

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to packaging, more particularly, but not exclusively, to packaging for pharmaceutical products.

[0002] Pharmaceuticals such as tablets and capsules may often be supplied on so-called 'blister' strips. A blister strip will usually be in the form of a sheet type material including a plurality of blister-like formations, with each blister being configured for receiving a single tablet or capsule. A layer, typically of foil, will be provided over the back of the sheet material to act as a closure for the tablets or capsules in the blisters. In order to remove one of the tablets or capsules from the blister strip, the associated blister is pushed so as to force the tablet/capsule out through the foil closure.

[0003] A medicinal course of tablets or capsules might typically comprise a number of tablets or capsules requiring one or more blister strips, which will be provided in a box-type packaging.

[0004] It is an object of the invention to provide packaging for use with blister strips or tablets/capsules.

[0005] According to the broadest aspect of the present invention, there is provided packaging for pharmaceutical products, the packaging comprising a box-type structure defining a first receptacle suitable for containing pharmaceutical products such as blister strips of tablets or the like, the packaging further including a second receptacle which can be stored in the first receptacle and which can be removed for use as a temporary receptacle for said pharmaceutical products.

[0006] Preferably, the second receptacle is in the form of sleeve means for receiving a blister strip of tablets or the like.

[0007] Preferably, the second receptacle is in the form of a wallet.

[0008] In a preferred embodiment, the first and second receptacles are formed from the same packaging blank, in which the second receptacle is preferably detachable from the first receptacle.

[0009] The invention is advantageous in that the primary receptacle can be used to store a course of medication in the form of tablets and capsules provided on blister strips, and the second receptacle can be used to store a day supply of said course, to be carried separately from the remainder of the course and the primary receptacle.

[0010] Other preferred features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description and dependent claims.

[0011] The invention will be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic perspective view of a packaging box according to a preferred embodiment of the invention, with the box in a closed condition;

Figure 2 is a schematic plan view of a packaging blank for use in creating the box shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a view similar to Figure 1, showing the box in a partially open condition;

Figure 4 is a view similar to Figures 1 and 3, showing the box in a fully open condition with the wallet portion partially removed from the box; and

Figure 5 is a view similar to Figure 4, showing the wallet portion fully removed from the box.

[0012] Referring to Figure 1, an article of packaging according to a preferred embodiment of the invention is in the form of a box, indicated generally at 10. The box 10 serves as a convenient receptacle for pharmaceutical products and is particularly suited for storing and supplying tablets and capsules provided on blister strips.

[0013] The box 10 is formed from a single packaging blank, illustrated in Figure 2 and indicated generally at 100. For convenience, the blank 100 can be described as consisting of one cover panel 102, two primary panels 104A, 104B, two secondary panels 106A, 106B, two wallet panels 108A, 108B and four end panels 110.

[0014] The cover panel 102 includes two sets of stepped cut lines 112 provided to form part of the periphery of a closure flap portion indicated at 114. Fold lines indicated at 116 are provided to define a pull tab 118 on the closure flap portion 114. A cut line 120 between the fold lines 116 and the pull tab 118 serve to proscribe a closure tab 122 on the closure flap portion 112, as will be described in more detail below.

[0015] In most cases, adjacent panels of the packaging blank 100 are separated by a line of weakness or fold line, indicated at 124. However, primary panel 104B includes cut lines indicated at 126, which define the outer periphery of an adhesive panel 128 adjacent wallet panel 108A, the purpose of which will be described in more detail below.

[0016] A cut line 130 is provided in primary panel 104B, for co-operative engagement with the closure tab 122 on the cover panel 102, as will be described below.

[0017] To assemble the packaging 10 shown in Figure 1 from the blank 100 shown in Figure 2, adhesive is first applied to the upper surface of the blank 100 on the adhesive panel 128 and the two end panels 110 on primary panel 104A. Starting from the right hand end as viewed in Figure 2, wallet panel 108B is then moved upwardly from its position in Figure 2, about the fold line between the two wallet panels 108, to a position over wallet panel 108A. The two wallet panels 108 are raised about the fold line between the wallet panel 108A and primary panel 104B so that an outer region of wallet panel 108B is brought into contact with the adhesive on adhesive panel 128. Once assembled in this way, the wallet panels 108 and adhesive panel 128 form an internal receptacle in the box 10, as will be described in more detail below.

