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(72) Inventors:
• **Khellaf, Fariz**
Doncaster, DN2 4NB (GB)
• **Wilkinson, Stephen Graham**
Leeds, LS6 3PB (GB)

(71) Applicant: **Cooper Lighting and Security Limited**
Doncaster,
South Yorkshire DN2 4NB (GB)

(74) Representative: **Waddington, Richard**
Appleyard Lees
15 Clare Road
Halifax, Yorkshire HX1 2HY (GB)

(54) **Emergency control panel**

(57) There is provided a touch screen fire brigade control panel 20 that fulfils all of the layout and sizing

requirements for a large number of authorities/regulatory bodies/regions that have those requirements, but in the form of a programmable touch screen.

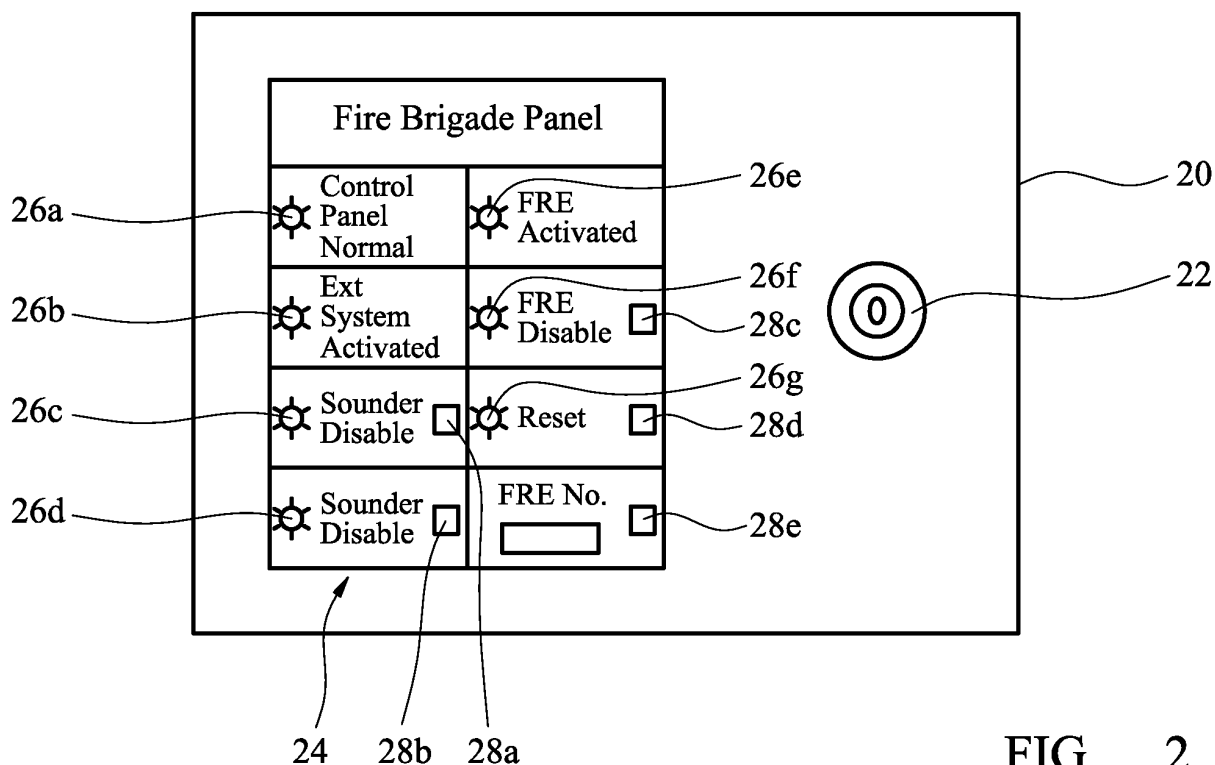


FIG. 2

Description

[0001] This invention relates to a an emergency control panel, in particular, but not exclusively, to a fire brigade, or fire fighter, panel.

[0002] Fire brigade panels are standard pieces of equipment that take the form of a box that is connected to an emergency fire alarm system control board. The fire brigade panel has a standardised layout that enables a member of the fire services to enter a building and immediately identify and use the fire brigade panel, for example to determine the status of the alarm system, to disable the alarm system, to be advised of the status of and to control disabling of fire protection equipment, amongst other things.

