## How can we shape the future of mobile connectivity with 6G?

Fusing connectivity and AI to deliver bespoke experiences that evolve

#### **Dr. Tingfang Ji**

Vice President, Engineering Qualcomm Technologies, Inc.

#### Dr. Gavin Horn

Senior Director, Engineering Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. San Diego, CA

Snapdragon and Qualcomm branded products are products of Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries.

## Shaping the digital future



Powering the mobile revolution

Redefining connected processing

Enabling intelligent computing everywhere

# Where are we in the cellular innovation cycle?

5 G

Ramping volume and expanding to new use case

5G ADVANCED

Completing 1st standard
—2<sup>nd</sup> phase of 5G innovations

6 G

Aligning on vision, foundational research, timeline, requirements



PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

Deliver end-to-end prototypes and impactful demonstrations

STANDARDIZATION

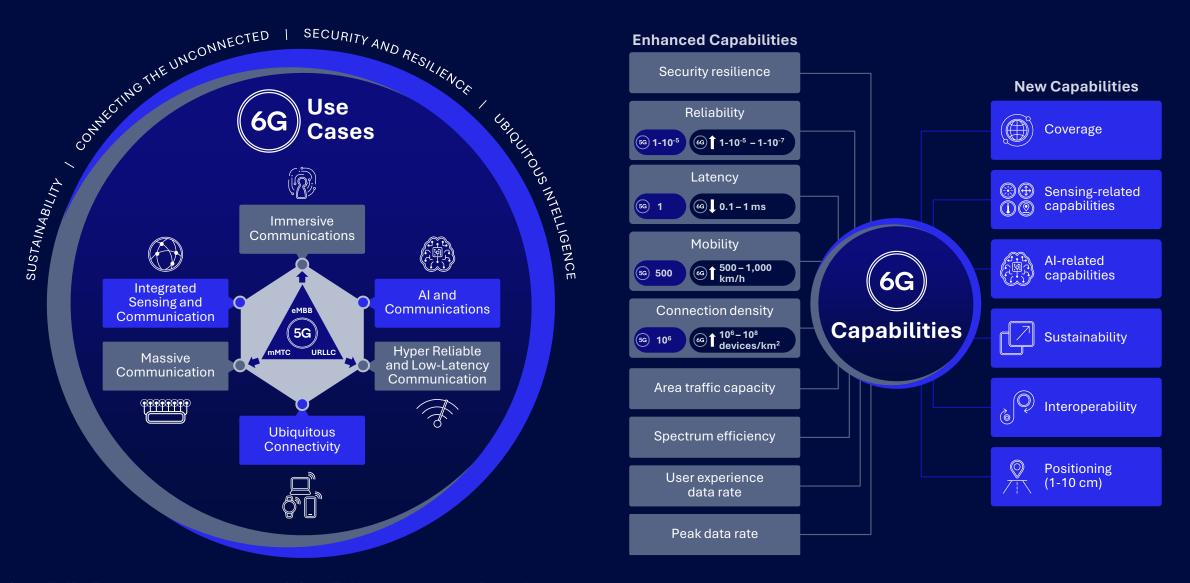
Drive e2e design with ecosystem and through standards process

TRIALS

INVENTION

Collaborate on OTA field trials that track 3GPP standardization and drive ecosystem towards rapid commercialization

## 6G vision from ITU-R — Usage scenarios and capabilities



### 6G will support an unprecedented range of frequency bands

LOW BANDS

below 1 GHz (~20 MHz BW)

MID BANDS

1 — 7 GHz (~100 MHZ BW)

**UPPER MID-BANDS** 

7 – 24 GHz (~500 MHz BW)

mmWAVE BANDS

24-71 GHz

SUB-THZ

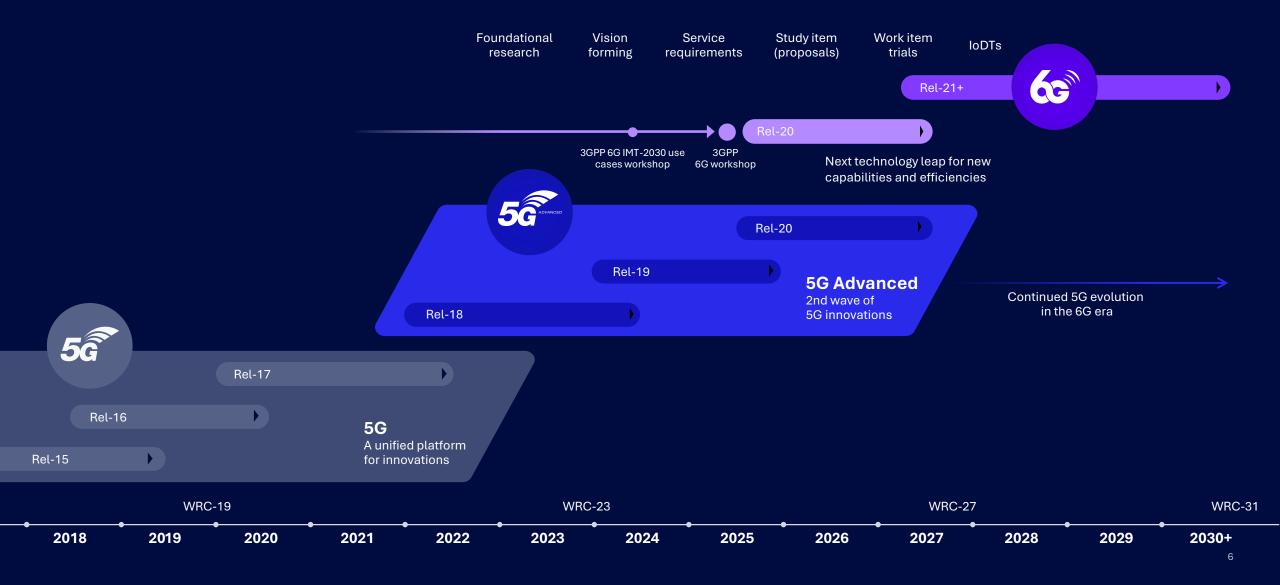
With 6G, lower frequencies with narrower bandwidths will provide even better long-range coverage.