[0018] By continuing to fold the adjacent panels in the manner described above. The packaging blank 100 eventually takes on the shape of the box 10 shown in Figure 1, with the outer surface of primary panel 104A forming the underside of the box 10 as viewed in Figure 1. Before the cover panel 102 is folded into a position over the outer surface of primary panel 104B, product to be supplied in the packaging 10 is introduced, for example a plurality of co-operatively sized blister strips. Adhesive is then applied to the distal corner regions of the cover panel 102, indicated at 132 in Figure 2 and the cover panel 102 can be brought into contact with the primary panel 104B so as to form the closed packaging box 10 shown in Figure 1.

[0019] To open the box 10, for example to remove medication, the tab 118 on the closure flap 114 is pulled upwardly as viewed in Figure 1. This causes the tab 118 to move relative to the remainder of the closure flap 114, about fold lines 116, until the connection between the stepped cut lines 112 and coverpanel 102 is broken and the closure flap portion 114 is torn free from the cover panel 102 to the position shown in Figure 3. As can be seen, the corner portions 132 of the cover panel 102 are retained on the upper primary panel 104B, with the cut line 130 exposed between the corner portions 132.

[0020] With the cover flap portion 114 raised, it is possible to access the products stored in the box 10, which defines a primary receptacle indicated at 134 in Figures 3 and 4. Product can be removed or introduced to the primary receptacle 134, as required.

[0021] As can be seen in Figure 3, the outer surface of the adhesive panel 128 is visible when the cover flap portion 114 is first opened. As mentioned above, the wallet panels 108 and adhesive panel 128 form an internal receptacle in the box 10, referred to hereinafter as the secondary receptacle or wallet 140.

[0022] To remove the wallet 140 from the position shown in Figure 3, i. e. with the wallet 140 connected to the rest of the box 10, the user must pull the wallet 140 and box 10 away from one another until the connection between the cut lines 126 at the junction of the primary panel 104B and the adhesive panel 128 is overcome and the wallet 140 becomes detached from the box 10, as indicated in Figure 4.

[0023] It will be understood that the wallet 140 is in the form of sleeve having a pair of ends 142, indicated clearly in Figure 5. The sleeve is open at both ends and is ideally suited for receiving a thin blister strip of medication.

[0024] The advantage of the wallet 140 is that a small number of capsules or tablets can be stored conveniently and separately from the remainder of a course of medication in the primary receptacle. For example, a 28 day course of medication might be in the form of four individual blister strips of medication, each strip holding a week's requirement of the medication. At any time, one of the strips can be removed from the primary receptacle 134 and stored for convenience in the wallet 140, to be carried by the user, while the box 10 is stored at a safe

location.

[0025] It is a particular advantage of the preferred embodiment that the wallet and primary box are formed from the same packaging blank, not least for ease of manufacture.

[0026] The wallet 140 can be stored in the box 10, when required. To close the box 10 from the positions shown in Figures 3 to 5, the closure flap portion 114 is folded back downwards towards the upper primary panel 104B. The closure tab 122 can then be engaged in the cut line 130 on the upper primary panel 104B to retain the box in a closed condition, until access to the box is again required.

Claims

1. Packaging for pharmaceutical products, the packaging comprising a box-type structure defining a first receptacle suitable for containing pharmaceutical products such as blister strips of tablets or the like, the packaging further including a second receptacle which can be stored in the first receptacle and which can be removed for use as a temporary receptacle for said pharmaceutical products.
2. Packaging as claimed in claim 1, in which the second receptacle is in the form of sleeve means for receiving a blister strip of tablets or the like.
3. Packaging as claimed in claim 1 or 2, in which the second receptacle is in the form of a wallet.
4. Packaging as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the first and second receptacles are formed from the same packaging blank
5. Packaging as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the second receptacle is detachable from the first receptacle.
6. Packaging substantially as herein described and as illustrated in Figures 1 to 5.
7. A packaging blank substantially as herein described and as illustrated in Figure 2.

