

# Introduction to z17 Channel Performance Management

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**Uh oh, there are Channel problems...**

## Channel Fundamentals Introduction

- What is a Channel?
- What is an I/O Adapter?
- Common I/O Adapters

## z17 Channel Architecture Changes

- Network Express Adapter
- FICON Express32-4P Adapter
- Data Processing Unit (DPU)

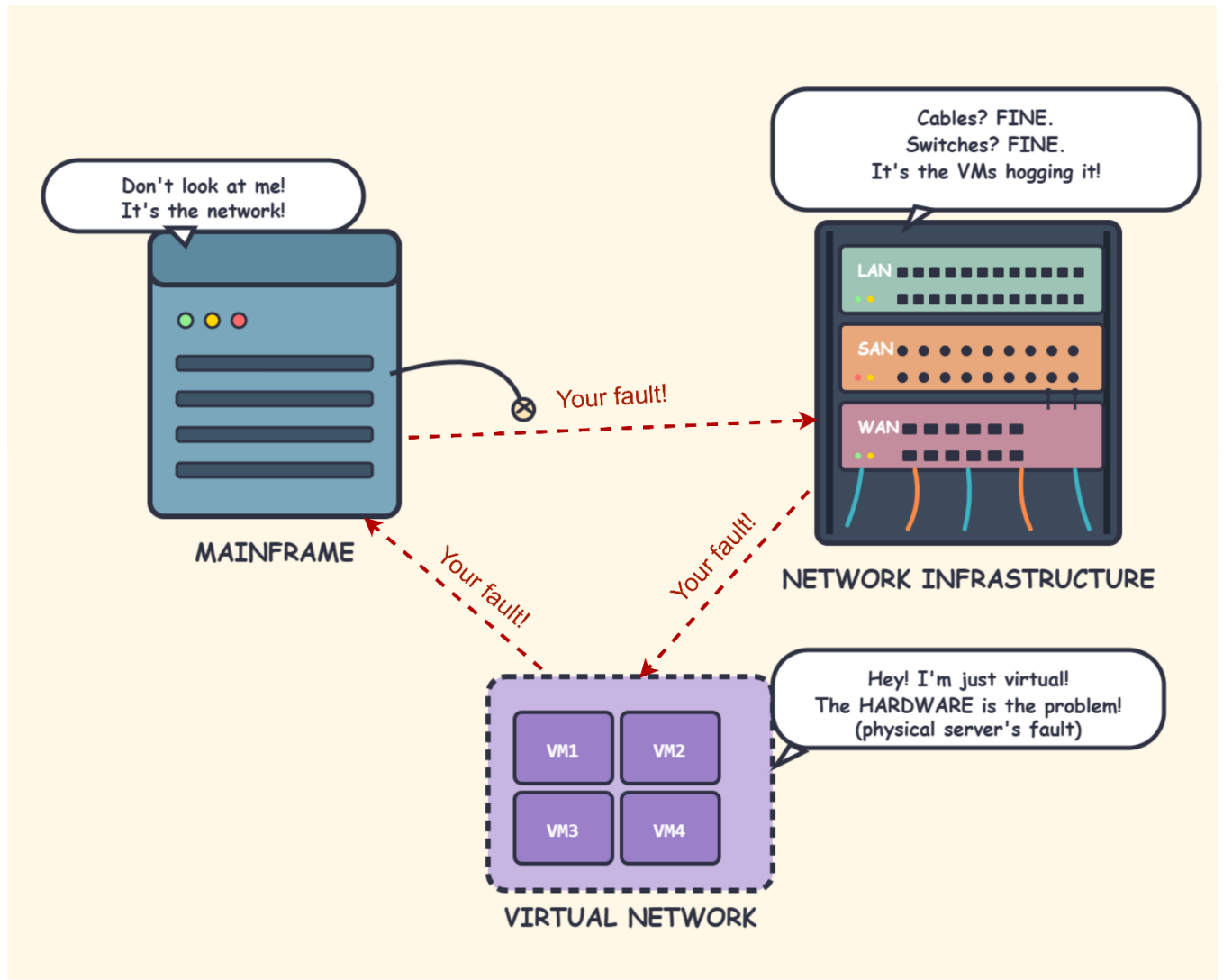
## z17 Channel Performance Analysis

- Basis of Channel Performance Analysis
- z17 Channel Components/Metrics

# Channel Fundamentals Introduction

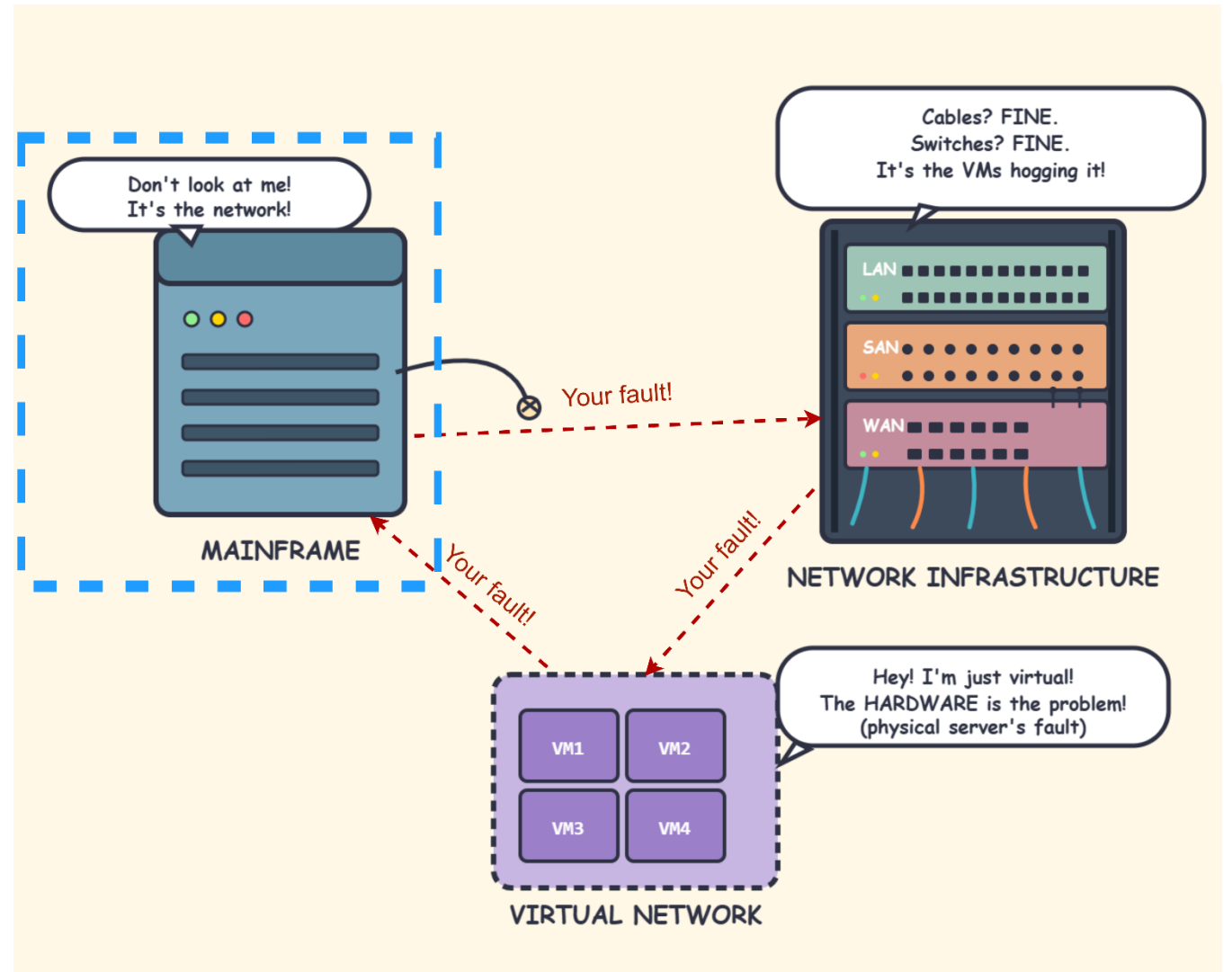
## IO related Systems

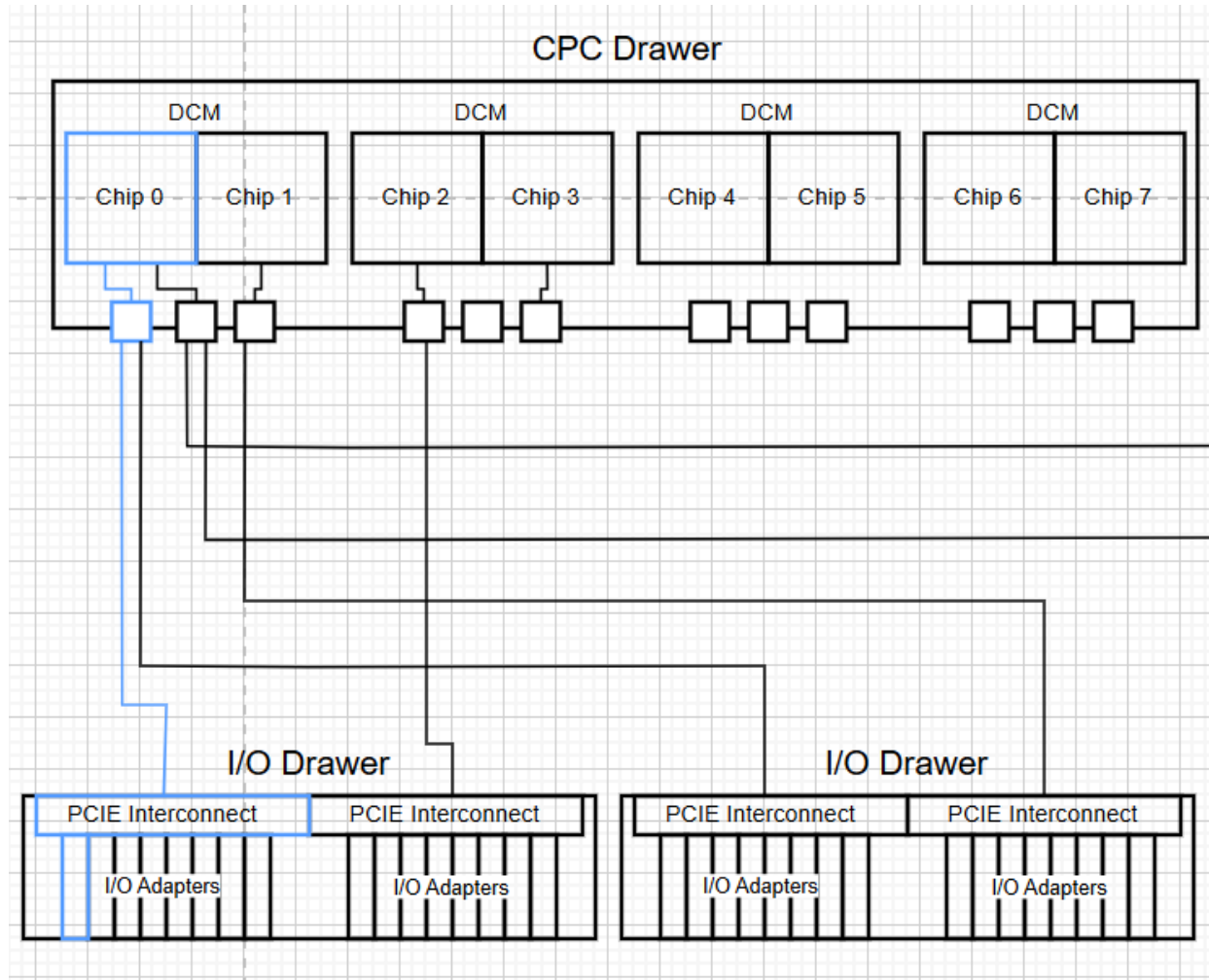
- Mainframe (Physical)
  - IO Adapters
  - SAPs
  - DPUs
  - PCIEs
- External Network Infrastructure
  - LANs
  - WANs
  - SANs
- Virtual Network
  - Hipersockets/VNICs
  - VSwitch/Guest LANs
- TCP/IP



## IO related Systems

- Mainframe (Physical)
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  - DPUs
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  - WANs
  - SANs
- Virtual Network
  - Hipersockets/VNICs
  - VSwitch/Guest LANs
- TCP/IP





Sample z16 drawer configuration

- **Channel** - a single I/O interface between a channel subsystem (on chip) and one or more control units

*Note: FICON channels technically include some components outside of the box however this does not have a large effect on channel performance management*

**I/O adapter** – A mechanism for connecting two unlike parts or machines (z/OS Communications Server Glossary)

## Typical use cases of I/O adapters on the mainframe

- Mainframe to Mainframe
- Mainframe to Storage Area Network
- Mainframe to Local/Wide Area Network

