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(72) Inventors:
• **Gibson, Paul**
London, WC2R 3LA (GB)
• **McKenzie, Aaron**
London, N4 2HR (GB)

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(74) Representative: **Read, Matthew Charles et al**
Venner Shipley LLP
20 Little Britain
London
EC1A 7DH (GB)

(71) Applicant: **British American Tobacco**
(Investments) Limited
London WC2R 3LA (GB)

(54) **Tape and container**

(57) A tape (200) for adhering to a container (100) and a container comprising the tape, the tape (200) comprising first (211) and second (212) longitudinal edges defining a boundary of the tape and a line of separation (300) extending between said edges to divide the tape

into first (400) and second (500) portions, the first portion (400) being severable from the second portion (500) along the line of separation (300) such that the first portion can be removed from the container and the second portion can remain adhered to the container as tamper evidence.

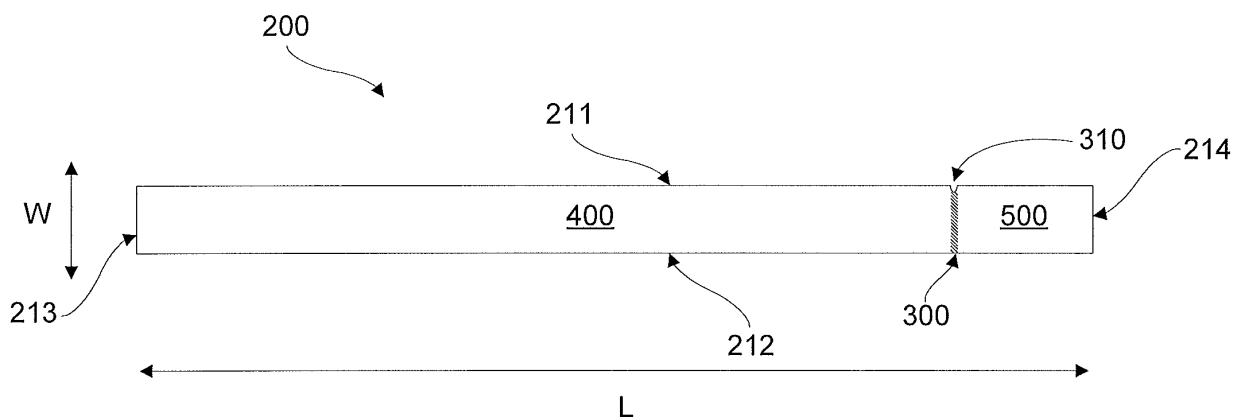


Fig. 5

Description

Field of the Invention

[0001] This invention relates to a tamper evident tape for a container. The invention also relates to a container including the tamper evident tape. Particularly, but not exclusively, the invention relates to a tamper evident tape comprising first and second longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between the first and second edges for separating the tape into first and second portions.

Background to the Invention

[0002] Typically, tobacco containers for packaging smokeless tobacco products such as snus comprise a main body and a cooperating lid. The lid and the main body generally provide a push-fit seal in order to keep the tobacco product fresh inside the container. As an indication of authenticity of the tobacco product, it is known for manufacturers to apply an overlapping label around the join between the body and the lid of the container after the tobacco product has been installed. These labels are adhered to both the body and the lid of the container, and generally must be completely removed from the container before the tobacco product can be accessed for the first time. This is shown in Figure 1.

[0003] An alternative to completely removing the label is to separate the label longitudinally, for example by peeling away a longitudinally removable section of the label which overlaps the join between the body and the lid of the container. This is shown in Figure 2. One or more outer longitudinal sections of the label, which do not overlap the join between the body and the lid of the container, may remain adhered to the surface of the container as tamper evidence to enable future consumers to identify that the container has been opened previously. However, longitudinally separable labels must be wider than the conventional, fully removable label shown in Figure 1 in order to provide sufficient width for both the removable section and the tamper evident outer section(s) to be adhered to the container. This makes longitudinally separable labels materially expensive.

Summary of the Invention

[0004] According to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a tape for adhering to a container, comprising first and second longitudinal edges defining a boundary of the tape and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions, the first portion being severable from the second portion along the line of separation such that the first portion can be removed from the container and the second portion can remain adhered to the container as tamper evidence.

[0005] The first portion may have a width greater than

a width of the second portion.

[0006] The tape may be suitable for circumscribing a join between a body and a lid of the container, wherein the tape can circumscribe the container such that the first portion overlaps said join and the second portion does not overlap said join.

[0007] The tape may comprise a layer of adhesive on a rear surface of the tape for adhering the tape to a surface of the container.

[0008] The tape may comprise a layer of non-permanent adhesive on a rear surface of the first portion and a layer of permanent adhesive on a rear surface of the second portion such the first portion can be releasably adhered to the surface of the container and the second portion can be permanently adhered to the surface of the container.

[0009] A length of the first portion may be greater than a length of the second portion.

[0010] The line of separation may comprise a plurality of perforations in the tape.

[0011] The line of separation may extend transversely across the tape substantially perpendicularly to one of the longitudinal edges.

[0012] The line of separation may extend across the tape at an angle approximately forty five degrees to one of the longitudinal edges.

[0013] The tape may comprise a notch in at least one of said longitudinal edges at an end of the line of separation.

[0014] The tape may comprise a pull-tab on the first portion for pulling the first portion away from a surface of the container.

[0015] The tape may comprise an elongate length of flexible material.