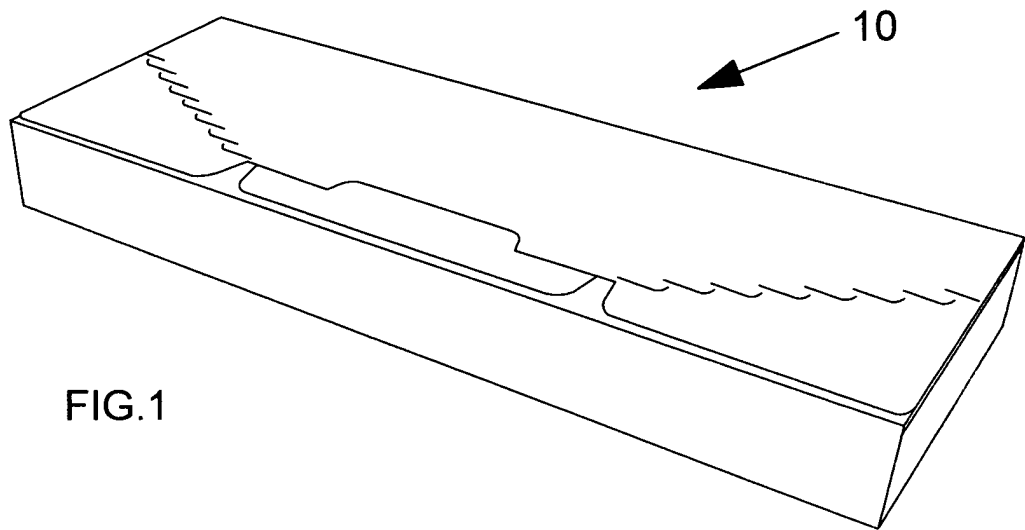


FIG. 1

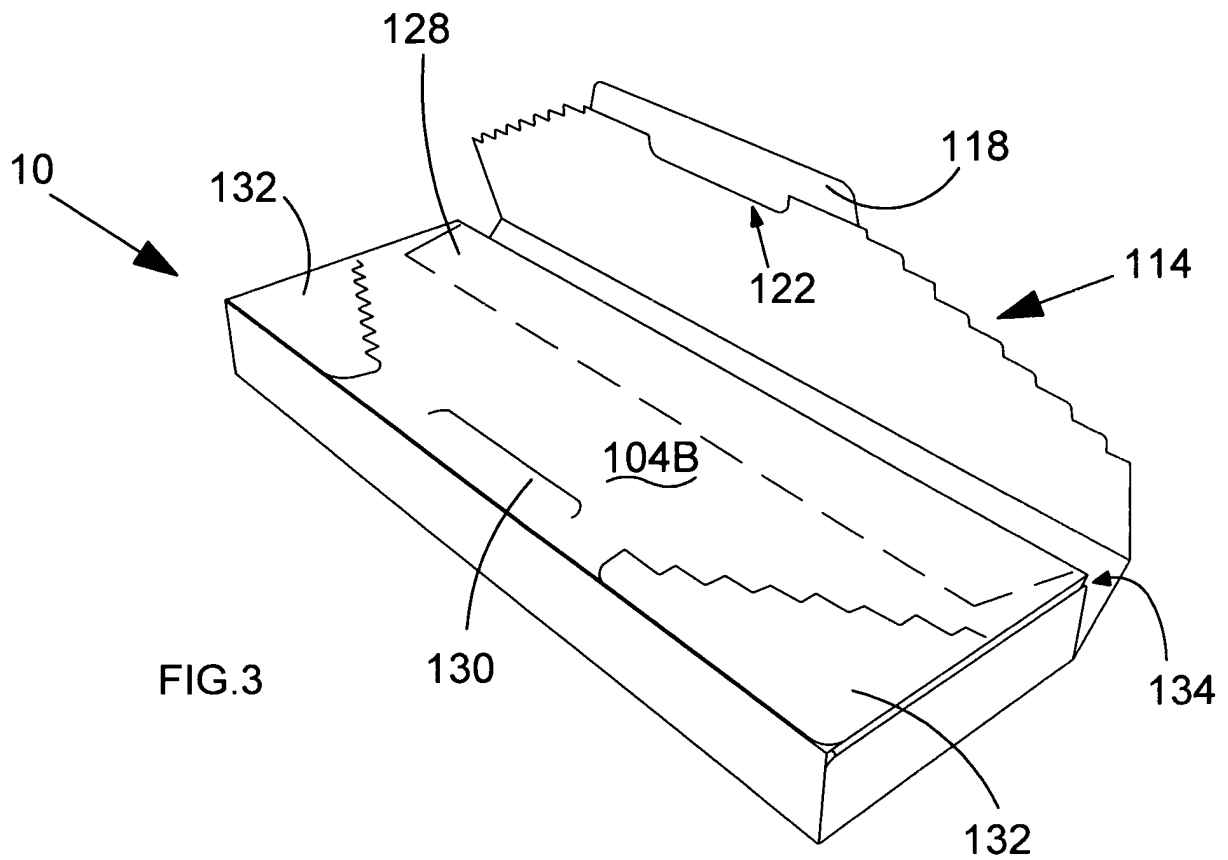


