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(54) **A method of balancing the load in a process for sorting objects**

(57) The sorting process comprises performing a first and at least a second consecutive sorting cycle by means of a postal machine and the present invention relates to a method of balancing to be performed before the commencement of the sorting process and comprising the step of performing, in at least one of the sorting cycles, at least one of the following procedures:

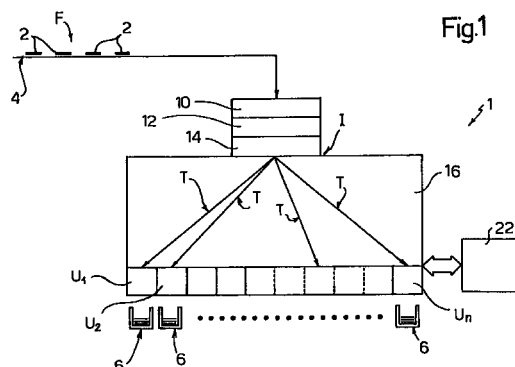
a) a first procedure of balancing the load of the outputs of the postal machine in the current sorting cycle based on at least one of the following balancing criteria:

shifting the delivery addresses from the outputs to which they are assigned to respective logically contiguous outputs associated with the same postman;
bisection of delivery address into respective pairs of virtually separate delivery address and allocating them to a respective pair of logically contiguous outputs associated with the same postman; and
allocation of further outputs to postmen on the basis of an order of criticality of the outputs already allocated to the postman themselves; and

b) a second procedure of balancing the load of the outputs of the postal machine in the current sorting cycle based on at least one of the following balancing criteria:

distribution over outputs utilised in the current sorting cycle of delivery addresses allocated to each output at the end of the subsequent sorting cycle;

shifting the delivery addresses from the outputs to which they are allocated to respective logically contiguous outputs;
exchange of delivery addresses between logically contiguous outputs; and
bisection of delivery addresses into respective pairs of virtually separate delivery addresses and allocating them to a respective pair of logically contiguous outputs.





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 27 March 2000	Examiner Van Dop, E
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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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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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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