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(54) Device for massaging by means of a fluid

(57) A device (10) for dispensing water for massaging parts of a user's body. The device (10) includes a hollow main body (11) of substantially thin, elongated shape, and fastening means (13,14) for fastening the de-

vice into a loop. The main body (11) has a number of nozzles (17) for producing jets of water. And the device (10) is made entirely in one piece from elastic material, such as silicone rubber.

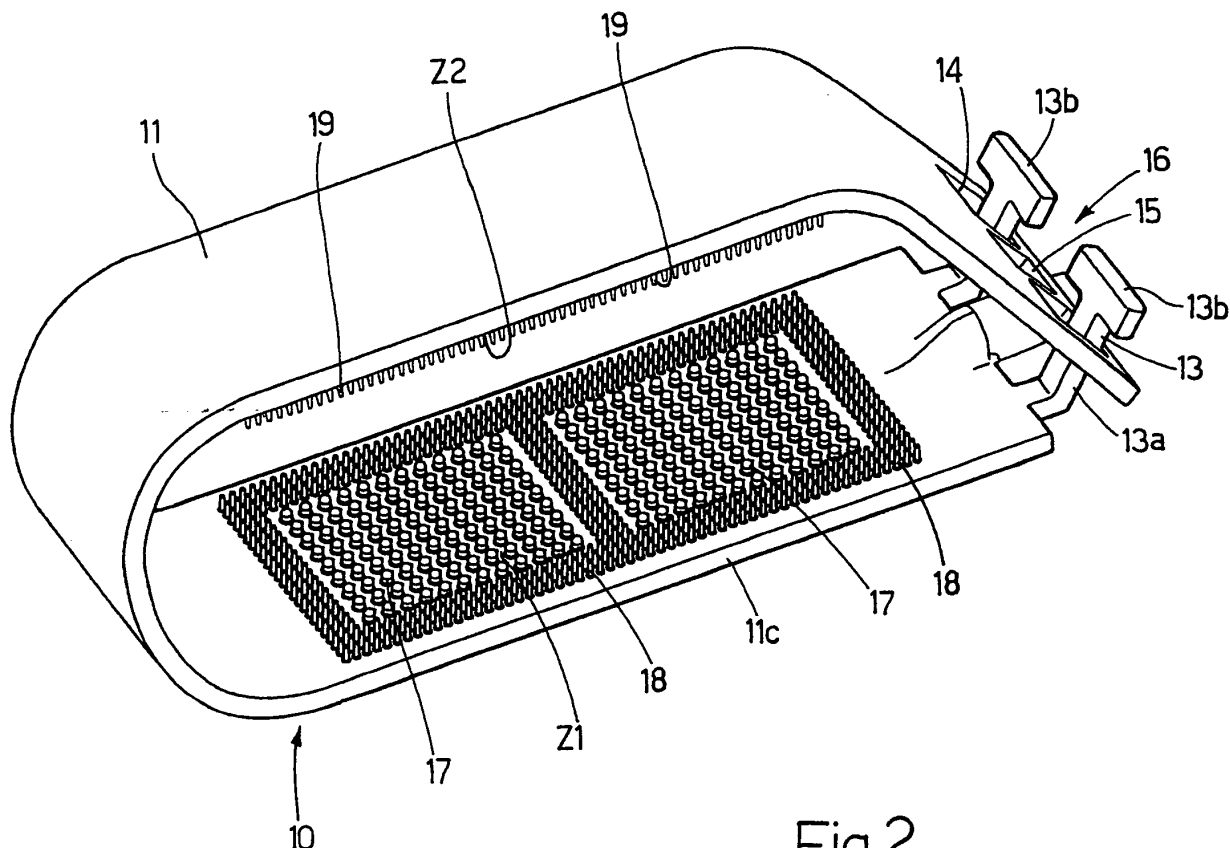


Fig.2

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a device for dispensing a fluid for massaging parts of a user's body.

[0002] In sanitary fixtures, such as a shower stall, a first type of water-dispensing device or so-called "shower head" is known for directing controlled-temperature water jets onto the user's body, substantially for actual washing purposes. Shower stalls are normally also equipped with a "hand-held shower".