## In the context of performance management, why do they matter?

- Different types of I/O adapter and their modes often have their own caveats when it comes to performance management

**FICON Express** – Adapters which use fibre connections to connect to Storage Units, Storage Area Networks (SAN), tape, and other mainframes. Operates using one of two modes:

- **Fibre Channel Native (FICON)** – Operating in mode allowing it to interface with devices using ECKD-format storage, FICON-attached tape, and FICON channel-to-channel (FCTC) connections. May be configured to have some operations use the zHPF protocol
- **Fibre Channel Protocol (FCP)** – Operating in mode allowing it to interface with fixed block SCSI storage devices and FCP-attached tape libraries. Uses the QDIO architecture



*FICON Express 32-4P*

**OSA Express** – Adapters which use ethernet cables to connect to LANs/WANS or other partitions on the same system. Operates using either:

- **QDIO mode**
- **Non-QDIO mode**



*OSA Express 7s 1.2*

**RoCE Express** – Adapters allowing for Host-to-host connection between two OS images for RDMA-accelerated TCP traffic (via SMC-R). Utilizes RoCE adapters.

*Note: The RoCE does not following traditional channel architecture and in fact there are no channels associated with RoCE cards*



RoCE Express3

**Network Express** – Adapter which can operate in 1 or both of the following modes :

- **OSH** mode giving it the same functionality as OSA Express adapters. Uses the EQDIO architecture.
- **NETH** has the same functionality as RoCE Express adapters

*Note: Much like the RoCE card the Network Express operating in NETH mode does not use traditional channel architecture*

