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(54) **Apparatus for feeding moulding material**

(57) An apparatus (10) for feeding moulding material towards a moulding station, the feeding apparatus (10) comprising a receptacle (11) for the moulding material at a first location, conveyor means (12) for conveying moulding material from the receptacle (11) towards a second location (13), reservoir means (14) at the second location (13), the second location (13) being at or adjacent the moulding station, heating means (30)

for heating the moulding material as it is conveyed by the conveyor means (12) characterised in that the heating means (30) comprises a plurality of heating units (30) spaced along the conveyor means (12), and a control means (20) individually to control the heat output of the plurality of heating units (30) thereby to provide zonal heating control along the conveyor means (12).

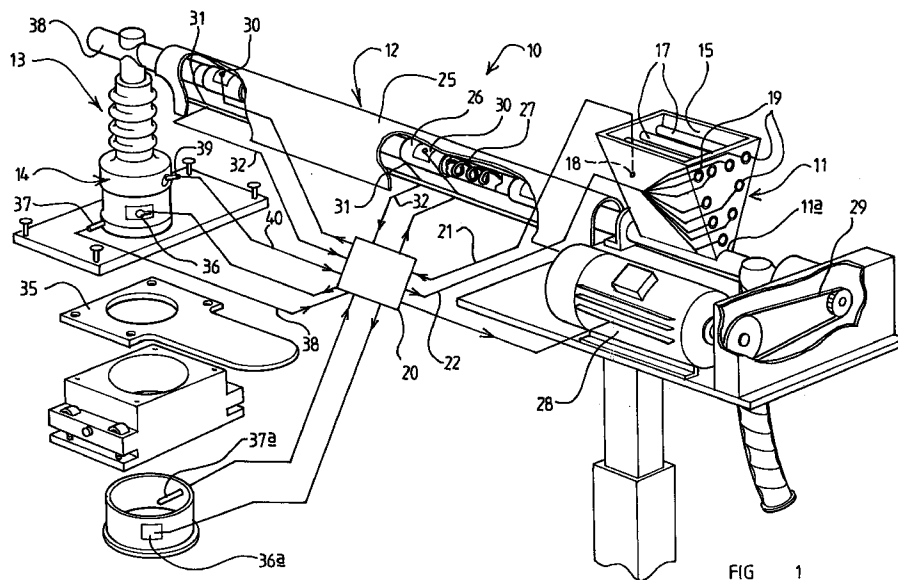


FIG 1

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 98 10 7755

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	EP 0 516 467 A (CINCINNATI INC) 2 December 1992	1-4,8,9	B30B15/30 B22F3/00
Y	* column 10, line 44 - column 11, line 1; figures 1-3,6 *	5-7	
Y	--- PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 006, no. 126 (M-142), 10 July 1982 & JP 57 053336 A (MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC CORP), 30 March 1982 * abstract *	5-7	
X	--- US 3 832 107 A (COX A ET AL) 27 August 1974 * column 3, line 62 - column 4, line 11; figures *	1,8,9	
A	--- US 5 593 707 A (GOE BRYAN W ET AL) 14 January 1997 * abstract; figures *	1-5,8,9	
A	--- US 3 988 088 A (KING JERRY A ET AL) 26 October 1976 * column 3, line 47 - line 68; figures *	1-5,8,9	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
A	--- US 3 521 326 A (RICE RICHARD E ET AL) 21 July 1970 * figures *	1-5,8,9	B30B B22F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 8 October 1998	Examiner Belibel, C
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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