Bandwidths up to ~100 MHz, shorter wavelengths, massive MIMO antennas and MU-MIMO enable high capacities New 6G spectrum with bandwidths up to ~500 MHz bring additional wide-area capacity for communications and sensing 6G spectrum bringing additional local-area capacity for communications and sensing

Higher frequencies with wide bandwidths provide excellent precision

Improving coverage and capacity in legacy bands and supporting new frequency bands for growth

### Leading the 5G Advanced evolution toward 6G



## Global Momentum for 6G is growing

We are leading key discussions and working groups to promote early government investments in critical technologies

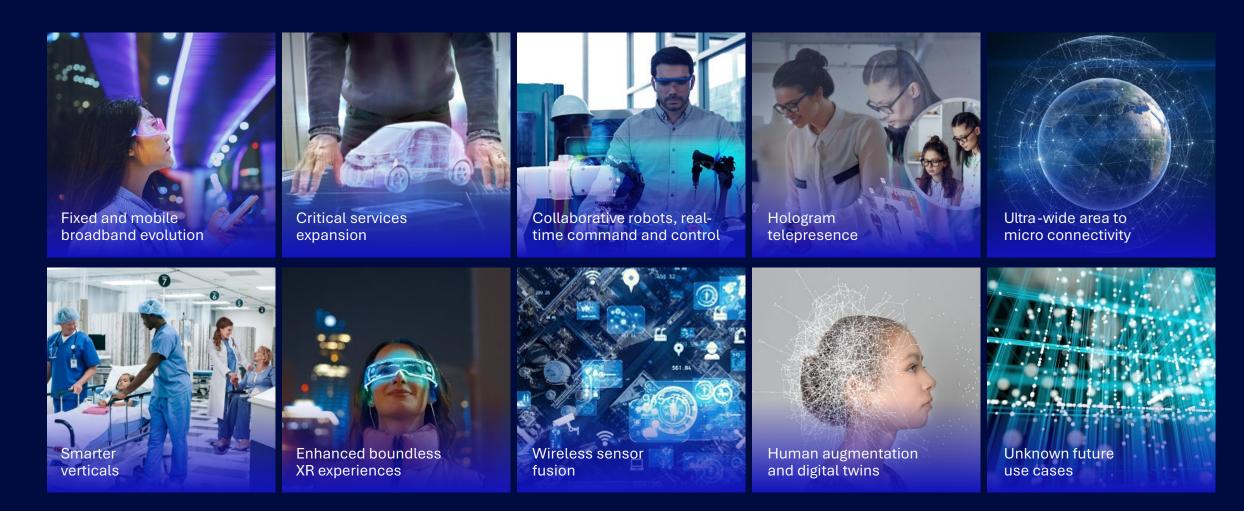


IMT-2030 defines next-gen mobile system requirements for 2030 and beyond



The standards body responsible for global 6G technology standardization







Propelling next-level experiences and innovative use cases in the new era of the connected intelligent edge for 2030 and beyond

## Evolving wireless with AI





## Applying AI to solve difficult wireless challenges

Deep wireless domain knowledge is required to optimally use AI capabilities



AI-enhanced wireless communications



Hard-to-model problems



Computational infeasibility of optimal solution



Efficient modem parameter optimization



Dealing with non-linearity







Determining appropriate representations for hard-to-model problems



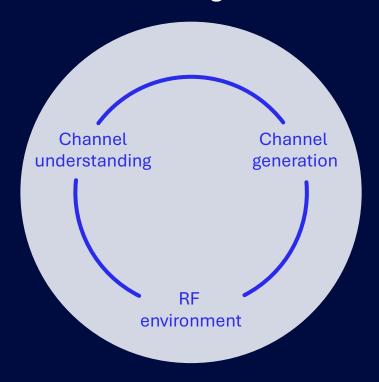
Finding near-ideal and computationally realizable solutions



Modeling non-linear functions

## Using AI/ML to solve hard-to-model wireless problems

Example: AI/ML can improve channel modeling



#### **Channel Generation**

Synthetic channel generation, e.g.,  $GAN^1 \underline{T}$ 

$$p(x_{1:T}) = \prod_{t=1}^{T} p(x_t | x_{1:t-1})$$

#### **Channel Prediction**

Fading channel prediction, RSRP prediction<sup>2</sup>

$$p(x_{t+n}|x_{1:t})$$

Channel Modeling

#### **Channel Inference**

Inferring channel on other antennas, beams, frequencies, or locations<sup>2</sup>

Recover full  $x_t$  based on partial observation:

$$\tilde{x}_t$$
:  $p(x_t|\tilde{x}_{1:t})$ 

#### **Channel Compression**

Channel State Feedback<sup>2,3</sup> Compress  $x_{t+1}$  based on prior

$$p(x_{t+1}|x_{1:t})$$



#### **BUILDING ON THE**

## 5G and 5G Advanced foundation

Targeting to expand wireless machine learning to the end-to-end system across network, RAN, device, and air interface



## Network architecture enhancements

Allowing for machine learning to run over different HW/SW and future RAN function split to improve flexibility and efficiency



## AI/ML procedure enhancements

Optimizing system for model management, training (e.g., federated and reinforcement learning), and inference



## Data management enhancements

Standardizing ML data storage/ access, data registration/ discovery, and data request/ subscription



## New and expanded use cases

Supporting traffic / mobility prediction, coverage / capacity optimization, massive MIMO, SON, CSI feedback, beam management, and other PHY/MAC and upper layer improvements



Qualcomm

**MWCB 2024** 

## Wireless Al Interoperability

For multi-vendor system

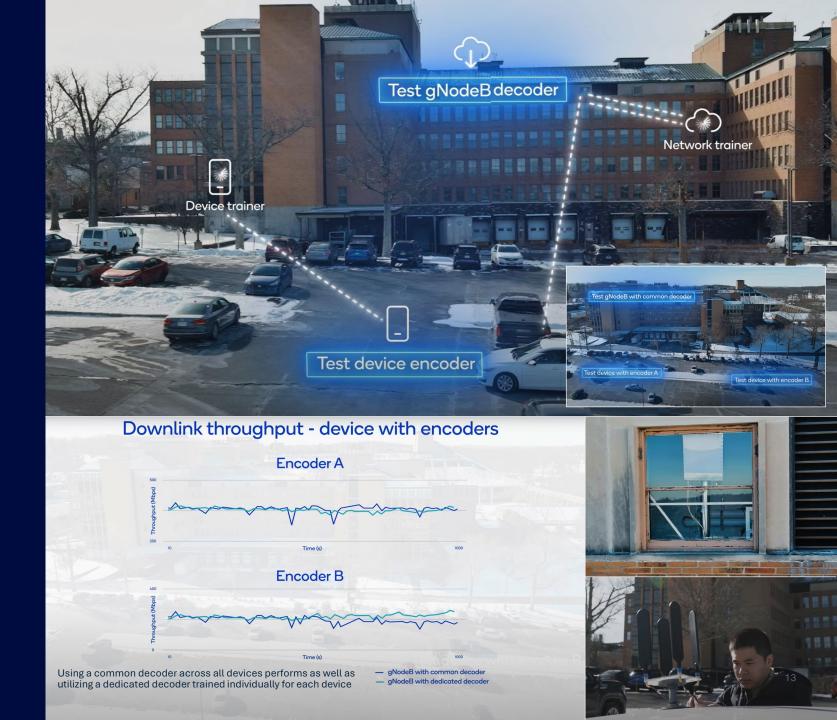
Close collaboration with Nokia Bell Labs on an over-the-air prototype of two-sided channel state information (CSI) feedback

Test network in Murray Hill, NJ, with Nokia infra and Snapdragon 5G Modem-RF

Sequential training enables data sharing but not neural network structures (models)

3GPP global standards compliant, potentially a part of 5G Advanced Rel-19+

Snapdragon and Qualcomm branded products are products of Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries.