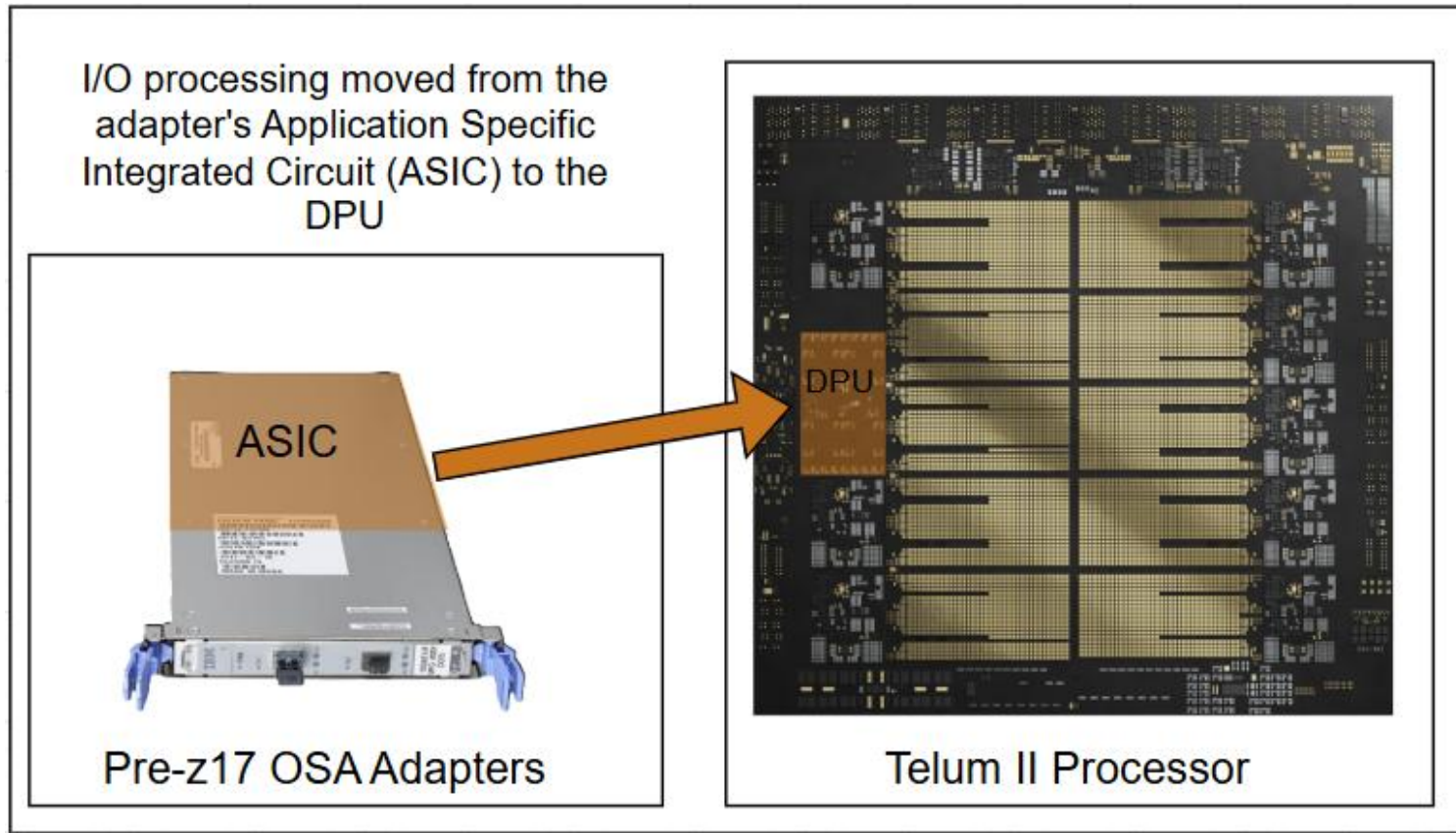


*Network Express*

# z17 Channel Architecture Changes

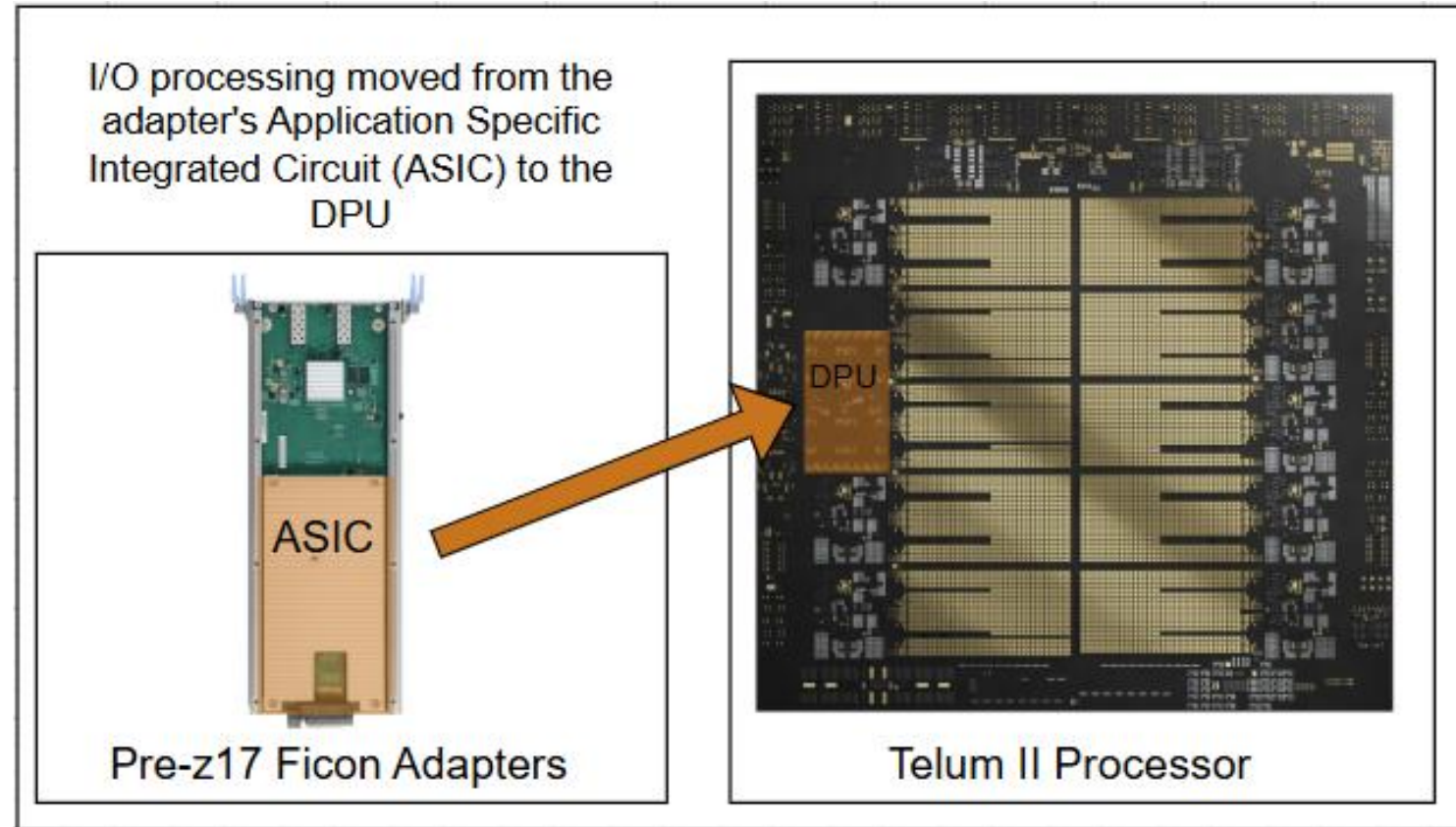
## Overview

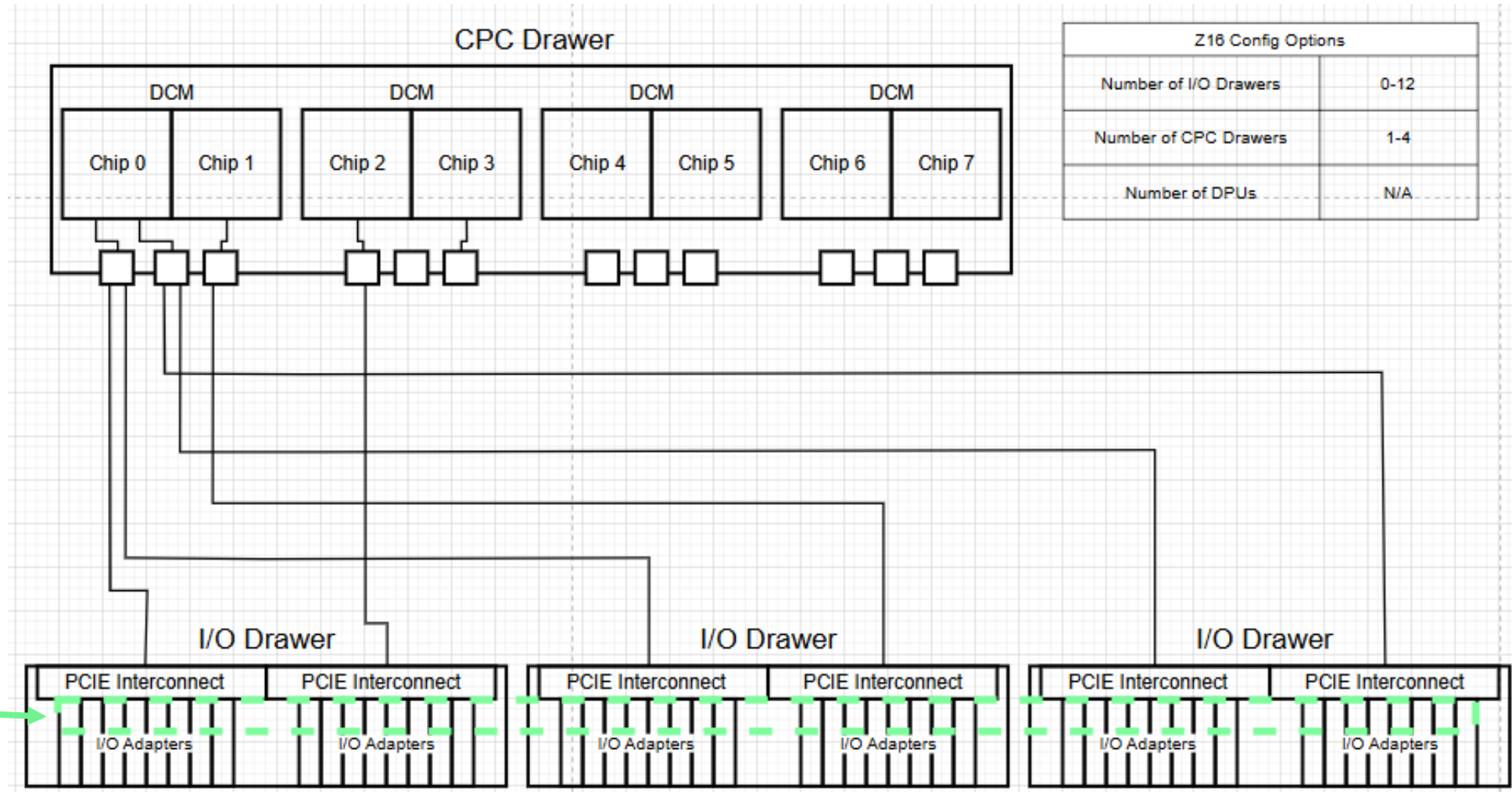
- ASICs removed
- I/O Processing is performed on the Data Processing Unit (DPU) rather than the ASIC



