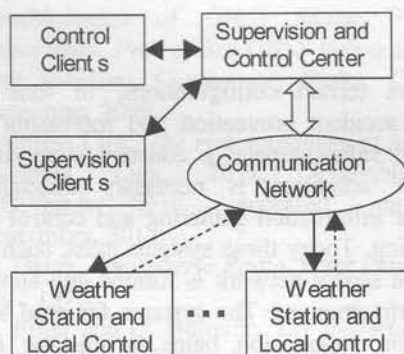


Fig.1. Functional block diagram of traffic safety supervision and control system.

Fully equipped weather stations are often very expensive in manner of applying in dense monitoring network. Station price arises with its measuring complexity and influence on infrastructure incorporation needs. Measuring complexity and incorporation needs can be reduced by reducing measuring parameters. The proposed weather parameter measuring station in this paper relies only on air temperature, humidity and wind parameter measurements and providing air temperature, air humidity, dew point temperature and wind direction and intensity information. Such simplicity of proposed station measurement requirements and ability lowers the station price and serves only as a weather measurement point in manner of increase of weather station network density. Secondary effect of applying this kind of

dense monitoring network is expected in increase of a quality of road weather forecasting data by providing more weather information for forecasting model. Due such simplicity these stations are often called *micrometeorological weather stations*.

## 2.2. Micrometeorological station structure

A weather micrometeorological station consists of several functional units, Fig. 2.

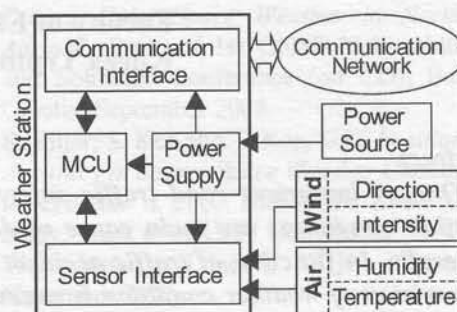


Fig.2. Functional block diagram of micrometeorological station.

These units make a standalone functional system and they are; *MCU* – microcontroller unit for data acquisition, processing and distribution preparing, *Sensor interface* – sensor connectivity, *Power supply* – powering requirements, *Communication interface* – connectivity to data exchange network for data distribution and station remote control.

Sensor interface consists of air temperature and humidity measurement sensor with air dew point calculation ability based on integrated digital *Sensirion SHT11* sensor [7]. The wind parameter measurements are done by utilizing an anemometer vane for wind direction and rotating cups for wind speed. Complete anemometer system utilizes fully digital interface even for vane and speed and relies on incremental encoder principle. Station power consumption in idle state is 0.2W and 4.5W in active state.

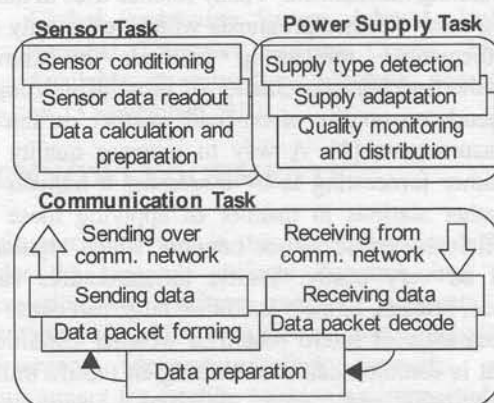


Fig.3. Block diagram of station algorithm.



Algorithm of this station does three tasks only, Fig. 3. First task maintain measurements jobs and measurements calculation. Second task does communication requirements of calling number recognition and data serving. Third task monitors power supply health and does solar charging requirements or conditioning of locally available power supply. Total producing cost of such system currently is less than \$100 USD and like that much less costly than fully equipped one. Whole micro-station system is packed in small and sturdy box (30x20x10cm) suitable for fast mounting.

### 2.3. Connectivity and data model

Data connectivity of this station is done by utilizing a proven and existing data network infrastructure. Existing network that is used is a GSM cellular network of mobile providers. As a communication model for data exchange in this micrometeorological station is used. SMS method is suitable due its simplicity and sufficiently capabilities for small data amount data transportations requirements of this station. Amount of data of this station is accommodated within few bytes and doesn't exceed total amount of 160 characters of standard SMS packet size. Interface that utilizes and does all necessary communication steps is based on GSM data module (in this station is used Telit GM862). Data exchange procedure steps (data pooling) are shown in functional block diagram on Fig. 4.

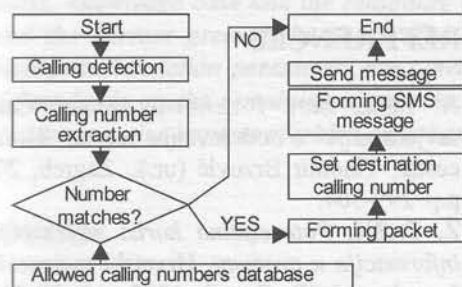


Fig.4. Data pooling diagram.

Data exchange procedure relies only on recognizing a calling number and responding with packet data structure in form of SMS message.

