General purpose CPU
   - Highest level functionality
   - Administrative interface
   - System control
   - Overall management functions
   - Routing protocols

Embedded processor
   - Intermediate functionality
   - Higher-layer protocols
   - Control of I/O processors
   - Exception and error handling
   - High-level ingress (e.g., reassembly)
   - High-level egress (e.g., traffic shaping)

I/O processor
   - Basic packet processing
   - Classification
   - Forwarding
   - Low-level ingress operations
   - Low-level egress operations