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(54) Title: HINGED-LID, SLIDE- OPEN PACKAGE OF TOBACCO ARTICLES

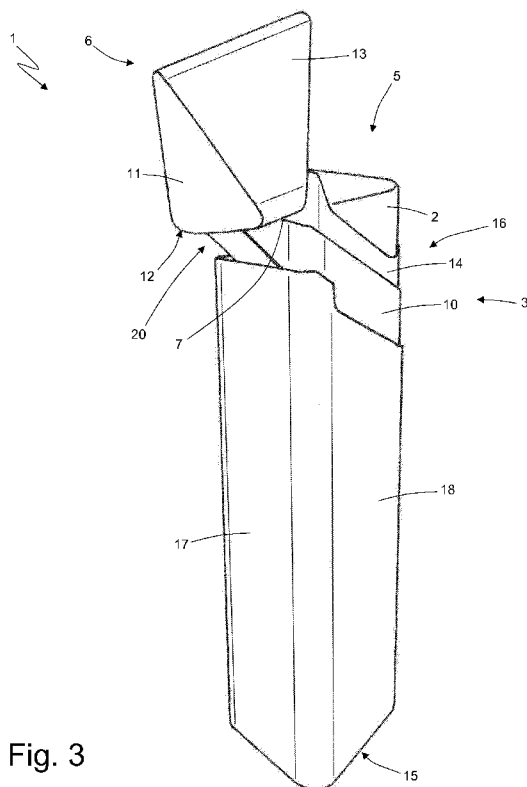


Fig. 3

(57) Abstract: A package (1) of tobacco articles, having: an inner container (3), which houses a group (2) of tobacco articles, and has a lid (6) hinged to the inner container (3); an outer container (4) housing the inner container (3) to allow the inner container (3) to slide, with respect to the outer container (4), between a closed configuration, in which the inner container (3) is inserted inside the outer container (4), and an open configuration, in which the inner container (3) is partly extracted from the outer container (4); and a connecting tab (20), which is integral with a rear wall (12) of the lid (6), is located inside a window (25) formed in a rear wall (9) of the inner container (3), and is connected mechanically to a rear wall (17) of the outer container (4) to rotate the lid (6) about a hinge (7) as the inner container (3) slides with respect to the outer container (4).

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HINGED-LID, SLIDE- OPEN PACKAGE OF TOBACCO ARTICLES

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a hinged-lid, slide-open package of tobacco articles.

In the following description, reference is made, for the sake of simplicity and purely by way of a non-limiting example, to a hinged-lid, slide-open packet of cigarettes.

BACKGROUND ART

Rigid, hinged-lid packets of cigarettes are currently the most widely marketed, by being easy to produce and easy and practical to use, and by effectively protecting the cigarettes inside.

In addition to the above types, rigid, slide-open packets of cigarettes have been proposed comprising two partly separable containers, one inserted inside the other, i.e. an inner container containing a foil-wrapped group of cigarettes and housed inside an outer container to slide with respect to the outer container between a closed configuration, in which the inner container is inserted inside the outer container, and an open configuration, in which the inner container is extracted from the outer container. A rigid, hinged-lid, slide-open packet of cigarettes has also been proposed, in which the inner container has a lid hinged to rotate

between a closed position and an open position closing and opening an open top end; and the inner container lid has a connecting tab integral at one end with the lid and at the opposite end with the outer container, so as to rotate the lid 'automatically' (i.e. without the user having to touch the lid) as the inner container slides with respect to the outer container. In other words, by means of the connecting tab connecting a wall of the lid to a wall of the outer container, the outer container pushes the lid from the closed to the open position, and vice versa, 'automatically' (i.e. without the user having to touch the lid), as the inner container slides with respect to the outer container, so the user simply has to exert enough pressure on the inner container to slide it with respect to the outer container, without having to touch the lid, which is rotated 'automatically'.

Rigid, hinged-lid, slide-open packets of cigarettes preferably have 'limit stops' defining a fully-open position (i.e. maximum withdrawal of the inner container from the outer container), and which prevent further slide of the inner container (and therefore further rotation of the lid) once the fully-open position is reached. Forming such 'limit stops', however, is fairly complicated, and poses problems when both manufacturing and folding the blanks.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a hinged-lid, slide-open package of tobacco articles, designed to eliminate the above drawbacks, and which in particular is cheap and easy to produce.

According to the present invention, there is provided a hinged-lid, slide-open package of tobacco articles as claimed in the accompanying Claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

10 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 front view in perspective of a rigid, hinged-lid, slide-open packet of cigarettes in accordance with the present invention and in a closed configuration;

Figure 2 shows a front view in perspective of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes in an open configuration;

Figure 3 shows a rear view in perspective of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes in an open configuration;

Figure 4 shows a rear view in perspective of an inner container of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes;

Figure 5 shows a front view in perspective of an outer container of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes;

25 Figures 6 and 7 show a detail of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes in a closed configuration and

fully-open configuration respectively;

Figure 8 shows a view in perspective of the Figure 6 and 7 detail;

Figure 9 shows a plan view of a blank from which to produce an inner container of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes;

Figure 10 shows a plan view of a blank from which to produce an outer container of the Figure 1 packet of cigarettes.

