



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:
13.06.2007 Bulletin 2007/24

(51) Int Cl.:
H01R 13/62 (2006.01)

(21) Application number: **05111792.7**

(22) Date of filing: **07.12.2005**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC NL PL PT RO SE SI SK TR
Designated Extension States:
AL BA HR MK YU

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(54) **Electrical Connector Assembly**

(57) An electrical connector assembly includes a first electrical connector (3) having conductive contacts (32) disposed in a receiving space (311) in an insertion end portion (31) of a first housing (30). A second electrical connector (4) includes a terminal-mounting seat (41) disposed in a hollow second housing (40) and mounted with conductive terminals (42). When the insertion end portion (31) of the first housing (30) is inserted into the second

housing (40), the terminal-mounting seat (41) is received fittingly in the receiving space (311) in the insertion end portion (31) of the first housing (30), and the conductive terminals (42) contact electrically and respectively the conductive contacts (32). A fastening unit prevents relative movement between the first and second housings (30, 40) so as to maintain electrical contact between the conductive contacts (32) and the conductive terminals (42).

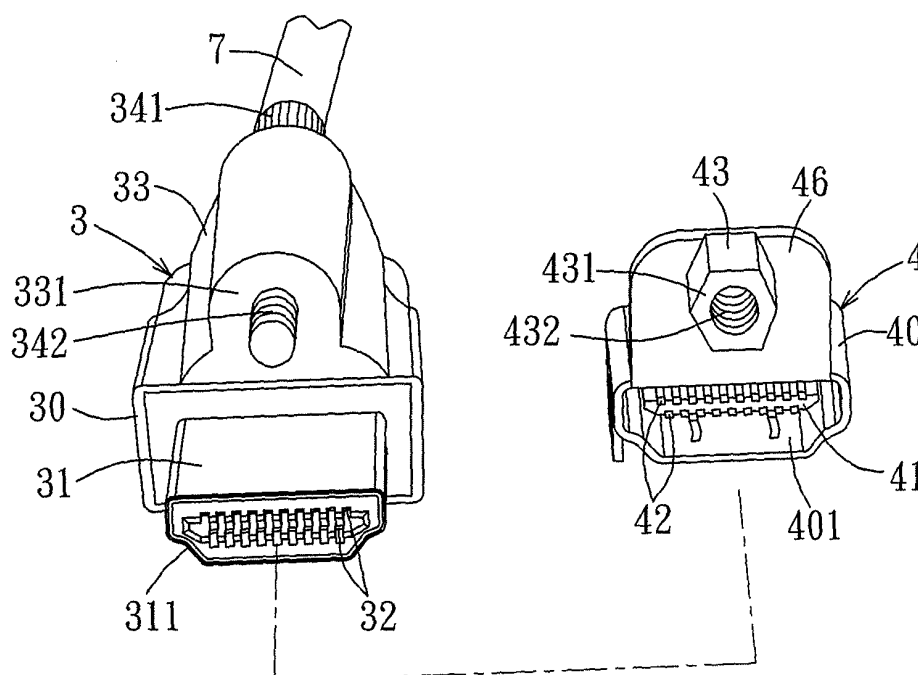


FIG. 3

Description

[0001] The invention relates to an electrical connector assembly, more particularly to an electrical connector assembly that includes a fastening unit for preventing relative movement between two connectors when the connectors are electrically interconnected.

[0002] Figures 1 and 2 illustrate a conventional electrical connector assembly that can be used for signal transmission via an HDMI interface and that includes a first electrical connector 1 and a second electrical connector 2. The first electrical connector 1 includes a first housing 10 that has an insertion end portion 11 formed with a receiving space 14, and a set of conductive contacts 12 disposed in the receiving space 14 and connected electrically to another electrical connector (not shown) via a cable 13. The second electrical connector 2 includes a hollow second housing 20 having an opening 23, and a set of conductive terminals 22 mounted on a terminal-mounting seat 21 that is disposed in the second housing 20. When the insertion end portion 11 of the first housing 10 of the first electrical connector 1 is inserted into the second housing 20 via the opening 23, the terminal-mounting seat 21 is received fittingly in the receiving space 14 in the insertion end portion 11 of the first housing 10, and the conductive contacts 12 of the first electrical connector 1 contact electrically and respectively the conductive terminals 22 of the second electrical connector 2.

[0003] However, in such a configuration, electrical contact between the conductive contacts 12 of the first electrical connector 1 and the conductive terminals 22 of the second electrical connector 2 cannot be maintained when the first and second housings 10, 20 are subjected to unintentional vibration or wobbling. As a result, stable signal transmission by the conventional electrical connector assembly cannot be ensured.

