The Exec and Virtual Exec processes are Medium–priority processes, so if there are other processes that have a higher priority (High or Critical), the higher priority processes get the CPU resources.

router#show process | i CPU | Exec

Use the Bug Toolkit (registered customers only) to look for bugs with this symptom in your Cisco IOS software release.

The exec command is configured for asynchronous and auxiliary lines.

If a line has only outgoing traffic, the Exec process should be disabled for this line, because if the device (for example, a modem) attached to this line sends some unsolicited data, the Exec process starts on this line.