10 PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

Number 1 in Figures 1, 2 and 3 indicates as a whole a rigid, slide-open packet of cigarettes.

The Figure 1 packet 1 of cigarettes comprises a wrapped, i.e. foil-wrapped, group 2 of cigarettes (shown schematically in Figures 2 and 3); a rigid inner container 3 actually containing wrapped group 2; and a rigid outer container 4 in which inner container 3 is housed to slide, i.e. translate, with respect to outer container 4 between a closed configuration (Figure 1), in which inner container 3 is inserted completely inside outer container 4, and an open configuration (Figures 2 and 3), in which inner container 3 is extracted partly from outer container 4 to allow access to wrapped group 2 of cigarettes.

As shown more clearly in Figure 4, inner container 3 is parallelepiped-shaped with an equilateral

triangular cross section, is cup-shaped with an open top end 5, and comprises a cup-shaped lid 6 hinged to inner container 3 along a hinge 7 to rotate with respect to inner container 3 between an open position (Figures 2, 3 and 4) and a closed position (Figure 1) opening and closing open top end 5 respectively.

Inner container 3 is parallelepiped-shaped with an equilateral triangular cross section, and comprises a bottom wall 8 opposite open top end 5; and three walls 9, 10 forming three 120° angles. More specifically, inner container 3 comprises a rear wall 9 in which hinge 7 of lid 6 is formed, and two front walls 10; three longitudinal edges are formed between walls 9 and 10; and three transverse edges are formed between wall 9, 10 and bottom wall 8.

Lid 6 is cup-shaped, is parallelepiped-shaped with an equilateral triangular cross section, and comprises a top wall 11 (which is opposite and parallel to bottom wall 8 of inner container 3 when lid 6 is closed); and three walls 12, 13 forming three 120° angles. More specifically, lid 6 comprises a rear wall 12 in which hinge 7 of lid 6 is formed, and two front walls 13; three longitudinal edges are formed between walls 12 and 13; and three transverse edges are formed between walls 12, 13 and top wall 11.

Inner container 3 has a rigid (i.e. cardboard)

collar 14, which is folded into a U and connected (glued) to the inside of inner container 3, and projects partly outwards of open top end 5 to engage a corresponding inner surface of the closed lid 6. More specifically, rigid collar 14 is positioned contacting the two front walls 10 of inner container 3 without hinge 7 of lid 6.

As shown in Figure 5, outer container 4 is parallelepiped-shaped with an equilateral triangular cross section, and comprises a bottom wall 15 opposite an open top end 16; and three walls 17 and 18 forming three 120° angles. More specifically, outer container 4 comprises a rear wall 17 facing and parallel to rear wall 9 of inner container 3; and two front walls 18 facing and parallel to front walls 10 of inner container 3. Three longitudinal edges are formed between walls 17 and 18; and three transverse edges are formed between walls 17, 18 and bottom wall 15.

In the preferred embodiment shown in the drawings, the three longitudinal edges of inner container 3, lid 6, and outer container 4 are rounded. In an alternative embodiment not shown, the three longitudinal edges of inner container 3, lid 6, and outer container 4 are square.

As shown in Figures 1, 2 and 5, the two front walls 18 of outer container 4 have a through window 19 astride

the longitudinal edge between front walls 18, and which allows access to the front walls 10 of inner container 3 underneath to push inner container 3 from the closed to the open configuration. In other words, to use packet 1
5 of cigarettes, the user holds outer container 4 with one hand and, with the thumb of the same hand, simultaneously exerts pressure on front walls 10 of inner container 3, through window 19 in front walls 18 of outer container 4, to slide inner container 3 with
10 respect to outer container 4.

In the embodiment shown in the drawings, window 19, allowing access to front walls 10 of inner container 3 underneath to push inner container 3 from the closed to the open configuration, is formed through front walls 18
15 of outer container 4. In a different embodiment not shown, front walls 18 of outer container 4 have no through window 19, and inner container 3 is pushed from the closed to the open configuration by the user acting on other parts of inner container 3. For example, bottom
20 wall 15 of outer container 4 may have a through hole, through which the user pushes on bottom wall 8 of inner container 3 to push inner container 3 from the closed to the open configuration.