[0004] Therefore, the object of the present invention is to provide an electrical connector assembly that can ensure stable signal transmission.

[0005] According to the present invention, an electrical connector assembly comprises:

a first electrical connector including a first housing that has an insertion end portion extending along a direction and formed with a receiving space that is defined by an inner wall surface, and a set of conductive contacts disposed in the receiving space and mounted on the inner wall surface;

a second electrical connector including a hollow second housing that has an opening and that permits extension of the insertion end portion of the first housing therein via the opening, a terminal-mounting seat disposed in the second housing and received fittingly in the receiving space in the insertion end portion of the first housing when the insertion end portion of the first housing is inserted into the second housing, and a set of conductive terminals mounted on the terminal-mounting seat and contact-

ing electrically and respectively the conductive contacts of the first electrical connector when the insertion end portion of the first housing is inserted into the second housing; and

a fastening unit provided on the first and second housings for preventing relative movement between the first and second housings when the insertion end portion of the first housing is inserted into the second housing so as to maintain electrical contact between the conductive contacts of the first electrical connector and the conductive terminals of the second electrical connector.

[0006] Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent in the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawings, of which:

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a conventional electrical connector assembly;

Figure 2 is an assembled schematic view of the conventional electrical connector assembly;

Figure 3 is an exploded perspective view showing the first preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 4 is an exploded schematic view showing the first preferred embodiment;

Figure 5 is an exploded perspective view showing the second preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 6 is an assembled schematic view showing the second preferred embodiment;

Figure 7 is an assembled schematic view showing the third preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 8 is an exploded schematic partly sectional view showing the fourth preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 9 is an exploded schematic view showing the fifth preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 10 is an exploded fragmentary, partly sectional, schematic view showing the sixth preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 11 is an exploded schematic top view showing the seventh preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention;

Figure 12 is an assembled schematic view showing the seventh preferred embodiment; and

Figure 13 is an exploded perspective view showing a fastening unit of the seventh preferred embodiment.

[0007] Before the present invention is described in

greater detail, it should be noted that like elements are denoted by the same reference numerals throughout the disclosure.

[0008] Referring to Figures 3 and 4, the first preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to the present invention is shown to include a first electrical connector 3, a second electrical connector 4, and a fastening unit.

[0009] The first electrical connector 3 includes a first housing 30 that has an insertion end portion 31 extending along a direction and formed with a receiving space 311 that is defined by an inner wall surface 312, and a set of conductive contacts 32 disposed in the receiving space 311 and mounted on the inner wall surface 312. In this embodiment, the conductive contacts 32 are coupled electrically to a cable 7.

[0010] The second electrical connector 4 includes a hollow second housing 40 that has an opening 401 and that permits extension of the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 thereinto via the opening 401, a terminal-mounting seat 41 disposed in the second housing 40 and received fittingly in the receiving space 311 in the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40, and a set of conductive terminals 42 mounted on the terminal-mounting seat 41 and contacting electrically and respectively the conductive contacts 32 of the first electrical connector 3 when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40. In this embodiment, the second housing 40 has an uprightly extending mounting plate 46 disposed adjacent to the opening 401. Each conductive terminal 42 has one end 421 that is adapted to be connected electrically to a circuit board (not shown).

[0011] The fastening unit is provided on the first and second housings 30, 40 for preventing relative movement between the first and second housings 30, 40 when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40 so as to maintain electrical contact between the conductive contacts 32 of the first electrical connector 3 and the conductive terminals 42 of the second electrical connector 4. In this embodiment, the fastening unit includes a fastener-mounting seat 33, a coupling member 43 and a fastener 34. The fastener-mounting seat 33 is mounted fixedly on the first housing 30, and has an engagement surface 331, which is formed with a through hole 332 that extends through the fastener-mounting seat 33 along the direction. The coupling member 43 is mounted fixedly on the mounting plate 46 of the second housing 40 by a bolt 48, and has an engagement surface 431, which is formed with a threaded hole 432. The fastener 34 is mounted movably and rotatably in the through hole 332 in the fastener-mounting seat 33, and has an operating end portion 341 extending outwardly of the fastener-mounting seat 33, and a threaded coupling end portion 342 opposite to the operating end portion 341. The operating end portion 341 is operated so as to enable the coupling end portion 342 to engage the

threaded hole 432 in the coupling member 43 when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40.

[0012] When the electrical connector assembly of the present invention is used for high-frequency signal transmission, due to the presence of the fastening unit, electrical contact between the conductive contacts 32 of the first electrical connector 3 and the conductive terminals 42 of the second electrical connector 4 can be maintained, thereby ensuring stable signal transmission.