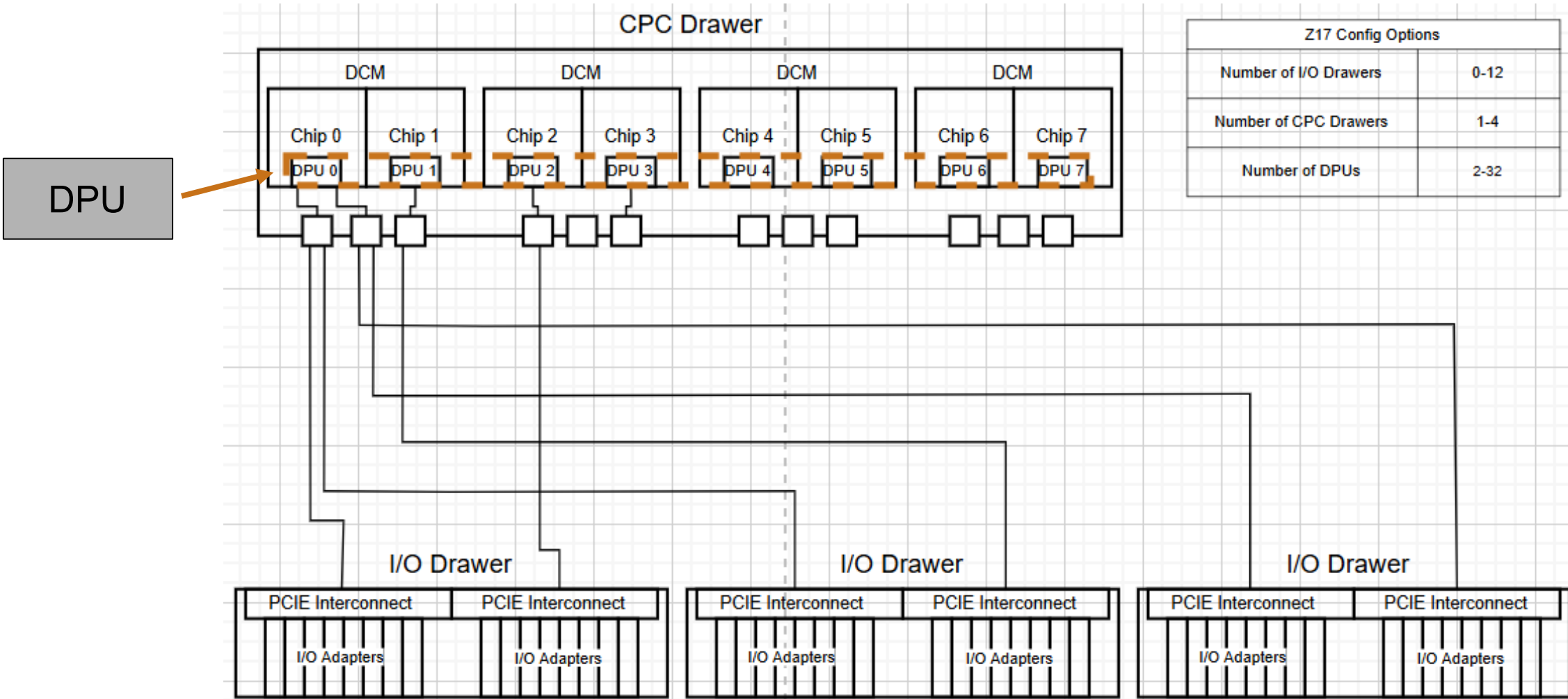
## Overview

- Same Functionality as older FICON adapters
- ASICs removed
- I/O Processing is performed on the DPU rather than the ASIC





Sample z16 I/O drawer Configuration



Z17 Config Options	
Number of I/O Drawers	0-12
Number of CPC Drawers	1-4
Number of DPUs	2-32