As shown in Figure 4, rear wall 12 (more
25 specifically, a top edge of rear wall 12) of lid 6 is connected to rear wall 17 of outer container 4 by a

connecting tab 20 to rotate lid 6 'automatically' (i.e. without the user having to touch lid 6) as inner container 3 slides with respect to outer container 4. In other words, by means of connecting tab 20 connecting rear wall 12 of lid 6 to rear wall 17 of outer container 4, inner container 3, as it slides with respect to outer container 4 from the closed to the open configuration, pushes lid 6 from the closed to the open position 'automatically' (i.e. without the user having to touch lid 6). Similarly, inner container 3, as it slides with respect to outer container 4 from the open to the closed configuration, pushes lid 6 from the open to the closed position 'automatically' (i.e. without the user having to touch lid 6), so the user simply has to exert enough pressure to slide inner container 3 with respect to outer container 4, without having to touch lid 6, which is rotated 'automatically'.

As shown in Figure 4, connecting tab 20 is U-shaped, and comprises an inner portion 21 coplanar with rear wall 9 of inner container 3; and an outer portion 22 folded roughly 180°, along a fold line 23, with respect to and onto inner portion 21.

As shown in Figure 5, outer container 4 comprises a further connecting tab 24, which is integral with rear wall 17 of outer container 4, extends upwards from a top edge of rear wall 17, and is folded roughly 180° with

respect to and onto rear wall 17 to form a 'U' shape with rear wall 17. Rear wall 12 of lid 6 is connected mechanically to rear wall 17 of outer container 4 by engagement of the two connecting tabs 20 and 24: by
5 connecting tab 20 engaging the 'U' defined by connecting tab 24 and vice versa (i.e. by connecting tab 24 engaging the 'U' defined by connecting tab 20). That is, a free edge of connecting tab 20 rests on the cusp of the 'U' defined by connecting tab 24 and vice versa
10 (i.e. a free edge of connecting tab 24 rests on the cusp of the 'U' defined by connecting tab 20).

As shown in Figures 4 and 6-8, connecting tab 20 is located inside, and slides freely with respect to, a window 25 formed in rear wall 9 of inner container 3 and
15 rear wall 12 of lid 6, and has an appendix 26 projecting downwards from fold line 23 separating inner portion 21 from outer portion 22. When inner container 3, and therefore lid 6, is in the closed configuration (Figure 1), a bottom edge 27 of appendix 26 is a given distance
20 from a bottom edge 28 of window 25, as shown in Figure 6. As inner container 3 slides out of outer container 4 and the lid rotates about hinge 7 from the closed to the open position, connecting tab 20 is retained integral with outer container 4 by connecting tab 24, and slides
25 with respect to inner container 3 inside window 25, so the bottom edge 27 of appendix 26 moves towards bottom

edge 28 of window 25 until it eventually reaches a limit or fully-open position (Figure 7), in which bottom edge 27 of appendix 26 rests on bottom edge 28 of window 25, thus stopping downward slide of connecting tab 20 with respect to window 25, and so preventing further withdrawal of inner container 3 from outer container 4, and further rotation of lid 6 about hinge 7 into the open position.

In other words, appendix 26 and window 25 together form a 'limit stop' defining a fully-open position (i.e. maximum withdrawal of inner container 3 from outer container 4 and maximum rotation of lid 6 about hinge 7) and preventing further slide of inner container 3 (and therefore further rotation of lid 6 about hinge 7) once the fully-open position is reached.

Containers 3 and 4 of packet 1 of cigarettes in Figures 1-7 are formed from respective blanks 29 and 30 shown in Figures 9 and 10, and each of which comprises, among other things, a number of panels indicated, where possible, using the same reference numbers, with superscripts, as for the corresponding parts of respective container 3, 4.

As shown in Figure 9, blank 29 has two transverse fold lines 31, and a number of groups of longitudinal fold lines 32, which define, between transverse fold lines 31, a panel 9'-12' forming an inner portion of

rear wall 9 of inner container 3 and an inner portion of rear wall 12 of lid 6; a panel 10'-13' forming one front wall 10 of inner container 3 and one front wall 13 of lid 6; a panel 10"-13" forming the other front wall 10
5 of inner container 3 and the other front wall 13 of lid 6; and a panel 9"-12" forming an outer portion of rear wall 9 of inner container 3 and an outer portion of rear wall 12 of lid 6. When folding blank 29, panels 9'-12' and 9"-12" are superimposed and glued to each other to
10 form rear wall 9 of inner container 3 and rear wall 12 of lid 6.