[0013] Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the second preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to this invention, which is a modification of the first preferred embodiment. Unlike the previous embodiment, the engagement surface (331a) of the fastener-mounting seat (33a) is formed with a positioning groove (332a) for engaging fittingly an end of the coupling member 43, which is configured as a nut, when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40. It is noted that, due to the presence of the positioning groove (332a), the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 can be efficiently positioned even while the coupling end portion has not yet engaged the threaded hole in the coupling member.

[0014] Figure 7 illustrates the third preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to this invention, which is a modification of the second preferred embodiment. Unlike the second preferred embodiment, the coupling end portion (342a) of the fastener (34a) is formed with a stop flange 343 extending radially and outwardly therefrom and abutting against the engagement surface 431 of the coupling member 43 when the coupling end portion (342a) of the fastener (34a) engages the threaded hole 432 in the coupling member 43, thereby preventing damage to a threaded surface of the threaded hole 432 in the coupling member 43 as a result of over-extension of the coupling end portion (342a) into the threaded hole 432 in the coupling member 43.

[0015] Figure 8 illustrates the fourth preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to this invention, which is a modification of the first preferred embodiment. In this embodiment, the fastening unit includes a first coupling block 35 mounted fixedly on the first housing 30 and formed with an integral tongue 351, and a second coupling block 44 mounted fixedly on the mounting plate 46 of the second housing 40 and formed with an engaging groove 441. The engaging groove 441 engages fittingly the engaging tongue 351 on the first coupling block 35 when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40.

[0016] Figure 9 illustrates the fifth preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to this invention, which is similar to the fourth preferred embodiment shown in Figure 8. In this embodiment, the first coupling block 35 is mounted fixedly on the mounting plate 46 of the second housing 40, and the second coupling member 44 is mounted fixedly on the first housing 30.

[0017] Figure 10 illustrates the sixth preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to this invention, which is a modification of the first preferred embodiment. In this embodiment, the second housing (40a) has an inner wall surface 402 formed with an engaging hole 403. The fastening unit includes a resilient member 5 having a mounting end portion 51, an operating end portion 52, an intermediate abutting member 53, and a biasing portion 54. The mounting end portion 51 is fixed on the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30. The operating end portion 52 is opposite to the mounting end portion 51, and is formed with a plurality of anti-slip ribs 521. The intermediate abutting portion 53 interconnects the mounting end portion 51 and the operating end portion 52, and abuts against the inner wall surface 402 of the second housing (40a) when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing (40a). The intermediate abutting portion 53 is formed with an engaging projection 531 corresponding to the engaging hole 403 in the second housing (40a). The biasing portion 54 is connected to the intermediate abutting portion 53 for biasing the engaging projection 531 on the intermediate abutting portion 53 to engage the engaging hole 403 in the second housing (40a) when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing (40a). In actual operation, the engaging projection 531 can be disengaged from the engaging hole 403 by pressing the operation end portion 52.

[0018] Figures 11 and 12 illustrate the seventh preferred embodiment of an electrical connector assembly according to this invention, which is a modification of the first preferred embodiment. In this embodiment, the fastening unit includes a clasper 61 and an engaging seat 62. The clasper 61 is mounted fixedly on the first housing 30, and has a pair of resilient clamping arms 62, each of which has a clamping plate end portion 621 extending toward the other one of the clamping arms 62 and formed with a notch 622, as best shown in Figure 13. In this embodiment, the notch 622 in the clamping plate end portion 621 of each clamping arm 62 is semicircular. The engaging seat 63 is mounted fixedly on the second housing 40, and has an annular outer surface 631 that is formed with an annular groove 632 to define a neck portion 633 of the engaging seat 63. The annular groove 632 extends around the neck portion 633. The clamping plate end portions 621 of the clamping arm 62 of the clasper 61 engage the annular groove 632 in the engaging seat 63, and clamp the neck portion 633 of the engaging seat 63 therebetween when the insertion end portion 31 of the first housing 30 is inserted into the second housing 40. Preferably, the engaging seat 63 further has a tapered end portion 634 connected integrally to the neck portion 633 for guiding the clamping arms 62 to clamp the neck portion 633 of the engaging seat 63.