[0016] According to a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a container comprising a lid, a body and a tape adhered to a surface of the container and at least partially circumscribing a boundary between the lid and the body, the tape comprising first and second longitudinal edges defining a boundary of the tape and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions, the first portion being severable from the second portion along the line of separation such that the first portion can be removed from the container and the second portion can remain adhered to the container as tamper evidence.

[0017] The first portion of the tape may have a width greater than a width of the second portion such that the first portion overlaps a join between the body and the lid of the container and the second portion does not overlap said join.

[0018] The first portion of the tape may be adhered to both of the body and the lid of the container and the second portion of the tape may be adhered to only one of the body or the lid of the container.

[0019] The container may comprise a layer of non-permanent adhesive between a rear surface of the first portion of the tape and a surface of the container, and a layer

of permanent adhesive between a rear surface of the second portion of the tape and a surface of the container such the first portion is releasably adhered to the surface of the container and the second portion is permanently adhered to the surface of the container.

[0020] A length of the first portion of the tape may be greater than a length of the second portion of the tape.

[0021] The line of separation may comprise a plurality of perforations in the tape.

[0022] The line of separation may extend transversely across the tape substantially perpendicularly to one of the longitudinal edges of the tape.

[0023] The line of separation may extend across the tape at an angle approximately forty five degrees to one of the longitudinal edges of the tape.

[0024] The tape may comprise a notch in at least one of the longitudinal edges of the tape at an end of the line of separation.

[0025] The tape may comprise a pull-tab on the first portion of the tape for pulling the first portion away from a surface of the container.

[0026] The tape may comprise an elongate length of flexible material.

[0027] The container may comprise a tobacco container.

[0028] The container may comprise a snus container.

Brief description of the drawings

[0029]

Figure 1 is an illustration of a snus container with a conventional label circumscribing the join between the base part and the lid of the container. Figure 1 shows the label being fully removed from the container to allow the container to open.

Figure 2 is an illustration of a snus container with a three part label having a longitudinally removable central portion which overlaps a join between a body and a lid of the container. Figure 2 shows the central portion being fully removed to allow the container to open.

Figure 3 is an illustration of a container suitable for containing tobacco products. The container comprises a body and a lid, and is shown in both a closed and an open position.

Figure 4 is an illustration of a first example of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and lid of a container. The tape has substantially straight and parallel longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions.

Figure 4A is an illustration of a rear surface of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and a lid of

a container. The rear surface is provided with an adhesive layer for securing the tape to the container.

Figure 5 is an illustration of a second example of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and lid of a container. The tape has substantially straight and parallel longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions.

Figure 6 is an illustration of a third example of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and lid of a container. The tape has substantially straight and parallel longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions.

Figure 7 is an illustration of a substantially cylindrical tobacco container having a body and lid and a tape circumscribing a join between the body and the lid. The tape corresponds to that shown in Figure 4.

Figure 8 is an illustration of a substantially cylindrical tobacco container having a body and lid, in which a first portion of the tape shown in Figure 4 has been removed from the container and a second portion of the tape remains on the container.

Figure 9 is an illustration of a fourth example of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and lid of a container. The tape has substantially straight and parallel longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions.

Figure 10 is an illustration of a fifth example of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and lid of a container. The tape has substantially straight and parallel longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions.

Figure 11 is an illustration of a sixth example of a tape for circumscribing a join between a body and lid of a container. The tape has substantially straight and parallel longitudinal edges and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions.

Figure 12 is an illustration of a substantially cylindrical tobacco container having a body and lid and a tape circumscribing a join between the body and the lid. The tape corresponds to that shown in Figure 9.

Figure 13 is an illustration of a substantially cylindrical tobacco container having a body and lid, in which a first portion of the tape shown in Figure 9 has been removed from the container and a second portion of

the tape remains on the container.

Detailed description of exemplary embodiments

[0030] Figure 3 shows a container 100 comprising a first part 110 forming a body of the container 100, and a second part 120 forming a lid of the container 100. The lid 120 is separable from the body 110 to open the container 100. The body 110 of the container 100 may comprise a substantially cylindrical cup with a circular base 111 and a single upstanding wall 112 extending around the circumference of the base 111. The circular base 111 and the upstanding wall 112 may form the boundaries of a cavity 130 for containing tobacco products, as is explained in more detail below.

[0031] The lid 120 of the container 100 may comprise a substantially cylindrical cup lid with a circular cover section 121 and a single, downwardly extending wall 122 around the circumference of the cover section 121. The body 110 and the lid 120 are configured to cooperate with one another when the container 100 is closed so as to form a complete enclosure around the cavity 130.

[0032] When the container 100 is closed, interaction between the body 110 and the lid 120 may provide a seal at a join 140 between the walls 112, 122 of the body 110 and the lid 120 to prevent air from passing into and out of the cavity 130. For example, the body 110 and the lid 120 may frictionally cooperate with one another so as to form a push-fit seal around the join 140 between the walls 112, 122 of the body 110 and the lid 120. Alternatively, the walls 112, 122 of the body 110 and the lid 120 may be provided with matching screw threads to allow the body 110 and the lid 120 to be screwed together.

[0033] The internal cavity 130 may be suitable for packaging and preserving perishable products when the container 100 is closed. In one example, the container 100 comprises a tobacco container. One or more tobacco products such as loose tobacco, cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos or smokeless tobacco products, for example snus or snuff, may be housed in the cavity 130 of the container 100 and accessed by removal of the lid 120 from the body 110.

