

15-410

“Delayed Impact”

Scheduling on Mars
Mar. 5, 2007

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Outline

What happened on Mars?

- (1997)

What Happened On Mars?

Mars Pathfinder probe (1997)

Nice launch

Nice transit

Nice de-orbit

Nice thump-down (inflatable air-bag)

Nice rover disembarkation

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Nice rover *spontaneous reboots*

Internal Architecture

“Information bus” (blackboard/whiteboard/...)

- Housekeeping by high-priority **bus manager** thread

Meteorological data gathering

- Occasional activity
- Low-priority **weather data** thread

Communication with Earth

- Medium-priority **communication** thread

Watchdog “thread” (think: countdown timer)

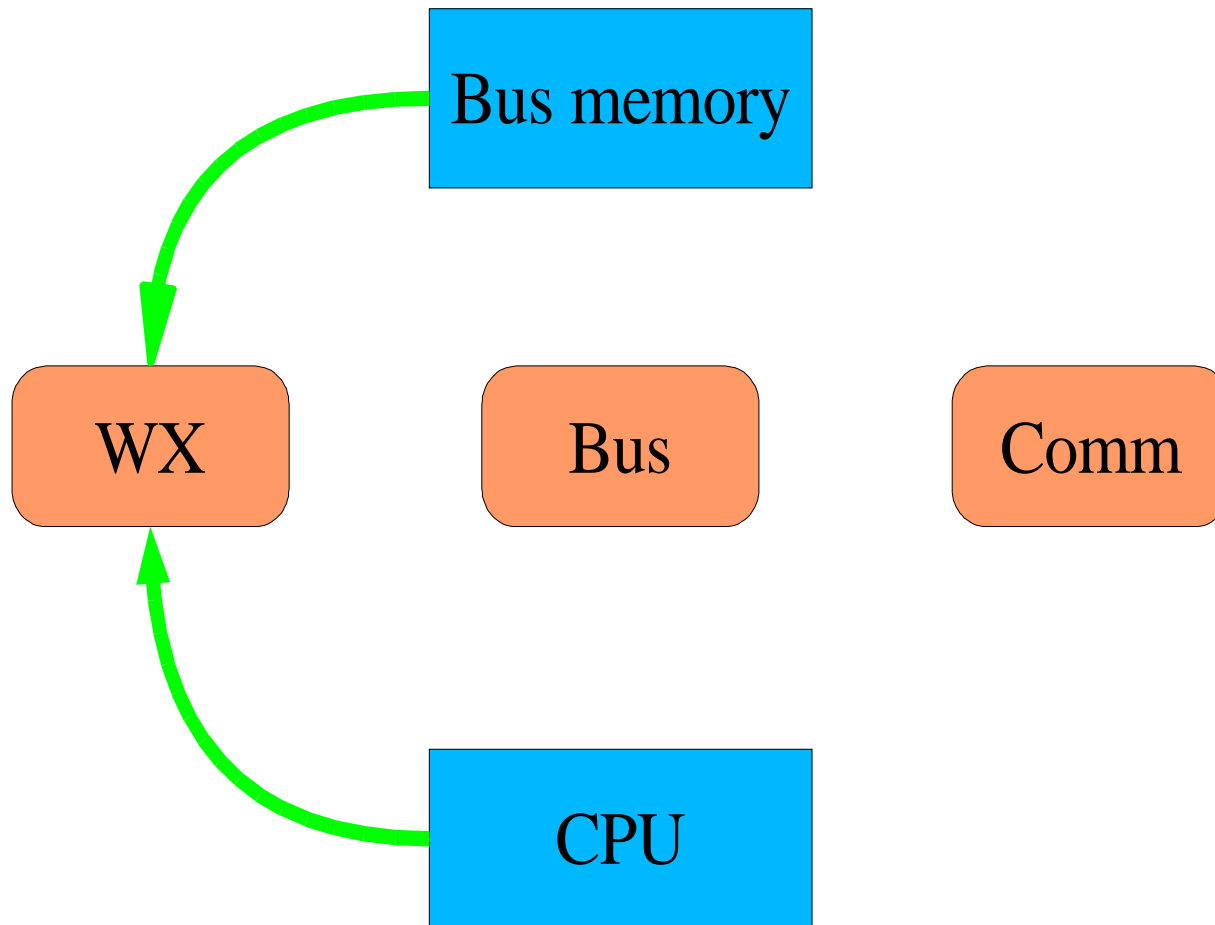
- “Too quiet”? **Reboot**
- “Shouldn't happen” event was happening repeatedly

What could go wrong?