Claims

1. An electrical connector assembly, **characterized by:**

a first electrical connector (3) including a first housing (30) that has an insertion end portion (31) extending along a direction and formed with a receiving space (311) that is defined by an inner wall surface (312), and a set of conductive contacts (32) disposed in said receiving space (311) and mounted on said inner wall surface (312);

a second electrical connector (4) including a hollow second housing (40, 40a) that has an opening (401) and that permits extension of said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) thereto via said opening (401), a terminal-mounting seat (41) disposed in said second housing (40, 40a) and received fittingly in said receiving space (311) in said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40, 40a), and a set of conductive terminals (42) mounted on said terminal-mounting seat (41) and contacting electrically and respectively said conductive contacts (32) of said first electrical connector (3) when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40, 40a); and

a fastening unit provided on said first and second housings (30; 40, 40a) for preventing relative movement between said first and second housings (30; 40, 40a) when said insertion end portion (30) of said first housing (3) is inserted into said second housing (40, 40a) so as to maintain electrical contact between said conductive contacts (32) of said first electrical connector (3) and said conductive terminals (42) of said second electrical connector (4).

2. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 1, **characterized in that** said fastening unit includes:

a fastener-mounting seat (33, 33a) mounted fixedly on one of said first and second housings (30, 40) and having an engagement surface (331, 331a), which is formed with a through hole (332) that extends through said fastener-mounting seat (33, 331a);

a coupling member (43) mounted fixedly on the other one of said first and second housings (30, 40) and having an engagement surface (431), which is formed with a threaded hole (432); and a fastener (34, 34a) mounted movably and rotatably in said through hole (332) in said fasten-

- er-mounting seat (33, 33a) and having an operating end portion (341) extending outwardly of said fastener-mounting seat (33), and a threaded coupling end portion (342, 342a) opposite to said operating end portion (341), said operating end portion (341) being operated so as to enable said coupling end portion (342, 342a) to engage said threaded hole (432) in said coupling member (43) when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40).
3. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 2, further **characterized in that** said coupling member (43) is configured as a nut, and said engagement surface (331a) of said fastener-mounting seat (33a) is formed with a positioning groove (332a) for engaging fittingly an end (431) of said coupling member when said insertion end portion of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40).
4. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 3, further **characterized in that** said coupling end portion (342a) of said fastener (34a) is formed with a stop flange (343) extending radially and outwardly therefrom and abutting against said end (431) of said coupling member (43) when said coupling end portion (342a) of said fastener (34a) engages said threaded hole (432) in said coupling member (43).
5. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 1, **characterized in that** said fastening unit includes:
- a first coupling block (35) mounted fixedly on one of said first and second housings (30, 40) and formed with an integral engaging tongue (351); and
- a second coupling block (44) mounted fixedly on the other one of said first and second housings (30, 40) and formed with an engaging groove (441), said engaging groove (441) engaging fittingly said engaging tongue (351) on said first coupling block (35) when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40).
6. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 1, **characterized in that:**
- said second housing (40a) has an inner wall surface (402) formed with an engaging hole (403); and
- said fastening unit includes a resilient member (5) having
- a mounting end portion (51) fixed on said
- insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30),
- an operating end portion (52) opposite to said mounting end portion (51),
- an intermediate abutting portion (53) interconnecting said mounting end portion (51) and said operating end portion (52) and abutting against said inner wall surface (402) of said second housing (40a) when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40a), said intermediate abutting portion (53) being formed with an engaging projection (531) corresponding to said engaging hole (403) in said second housing (40a), and
- a biasing portion (54) connected to said intermediate abutting portion (53) for biasing said engaging projection (531) on said intermediate abutting portion (53) to engage said engaging hole (403) in said second housing (40a) when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40a).
7. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 1, **characterized in that** said fastening unit includes:
- a clasper (61) mounted fixedly on one of said first and second housings (30, 40) and having a pair of resilient clamping arms (62), each of which has a clamping plate end portion (621) extending toward the other one of said clamping arms (62) and formed with a notch (622); and
- an engaging seat (63) mounted fixedly on the other one of said first and second housings (30, 40) and having an annular outer surface (631) that is formed with an annular groove (632) to define a neck portion (633) of said engaging seat (63), said annular groove (632) extending around said neck portion (633), said clamping plate end portions (621) of said clamping arms (62) of said clasper (61) engaging said annular groove (632) in said engaging seat (63) and clamping said neck portion (633) of said engaging seat (63) therebetween when said insertion end portion (31) of said first housing (30) is inserted into said second housing (40).
8. The electrical connector assembly as claimed in Claim 7, further **characterized in that** said notch (622) in said clamping plate end portion (621) of each of said clamping arms (62) is semicircular, said engaging seat (63) further having a tapered end portion (634) connected integrally to said neck portion (633) for guiding said clamping arms (62) to clamp said neck portion (633) of said engaging seat (63).