**Qualconno**MWCB 2024

## Al-enabled 5G mmWave Beam Management

Time-domain and spatial-domain device beam prediction

Reduced signaling overhead yields a more energy-efficient system design

Global standards-compliant design based on 3GPP Rel-18/19 projects

Over-the-air testbed operating in the 28 GHz band with up to 800 MHz bandwidth

Snapdragon and Qualcomm branded products are products of Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries.



A KEY PILLAR OF THE 5G ADVANCED ERA

## Wireless Al

3 projects in Release 19

## Study on AI/ML for Next-Gen Radio Access Network<sup>1</sup>

New use cases including network slicing and coverage and capacity optimization (CCO)

Continued studies on mobility optimization for NR-DC, split architecture support, enhanced energy saving, continuous MDT, and multi-hop device trajectory

## Study on AI/ML to enhance 5G NR mobility<sup>2</sup>

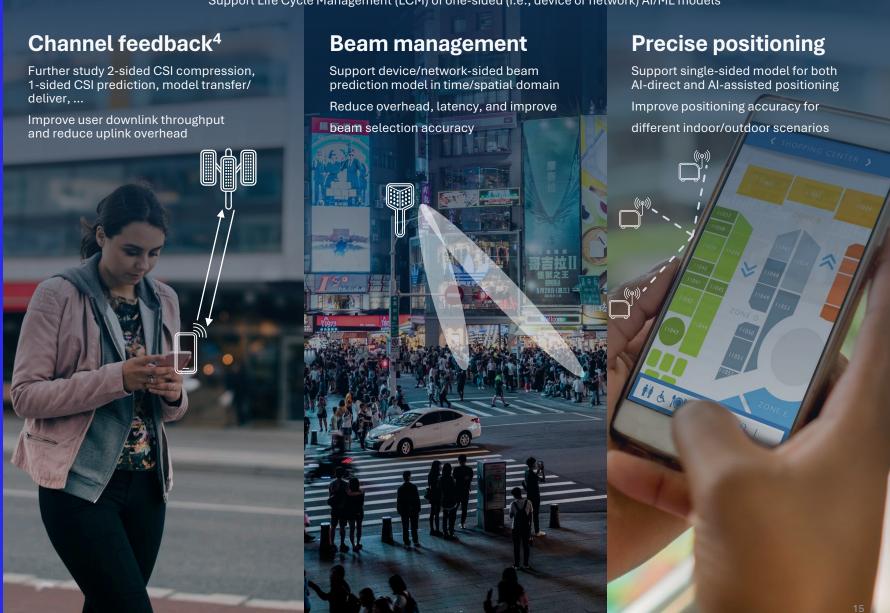
Focusing on L3 device mobility, including RRM measurement & event prediction, device assistance information for network-side model, enhanced LCM, evaluation on testability, interoperability, impacts on RRM requirements and performance

1 RAN 3 led; 2 RAN 2 led; 3 RAN 1 led; 4 Continued study with corresponding checkpoints in RAN#105 (Sept '24) Source: RP-234039 (AI/ML for NR air interface); RP-234054 (Study on AI/ML for NG-RAN); RP-234055 (Study on AI/M for mobility in NR)

## Work on AI/ML Air Interface<sup>3</sup>

#### **General Wireless Al Framework**

Support Life Cycle Management (LCM) of one-sided (i.e., device or network) AI/ML models



## Al-native 6G





## Applying generative modeling to improve wireless communications system design

#### Wide applicability for Generative Modeling



#### Real-time use cases for air interface

Propagation channel Scheduler optimization

Beam management Traffic source

Interference prediction Mobility enhancement

Link / system simulation

Deployment optimization

Positioning and sensing

Network and device optimization

Others...

#### **Application examples**

#### **Channel rendering**



Text description of image or semantic map





#### **Diffusion model**

(To generate channel information)





Channel sampled from a conditional distribution P (h | conditioning from inputs, location)

#### **Network / device prediction**



Context in text, e.g., history of device reports and base station responses





#### Large language model

To learn link, beam, protocol languages





Next action for base station and/or device, sampled from a conditional distribution P (next action | conditioning from inputs)

## Our on-going wireless generative Al research areas

3D mapping and material learning

Foundation models (e.g., link and protocol level use cases, beam prediction, and others)

Neural channel rendering (e.g., map-based, ray tracer augmented, site-specific, and others)

Customized ML-based stochastic channel

Neural surrogate for base station scheduler and applications traffic

And others...









## Machine learning can offer continuous wireless enhancements

Al-native air interface design can enable continual system improvements in between major 3GPP releases through self-learning

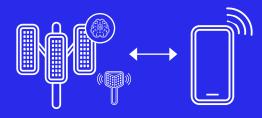
**CURRENT 3GPP RELEASE PROCESS** 

Release X

**Approximately 1.5-year cycle** 

Release X+1

No standardized improvement during nominal Work/study item phase towards subsequent release



## Data-driven communication and network design

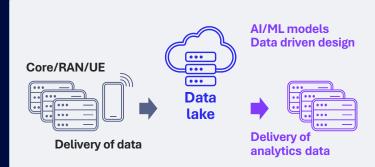
Data-driven system configuration provides end-to-end optimizations

Dynamic parameter adaptation based on fast machine learning algorithms

Neural network system design can customize to given wireless environment

## Solve system-wide issues to support AI/ML in the 6G standard

Management of AI and ML, including model and life-cycle management across functions



#### **Data collection**

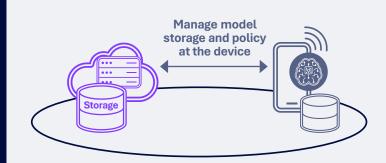
Collect data across different devices and network platforms into a common data lake

Continue to define data collection for new use cases at device and network

Make the data discoverable and accessible by SMO and other network entities

Use the data as input to:

- 1. Train AI/ML models
- 2. Device performance optimization
- 3. Data driven design



#### **Device and network management**

Manage storage and policy of AI/ML models at the device (and potentially network nodes)

Enable per UE and per RAN node AI/ML model provisioning across features (hosted by Qualcomm or 3rd party e.g., OEM or operator)

Support related procedures required to enable the device for AI/ML services, e.g., device configuration and policies



#### AI/ML management procedures

Joint Cloud/Core/RAN and device AI/ML functions to optimize connectivity and user experience

Device-side only or joint device-cloud AI/ML inference across different use cases

Leverages virtualization/containerization to scale and enable data driven device and network autonomy

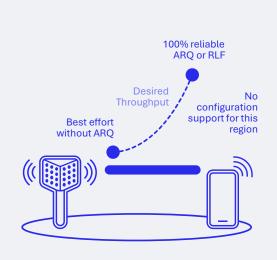
**DATA ANALYTICS** 

LIFE CYCLE MANAGEMENT

**AI/ML SERVICES** 

## Al-native radio protocols – Why now?

Protocol adapts to the user experience instead of the user experience being defined by the protocol behavior