[0003] A typical fire brigade panel structure is shown in Figure 1. In that Figure there is shown a box 10 having a lock 12, which takes a standard key in the possession of the fire brigade and with which key the fire brigade may operate functions of the fire brigade panel. A display section 14 of the panel has indicator lights 16, which are usually LEDs, arranged in two columns. From the top of the left column the lights relate to an indication that the control panel is in normal operation 16a, that the extinguishing system is activated 16b, that the sounder is disabled 16c, a button 18a is also present to allow the sounders on a fire alarm system to be disabled. At the bottom of the left hand column there is a light indicating that the FRE is disabled 16d. A button 18b is also provided to allow disabling of FRE.

[0004] At the top of the right hand column there is an indicator light 16e to show that the FRE is activated, beneath that there is an indicator light 16f to show that the fire protection equipment is disabled as well as a button 18c to achieve disabling of the fire protection equipment (FPE). Beneath that is a reset button 18d and indicator light 16g and at the bottom of the right hand column there is a button 18e that allows testing of the FRE, as well as a space for indication of an FRE number.

[0005] The layout of these panels as mentioned above is standardised by the relevant standards body.

[0006] Disadvantages arise with the type of system shown in that a manufacturer must make a different panel for each location where different standards apply and for each alarm system where different standards apply.

[0007] It is an object of the present invention to address the above mentioned disadvantages.

[0008] According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided an emergency control panel having a programmable visual display.

[0009] The emergency control panel is preferably an emergency services control panel.

[0010] The emergency control panel is preferably a fire brigade, or fire fighter control panel.

[0011] Preferably, the visual display is touch sensitive.

[0012] Preferably, the visual display is programmable to display the functions/information required for a fire brigade control panel by a relevant regulatory body, or other

official body that sets the requirements.

[0013] Preferably, the visual display, when touch sensitive, is programmable to have actuable buttons corresponding to those required by relevant regulations.

[0014] Preferably, the control panel is programmable to store a plurality of display modes, where a display mode represents the requirements of a particular regulatory body.

[0015] Preferably, the control panel is operable to select a chosen display mode.

[0016] Preferably, the control panel is operable to cause the display to operate an insertion and/or turning of a key in a lock of the control panel.

[0017] According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a method of displaying an emergency control panel, the method comprising causing a programmable visual display to display the features of an emergency control panel.

[0018] Any of the features disclosed herein may be combined with any of the above aspects, in any combination.

[0019] For a better understanding of the invention, and to show how embodiments of the same may be carried into effect, reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic perspective view of a prior art fire brigade panel for a fire alarm system control panel; and

Figure 2 is a schematic front view of a fire brigade control panel according to the present invention.

[0020] In view of the disadvantage of having to produce a different fire brigade control panel for each market that has a standard for such a panel, the inventive realisation has been made that a computer display could be used to provide all of the functions and comply with all of the regulatory requirements for a control panel for each of the large number of different fire brigade jurisdictions/regions that have fire brigade panel requirements.

[0021] Consequently, Figure 2 shows a touch screen fire brigade control panel 20 that fulfils all of the layout and sizing requirements for a large number of authorities/regulatory bodies/regions that have those requirements. Figure 2 shows an example for the United Kingdom that corresponds to the layout of Figure 1 to show clearly how the two correspond in outward appearance. The panel 20 also includes a lock 22 which has the same functions as the lock 12 shown in Figure 1.

[0022] Furthermore, there is a display panel 24 that is touch sensitive. The display panel 24 is programmed to show the same layout of functions and information as required by the regulations, for example each of the LEDs 16a to 16g in Figure 1 have an equivalent section of the display 26a to 26g in Figure 2. Thus a section of the display 24 is arranged to illuminate in the same manner

as a light would illuminate. Similarly, the buttons 18a to 18e in Figure 1 all have a corresponding button 28a to 28e, each of those buttons being touch sensitive to operate the same functions as would be the case for the prior art fire brigade panel discussed in relation to Figure 1.

[0023] Similarly, the display panel 24 is programmed to have the same text displayed as is present on the control panel shown in Figure 1.

[0024] In view of the above, the functionality of the touch screen fire brigade control panel 20 is exactly the same as that of the prior art touch screen display. However, much greater functionality and a reduction in corresponding manufacturing cost and so cost of overall system is provided by the touch screen fire brigade display panel 20, because it can be programmed with the regulatory requirements of any of a number of regulatory bodies, including foreign language versions.