[0034] Referring to Figures 4 to 9, the container 100 may be provided with a tamper evident tape 200 to indicate the authenticity of the container's contents to potential consumers. The tape 200 may consist of a label. The tape 200 may be formed of a flexible material. For example, the tape 200 may comprise a paper tape. Alternatively the tape 200 may comprise a plastics tape, optionally being suitable for providing an air-tight seal over the join 140. The tape 200 may be elongate and may fully or partially circumscribe the container 100 around the join 140. The tape 200 may overlap the join 140 between the body 110 and the lid 120 when the container 100 is closed, to prevent the lid 120 from being removed. This provides a positive indication to a potential consumer that the container 100 has not been opened since the tape 200 was applied to the container 100. Thus, if the tape

200 is applied to the container 100 immediately after the contents of the container 100 has been installed in the cavity 130 by the manufacturer, the tape 200 serves to indicate that the contents of the container 200 has not been tampered with.

[0035] Referring to Figures 4, 5 and 6 the tape 200 may comprise an elongate tape 200 having a long axis L along a length of the tape 200 and a short axis W along a width of the tape 200. The magnitude of the length of the tape 200 may be greater than the magnitude of the width of the tape 200. As an example, the length of the tape 200 may be substantially equal to the outer circumference of the body 110 and lid 120 to which it is to be adhered. Alternatively, the length of the tape 200 may be longer or shorter than the outer circumference of the body 110 and lid 120.

[0036] The boundaries of the tape 200 may be defined by first and second longitudinal edges 211, 212 and first and second transverse edges 213, 214. The first and second longitudinal edges 211, 212 may run along the length of the tape 200 from one end of the tape 200 to the other. The transverse edges 213, 214 may run along the width of the tape 200. The longitudinal edges 211, 212 of the tape 200 may be straight and substantially parallel with the long axis L and therefore length of the tape 200. However, this feature is not essential. For example, the longitudinal edges 211, 212 may have a curved, zig-zag or sawtooth profile.

[0037] The tape 200 may comprise a line of separation 300 extending from the first longitudinal edge 211 to the second longitudinal edge 212 across the tape 200 to divide the tape into a first portion 400 and a second portion 500. The tape 200 may be severable along the line of separation 300 to separate the first portion 400 from the second portion 500. As shown in Figures 4 to 6 and 9 to 11, the second portion 500 may have a shorter length than that of the first portion 400. For example, the length of the second portion 500 may be approximately one fifth or one tenth of the length of the first portion 400. The width of both of the first and second portions 400, 500 may be substantially equal to the width of the conventional tape shown in Figure 1.

[0038] The line of separation 300 may, for example, comprise or consist of a row of perforations along which the tape 200 can be torn to separate into the first and second portions 400, 500. Alternatively, the line of separation 300 may consist of a series of embossments, tears or weakened sections. The line of separation 300 may extend transversely across the tape 200 at an angle substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal edges 211, 212 of the tape 200. Alternatively, the line of separation 300 may extend transversely across the tape 200 at a different angle, for example at an angle of 45 degrees to the longitudinal edges 211, 212 of the tape 200.

[0039] The line of separation 300 is configured to facilitate easy separation of the first and second portions 400, 500 of the tape 200 by a consumer, such that the first portion 400 can be removed from the container 100

and the second portion 500 can remain secured to the container 100. For example, a consumer may pull on the first portion 400 to break the tape 200 along the line of separation 300 and peel the first portion 400 away from the container 100. Referring to Figures 4 to 6, a notch 310 may be provided in one of the first or second longitudinal edges 211, 212 at an end of the line of separation 300 as an aid to separation of the first and second portions 400, 500. Additionally or alternatively, a tab 320 may extend outwards from one of the first or second longitudinal edges 211, 212 on the first portion 400 of the tape 200 to allow a consumer to grasp the first portion 400 of the tape 200 and separate it from the second portion 500 along the line of separation 300. Such a tab 320 is shown in Figures 9 to 11.

[0040] Referring to Figure 4A, the tape 200 may further comprise an adhesive layer provided on a rear surface of the tape 200 to provide a means for adhering the tape 200 to the external surface of the container 100. For example, the adhesive layer may comprise a contact adhesive, such that the tape 200 can be adhered to the surface of the container 100 using a relatively minimal amount of pressure. The adhesive layer may comprise a first adhesive layer 251 on a rear surface of the first portion 400 of the tape 200 and a second layer 252 on a rear surface of the second portion 500 of the tape 200. The adhesive layer 251, 252 may cover the entirety of the rear surface of the tape 210 to enable the tape 210 to be adhered to both the body 110 and the lid 120 of the container 100 when the tape 200 is applied over the join 140 between the body 110 and the lid 120 of the container 100. The adhesive layer 251, 252 may comprise a non-permanent adhesive such that when the tape 200 is applied to the surface of the container 100, the adhesive layer 251, 252 forms a non-permanent bond between the tape 200 and the container 100. This may allow the tape 200 to be peeled away from the surface of the container 100 relatively easily. Optionally, only the first adhesive layer 251 comprises the non-permanent adhesive. The second adhesive layer 252 may comprise a permanent adhesive to prevent the second portion 500 of the tape from being removed from the container 100.

[0041] A front surface of the tape 200, intended to face outwards from the container 100, may be provided with printed instructions for removal of the tape 200 or product information.

[0042] Figure 7 shows an example of the tape 200 circumscribing and overlapping the join 140 between the body 110 and the lid 120 of a container 100. The container 100 shown in Figure 7 is a snus container, although it will be appreciated that the container 100 could alternatively be a container for another type of product. The tape 200 shown in Figure 7 corresponds to the tape shown in Figure 4, but it will be appreciated that the tape 200 could alternatively correspond to any of the tapes 200 shown in Figures 5, 6, 9, 10, 11 or any of the alternative tape configurations discussed above and below.