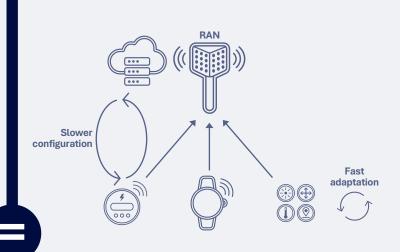


- Current configuration options in the user plane do not support a range of performance that allows the device to match QoS requirements
- Standard is defined to produce predictable performance and simple compliance test of protocol functions instead of allowing flexibility to adapt to various scenarios



### **Leveraging AI capabilities**

- Continual improvement through self-learning
- Data-driven development of Al models responsive to user experiences and services
- Dynamic parameter adaptation based on fast machine learning algorithms hosted at the device and assisted by the cloud



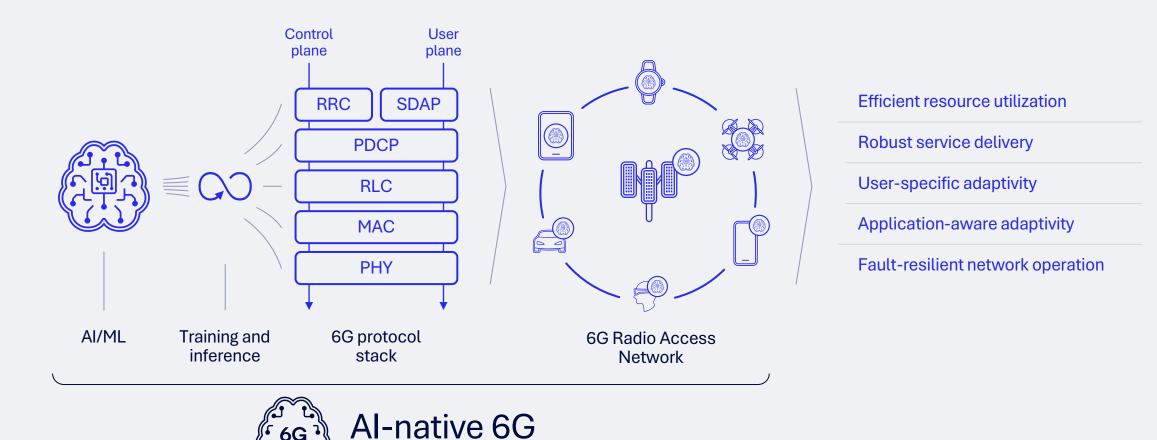
#### **User experience optimization**

- Slower network configuration to define a range of behavior within which the device can autonomously adapt based on current state
- Device's contextual awareness determines how to support user experience based on real-time application requirements and local conditions

### Al-native 6G: Adaptive intelligence across the 6G protocol stack

with adaptive intelligence

Adaptivity is why AI and 6G are complementary

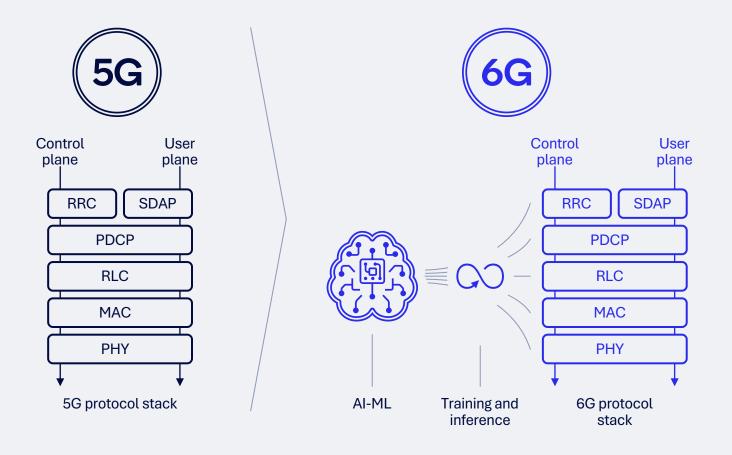


### Deliver performance-driven user experiences with adaptive intelligence

A network protocol that adapts to optimize user experiences instead of user experiences being defined by protocol behaviors

Network parameters are set to **static** values based on worst-case network requirements

Device behaviors are **fixed** across all scenarios for **behavior-driven** compliance



Network parameters are **adapted** intelligently within acceptable ranges under network supervision to meet key performance indicator (KPI) targets

Device behavior is **robust** for **performance-driven** compliance

A paradigm shift from conformance to adaptation and performance-driven optimization

## Migrating from 5G to 6G with a focus on lower TCO

Cost-efficient design mindset

User plane-first design approach

Future-ready 6G Standalone architecture

Dual Stack and Multi-RAT spectrum sharing

RAN sharing

Energy efficient RAN operation

Automated RAN operation with Al



Efficient utilization of CAPEX and OPEX



## Migrating to 6G: Prioritize 6G Standalone for a range of benefits

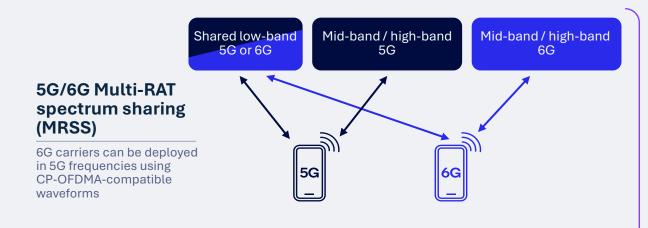
Multi-RAT Spectrum Sharing (MRSS) and Dual-Stack are complementary tools for enhanced 6G experiences over wide areas

## Provide wide area 6G coverage with MRSS

Enhance the robustness of 6G with MRSS for accessing a reliable low-band coverage anchor

Deploy 6G efficiently using CP-OFDMA-compatible 6G waveforms for MRSS in existing 5G bands

Combine existing carriers with new 6G carriers in higher frequencies for higher capacity

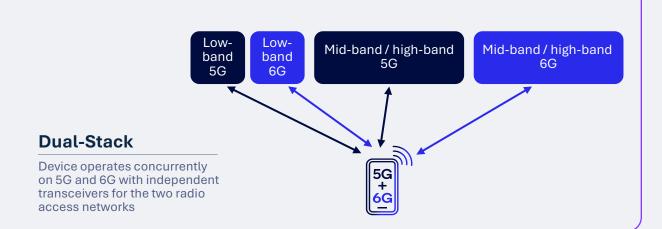


## Improve user experiences with Dual-Stack

Simplify 6G introduction by eliminating 5G-6G RAN coordination with Dual-Stack

Move 5G-6G interworking complexity to the device to reduce the RAN transformation effort