FIG. 3

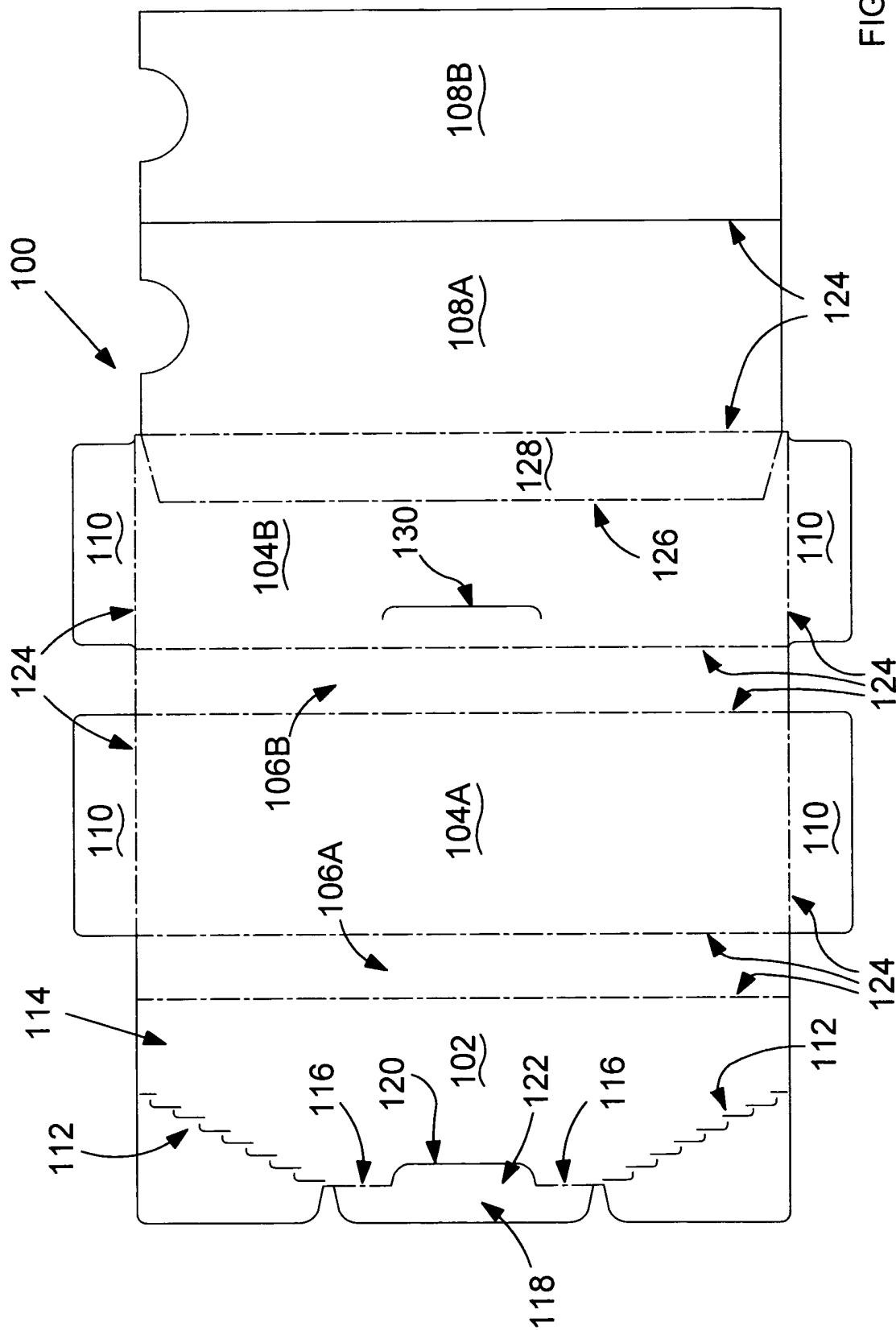