[0003] Such fixtures are also known to comprise a special second type of water-dispensing device, in which the water has sufficient energy to massage the user's body.

[0004] The parts of the user's body most commonly massaged are the feet (so-called "foot massage") or the back and abdominal regions.

[0005] In the case of a foot massage, devices are known which rest, in use, on the base of the shower stall; and the user's feet are inserted inside the massage device, which dispenses pressurized water onto them by means of special nozzles. Devices of this sort must normally be stored after use, which means they must be washed, dried thoroughly, and put away, possibly inside a container outside the shower stall.

[0006] In fact, if left permanently inside the shower stall, the foot massage device may hinder the user's movements during normal showering.

[0007] A back and abdomen massage device, on the other hand, normally comprises a number of nozzles formed in an equipped panel made of plastic, obviously on a level with the parts of the body to be massaged.

[0008] The present invention therefore relates to a water-dispensing device which may be used, at the user's discretion, for massaging any part of the user's body. More specifically, the device according to the invention is particularly suitable for massaging the feet or the back and/or abdomen.

[0009] The device according to the present invention is also easy to clean and dry, and, when not in use, may be stored easily in any container outside the shower stall.

[0010] It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a device for dispensing a fluid for massaging parts of a user's body, in accordance with the teachings of Claim 1.

[0011] A non-limiting embodiment of the present invention will be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a first view in perspective of the device according to the present invention in an open configuration;

Figure 2 shows a second view in perspective of the device according to the present invention in a closed configuration;

Figure 3 shows a top plan view of the Figure 1, 2 device according to the invention;

Figure 4 shows a first side view of the Figure 1, 2, 3 device according to the invention;

Figure 5 shows a second side view of the Figure 1, 2, 3, 4 device according to the invention;

Figure 6 shows an underside plan view of the Figure 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 device according to the invention.

[0012] Number 10 in the accompanying drawings indicates a device for dispensing a fluid for massaging parts of a user's body (not shown). Which fluid may be water drawn from a water mains (not shown), in particular a water mains supplying a shower stall.

[0013] Device 10 comprises a hollow main body 11 substantially elongated along an axis (a).

[0014] In the embodiment shown in the accompanying drawings, main body 11 is substantially in the form of a rectangular parallelepiped with six faces 11a, 11b, 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f.

[0015] As shown in more detail in Figure 1, the extension L1 of faces 11a, 11b along axis (a) is much greater than the extension L2 of faces 11c, 11d, 11e, 11f along an axis (b) perpendicular to axis (a).

[0016] Extension L1 of faces 11a, 11b along axis (a) is also greater than the extension L3 of faces 11e, 11f along an axis (c) perpendicular to both axes (a) and (b).

[0017] Main body 11, and hence device 10 as a whole, is therefore thin with respect to axis (b), as shown in the accompanying drawings.

[0018] Being hollow, main body 11 can be supplied inside with a massage fluid, in particular water from a water mains.

[0019] As shown particularly in Figure 1, face 11f of main body 11 has a tubular member 12 for connecting the inside of main body 11 hydraulically to the water mains.

[0020] Face 11f also has two identical projecting fastening members 13 symmetrical with respect to axis (a).

[0021] At the opposite end to face 11f, i.e. at face 11e, at least two through holes 14 are provided.

[0022] As shown particularly in Figure 1, a further through hole 15 is provided between the two through holes 14 to improve manual grip by the user when carrying the device.

[0023] Each projecting member 13 comprises a stem 13a and a head 13b, such that each projecting member 13 is substantially T-shaped.

[0024] In the closed configuration shown in Figure 2, head 13b of each member 13 is inserted by the user inside a respective through hole 14.

[0025] Since the whole of device 10 is molded in one piece from elastic material, e.g. silicone rubber, head 13b is readily deformable and can be inserted easily inside respective through hole 14.

[0026] Projecting members 13 and through holes 14 together define a fastening system 16, as shown in Figure 2.

[0027] As will be seen, the closed configuration in Figure 2 is especially suitable for use as a foot massage (see below).