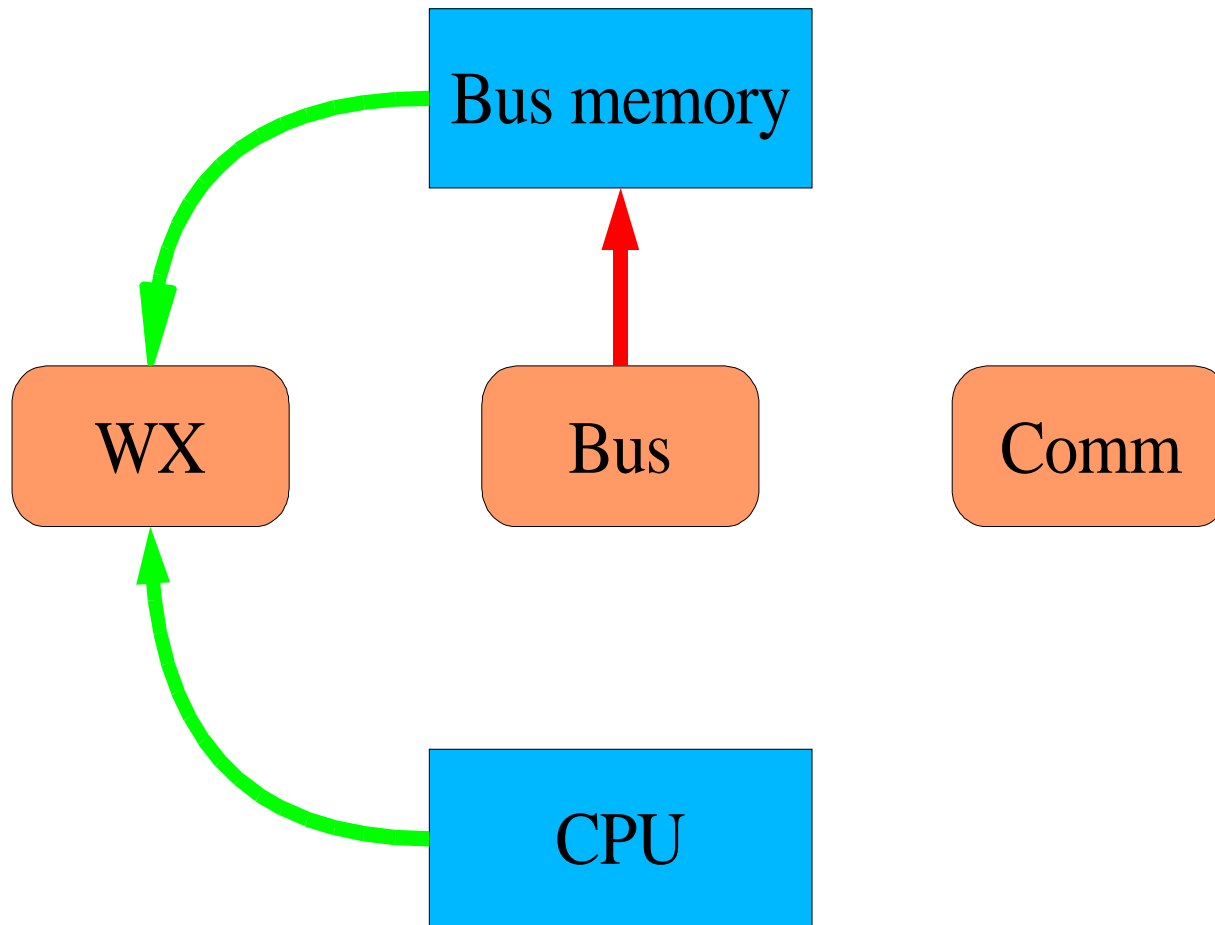
Weather data locks “bus” memory to publish reading

High-priority bus manager must wait

What could go wrong?



What could go wrong?



What could go wrong?