Sample z17 I/O drawer Configuration

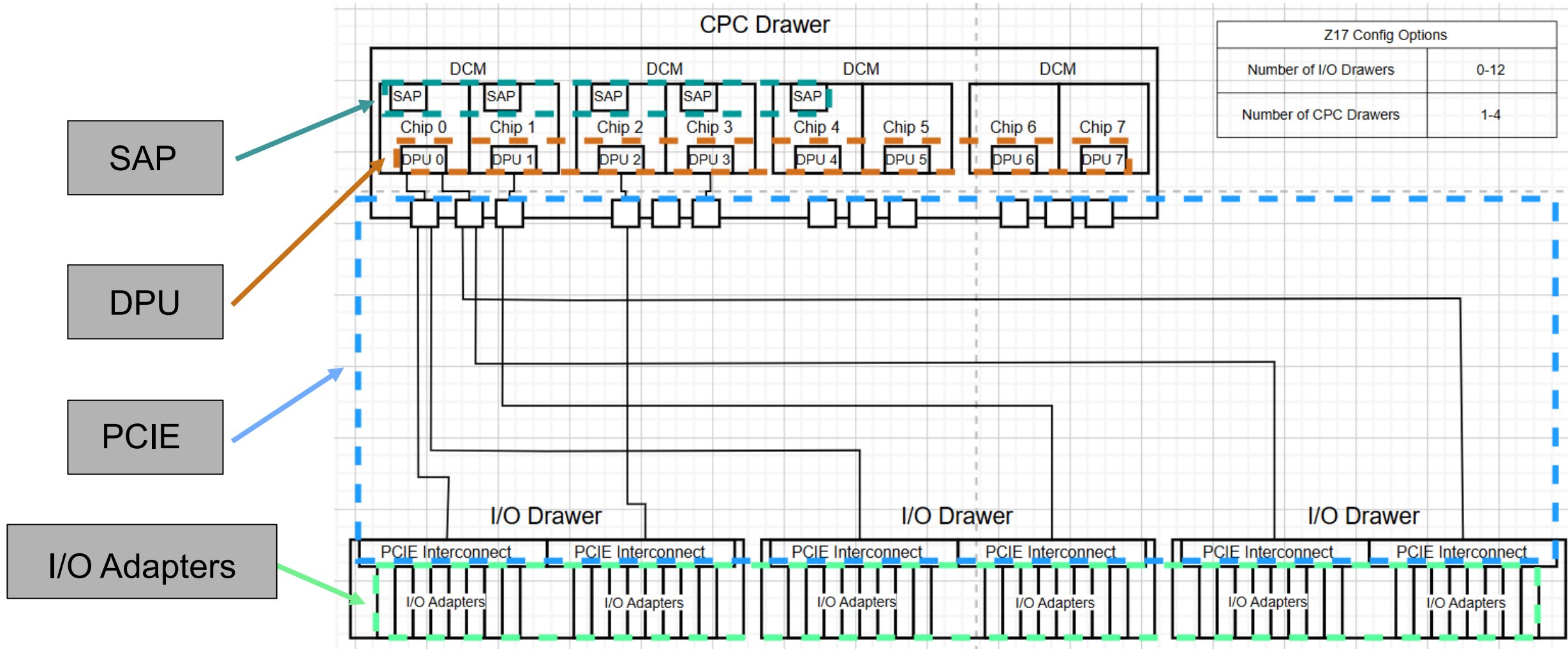
# z17 Channel Performance Analysis

**Channels utilize a pipeline of hardware components**

**Data can only travel as fast as the slowest component**

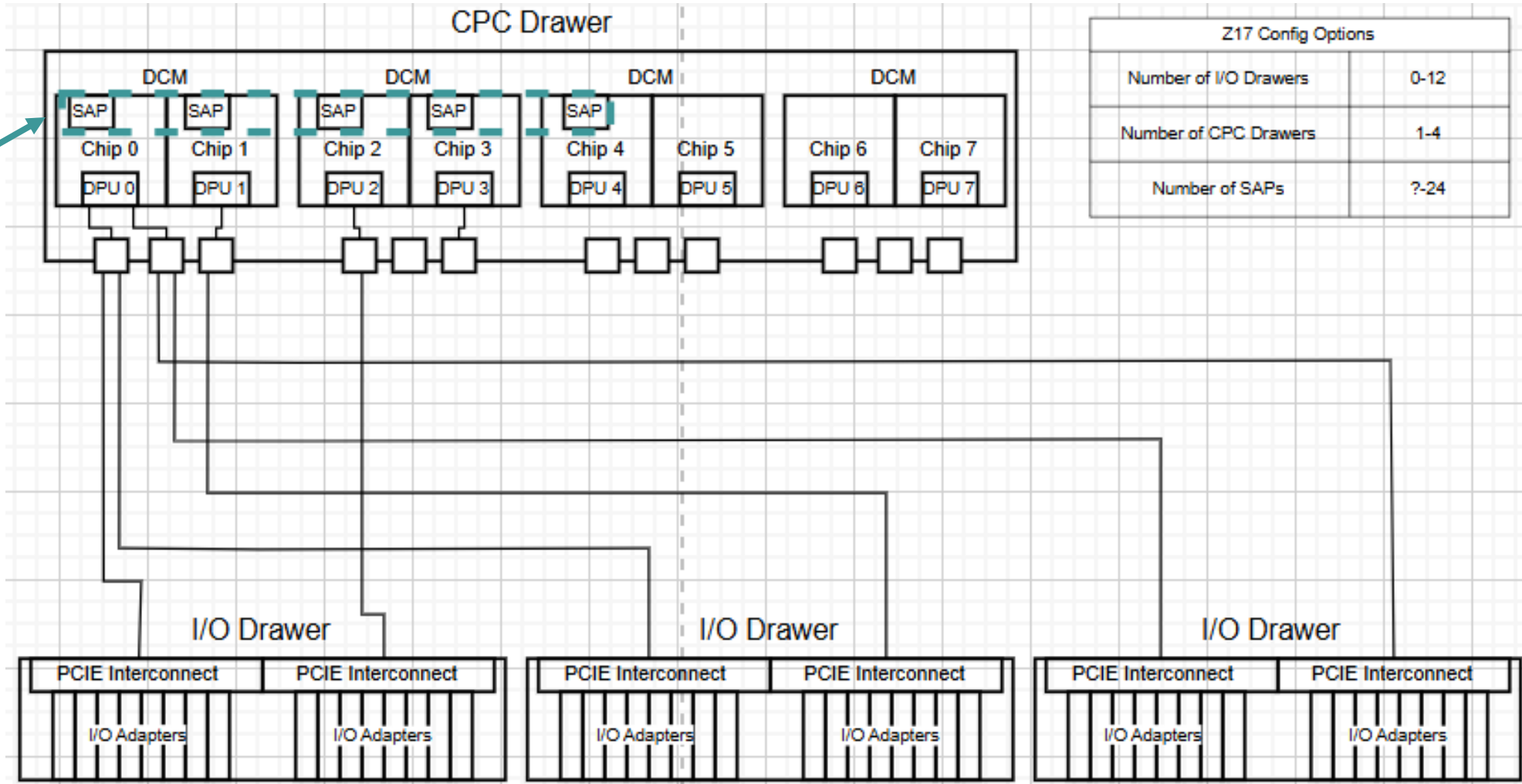
**Channel performance analysis is based of understanding each of these components and finding which components are/will be bottleneck**





Sample z17 I/O drawer Configuration

SAP



Z17 Config Options	
Number of I/O Drawers	0-12
Number of CPC Drawers	1-4
Number of SAPs	?-24

*Note:  
Additional SAPs beyond  
standard configuration may  
NOT be allocated on the z17*

Sample z17 I/O drawer Configuration

## Description

- Processor configured to run the Channel Subsystem Licensed Internal Code and controls I/O operations

## Relevant Performance Details

- SAPs are not utilized by channels using the QDIO/EQDIO protocols
  - OSAs in QDIO mode
  - Network Express Adapters in OSH mode
  - Ficon Express in FCP mode
- SAPs share the total workload amongst themselves

*Notes:*  
 SAP – System Assist Processor  
 There are some minor exceptions where SAP workload is not shared

Report: ESAIOP

-----I/O Processor-----								
I/O Proc	<Pct Util>	<Rate/Second>	<-Percent of Strts busy-->					
Nmbr	Busy	Idle	SSCH	Intrpts	Chan	Switch	CtlUnit	Device
0	5.2	94.8	8213	16152	0.0	0	0	0
1	2.1	97.9	8213	163	0	0	0	0
2	5.9	94.1	8214	16605	0.0	0	0	0
3	1.8	98.2	8213	172	0	0	0	0
4	6.3	93.7	8213	20014	0	0	0	0
5	1.8	98.2	8213	182	0	0	0	0
6	3.7	96.3	8214	8191	0	0	0	0
7	1.7	98.3	8213	96	0	0	0	0
8	7.5	92.5	8214	23119	0	0	0	0
9	1.7	98.3	8213	113	0	0	0	0
10	8.1	91.9	8213	20384	0	0	0	0
11	2.3	97.7	8214	118	0	0	0	0
12	7.9	92.1	8214	16308	0.0	0	0	0
13	2.3	97.7	8213	210	0.0	0	0	0
14	5.9	94.1	8213	13491	0.0	0	0	0
15	2.2	97.8	8213	209	0.0	0	0	0
16	8.4	91.6	8213	22863	0.0	0	0	0
17	2.5	97.5	8213	213	0	0	0	0
18	4.4	95.6	8213	8253	0.0	0	0	0
19	2.3	97.7	8213	86	0	0	0	0
20	6.8	93.2	8213	16016	0	0	0	0
21	2.2	97.8	8214	150	0.0	0	0	0
22	6.7	93.3	8213	16512	0.0	0	0	0
23	2.4	97.6	8214	169	0.0	0	0	0
24	6.8	93.2	8214	14858	0.0	0	0	0
25	2.1	97.9	8214	168	0.0	0	0	0
26	8.6	91.4	8214	20623	0.0	0	0	0
27	2.3	97.7	8214	143	0.0	0	0	0
28	7.2	92.8	8214	20537	0.0	0	0	0
29	2.3	97.7	8213	152	0.0	0	0	0

Report displaying, I/O Processor Metrics by Processor Number 22

## How will a bottleneck look?

- High number of channels in FICON mode
- Smaller I/O block sizes
- High AVERAGE SAP utilization