Provide unprecedented user experiences by combining 5G and 6G network capacities



**6G** Standalone

## Prioritizing infrastructure reuse and extensibility for fronthaul evolution

#### **REUSE**

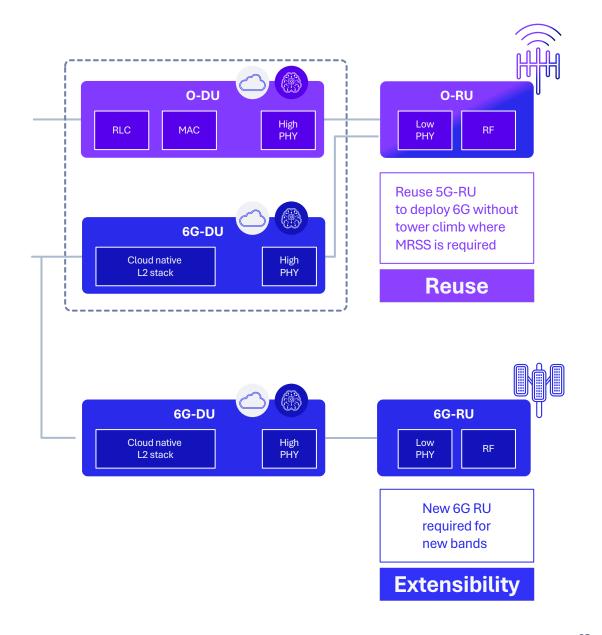
## Migrate open fronthaul from 5G to 6G on existing bands

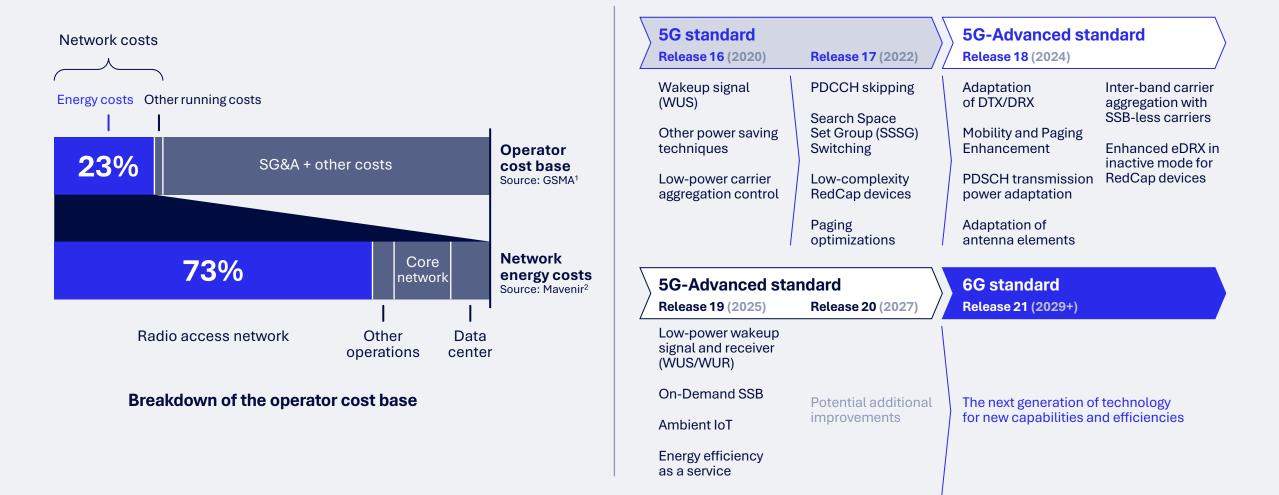
- Strong operator interest to keep Open Fronthaul for 6G
- Reuse existing open fronthaul and radio unit (RU) when migrating existing bands to 6G with MRSS

#### **EXTENSIBILITY**

#### **Evolve open fronthaul for new 6G features**

- OFH design areas under existing OFH architecture and framework
- Layer-1 driven: SBFD and FD, Enhanced MIMO processing of PUCCH, SRS-based DL precoding at RU, Dense UL detection for NOMA
- Layer-2 driven: Signaling simplifications, Topology aware scheduling for C-RAN
- Service driven: Sharing of RU by DUs belonging to different operators, as a TCO reduction and Multiplexing performance gain opportunity





## Building on the 3GPP's long standing efforts to improve energy efficiency

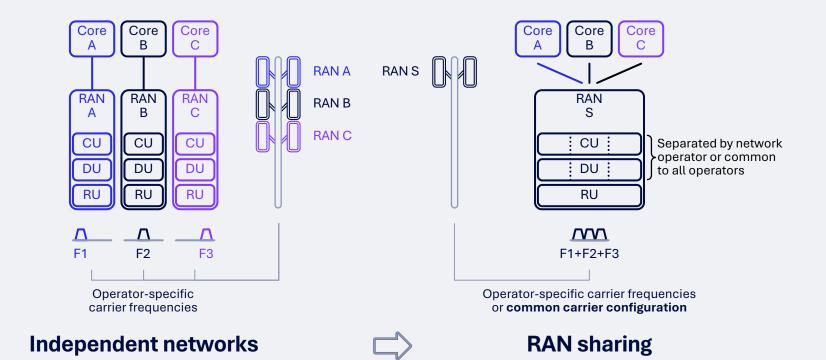
## Reduce TCO and accelerate rollouts with advanced RAN sharing

Share some or all RAN components to reduce CAPEX and OPEX

Differentiate network services and user experiences with separate core networks

Continue with operator-specific spectrum or combine spectrum resources for joint scheduling over a common wide carrier (~ 500 MHz BW)

Reduce antenna tower loading and tower lease costs with fewer antennas by using the common carrier configuration



#### Other TCO reduction technologies:



Al-based network automation for continuous operational optimization



Non-terrestrial networks for energy- and cost- efficient rural coverage



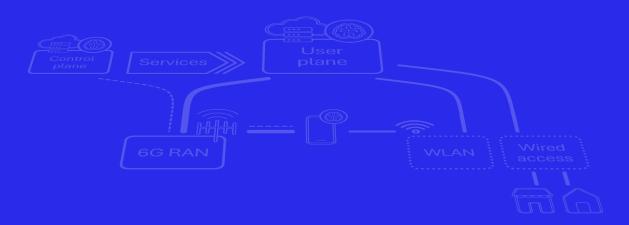
Green networks with energy-saving operational modes for lower OPEX