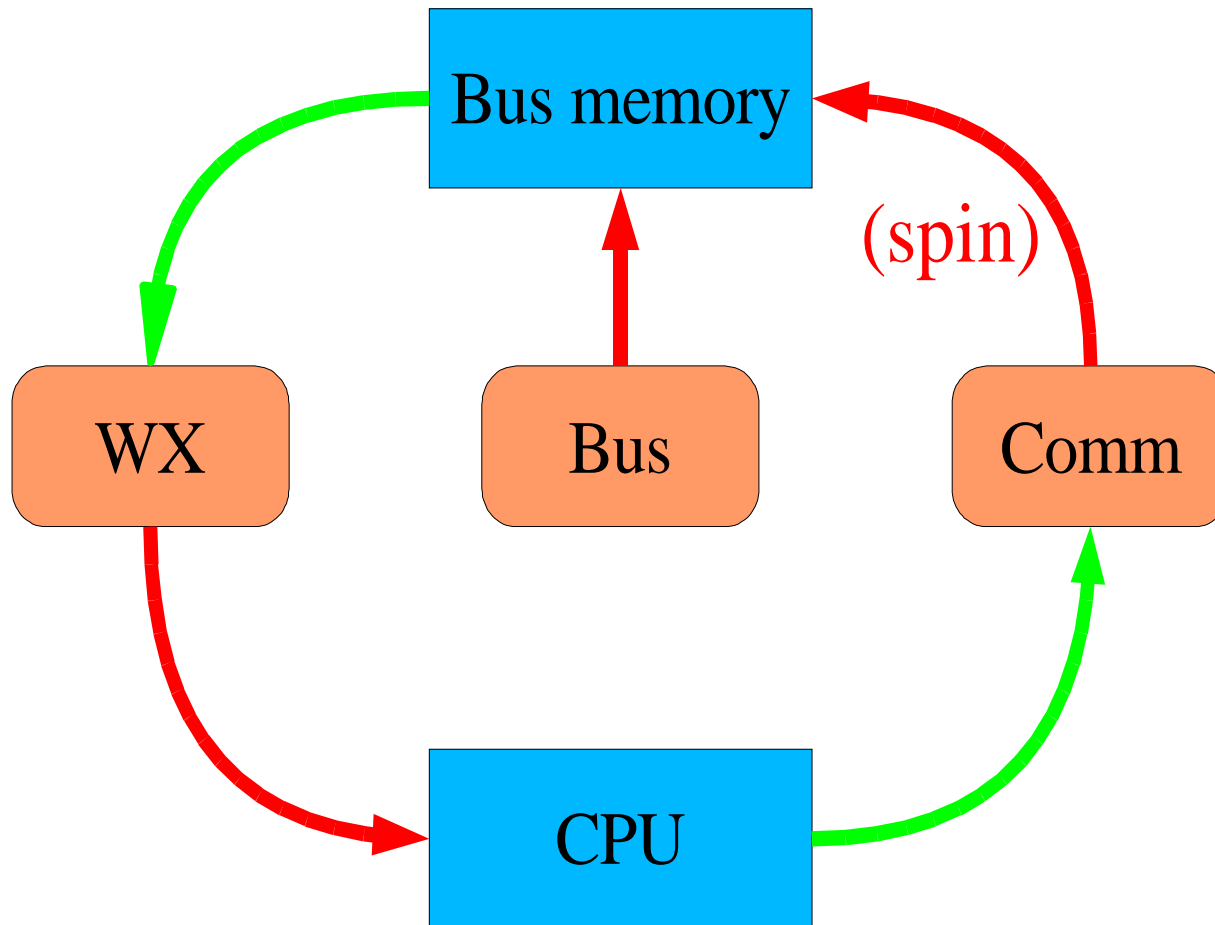
Weather data locks “bus” memory to publish

High-priority bus manager must wait

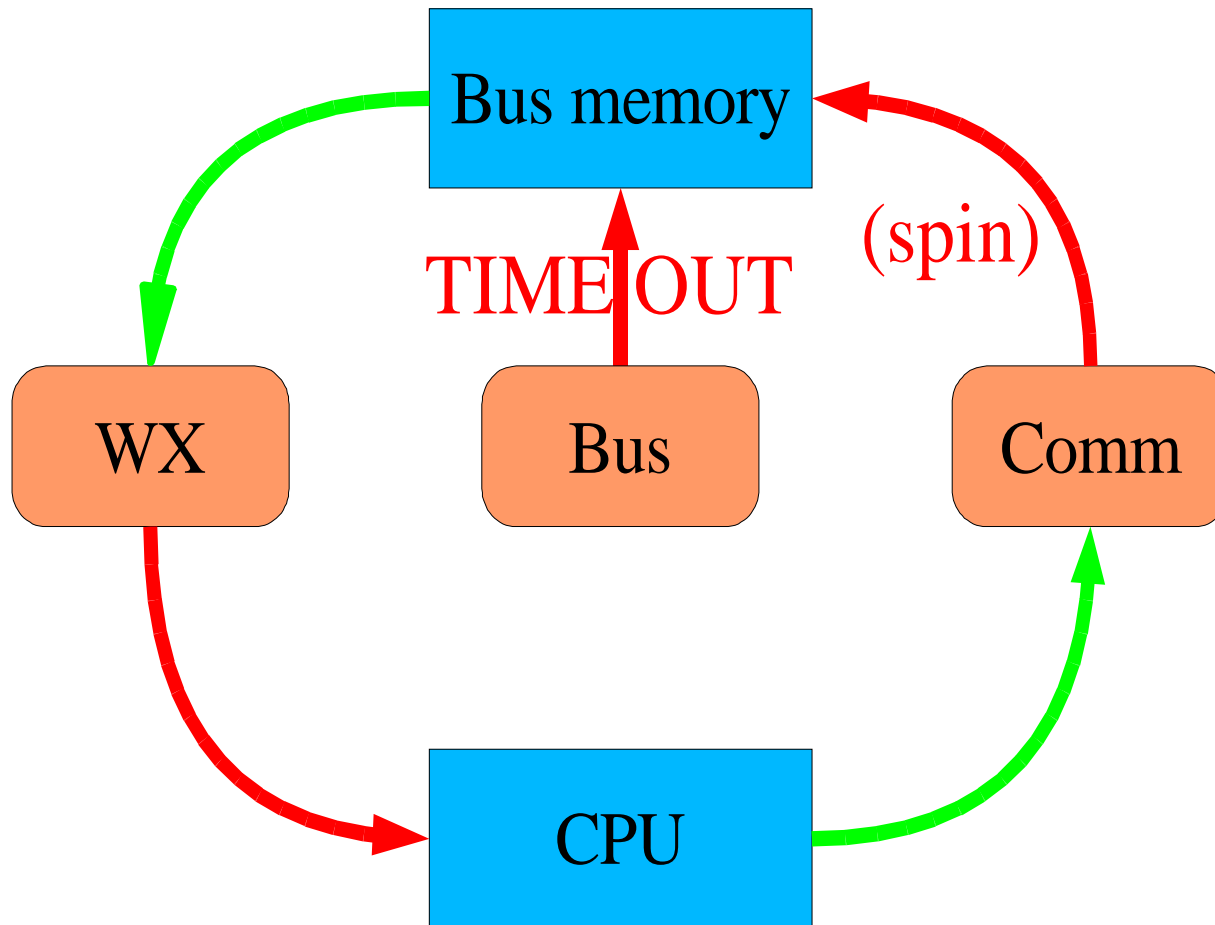
Interrupt makes **communication** runnable