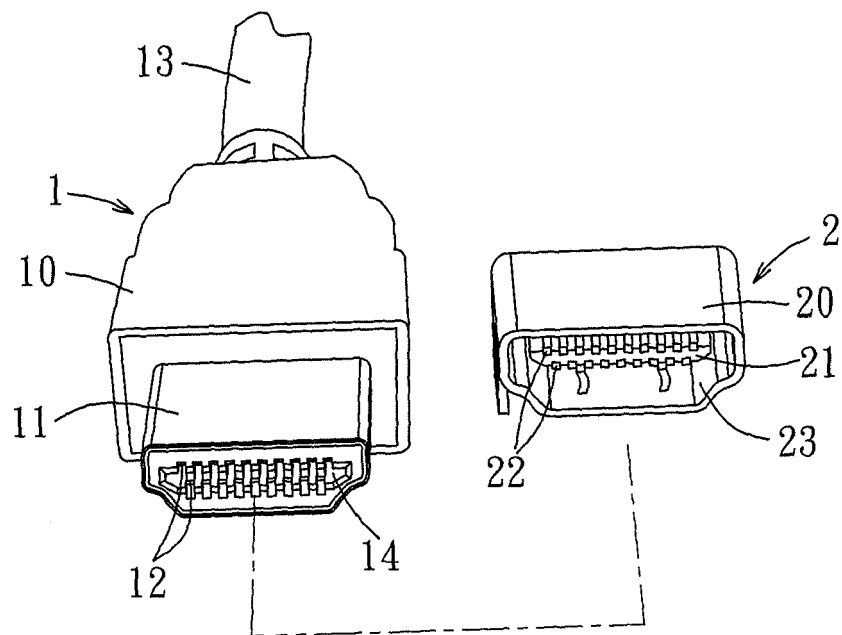


FIG. 1 PRIOR ART

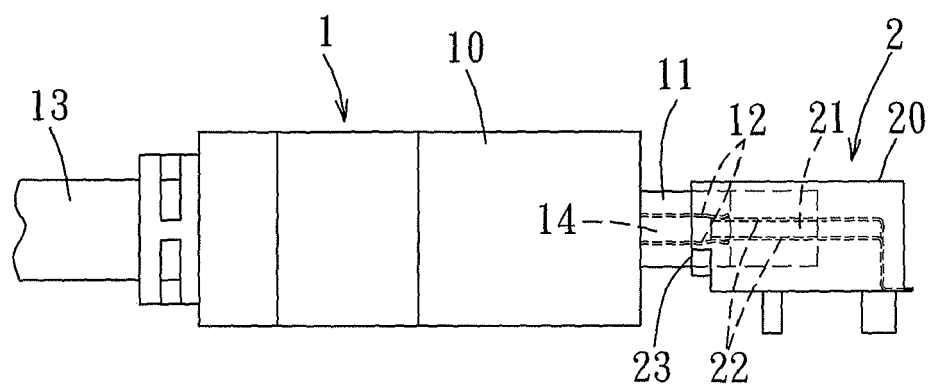


FIG. 2 PRIOR ART

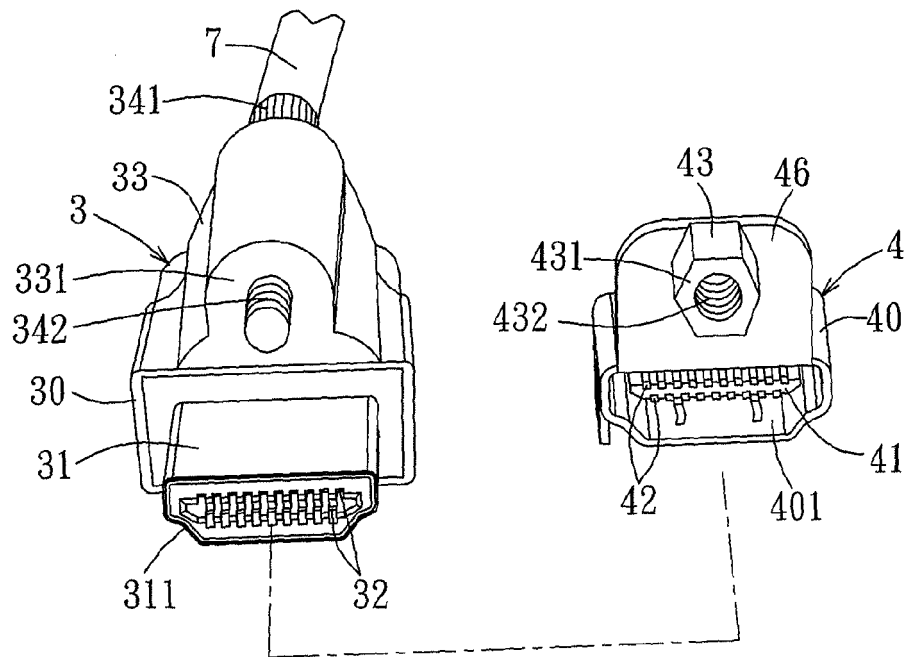


FIG. 3

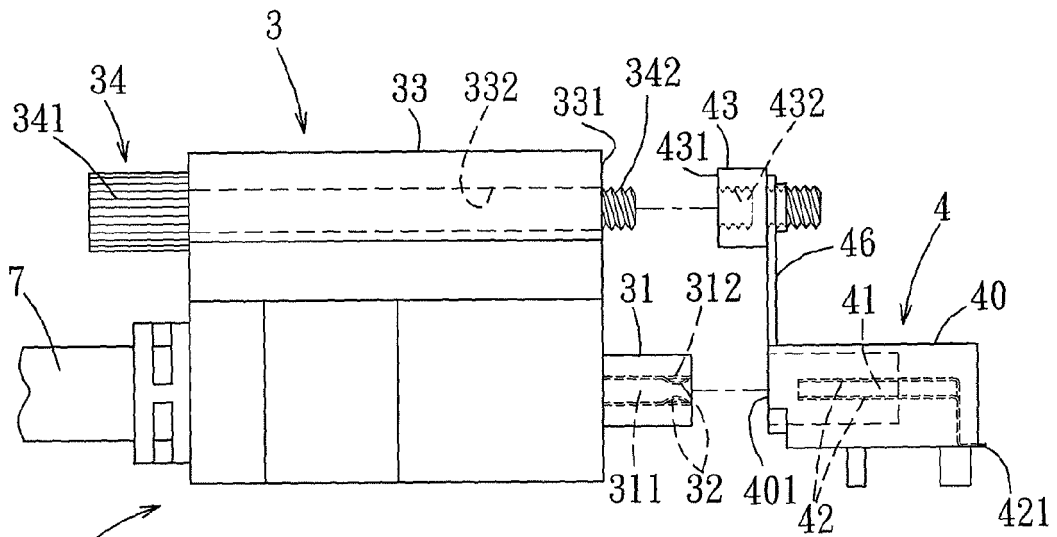


FIG. 4

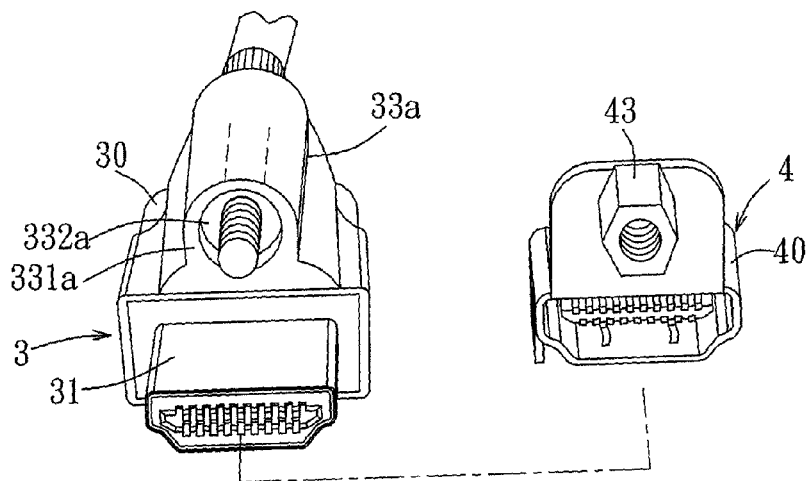