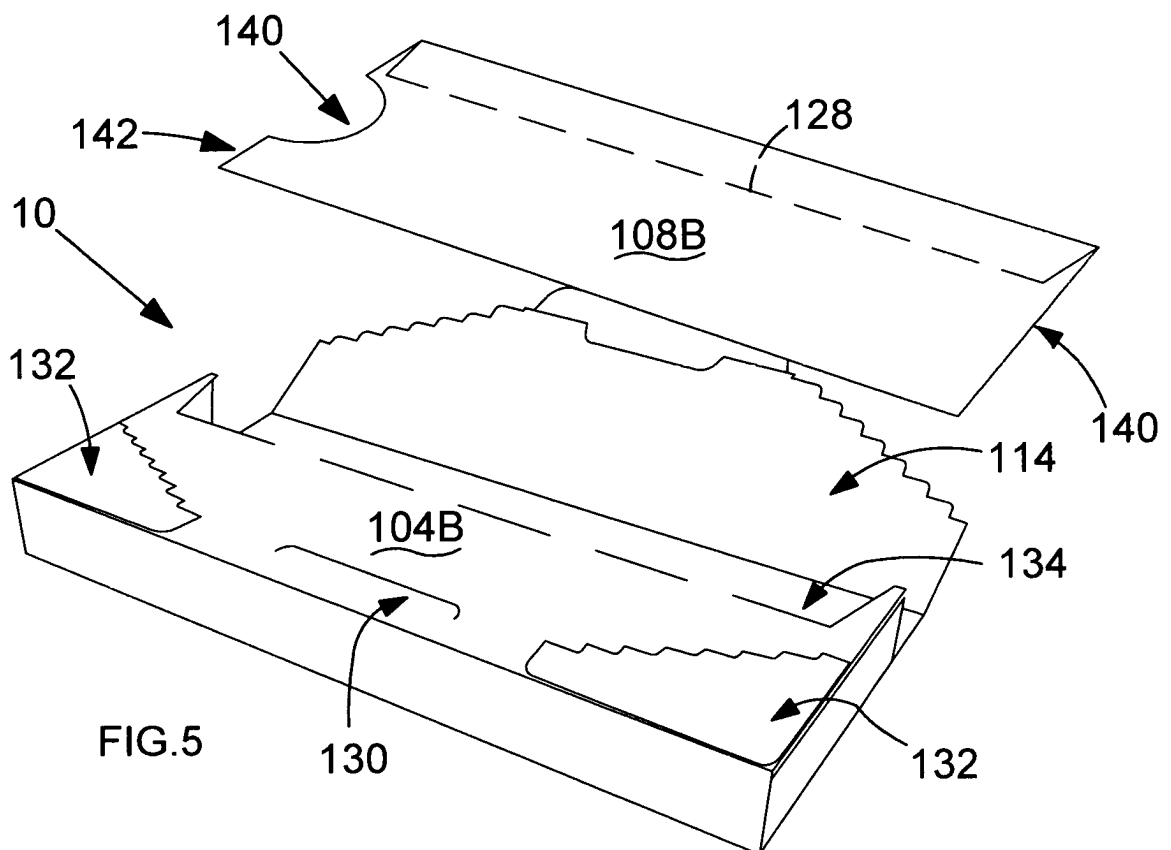
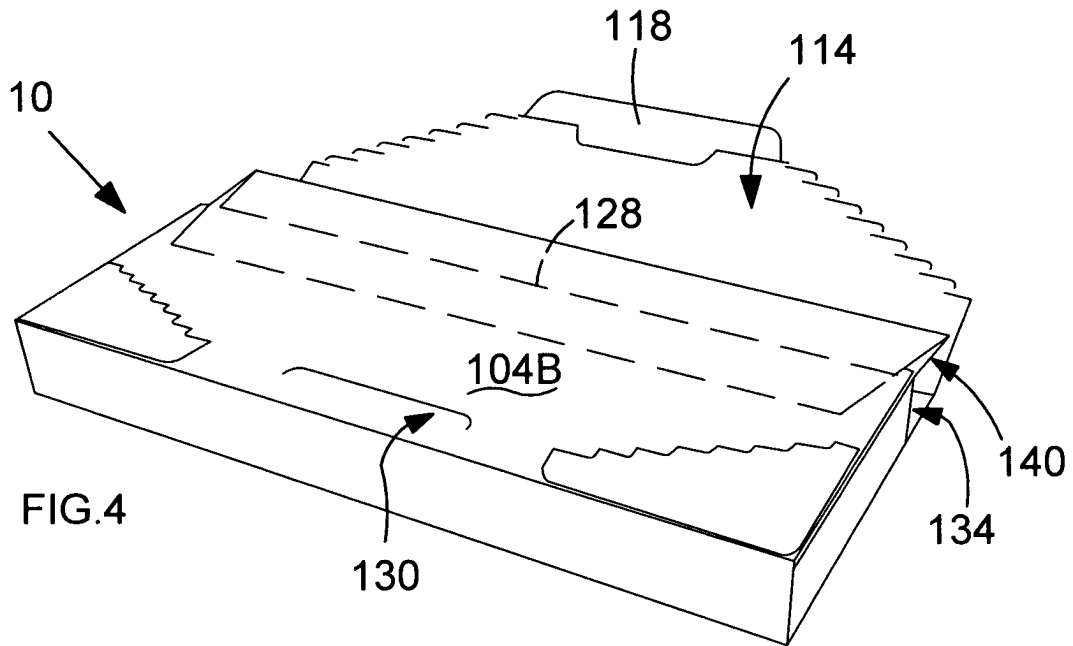