- “Medium” priority, so preempts **weather data**
- **Communication** then attempts to lock bus
- Highest-priority runnable task, so it spin-waits

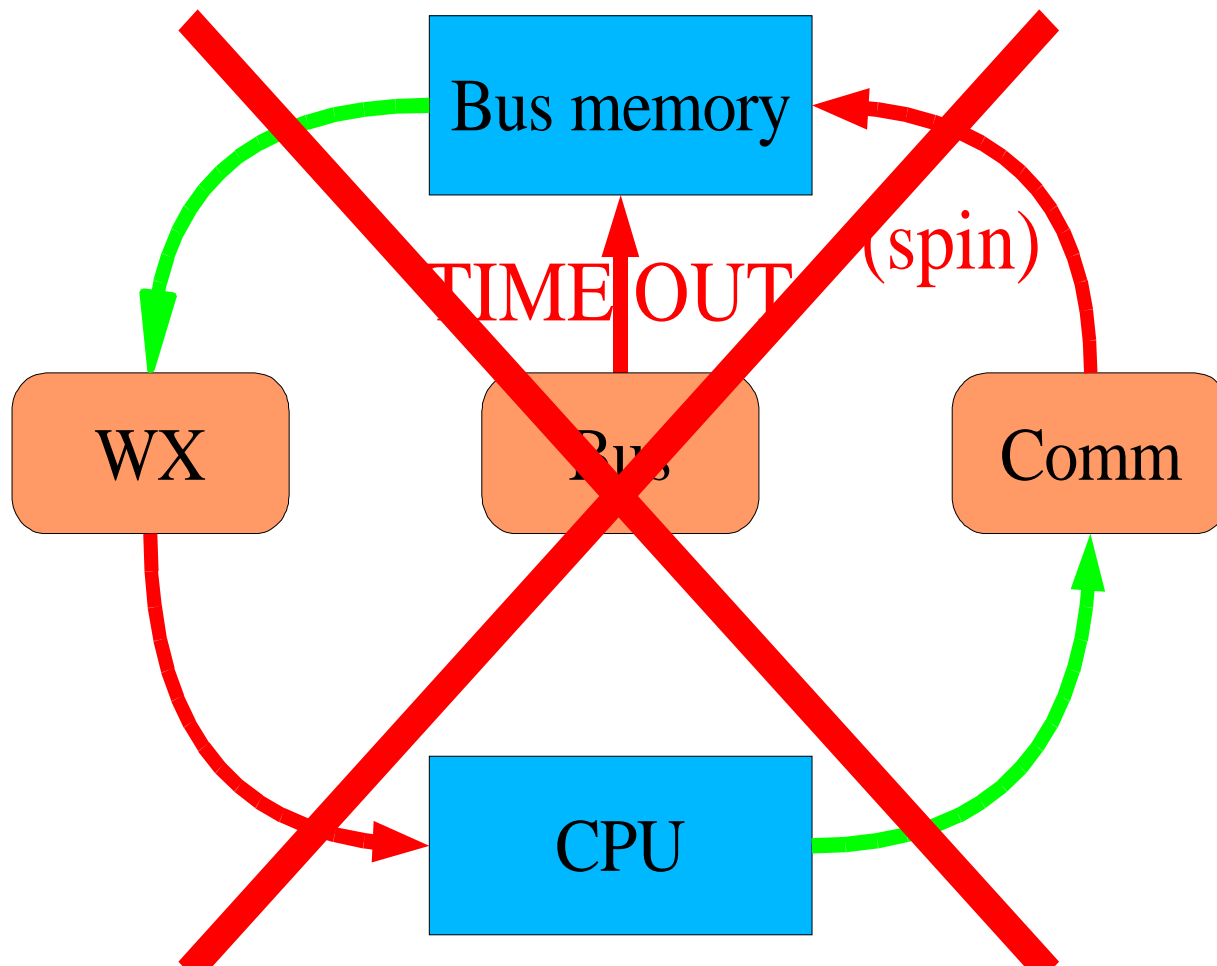
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What could go wrong?