[0028] As shown in more detail in Figure 1, face 11a

has a first area Z1 and a second area Z2, which are symmetrical with respect to axis (c).

[0029] First area Z1 comprises a number of nozzles 17 combined with a number of massaging elements 18, which project from face 11a on the same side to which pressurized water is supplied.

[0030] In the embodiment shown in the accompanying drawings, second area Z2 comprises a number of massaging elements 19 identical to those of first area Z1.

[0031] It should be pointed out that both massaging elements 18 and massaging elements 19 may be of different heights and thicknesses for effective massage.

[0032] Massaging elements 18, 19 may cover face 11 in patterns other than that shown in the accompanying drawings.

[0033] Moreover, in an embodiment not shown, portions of second area Z2 may also comprise a number of nozzles similar to nozzles 17.

[0034] To perform a foot massage, the user simply loops device 10 as shown in Figure 2, so that, in use, the soles of the feet (not shown) rest on first area Z1, while the insteps are massaged by rubbing against massaging elements 19 of second area Z2.

[0035] Obviously, if second area Z2 also comprises a number of nozzles, the insteps may also be hydromassaged.

[0036] As will be clear to anyone skilled in the art, device 10 may be used for purposes other than the foot massage shown in Figure 2.

[0037] In particular, if unfastened into a strip and hung on any wall of the shower stall (not shown), device 10 may be used, with no alterations other than in configuration, as an abdominal and/or back massage device, for example.

[0038] The versatility of device 10 according to the present invention is therefore obvious : when looped (Figure 2), it may be used, for example, as a foot massage device, and, when unfastened into a strip (Figures 1, 3-6), it may be used for other types of massage, e.g. as an abdomen and/or back massaging device.

3. A device (10) as claimed in any one of the foregoing Claims, **characterized by** comprising at least one area (Z1, Z2) having a number of massaging elements (18, 19).

4. A device (10) as claimed in Claim 3, **characterized by** comprising a first area (Z1) and a second area (Z2), each comprising a number of massaging elements (18, 19); said first area (Z1) being located opposite said second area (Z2) with respect to an axis (c).

5. A device (10) as claimed in Claim 4, **characterized in that**, with respect to said axis (c), said first area (Z1) is located substantially symmetrically with respect to said second area (Z2).

6. A device (10) as claimed in Claim 4 or 5, **characterized in that** said first area (Z1) and said second area (Z2) each comprise a number of nozzles (17) and a number of massaging elements (18, 19).