#### **Examples of commercial RAN sharing:**

4G/5G regional RAN sharing in Europe, Japan and Latin America

5G national RAN sharing in China

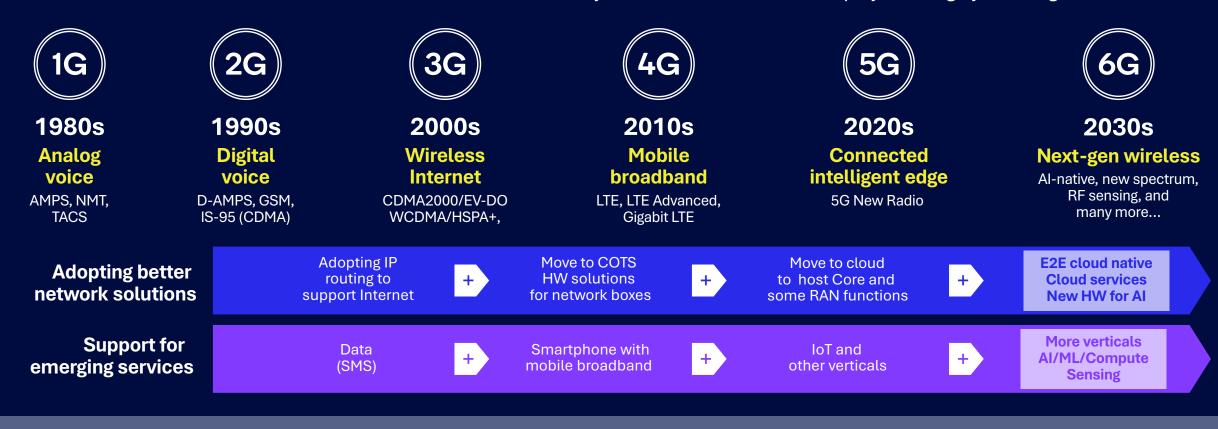
## Rethinking the control plane





## Emerging services and external technologies are driving deployments

Since 3G introduced data the network architecture and connectivity functions that have been deployed is largely unchanged



Key differences across Gs can be characterized by

How the network is implemented

Increased diversity of services OTT

Evolution of connectivity features (e.g., security, mobility)

## Separate user plane architecture helped scale the mobile Internet

3GPP adopted the Internet's IP-centric hourglass model for the user plane

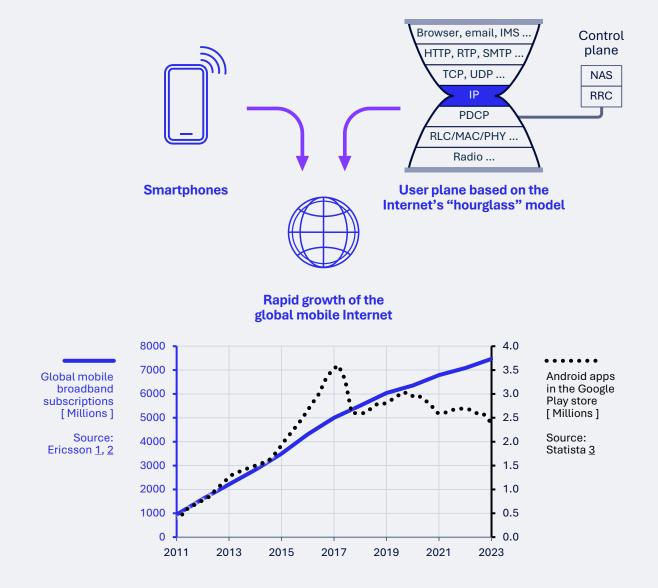
The Internet was designed to scale and serve a broad range of devices and services

The IP layer and the "hourglass" model were instrumental in facilitating the Internet's scale and versatility

- Packet-switching
- Protocol flexibility above and below the IP layer

3GPP adopted the IP "hourglass" model for the user plane to connect mobile devices to the Internet

Mobile users enjoyed an unprecedented diversity of rapidly-evolving services due to the flexibility provided by the smartphone and the IP-native user plane



<sup>1:</sup> https://www.ericsson.com/en/reports-and-papers/mobility-report/mobility-visualizer?f=3&ft=1&r=1&t=9&s=4&u=1&y=2012,2023&c=2

<sup>2:</sup> https://www.ericsson.com/4a98ba/assets/local/reports-papers/mobility-report/documents/2011/traffic-and-market-data-report-q4-2011.pdf

<sup>3:</sup> https://www.statista.com/statistics/266210/number-of-available-applications-in-the-google-play-store/

## The 3GPP control plane: Ever richer feature sets with limited adoption

4G and 5G continue to rely on a separate non-IP control plane as was first introduced in 3G

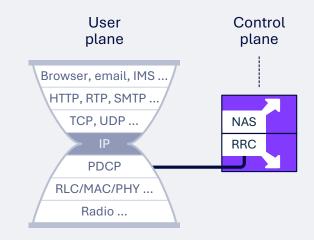
The non-access stratum (NAS) and radio resource control (RRC) control plane protocols have grown in complexity with more services in each 3GPP release

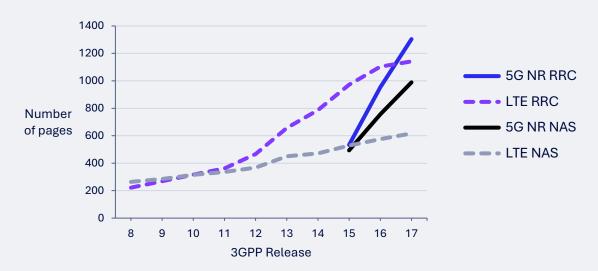
Control plane services have included:

- New horizontal features such as carrier aggregation and dual connectivity
- New verticals including Internet of Things (IoT) and Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X)
- Services hosted as part of the NAS/RRC control plane protocols, e.g., user location through NAS, or data collection through RRC for minimization of drive tests (MDTs)

Services over NAS or RRC require specialized knowledge for development, introduction, testing and maintenance compared to the more mainstream IP-based services

New control-plane services often impact various network entities, which affects adoption





## Adopt a user plane-first design approach for 6G

Simplify 6G architecture and accelerate the introduction and operation of new services

#### User plane first design approach

Benefit from the scale and developer ecosystem for Internet services and protocols

Leverage the advantages of new cloud-based deployments, eliminating the need for additional hardware

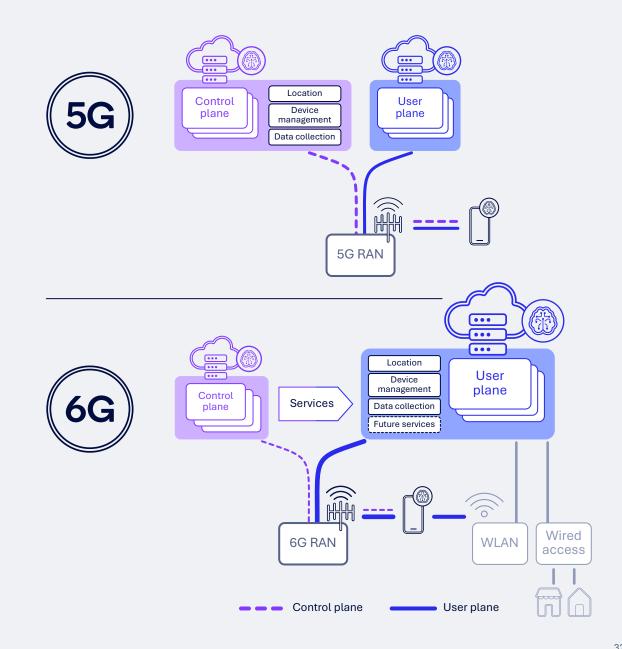
Develop "G-agnostic" services that can work seamlessly across different generations of cellular networks

Backport services to previous generations of mobile networks or cross-port them to other access technologies like Wi-Fi, fiber or cable

#### Lean control plane

Use the control plane only for aspects fundamental to maintaining connectivity and establishing data services, such as

- Security,
- Mobility, and
- Session management



### Reuse and Replace protocols and interfaces

#### Reuse

#### **External interfaces (Exposed to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties)**

Common for 5G and 6G for service and data interworking

Data exposure (NEF) and IP functions (UPF) should be backward compatible

#### **Internal Core interfaces (Service Based)**

#### Reuse HTTP2/TCP

Potentially evolve to HTTPS3/QUIC to support cloud platform evolution

Service discovery and authorization (NRF), and analytics (NWDAF) common for 5G and 6G

#### **Subscription and Policy management**

Common for 5G and 6G as underlying functionality should not change

### Replace

#### **NAS** protocol

Replace 5G NAS with a modular 6G NAS protocol with independent protocols for mobility management, session management, security, etc.