[0043] Figure 8 shows an example of the container 100

and the tape 200 after the tape 200 has been torn along the line of separation 300. The first portion 400 has been peeled away from the container 100 and the second portion 500 has been left adhered to the container 100 as tamper evidence. Once the first portion 400 has been removed, the second portion 500 can act as a hinge between the body 110 and the lid 120 to allow the container 100 to be hinged open and closed. The second portion 500 may remain adhered to the container 100 over a wide area, for example the entire width of the tape 200, giving it a wide contact area with the container 100. It is thus unlikely to become detached from the container 100 even if it is damaged during separation of the first and second portions 400, 500. As discussed above, to further reduce the possibility of the second portion 500 becoming detached from the container 100, the second portion 500 may be adhered to the container using a permanent adhesive. Thus, the tape 200 is able to provide tamper evidence to consumers without requiring the excess material needed by the longitudinally separable tape shown in Figure 2.

[0044] Referring to Figures 9 to 11, the second portion 500 of the tape 200 may optionally have a lesser width than the first portion 400. For example, there may be a step change in the width of the tape 200 between the first and second portions 400, 500 such that the width of the tape 200 is reduced at the line of separation 300. The width of the second portion 500 may be approximately three quarters, two thirds or one half of the width of the first portion 400. As shown in Figures 9 to 11, the reduction in the width of the tape 200 may coincide with both an end of the line of separation 300 and a transverse edge of a tab 320.

[0045] The provision of a narrower second portion 500 allows the tape 200 to be secured to a closed container 100 such that the first portion 400 overlaps the join 140 and the second portion 500 does not overlap the join 140. More specifically, whilst the first portion 400 of the tape 200 is adhered to both the body 110 and the lid 120 of the container 100, the second portion 500 can be adhered to only one of the body 110 or lid 120 of the container 100. This is shown in Figure 12. The tape 200 shown in Figure 12 corresponds to that shown in Figure 9. However, it will be appreciated that the tape 200 could alternatively correspond to either of the tapes shown in Figures 10 or 11. If the first portion 400 is separated from the second portion 500 and peeled away from the container 100 in the manner described above, the second portion 500 will not interfere with removal of the lid 120 from the body 110 of the container 100.

[0046] This has the advantage that the second portion 500 can remain fully adhered to the surface of the body 110 or lid 120 of the container 100 to indicate to consumers that the container 100 has been tampered with, whilst also allowing the lid 120 of the container 100 to be fully removed from the body 110. The tamper evidence function of the second portion 500 will be unaffected by repeated opening and closing of the container 100, as the

second portion 500 is well separated from the join 140 and is thus unlikely to suffer damage during removal or replacement of the lid 120.

Claims

1. A tape for adhering to a container, comprising first and second longitudinal edges defining a boundary of the tape and a line of separation extending between said edges to divide the tape into first and second portions, the first portion being severable from the second portion along the line of separation such that the first portion can be removed from the container and the second portion can remain adhered to the container as tamper evidence. 5
2. A tape according to claim 1, wherein the first portion has a width greater than a width of the second portion. 10
3. A tape according to claim 2 for circumscribing a join between a body and a lid of the container, wherein the tape can circumscribe the container such that the first portion overlaps said join and the second portion does not overlap said join. 15
4. A tape according to any preceding claim, comprising a layer of adhesive on a rear surface of the tape for adhering the tape to a surface of the container. 20
5. A tape according to claim 4, comprising a layer of non-permanent adhesive on a rear surface of the first portion and a layer of permanent adhesive on a rear surface of the second portion such the first portion can be releasably adhered to the surface of the container and the second portion can be permanently adhered to the surface of the container. 25
6. A tape according to any preceding claim, wherein a length of the first portion is greater than a length of the second portion. 30
7. A tape according to any preceding claim, wherein the line of separation comprises a plurality of perforations in the tape. 35
8. A tape according to any preceding claim, wherein the line of separation extends transversely across the tape substantially perpendicularly to one of the longitudinal edges. 40
9. A tape according to any preceding claim, wherein the line of separation extends across the tape at an angle approximately forty five degrees to one of the longitudinal edges. 45
10. A tape according to any preceding claim, comprising 50

a notch in at least one of said longitudinal edges at an end of the line of separation.

11. A tape according to any preceding claim, comprising a pull-tab on the first portion for pulling the first portion away from a surface of the container. 5
12. A container comprising a lid, a body and a tape according to any one of claims 1 to 11 adhered to a surface of the container and at least partially circumscribing a boundary between the lid and the body. 10
13. A container according to claim 12 comprising a tobacco product container. 15
14. A container according to claim 12 or 13 comprising a snus container. 20