Solution?

VxWorks has two mutex flavors

- Normal
- *Priority Inheritance*

Rover code initialized flavors via global variables

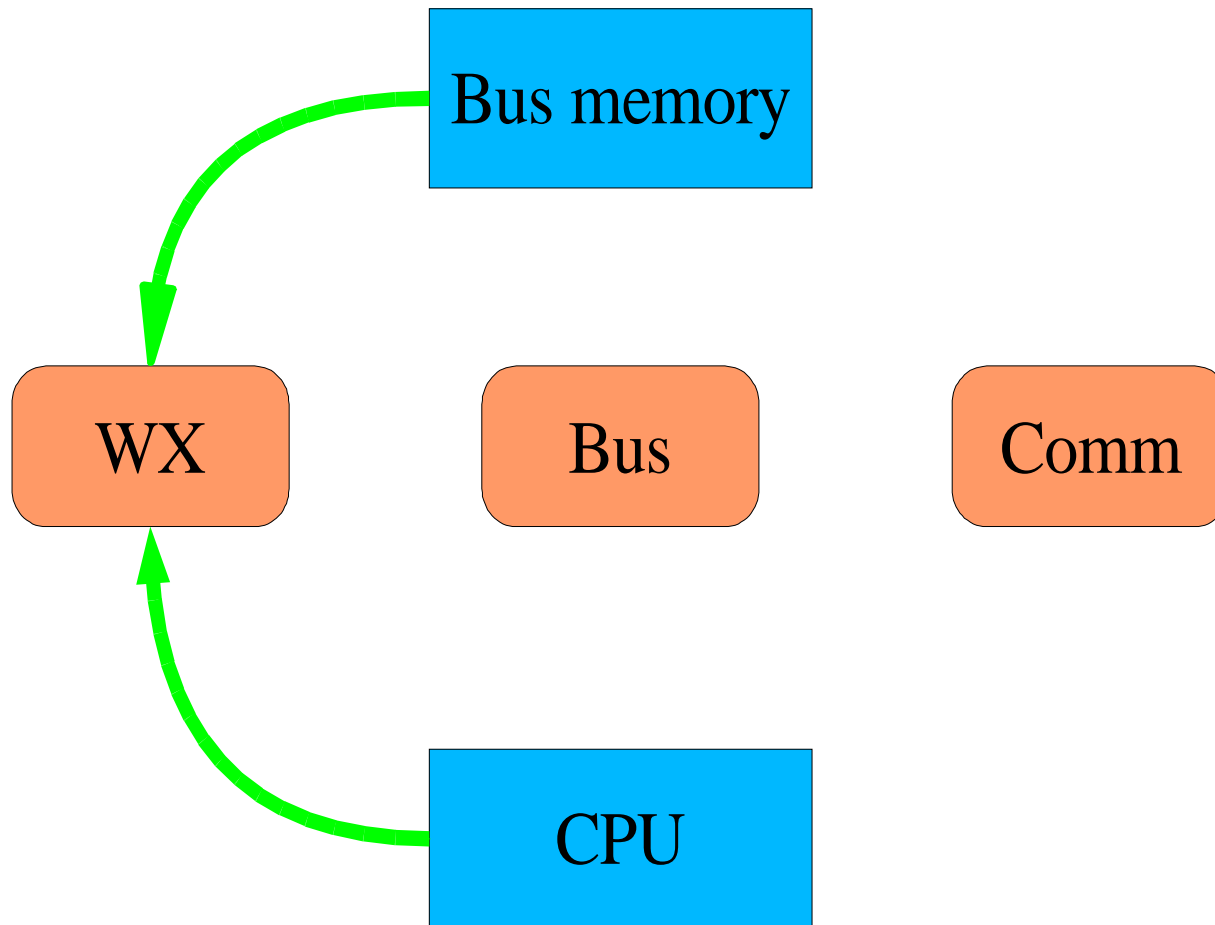
```
extern int bus_mutex_flavor = MF_DEFAULT;  
mutex_init(&bus_mem_mutex, bus_mutex_flavor);
```