## Interpreting the associated report...

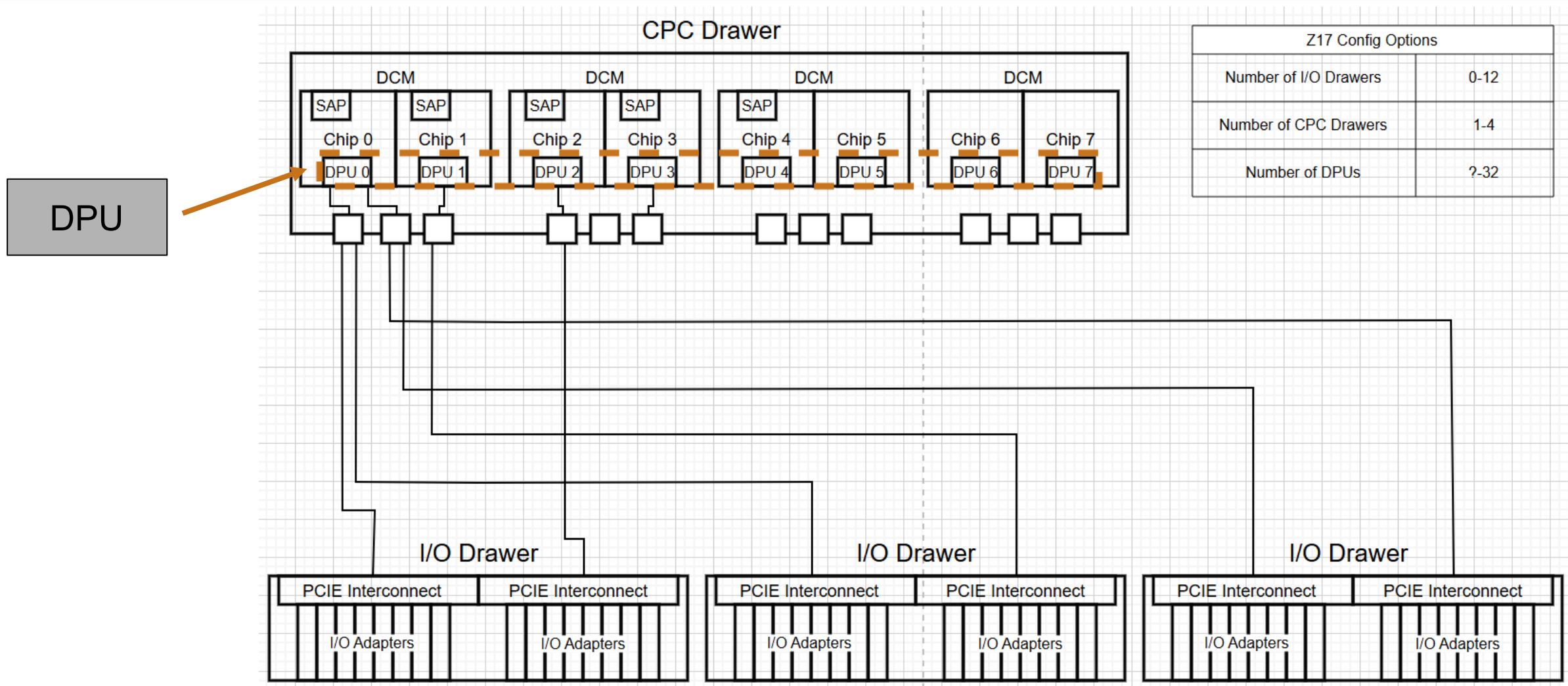
*Note:  
Each physical SAP is represented by 2 logical processors as a result of SMT*

Report: ESAIOP

I/O		-----I/O Processor-----						
Proc	<Pct Util>	<Rate/Second>	<-Percent of Strts busy-->					
Nmbr	Busy	Idle	SSCH	Intrpts	Chan	Switch	CtlUnit	Device
0	5.2	94.8	8213	16152	0.0	0	0	0
1	2.1	97.9	8213	163	0	0	0	0
2	5.9	94.1	8214	16605	0.0	0	0	0
3	1.8	98.2	8213	172	0	0	0	0
4	6.3	93.7	8213	20014	0	0	0	0
5	1.8	98.2	8213	182	0	0	0	0
6	3.7	96.3	8214	8191	0	0	0	0
7	1.7	98.3	8213	96	0	0	0	0
8	7.5	92.5	8214	23119	0	0	0	0
9	1.7	98.3	8213	113	0	0	0	0
10	8.1	91.9	8213	20384	0	0	0	0
11	2.3	97.7	8214	118	0	0	0	0
12	7.9	92.1	8214	16308	0.0	0	0	0
13	2.3	97.7	8213	210	0.0	0	0	0
14	5.9	94.1	8213	13491	0.0	0	0	0
15	2.2	97.8	8213	209	0.0	0	0	0
16	8.4	91.6	8213	22863	0.0	0	0	0
17	2.5	97.5	8213	213	0	0	0	0
18	4.4	95.6	8213	8253	0.0	0	0	0
19	2.3	97.7	8213	86	0	0	0	0
20	6.8	93.2	8213	16016	0	0	0	0
21	2.2	97.8	8214	150	0.0	0	0	0
22	6.7	93.3	8213	16512	0.0	0	0	0
23	2.4	97.6	8214	169	0.0	0	0	0
24	6.8	93.2	8214	14858	0.0	0	0	0
25	2.1	97.9	8214	168	0.0	0	0	0
26	8.6	91.4	8214	20623	0.0	0	0	0
27	2.3	97.7	8214	143	0.0	0	0	0
28	7.2	92.8	8214	20537	0.0	0	0	0
29	2.3	97.7	8213	152	0.0	0	0	0

Report displaying, I/O Processor Metrics by Processor Number 23

# z17 Channel Components - DPU



Z17 Config Options	
Number of I/O Drawers	0-12
Number of CPC Drawers	1-4
Number of DPUs	?-32

Sample z17 I/O drawer Configuration

## Description

- I/O processor responsible for packet construction, inspection and routing

## Relevant Performance Details

- DPU's do NOT share compute with each other
- Each channel is processed by a single DPU
- DPU channel links determined by hardware configuration
- Each DPU can be linked to 128 Channels max
- The ONLY channels which use the DPU are the channels associated with the FICON Express 32-4p and the Network Express adapters

Report: ESACHAN

```

-----
                <----DPU Util Pct----->
Time/   Chn1 <-Channel-> <-Overall-> DPU
CHPID   Type LPAR  Total LPAR  Total Num
-----
06:02:00
20      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
21      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.045 30
22      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
23      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.044 30
24      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
25      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.045 30
26      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
27      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.045 30
C8      FCP   0 0.003   0 0.058 14
CA      FCP   .  .       .  .       .
CB      FCP   0 0.003   0 0.058 14
CD      FCP   0 0.003   0 0.064 22
E0      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E1      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E2      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E3      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E5      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E7      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E8      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
E9      OSD   .  .       .  .       .
-----
Totals  FICON 0.002 0.042 0.020   .  .
Totals  FCP   0 0.036   0   .  .
Totals  OSA   0   0     0   .  .
    
```

## How will a bottleneck look?

- High number of Ficon Express 32-4P/Network Express adapters linked to a given DPU
- Smaller I/O block sizes
- Heavy use of non-zHPF operations
- A single overutilized DPU