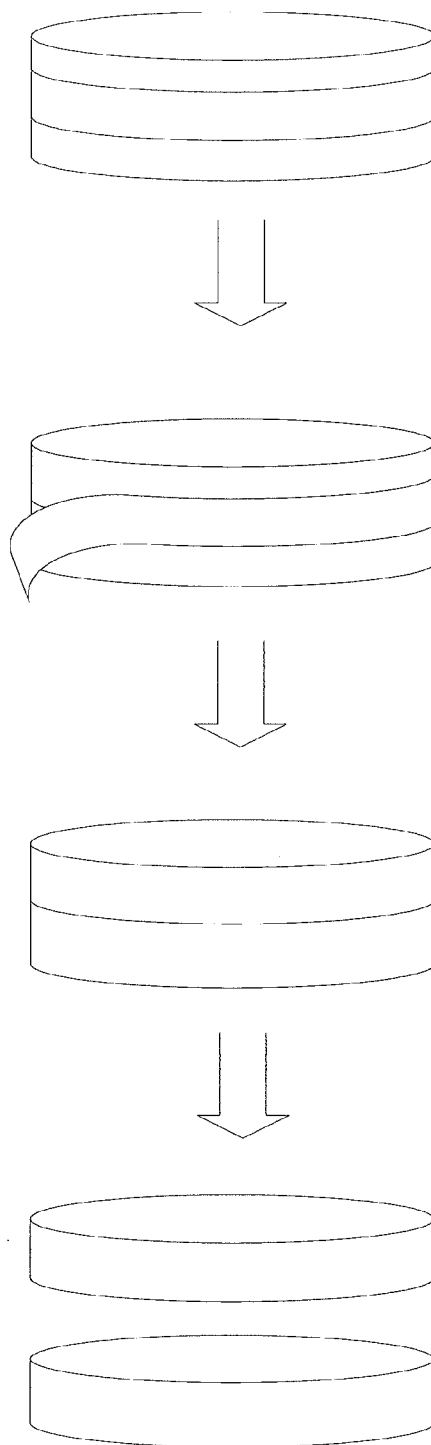


Fig. 1

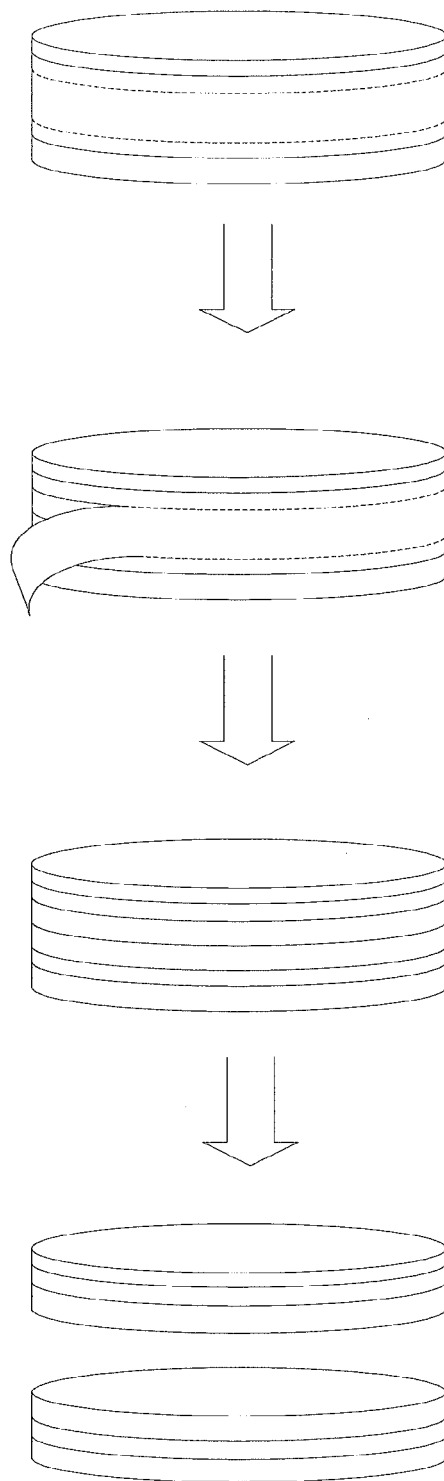


Fig. 2

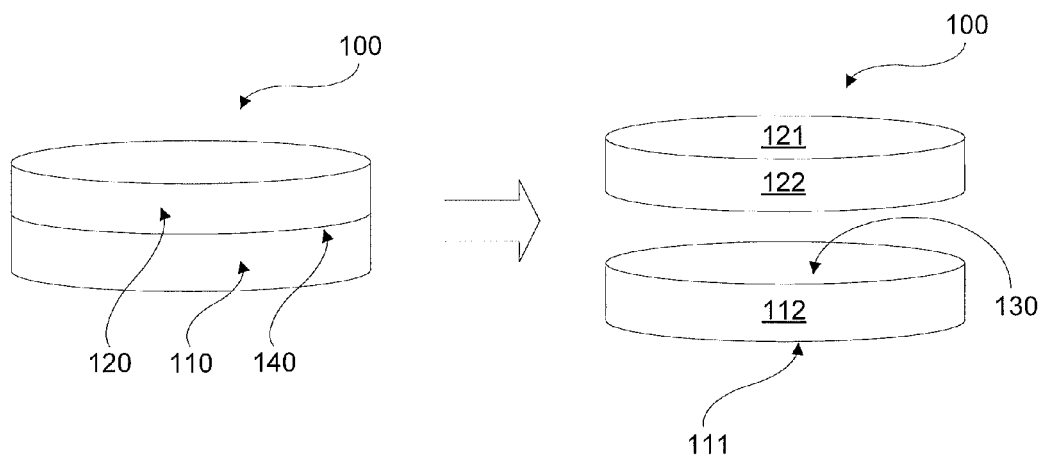


Fig. 3

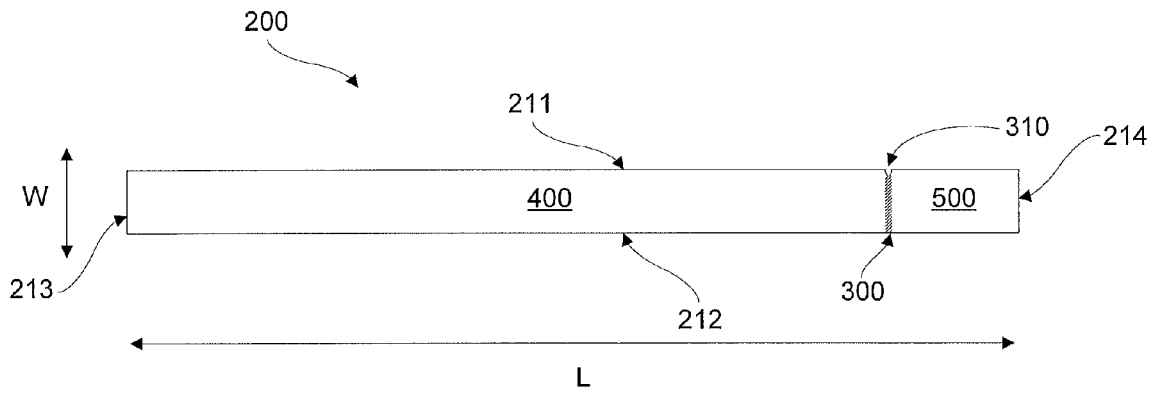


Fig. 4

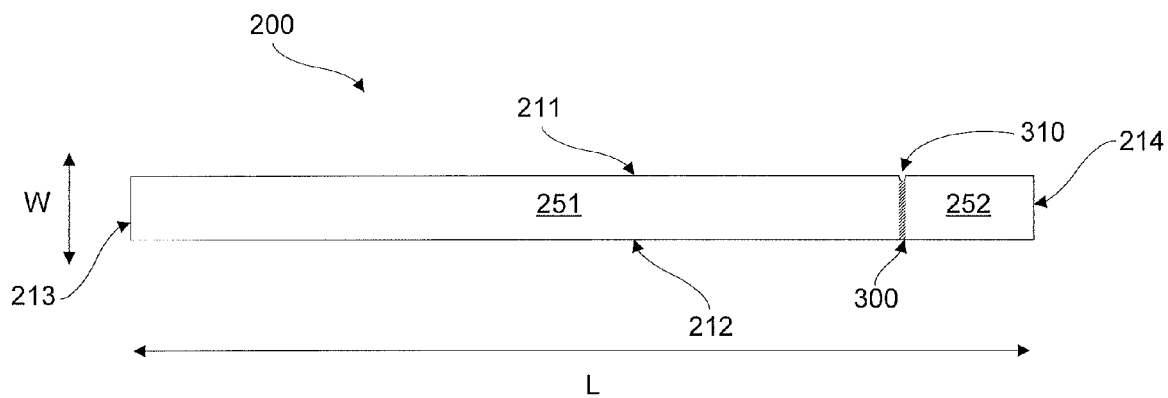


Fig. 4A

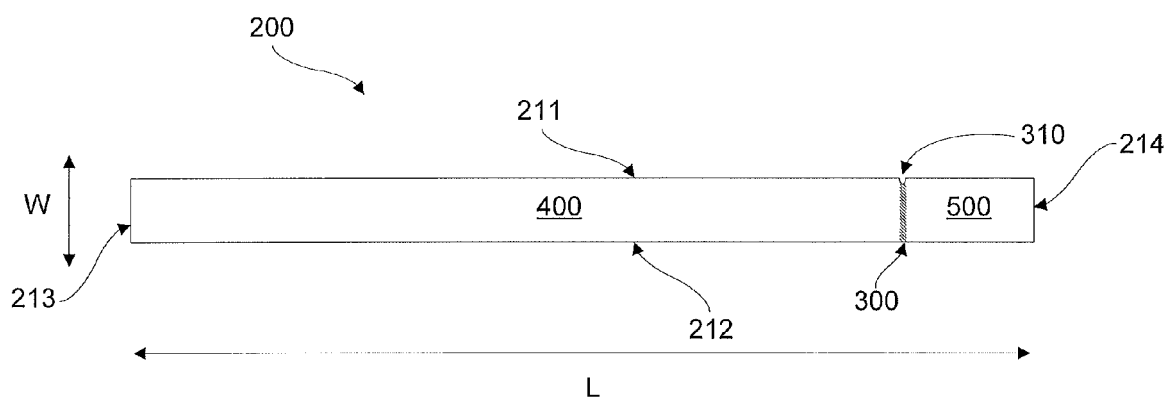


Fig. 5

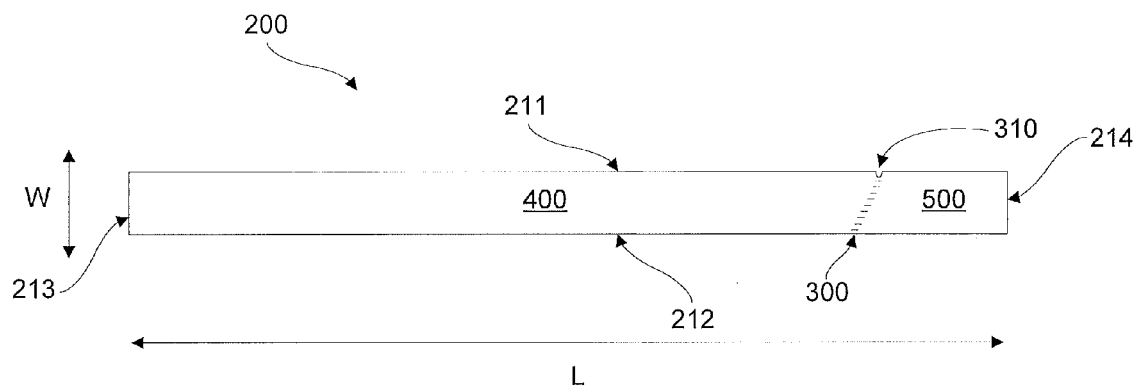


Fig. 6

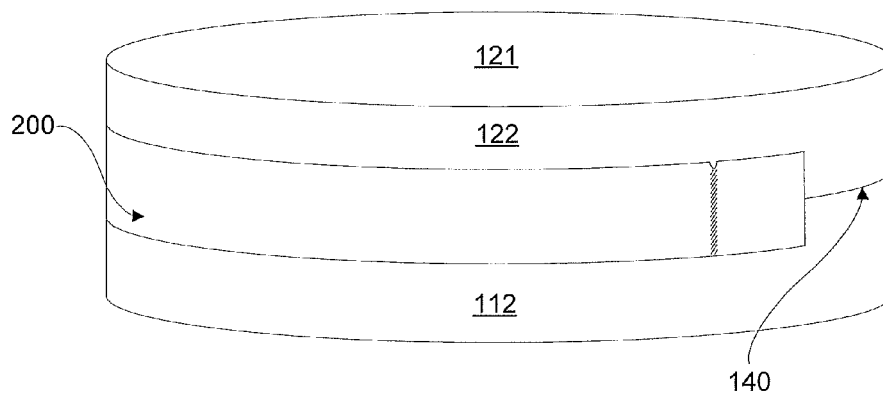


Fig. 7

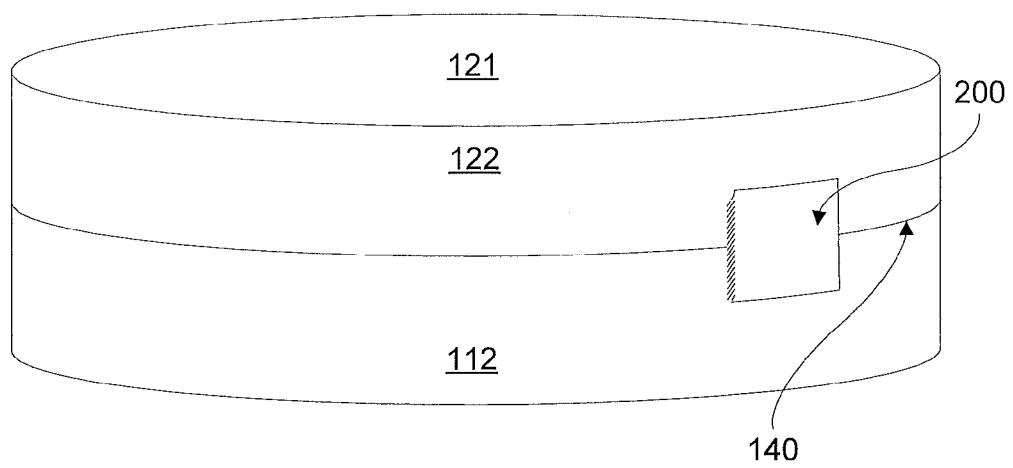