Rover flew with “debug” interpreter enabled

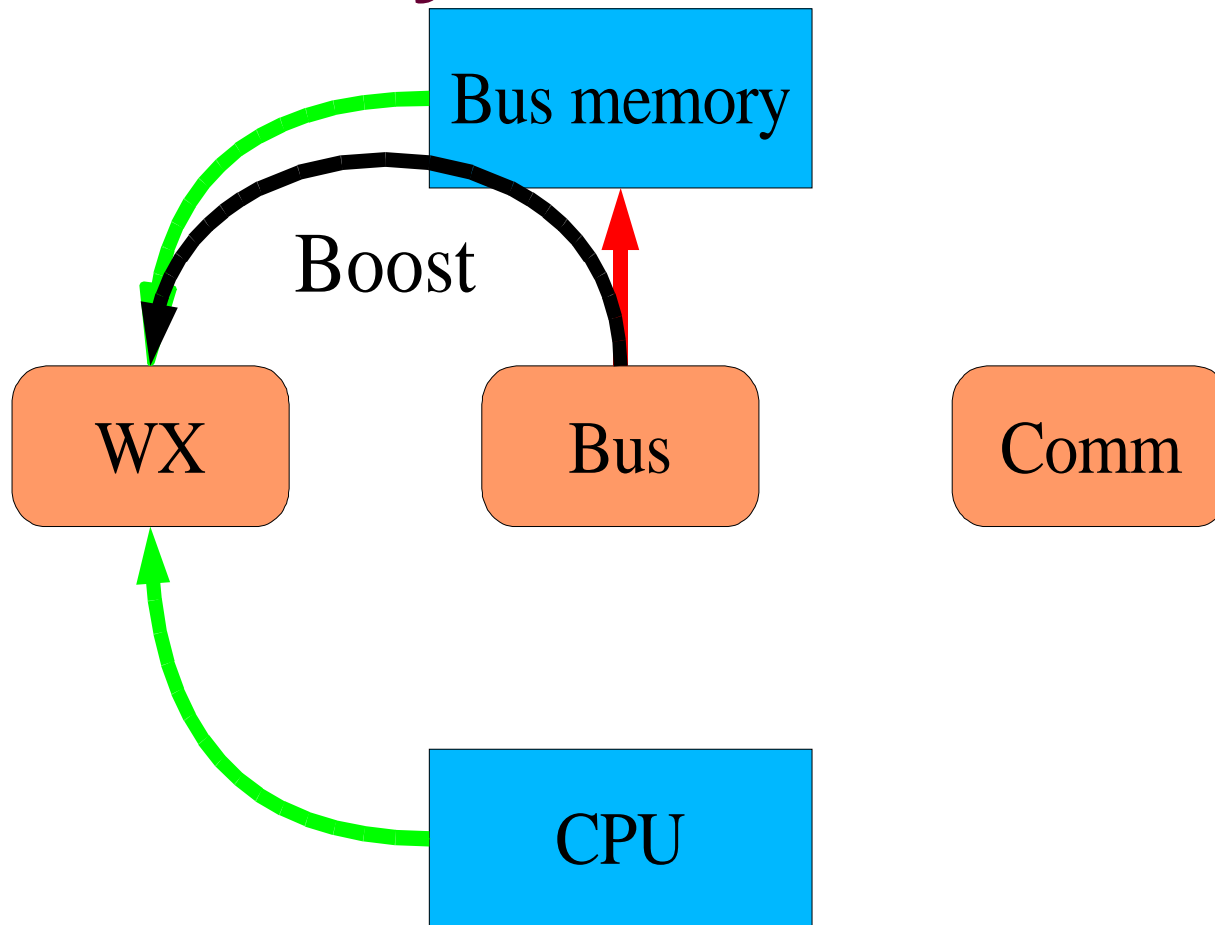
- Read-eval loop waiting for commands
- ```
% assign bus_mutex_flavor = MF_P_INHERIT
```