## 3. NETWORK MODEL

Alongside weather stations data distribution network is another important part. Existing network model for data exchange is mainly closed for public access and prevents end-user (driver) to have direct and instant information on road weather and traffic condition. In following text is presented

a network model for data exchange with addition in form of public access ability.

Main idea of proposed network model is to grant access for end-users to gather instant and basic information of desired road traffic condition. The structure of proposed network, Fig.5, is similar to existing network model with difference in addition of separate data servers which serve end-user requests through simple SMS data pooling.

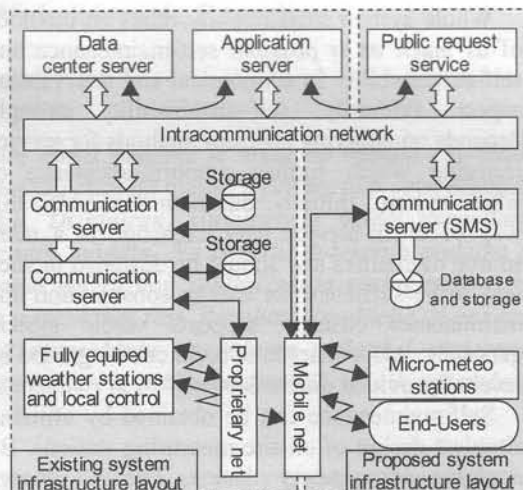


Fig.5. Proposed network model.

Stations are pooled by SMS communication server in regular period of time. Pooling servers pools every station and store its responses into a database and storage server where all data can be accessed by application server and/or server for servicing public requests. Application server uses gathered data as addition in improving of road and traffic weather condition estimation.

### 3.1. Public accessibility

Public servicing request server services a request of end-users and provides them an instant and on-time road and traffic condition information. The main idea is; end-user sends their request to public server as an SMS formed request. SMS request can contain and server responses are:

- *Road formally name only*; i.e. "A3", where end-user request global condition of A3 road. Public server response with globally estimated or on-time condition like, "Temperature is 28°C, mild wind, no fallings, no wet sections, 130 km/h limit" with addition of exception like, "road closed on section xy, turn at ...", or on-site "road repairing at section xy, speed limit 60km/h, slow down".
- *or, road formally name and section xy*; i.e. "A3, Bajakovo" where user request traffic condition at border crossing and payroll nearby. Public server responses with i.e. "Attention: Payroll jams 2 km



*in length, temperature is 33°C, humidity 95%, no wind, border crossing estimation time: 1 hour"*

Server response can be in variety of forms and can contain general and vital road and traffic condition data combined with commands and/or recommendations for safely driving.

### 3.2. Sustainability and payment

Whole system sustainability relies on methods of *as much as is possible* self-maintenance and self-sustainability in economical and intervention aspect. Primarily, self-sustainability strongly depends on applying efficient methods for service charging which further supports existence of whole system. Initially, due nature of SMS, this way of client-service data exchange is a main source of charges and should be designed in such way to be sufficient for energy consumption and maintenance costs - supports whole system generally. Also, charges of SMS can be graded by level of provided traffic details.

Self-maintenance can be obtained by utilizing simplest design of on-site measuring stations. By applying low energy design, keeping energy consumption low and designing robust and element-resistant construction, maintenance can be significantly reduced. A proposed micro-meteorological station structure and design, presented in this paper, have by its nature.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Traffic safety doesn't depend only on road physical quality or terrain configurations or driver driving skills. Great factor that is inseparable and greatly influences on traffic safety is weather and weather conditions. Roads as most significant part of traffic infrastructure can significantly influence on appearance of micro localized weather condition primarily by its large masses and areas. These conditions are hardly to estimate by utilizing only computer meteorological forecast models without on-site measurements. To improve meteorological condition estimates by its quality and accuracy using on-site measurements are mandatory. Today the variety of systems for these purposes exists.

The backbone of these systems is a network of meteorological stations that measures weather parameters. Today existing systems measures these parameters and controls entire roads or roads sections by informing drivers either by controlling on-site signalization or informing them through public information systems. Common characteristic of public informing is a delay in information appearance regarding real on-site weather forming condition. Due ability of fast weather forming and changing condition on specific road sections that kind of delay in information spreading chain can

cause traffic jams, closed roads or even traffic accidents. Main reason of appearance of such delay is closeness of existing systems for traffic safety control and supervision to end-users, drivers respectively.

In this paper is presented a network model that is open for public access in manner of providing instant and on-time information about road and traffic weather condition. This model of network relies mainly on existing network infrastructure by utilizing existing weather stations with addition of number of simpler weather station that measures only basic weather conditions of air. These simpler weather stations provide weather data in manner to make measuring network denser to achieve better and more accurate weather forecasting. Also these stations data combined with existing weather stations partially open enclosed existing monitoring system to public access.

Public access of this system is achieved by introducing separate service system which gathers data from simpler weather stations utilizing SMS and serving public request also through this channel. By that configuration and network modeling the public access has been made and instant and on-time informing of end-user is achieved. That greatly helps when travel is planned, routing has been made or traffic avoidance decided. Whole system upgrade can be self-sustained and self-maintained by utilizing SMS charging mechanism and designed in a way for low cost, low energy consumption with sturdy and simply design.

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