Fig. 8

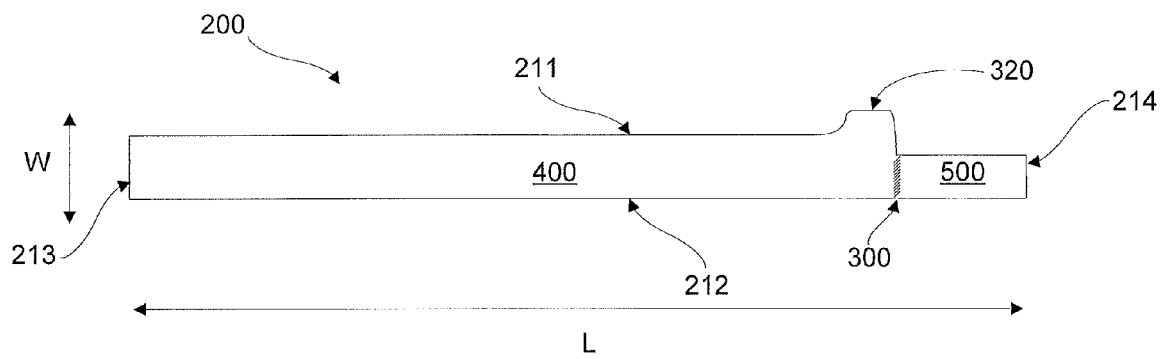


Fig. 9

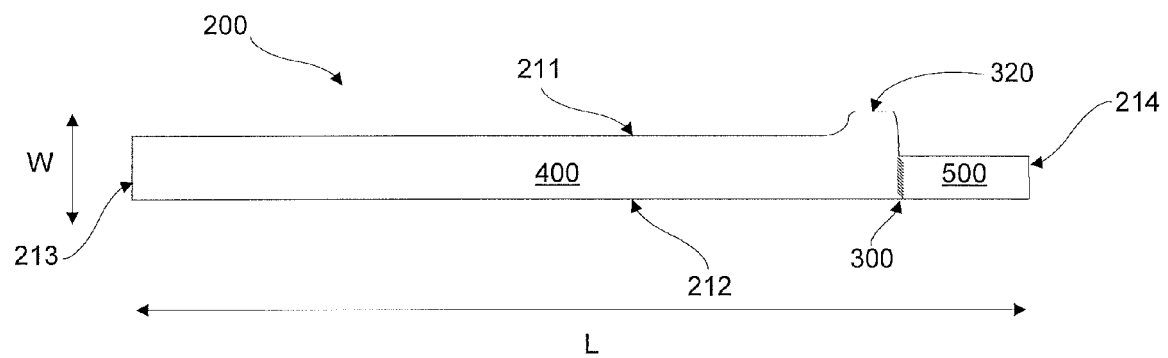


Fig. 10

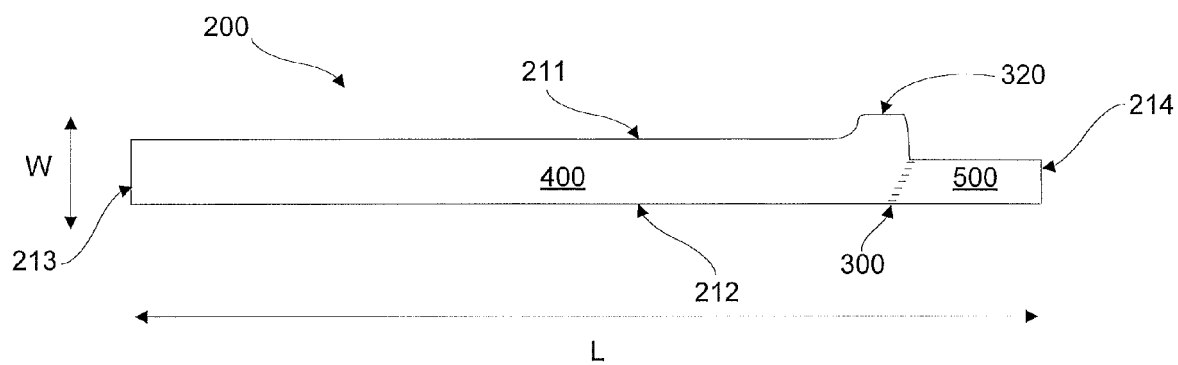


Fig. 11

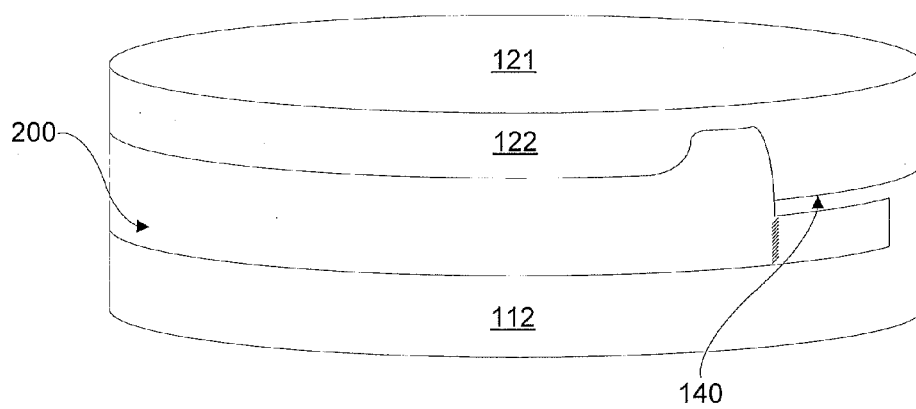


Fig. 12

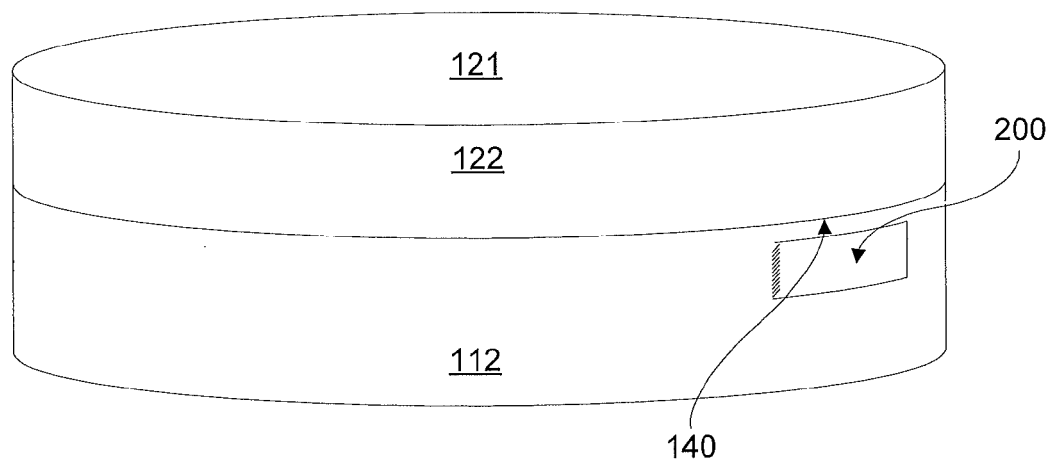


Fig. 13



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 10 16 1278

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
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Y	* column 2, line 44 - column 3, line 34; figures *	12	
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A	* page 3, line 20 - page 5, line 8; figures *	3	
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A	EP 0 847 035 A2 (TOVENCA AG) 10 June 1998 (1998-06-10)	1	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
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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 28 July 2010	Examiner Jagusiak, Antony
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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EPO FORM 1503 03.92 (P04C01)

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

EP 10 16 1278

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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28-07-2010

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