## All fixed

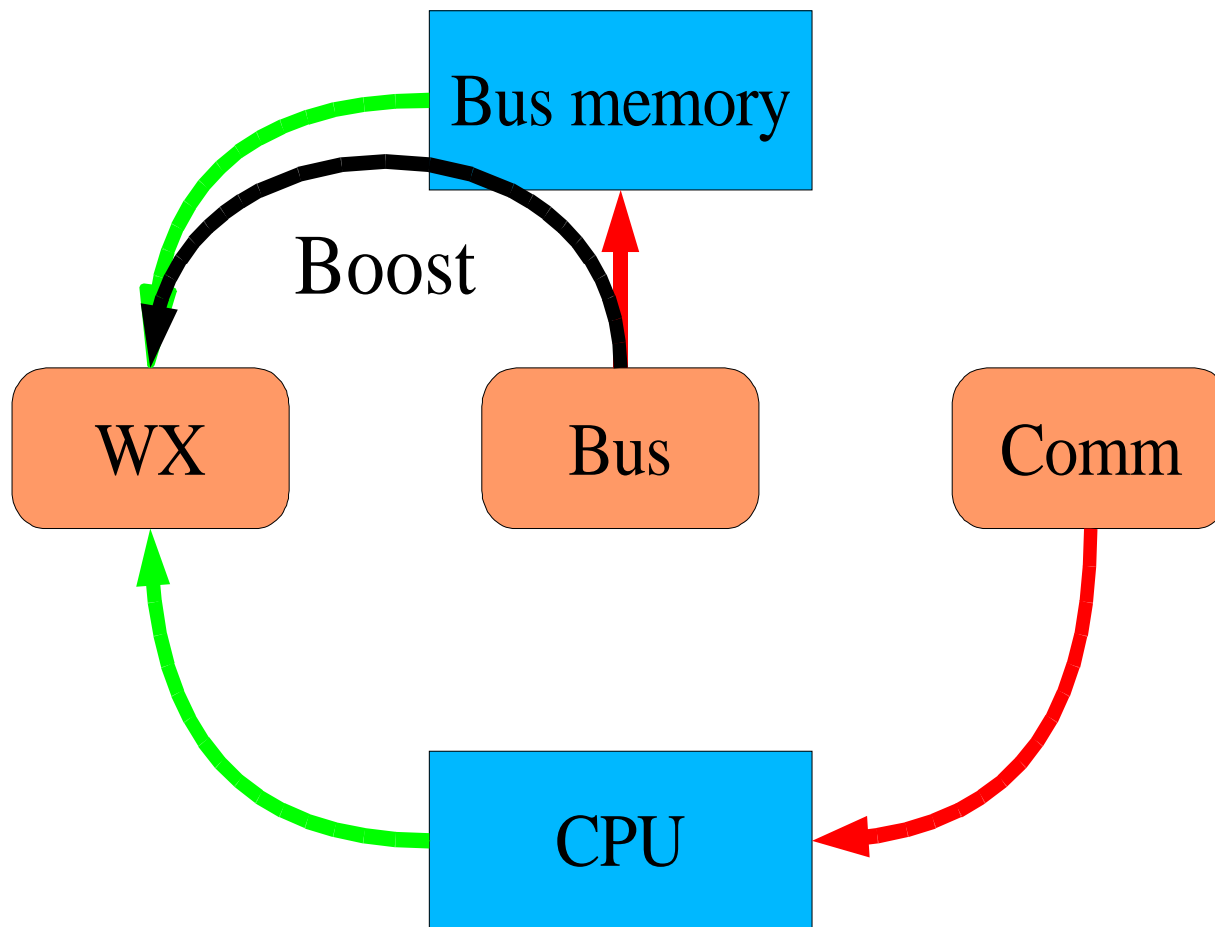
# Weather Thread is Busy



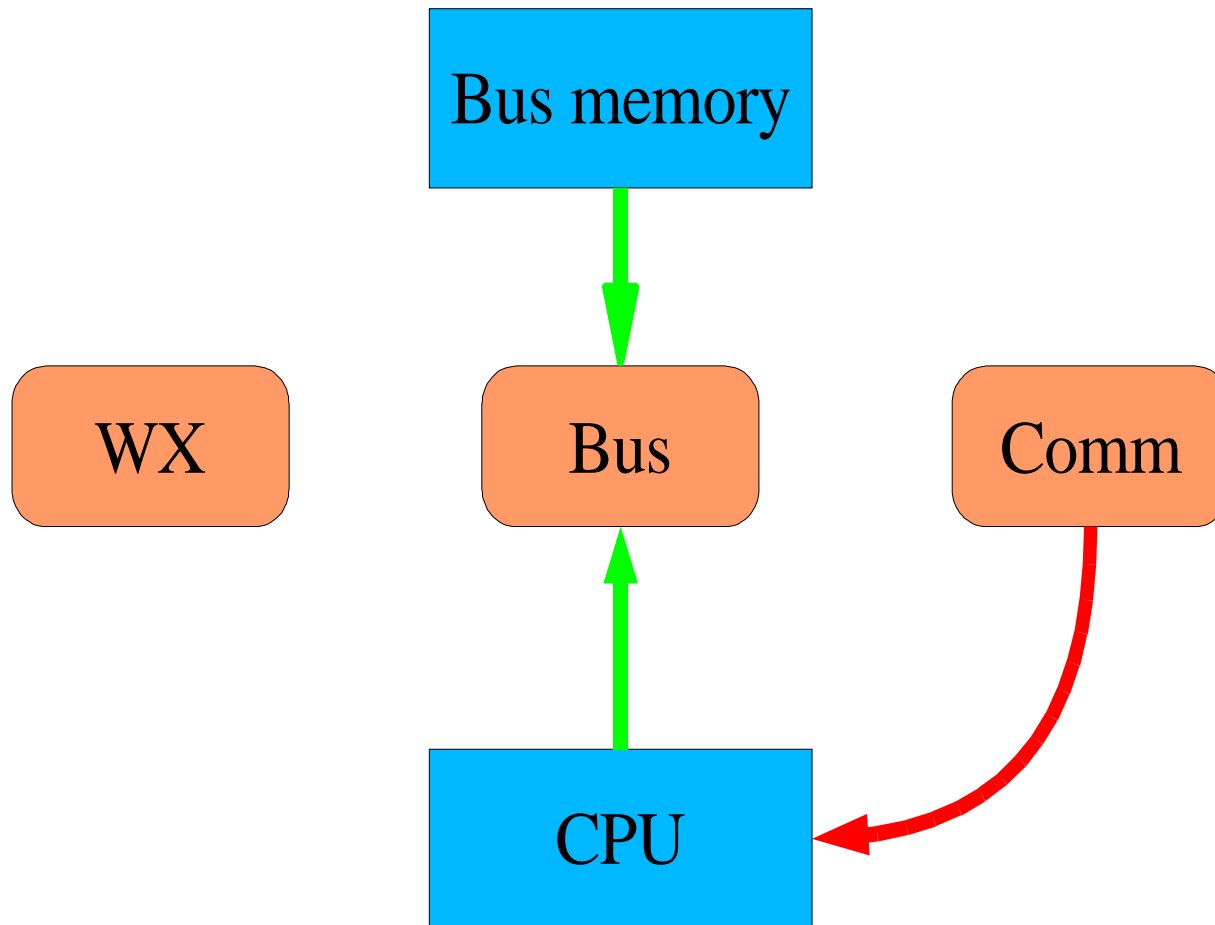
# Bus Thread Waits: Priority Inherited by WX