## Interpreting the associated report...

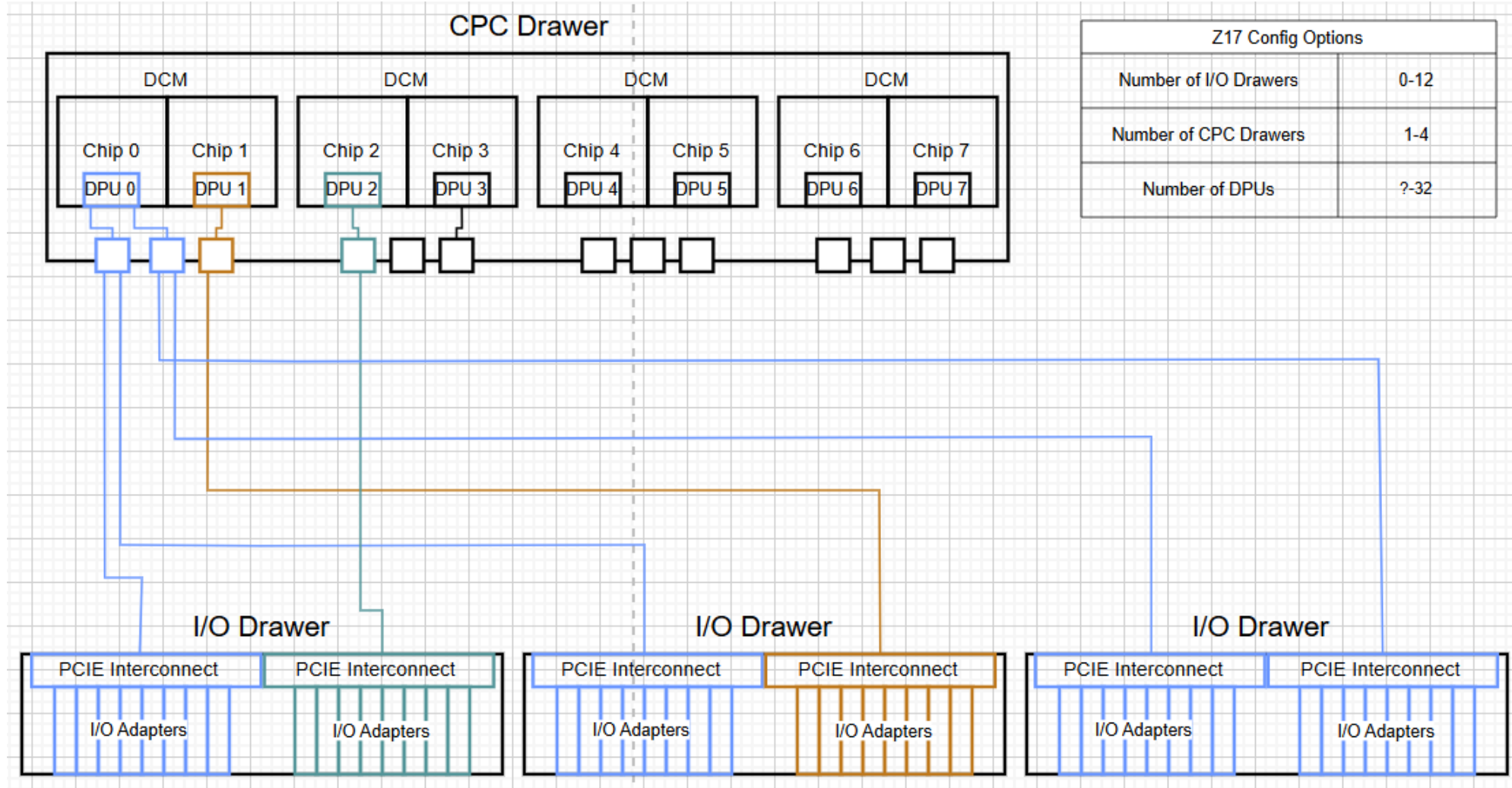
Report: ESACHAN

```

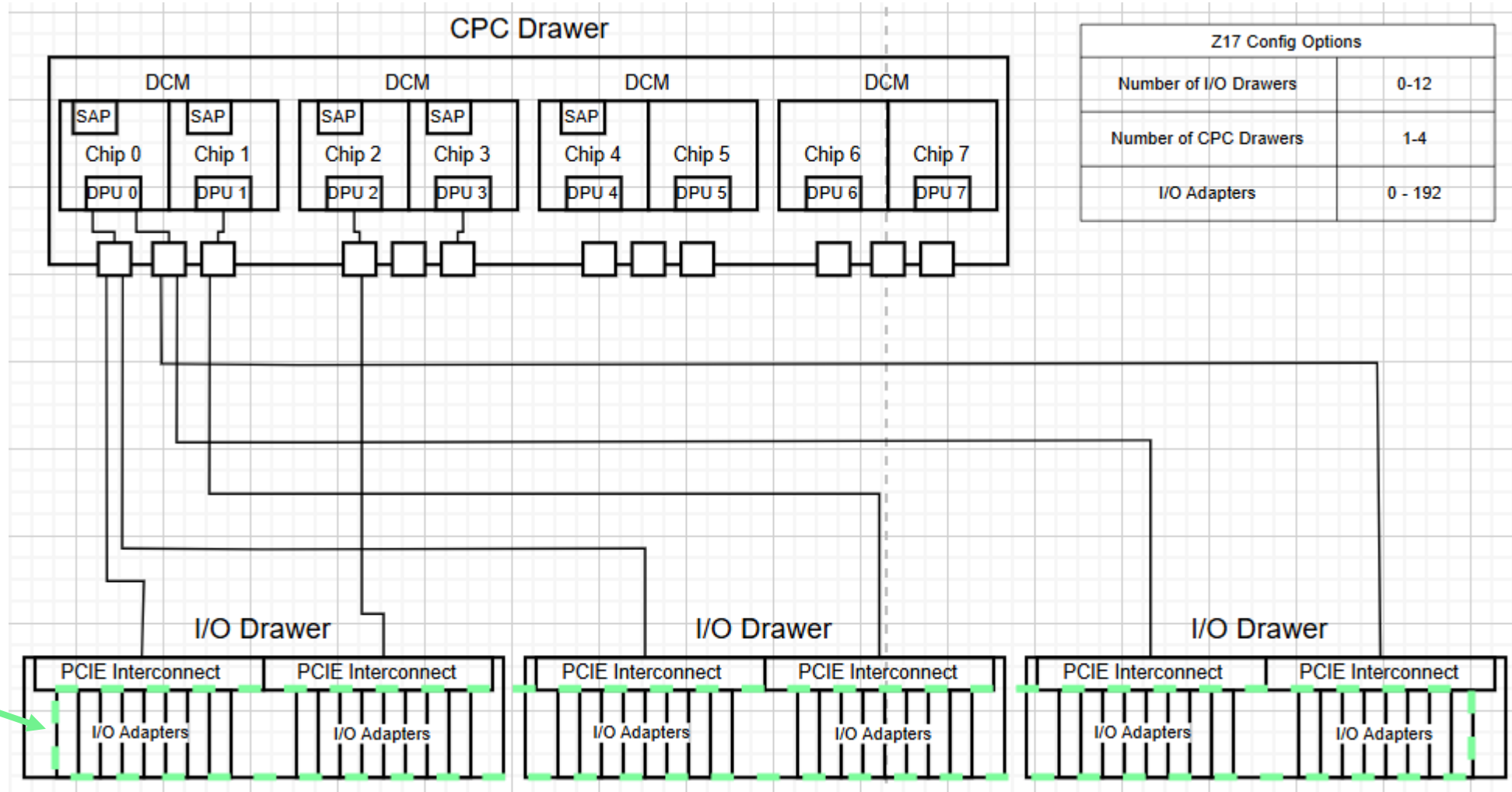
-----
              <----DPU Util Pct----->
Time/   Chnl <-Channel-> <-Overall-> DPU
CHIPID  Type LPAR  Total LPAR  Total Num
-----
06:02:00
20      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
21      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.045 30
22      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
23      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.044 30
24      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
25      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.045 30
26      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.003 0.064 22
27      FCS 0.000 0.005 0.002 0.045 30
C8      FCP   0 0.003   0 0.058 14
CA      FCP   .  .   .  .   .
CB      FCP   0 0.003   0 0.058 14
CD      FCP   0 0.003   0 0.064 22
E0      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E1      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E2      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E3      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E5      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E7      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E8      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
E9      OSD   .  .   .  .   .
-----
Totals FICON 0.002 0.042 0.020   .  .
Totals FCP   0 0.036   0   .  .
Totals OSA   0   0   0   .  .