- Allows for more flexible and independent evolution of functions and introduction of new verticals
- Common transport of control plane signaling between UE and CN

Adopt a corresponding 6G AMF/SMF solution

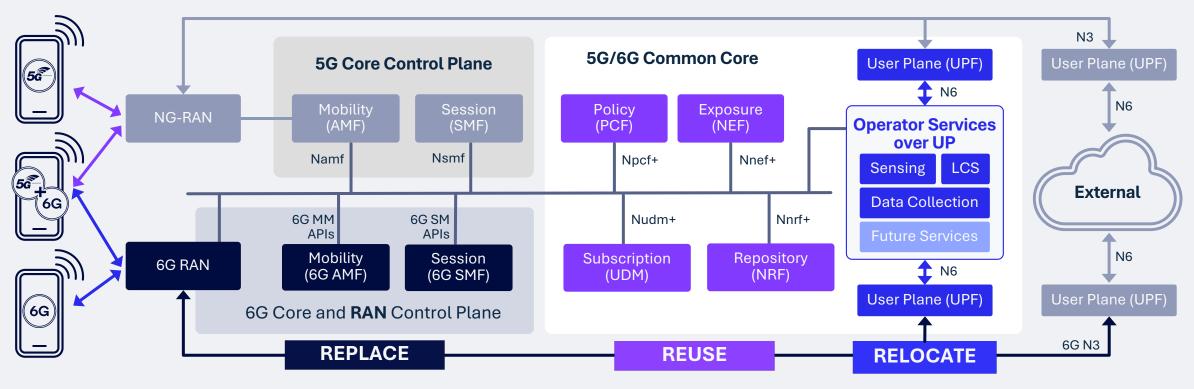
#### **RAN to CN interfaces**

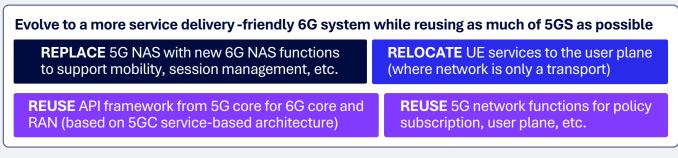
Replace reference point interface with SBA based APIs

Allows for common orchestration of RAN and CN and allows RAN to benefit from cloud functionality

### 6G Core - Relocate, Reuse and Replace (System Architecture)

6GC evolved from 5GC network architecture\*







## Digital twin networks

Digital model of the physical world

Enhanced RF modeling

RAN end-to-end modeling

AI/ML training



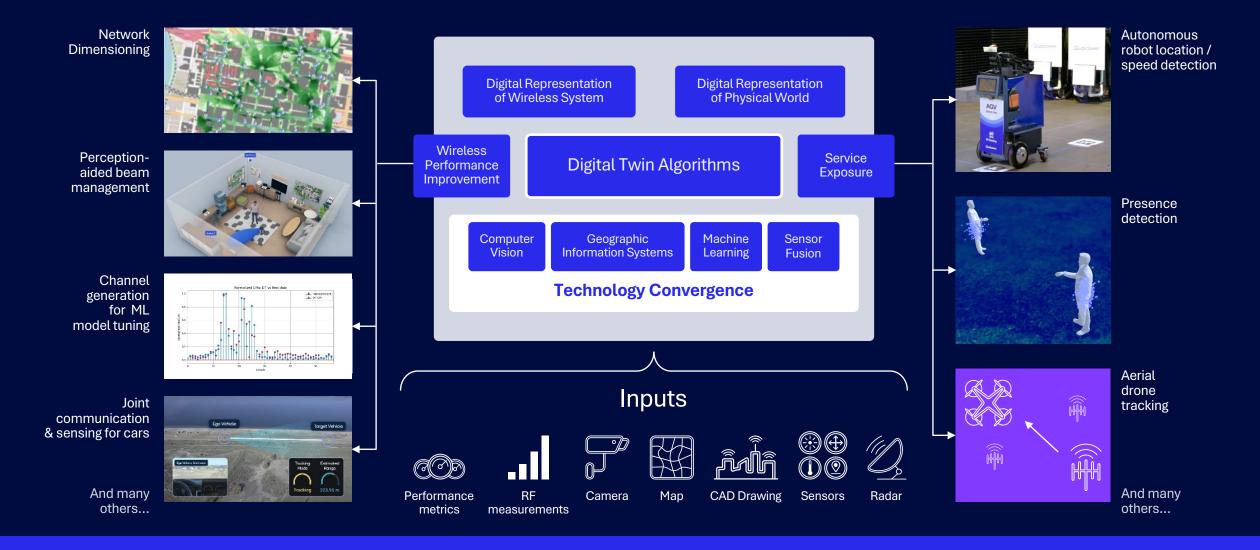
Network measurements

> Network control



hysical network





## Digital twin networks: Virtual representations of physical networks

Monitoring and performance optimization of its real-world counterpart



**Qualcomm**MWCB 2024

## Digital Twin Network (DTN)

Converging expertise in wireless system modeling, computer vision and AI to create the high-fidelity DTN

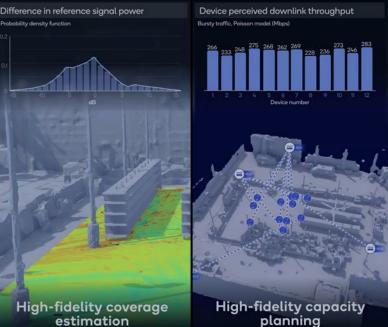
Generating synthetic data to addresS the data collection challenge from real world deployments

Sophisticated dynamic modeling of 5G RAN infrastructure

Over-the-air testbed operating in the 3.35 GHz band with cloud-native 5G RAN, RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC) and the Qualcomm Edgewise™ Suite

Snapdragon and Qualcomm branded products are products of Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries.









## Our innovations on the path to 6G



Al-native E2E communications

Data-driven communication and network design, with joint training, model sharing and distributed inference across networks and devices.