FIG. 2





European Patent
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PARTIAL EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

which under Rule 45 of the European Patent Convention EP 05 25 6540 shall be considered, for the purposes of subsequent proceedings, as the European search report

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
X	DE 92 00 577 U1 (CARL EDELMANN GMBH; PAUL HARTMANN AG, 7920 HEIDENHEIM, DE) 12 March 1992 (1992-03-12) * page 1, paragraph 1 - page 4, paragraph 3 * * figures 1,3 *	1-5	B65D5/42 B65D5/54
A	FR 2 744 095 A (CORJET DENIS) 1 August 1997 (1997-08-01) * abstract; figures 1,2 *	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			B65D
INCOMPLETE SEARCH			
<p>The Search Division considers that the present application, or one or more of its claims, does/do not comply with the EPC to such an extent that a meaningful search into the state of the art cannot be carried out, or can only be carried out partially, for these claims.</p> <p>Claims searched completely :</p> <p>Claims searched incompletely :</p> <p>Claims not searched :</p> <p>Reason for the limitation of the search:</p> <p>see sheet C</p>			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich		9 January 2006	Piolat, O
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		<p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention</p> <p>E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date</p> <p>D : document cited in the application</p> <p>L : document cited for other reasons</p> <p>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>	
<p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone</p> <p>Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category</p> <p>A : technological background</p> <p>O : non-written disclosure</p> <p>P : intermediate document</p>			

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EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C07)



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**INCOMPLETE SEARCH
SHEET C**

Application Number
EP 05 25 6540

Claim(s) searched completely:
1-5

Claim(s) not searched:
6,7

Reason for the limitation of the search:

The wording of claims 6 and 7 "substantially as herein described and as illustrated in figure(s)" leaves the reader in doubt as to the technical features to which it refers, so that a lack of clarity within the meaning of article 84 EPC arises to such an extent as to render a meaningful search of these claims impossible. Reference to Rule 29(6) EPC is also made. Consequently, the search has been carried out for those parts of the application which do appear to be clear, namely claims 1 to 5.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 05 25 6540

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

09-01-2006

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
DE 9200577	U1	12-03-1992	NONE	

FR 2744095	A	01-08-1997	NONE	