```

Report displaying DPU utilization by CHPID and total DPU utilization



# z17 Channel Components – I/O Adapter



I/O Adapters

Sample z17 I/O drawer Configuration



# z17 Channel Components/Metrics – I/O Adapter

## Description

- Facilitates data transfer between the mainframe box and outside networks/devices

## Relevant Performance Details

- Maximum reads/writes is based on I/O Adapter model
- Separate maximums for read and write

*Note:  
Maximum reads/writes may be negotiated down*

```
Report: ESACHAN
          <-----Data Units----->
Time/    Chnl <-Reads/Sec-> <Writes/Sec->
CHPID   Type  LPAR Totl Pct  LPAR Totl Pct
-----
15:45:
18      OSD   0 3757 0.2    0 9062 0.6
1A      OSD   0 3621 0.2    0  954 0.1
1B      OSD   0 3859 0.2    0 8900 0.5
1C      OSD   0 4033 0.2    0 8771 0.5
1D      OSD 4170 16K 1.0 2225 13K 0.8
1E      OSD 3872 29K 1.8 3961 21K 1.3
37      OSD   0  196 0.0    0  167 0.0
38      OSD   0  170 0.0    0  158 0.0
3C      OSD  651  651 0.1   809  809 0.1
67      FCS    3 1781 0.1   207 5881 0.4
69      FCP   514  514 0.0 1299 1299 0.1
6C      FCP   513  513 0.0 1300 1300 0.1
7A      FCS    3   35 0.0   232  799 0.1
8C      FCP 201K 201K 12 4687 4687 0.3
8D      FCP   513  513 0.0 1301 1301 0.1
-----
Totals  FICON   7 1816 0.1   439 6680 0.4
Totals  FCP 203K 203K 12 8588 8588 0.5
Totals  OSA 9900  63K 10 7653  64K 3.9
```

Report displaying, I/O Control Unit Read/Write Utilization by CHPID



## How will a bottleneck look?

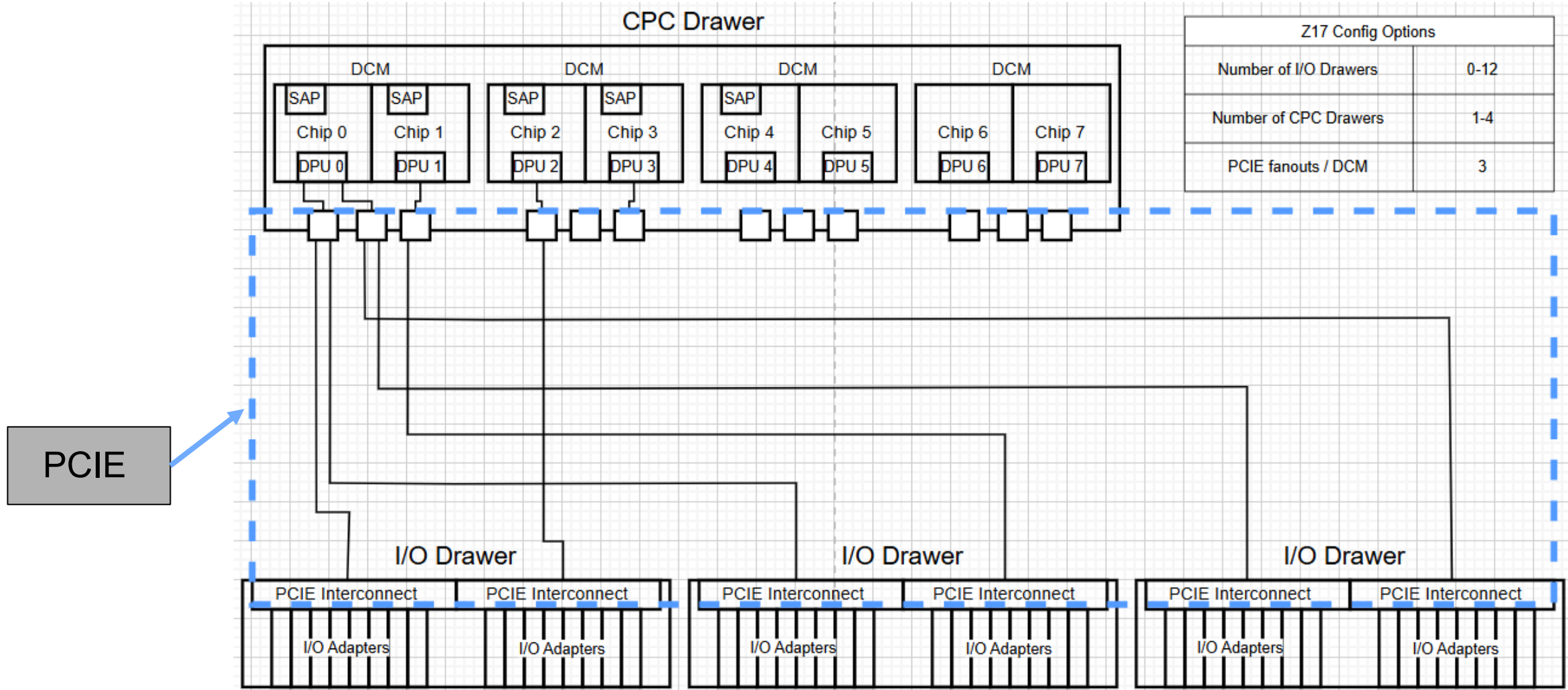
- External network limitations
- Older adapters
- Overutilization of either a channel's reads or writes or both

## Interpreting the associated report...

Note:

Max reads/writes may be seen in the ESACHNC report

```
Report: ESACHAN
          <-----Data Units----->
Time/    Chnl <-Reads/Sec-> <Writes/Sec->
CHPID   Type LPAR Totl Pct LPAR Totl Pct
-----
15:45:
18      OSD   0 3757 0.2   0 9062 0.6
1A      OSD   0 3621 0.2   0  954 0.1
1B      OSD   0 3859 0.2   0 8900 0.5
1C      OSD   0 4033 0.2   0 8771 0.5
1D      OSD 4170 16K 1.0 2225 13K 0.8
1E      OSD 3872 29K 1.8 3961 21K 1.3
37      OSD   0  196 0.0   0  167 0.0
38      OSD   0  170 0.0   0  158 0.0
3C      OSD  651  651 0.1   809  809 0.1
67      FCS    3 1781 0.1   207 5881 0.4
69      FCP   514  514 0.0 1299 1299 0.1
6C      FCP   513  513 0.0 1300 1300 0.1
7A      FCS    3   35 0.0   232  799 0.1
8C      FCP 201K 201K 12 4687 4687 0.3
8D      FCP   513  513 0.0 1301 1301 0.1
-----
Totals FICON    7 1816 0.1   439 6680 0.4
Totals FCP 203K 203K 12 8588 8588 0.5
Totals OSA 9900  63K 10 7653  64K 3.9
```



Sample z17 I/O drawer Configuration

## Description

- Expansion bus connecting chips on the CPC drawer to devices (I/O adapters) on the I/O drawer

## Relevant Performance Details

- PCIEs have 1 set of wires transmitting data and 1 set of wires for receiving data
- Typically, not overutilized

```

Report: ESACHAN
-----
                <Bus Cy>
Time/   Chnl <cl/Sec>
CHPID  Type Used Pct
-----
12:24:
70      OSD   .   .
71      OSD   .   .
80      OSD   .   .
84      OSD   .   .
86      OSD   .   .
C1      FCS   17K 0.5
C3      FCS   83K 2.7
C6      FC    83K 2.7
C7      FCS   17K 0.5
C9      FCS   83K 2.7
CB      FCS   17K 0.5
CD      FCS   84K 2.7
CE      FCS   83K 2.7
CF      FCS   17K 0.5
-----
Totals FICON 484K 15
Totals OSA   0   0
  
```

Report displaying PCIE bus cycle utilization by CHPID 32



# z17 Channel Components - PCIE

## How will a bottleneck look?

- Overutilization of either data transmitted or received or both

## Interpreting the associated report...

Note:

Bus utilization metrics are not produced for OSAs even though OSAs DO utilize the PCIE

```
Report: ESACHAN
-----
Time/      <Bus Cy>
Chn1 <c1/Sec>
CHPID  Type Used Pct
-----
12:24:
70      OSD  .  .
71      OSD  .  .
80      OSD  .  .
84      OSD  .  .
86      OSD  .  .
C1      FCS  17K 0.5
C3      FCS  83K 2.7
C6      FC   83K 2.7
C7      FCS  17K 0.5
C9      FCS  83K 2.7
CB      FCS  17K 0.5
CD      FCS  84K 2.7
CE      FCS  83K 2.7
CF      FCS  17K 0.5
-----
Totals FICON 484K 15
Totals OSA  0  0
```

Report displaying PCIE bus cycle utilization by CHPID 33



**So, what do you do when there is a channel problem?**

**Thank you for listening!**

**Questions?**

**Tyler Rossi**

Software Engineer / Performance Apprentice

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## Exciting News!!

**Velocity Software is now your place for z/VM education!**

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  - **July 8-10 2026 – Modules 1, 2 and 3 (from our education page)**

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**Send an email to – [education@velocitysoftware.com](mailto:education@velocitysoftware.com)**