Expanding into new spectrum bands

Expanding to THz, wide-area expansion to higher bands, new spectrum sharing paradigm, dynamic coordination with environmental awareness



Merging of worlds

Physical, digital, virtual, immersive interactions takin; human augmentation to next level via ubiquitous, low-power joint communication and sensing



calable network architecture

Disaggregation and virtualization at the connecte intelligent edge, use of advanced topologies to address growing demand



Air interface innovations

Evolution of duplexing schemes, Giga-MIMO, mmWave evolution, reconfigurable intelligent surfaces, non-terrestrial communications, waveform/coding for MH to THz, system energy efficiency



Communications resilienc

Multifaceted trust and configurable security, post quantum security, robust networks tolerant to failures and attacks







Qualcomm<sup>®</sup> **5G AI Suite**Gen 3

Al-enhanced 5G Advanced user experience



Multi-antenna management to improve user experience



Contextually-aware QoS and latency improvements



60% faster CPE service acquisition (mmWave)



10% lower power in connected mode (mmWave)



Location accuracy improvement by 30%\*



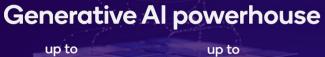
Best-cell selection time reduced by 20%\*



**30%** faster link acquisition

\* Up to indicated numbers





10B parameters

on device

up to

20

tokens per sec for 7B LLMs

#### AI

Qualcomm® Hexagon™ **NPU** 

98% faster

40% more efficient

Stable Diffusion and ControlNet

<1 sec

fastest in the world

77GB/s, 4.8GHz

LPDDR5x memory bandwidth

Qualcomm Al Stack

Pytorch ExecuTorch and optimized models

First to support multi-modal gen Al models

On-device personalization

with Qualcomm sensing hub

World's 1st to support speculative decoding 4nm process node

Qualcomm<sup>®</sup> Kryo<sup>™</sup> CPU

3.3GHz

**CPU** max frequency

30% performance 20%

efficiency

Security

Truepic with C2PA Strongbox protection **Dual Always-Sensing ISPs** 

### Gaming

**25**% performance efficiency

**Unreal Engine 5** with Lumen lighting system

240 FPS

Global illumination Next-gen lighting effects

Camera

Photo expansion

**Night vision** for video capture

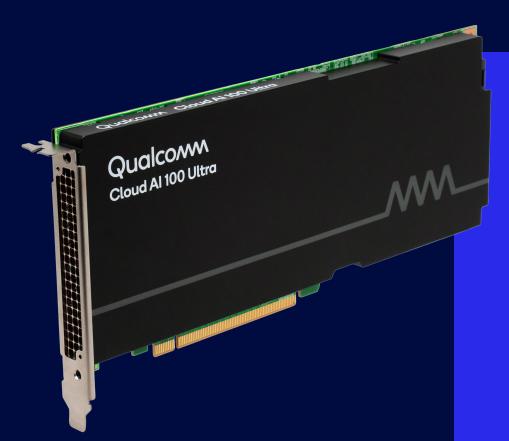
Video object eraser

Dolby HDR photo capture

Sound

24bit, 96KHz Lossless

### Introducing Qualcomm Cloud AI 100 Ultra



A performance- and cost-optimized AI inference solution, purpose-designed for Generative AI and large language models (LLMs).



Best Perf/TCO\$



100B Gen Al models on a single card



Software tools for frictionless porting of pre-trained models



8x larger models within a single server



Fully programmable and with support for recent Al techniques and data formats

## Vision for gen Al-augmented and autonomous networks



Intelligent monitoring and management

On-the-fly modeling

Proactive alerts

Programming Al-assistants

'Level-3' autonomous networks

KEY LONGER-TERM RESEARCH VECTORS

# Enabling the path towards 6G



#### Al-native E2E communications

Data-driven communication and network design, with joint training, model sharing and distributed inference across networks and devices



#### Scalable network architecture

Disaggregation and virtualization at the connected intelligent edge, use of advanced topologies to address growing demand



#### Expanding into new spectrum bands

Expanding to THz, wide-area expansion to higher bands, new spectrum sharing paradigm, dynamic coordination with environmental awareness



#### Air interface innovations

Evolution of duplexing schemes, Giga-MIMO, mmWave evolution, reconfigurable intelligent surfaces, non-terrestrial communications, waveform/coding for MHz to THz, system energy efficiency



#### Merging of worlds

Physical, digital, virtual, immersive interactions taking human augmentation to next level via ubiquitous, low-power joint communication and sensing



#### Communications resiliency

Multifaceted trust and configurable security, post quantum security, robust networks tolerant to failures and attacks

43



### **Qualcoww** Showcasing the latest technology innovations on the path to 6G

## FOUNDATIONAL WIRELESS INNOVATIONS Advanced 5G mmWave 6G Giga-MIMO System **Enabling Upper Midband** Deployment

Digital Twin

Network

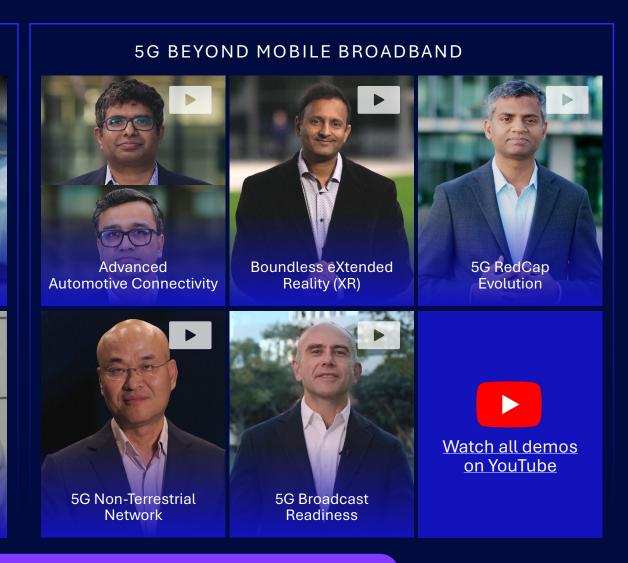
Al-enabled

mmWave Beam

Prediction

Wireless Al

Interoperability



On the Path to

Sub-Terahertz



Sign up for the What's Next in Wireless Tech newsletter!

## Thank you

Nothing in these materials is an offer to sell any of the components or devices referenced herein.

© Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. and/or its affiliated companies. All Rights Reserved

Qualcomm and Snapdragon are trademarks or registered trademarks of Qualcomm Incorporated. Other products and brand names may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

References in this presentation to "Qualcomm" may mean Qualcomm Incorporated, Qualcomm Technologies, Inc., and/or other subsidiaries or business units within the Qualcomm corporate structure, as applicable. Qualcomm Incorporated includes our licensing business, QTL, and the vast majority of our patent portfolio. Qualcomm Technologies, Inc., a subsidiary of Qualcomm Incorporated. operates, along with its subsidiaries, substantially all of our engineering, research and development functions, and substantially all of our products and services businesses, including our QCT semiconductor business.

Snapdragon and Qualcomm branded products are products of Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries. Qualcomm patented technologies are licensed by Qualcomm Incorporated.