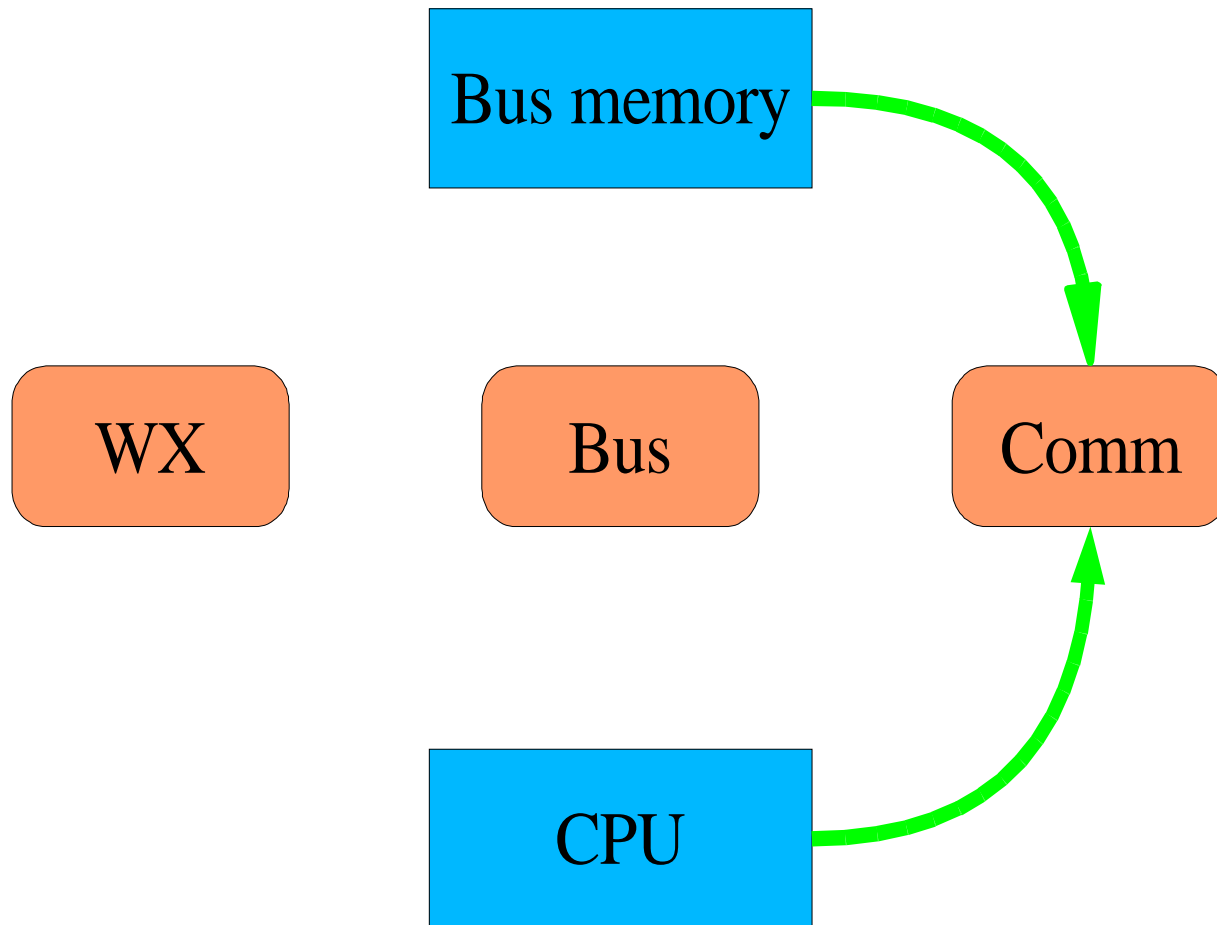
# Comm Artificially Defers



# “Low-Priority” Thread Finishes Fast



# “Low-Priority” Thread Finishes Fast



# History of an Idea

## Priority Inheritance Protocols: An Approach to Real-Time Synchronization

- IEEE Transactions on Computers 39:9
  - Lui Sha (CMU SEI)
  - Rangunathan Rajkumar (IBM Research → CMU ECE)
  - John Lehoczky (CMU Statistics)

# History of an Idea

## Events

- 1987-12 “Manuscript” received
- 1988-05 Revised
- 1990-09 Published
- 1997-07 Rescues Mars Pathfinder

## History courtesy of Mike Jones

- <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~rajkumar/mars.html>