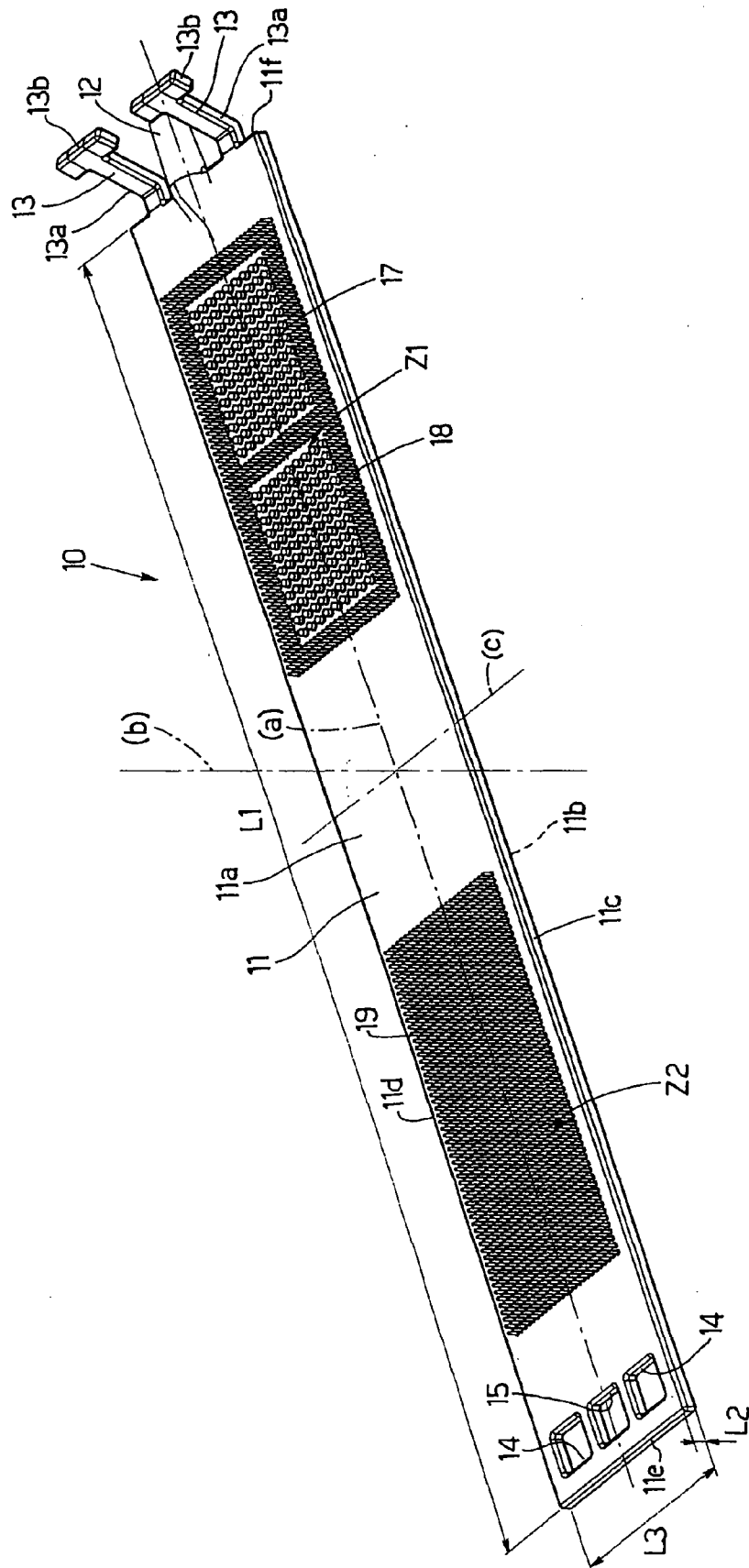
7. A device (10) as claimed in any one of the foregoing Claims, **characterized by** being made entirely in one piece.

8. A device (10) as claimed in any one of the foregoing Claims, **characterized by** being made of rubber, in particular, silicone rubber.

Claims

1. A device (10) for dispensing a fluid, in particular water, for massaging parts of a user's body, the device (10) comprising a hollow main body (11) of substantially thin, elongated shape; said main body (11) having a number of nozzles (17) for producing jets of said fluid; said main body (11) being made of elastic material; and the device (10) being **characterized by** comprising fastening means (16) for fastening the device (10) substantially into a loop.

2. A device (10) as claimed in Claim 1, **characterized by** also comprising connecting means (12) for connection to a supply mains of said fluid.