FIG. 5

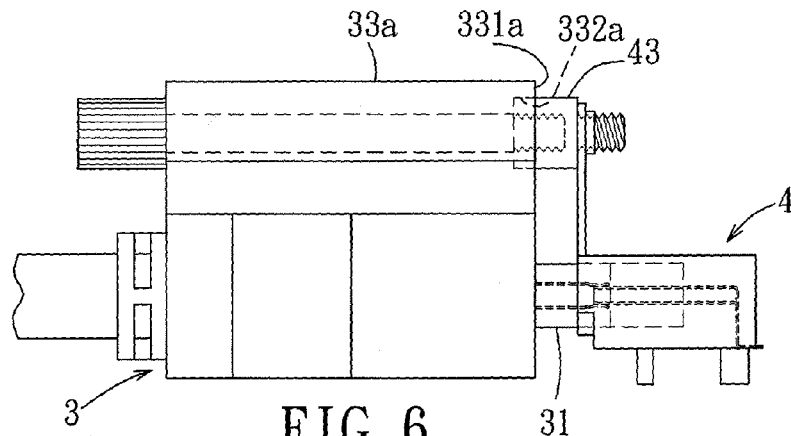


FIG. 6

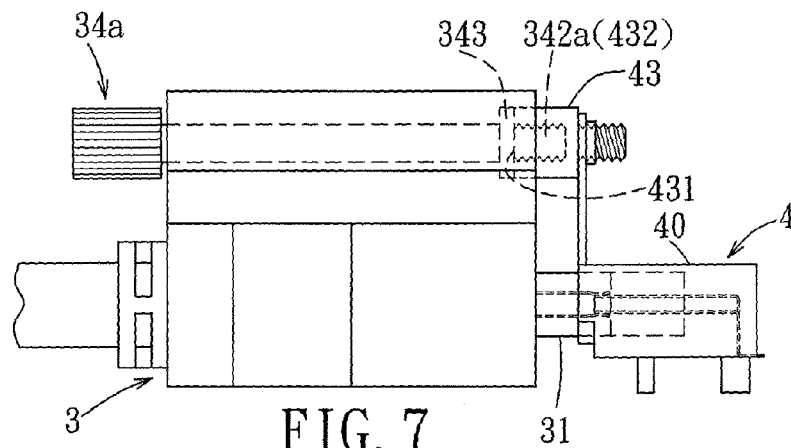


FIG. 7

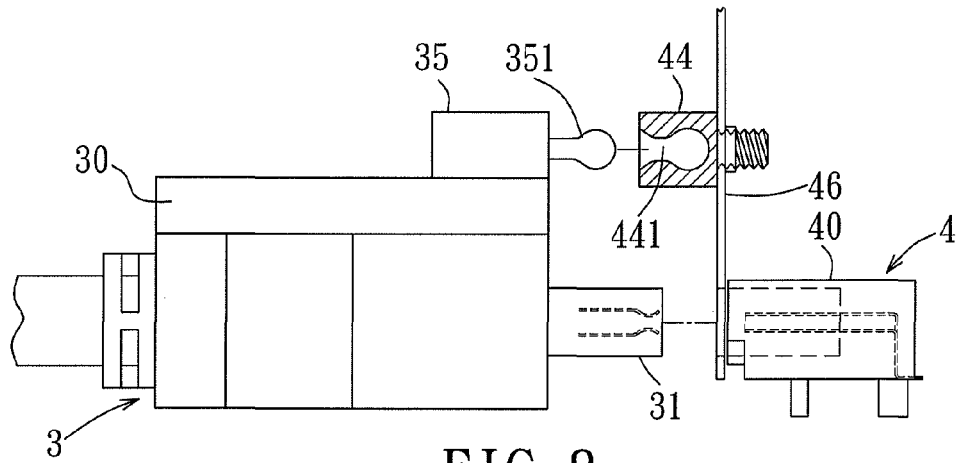


FIG. 8

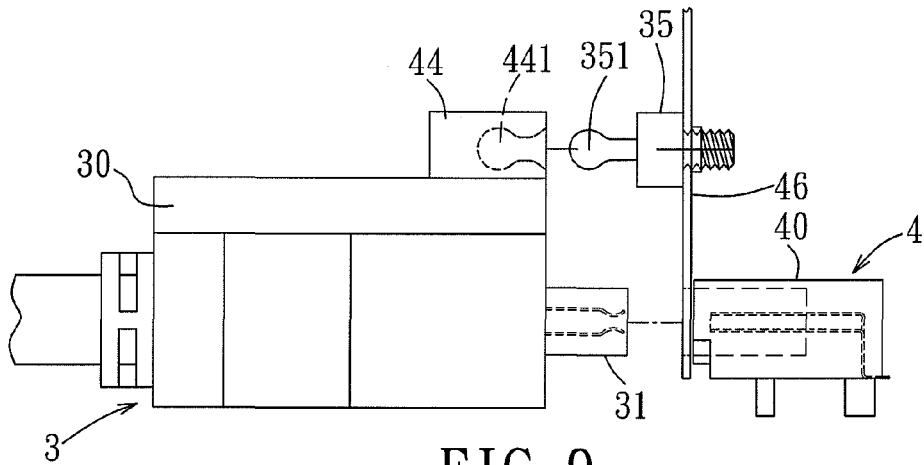


FIG. 9

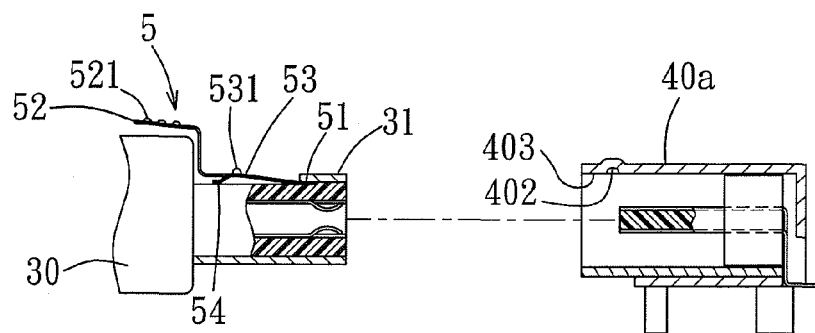


FIG. 10