[0025] The programming of a touch screen display is a straight forward implementation for a person skilled in the art, when provided with the detail of what must be displayed and where buttons should be. All of this information can be gained from the relevant standard that is to be complied with.

[0026] In use, the panel when being installed need only be initialised in a particular language and/or country/region requirement for the particular installation to cause the display 24 to show the correct format for that particular location. In all other respects the functionality of the display panel is the same.

[0027] When a fire fighter inserts a key in to the lock 22, the display may be activated from a sleep state.

[0028] In view of the above, only one panel needs to be manufactured, which results in lower costs of manufacture and stocking of parts etc. Also, any changes in regulatory requirements for a given area can be accommodated by re-programming of the panel, rather than replacing the panel, as would otherwise be required.

[0029] In view of the above significant advantages are achieved.

[0030] Attention is directed to all papers and documents which are filed concurrently with or previous to this specification in connection with this application and which are open to public inspection with this specification, and the contents of all such papers and documents are incorporated herein by reference.

[0031] All of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), and/or all of the steps of any method or process so disclosed, may be combined in any combination, except combinations where at least some of such features and/or steps are mutually exclusive.

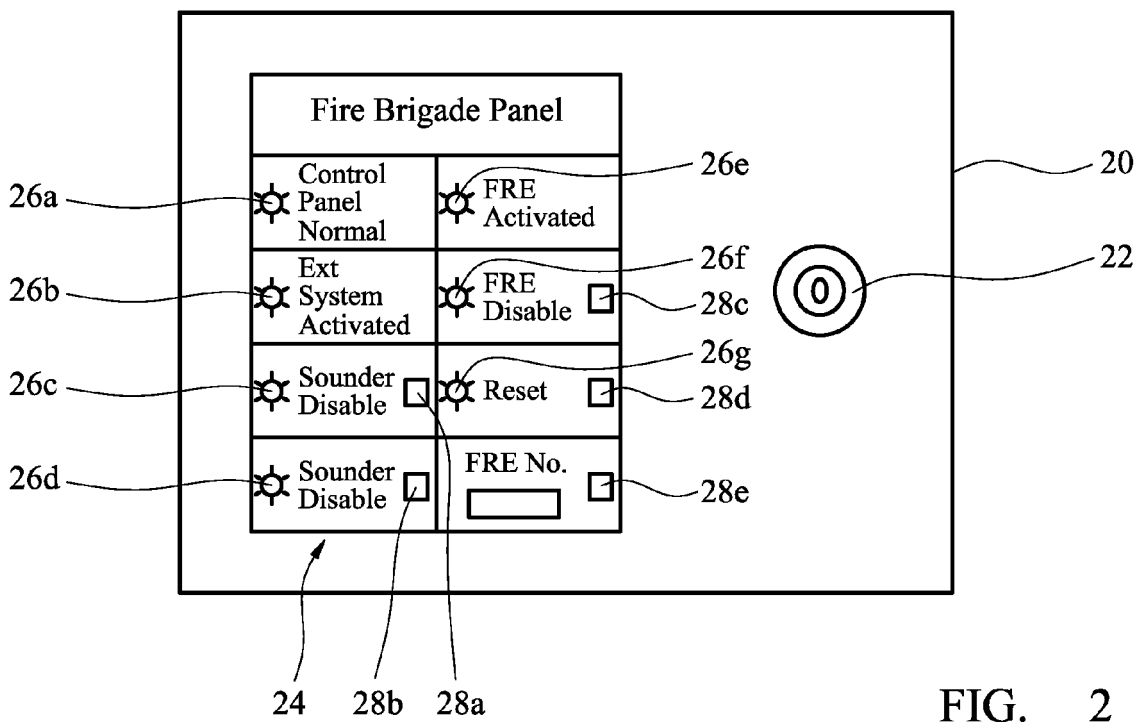
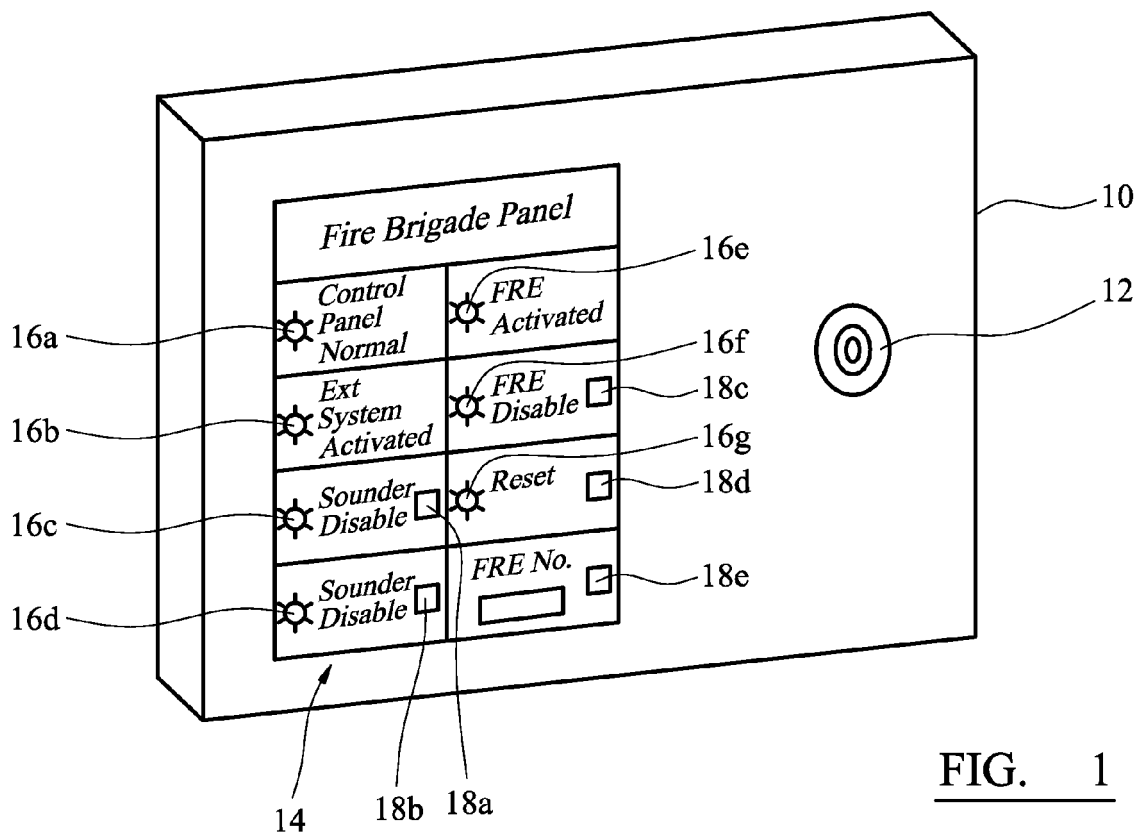
[0032] Each feature disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings) may be replaced by alternative features serving the same, equivalent or similar purpose, unless expressly stated otherwise. Thus, unless expressly stated otherwise, each feature disclosed is one example only of a