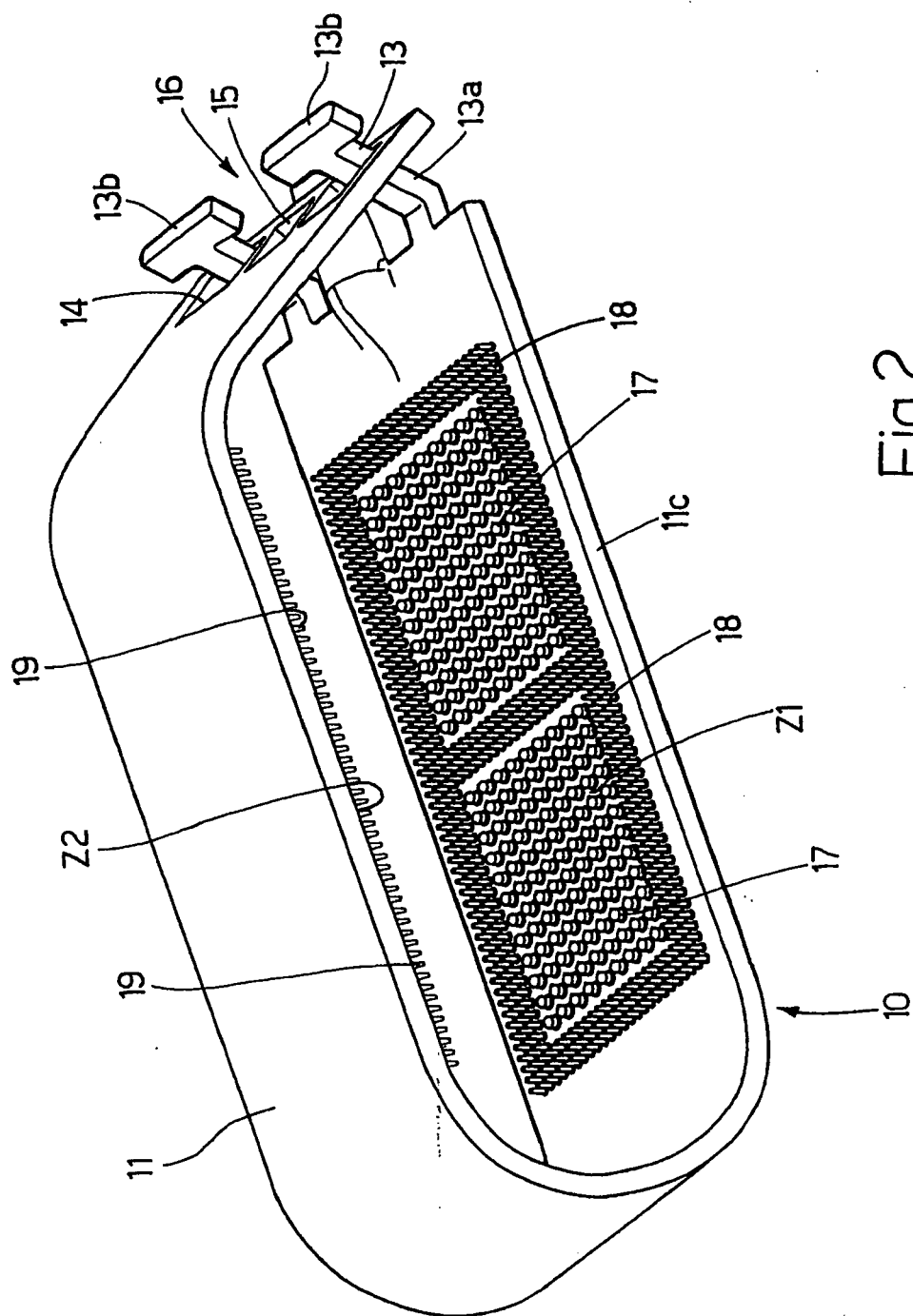
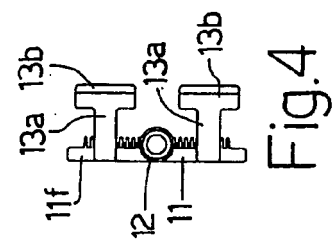
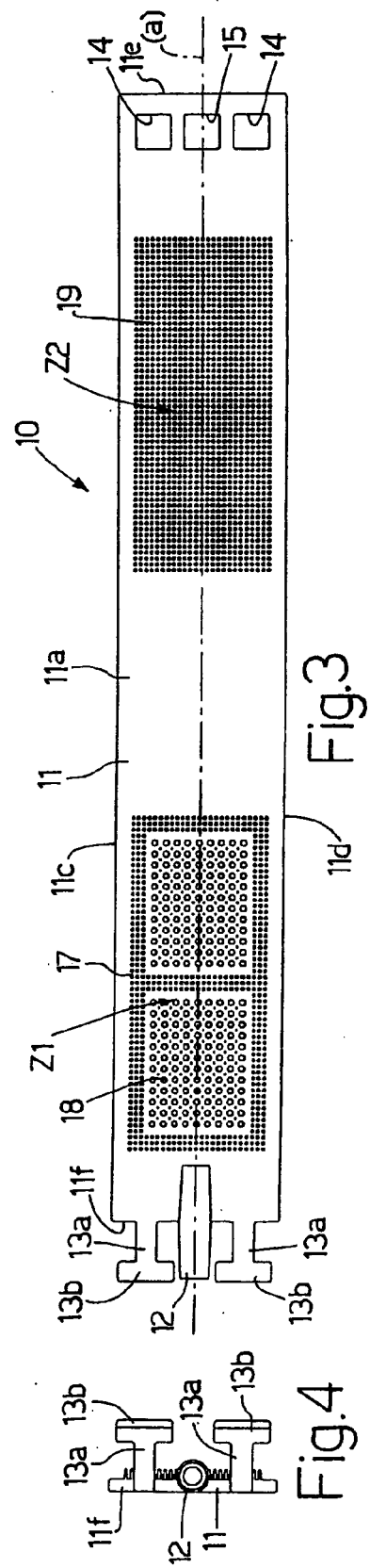
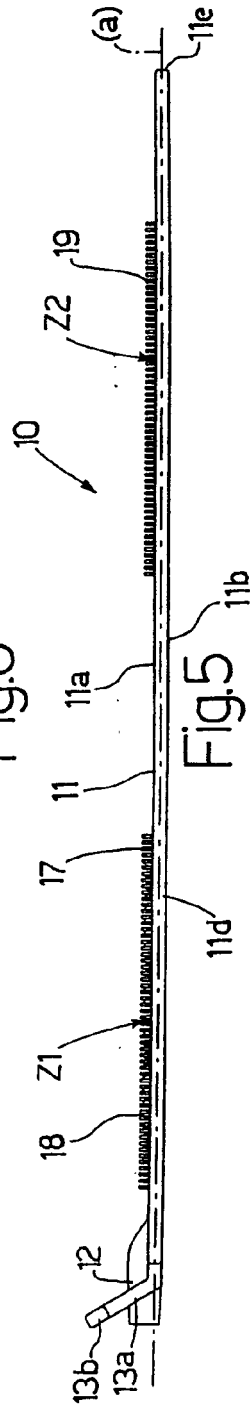
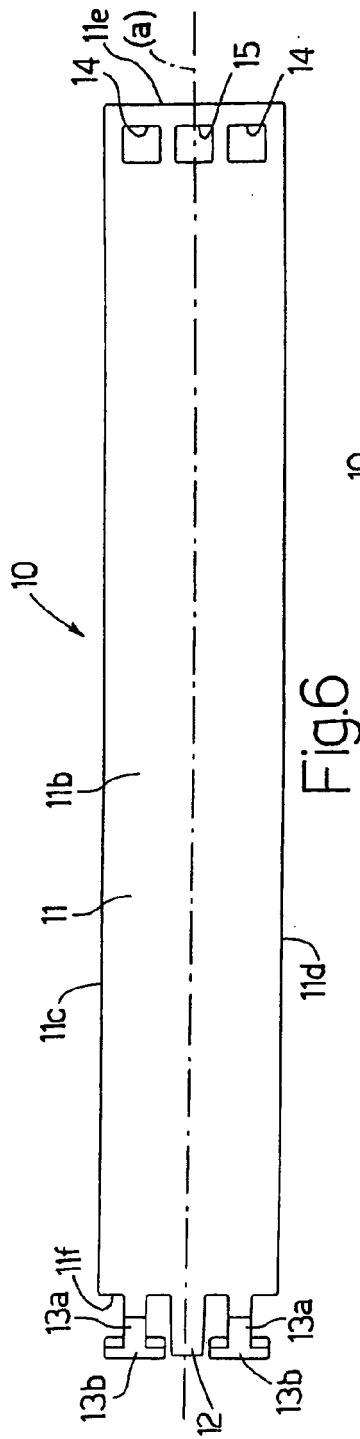


Fig. 2





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 05 42 5418

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X	US 5 634 890 A (MORRIS ET AL) 3 June 1997 (1997-06-03) * figures *	1,2,7,8	A61H9/00 A61H35/00 A47K3/28
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 11 October 2005	Examiner Elmar Fischer
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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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
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