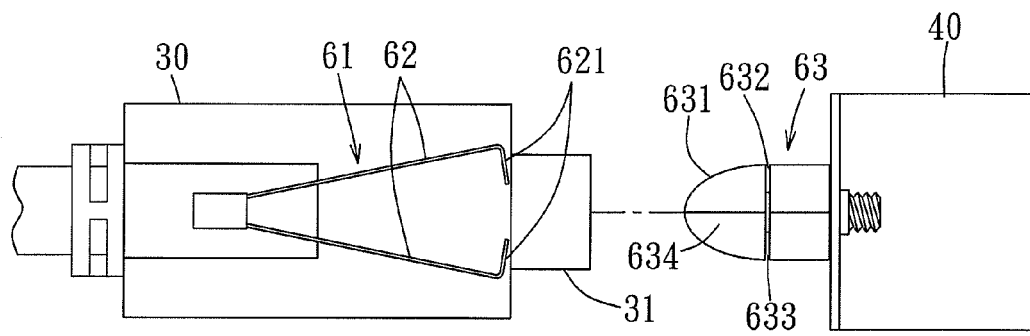


FIG. 11

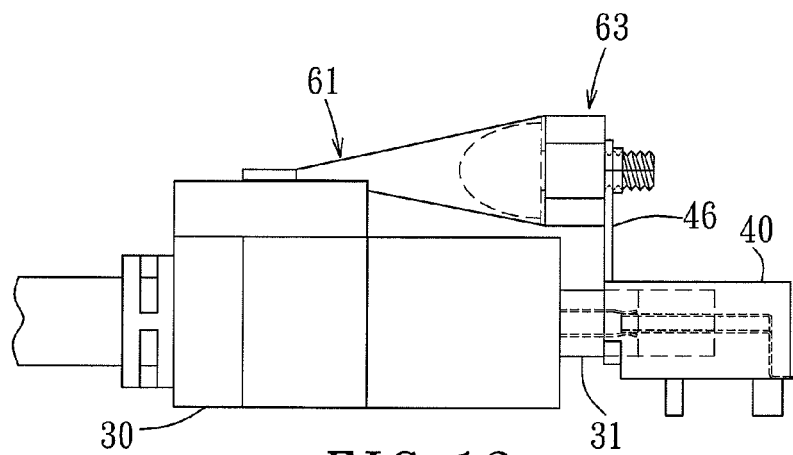


FIG. 12

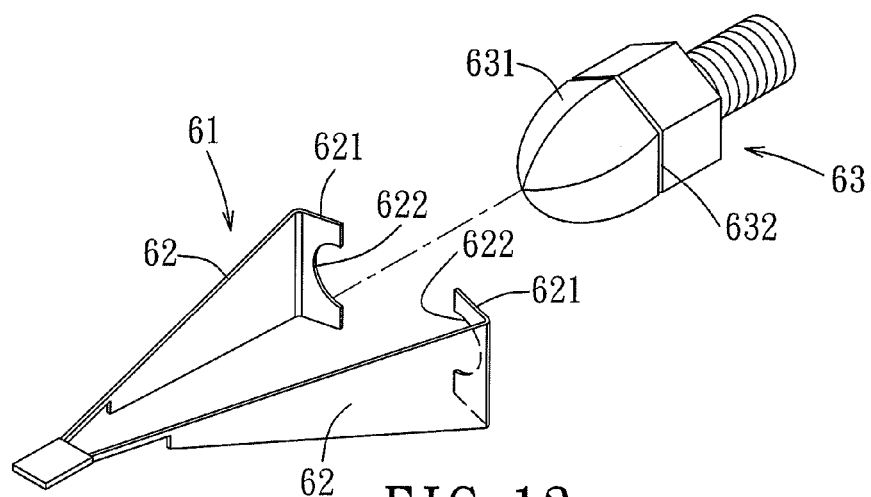


FIG. 13



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 05 11 1792

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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 18 May 2006	Examiner Corrales, D
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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EP 05 11 1792

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