generic series of equivalent or similar features.

[0033] The invention is not restricted to the details of the foregoing embodiment(s). The invention extends to any novel one, or any novel combination, of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), or to any novel one, or any novel combination, of the steps of any method or process so disclosed.

Claims

1. An emergency control panel comprising a programmable visual display.
2. An emergency control panel as claimed in claim 1, which is an emergency services control panel.
3. An emergency control panel as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, in which the visual display is touch sensitive.
4. An emergency control panel as claimed in claim 3, in which the visual display is programmable to have actuable buttons corresponding to those required by relevant regulations.
5. An emergency control panel as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the visual display is programmable to display the functions/information required for a fire brigade control panel by a relevant regulatory body or other official body.
6. An emergency control panel as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the control panel is programmable to store a plurality of display modes.
7. An emergency control panel as claimed in claim 6, in which the control panel is operable to select a chosen display mode.
8. An emergency control panel as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the control panel is operable to cause the display to operate on insertion and/or turning of a key in a lock of the control panel.
9. A method of displaying an emergency control panel, the method comprising causing a programmable visual display to display the features of an emergency control panel.





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 08 10 1932

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Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 17 July 2008	Examiner de la Cruz Valera, D
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EPO FORM 1503 03 82 (P04C01)



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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 17 July 2008	Examiner de la Cruz Valera, D
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p>			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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EP 08 10 1932

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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