Panel 10'-13' has two wings 8' and 11' separated from panel 10'-13' by transverse fold lines 31, and which form an inner portion of bottom wall 8 of inner
15 container 3 and an inner portion of top wall 11 of lid 6 respectively. Panel 10"-13" has two wings 8" and 11" separated from panel 10"-13" by transverse fold lines 31, and which form an inner portion of bottom wall 8 of inner container 3 and an inner portion of top wall 11 of
20 lid 6 respectively. Panel 9"-12" has two wings 8"" and 11"" separated from panel 9"-12" by transverse fold lines 31, and which form an outer portion of bottom wall 8 of inner container 3 and an outer portion of top wall 11 of lid 6 respectively. When folding blank 29, wings
25 8', 8" and 8"" are superimposed and glued to one another to form bottom wall 8 of inner container 3; and wings

11', 11" and 11''' are superimposed and glued to one another to form top wall 11 of lid 6.

Panel 9"-12" has window 25, which contains outer portion 22 of connecting tab 20 (in which appendix 26 is defined and separated from outer portion 22 by a U-shaped through cut originating from fold line 23); inner portion 21 of connecting tab 20; and a top portion 33 of connecting tab 20 (which is separated from inner portion 21 by the fold line defining hinge 7). More specifically, window 25 is formed by a U-shaped through cut through panel 9"-12" and originating from a transverse fold line 31, and which defines both window 25 and connecting tab 20: top portion 33 of connecting tab 20 originally forms part of rear wall 12 of lid 6, and portions 21 and 22 of connecting tab 20 originally form part of rear wall 9 of inner container 3.

Panels 10'-13' and 10"-13" have a V-shaped cut 34, which rests laterally on the fold lines defining hinge 7, and separates front walls 10 of inner container 3 from front walls 13 of lid 6.

As shown in Figure 10, blank 30 has two transverse fold lines 35, and a number of groups of longitudinal fold lines 36, which define, between transverse fold lines 35, a panel 17' forming an inner portion of rear wall 17 of outer container 4; a panel 18' forming one front wall 18 of outer container 4; a panel 18" forming

the other front wall 18 of outer container 4; and a panel 17" forming an outer portion of rear wall 17 of outer container 4. When folding blank 30, panels 17' and 17" are superimposed and glued to each other to form rear wall 17 of outer container 4.

Panel 18' has a wing 15' separated from panel 18' by a transverse fold line 35, and which forms an inner portion of bottom wall 15 of outer container 4. Panel 18" has a wing 15" separated from panel 18" by a transverse fold line 35, and which forms an inner portion of bottom wall 15 of outer container 4. Panel 17" has a wing 15"" separated from panel 17" by a transverse fold line 35, and which forms an outer portion of bottom wall 15 of outer container 4. When folding blank 30, wings 15', 15" and 15"" are superimposed and glued to one another to form bottom wall 15 of outer container 4.

In the embodiment shown in the drawings, packet 1 of cigarettes is parallelepiped-shaped with an equilateral triangular cross section. In an equivalent embodiment not shown, packet 1 of cigarettes is parallelepiped-shaped with a right-angle triangular cross section.

Packet 1 of cigarettes described has numerous advantages, by being cheap and easy to produce and, above all, by comprising a 'limit stop' defining a

fully-open position and defined by appendix 26 and window 25. It is important to note that the 'limit stop' defining the fully-open position can be formed easily by simply forming a cutout in blank 29, and requires no additional folding when folding blank 29 (when outer portion 22 of connecting tab 20 is folded 180° onto inner portion 21, appendix 26 is kept in the correct position by the U-shaped cutout separating appendix 26 from outer portion 22).

10 Moreover, the fully-open position defined by the 'limit stop' can be adjusted easily by simply adjusting the position of the U-shaped cutout defining appendix 26 and/or by adjusting the position of the U-shaped cutout defining window 25.

15 Given its numerous advantages, the design of packet 1 of cigarettes described may also be used for producing cartons of cigarettes, which are substantially the same as packet 1 of cigarettes described, the only difference being that they contain a group of packets of cigarettes
20 as opposed to a group of cigarettes.

CLAIMS

1) A package (1) of tobacco articles, comprising:

an inner container (3), which houses a group (2) of tobacco articles, has an open top end (5), and comprises
5 a lid (6) hinged to the inner container (3) along a hinge (7) to close the open top end (5);

an outer container (4) housing the inner container (3) to allow the inner container (3) to slide, with respect to the outer container (4), between a closed
10 configuration, in which the inner container (3) is inserted inside the outer container (4), and an open configuration, in which the inner container (3) is partly extracted from the outer container (4); and

a first connecting tab (20), which is integral with
15 a rear wall (12) of the lid (6), is located inside a first window (25) formed in a rear wall (9) of the inner container (3), and is connected mechanically to a rear wall (17) of the outer container (4) to rotate the lid (6) about the hinge (7) as the inner container (3)
20 slides with respect to the outer container (4);

the package (1) being **characterized in that** the first connecting tab (20) has an appendix (26) projecting towards a bottom edge (28) of the first window (25), so that contact between a bottom edge (27)
25 of the appendix (26) and the bottom edge (28) of the first window (25) defines a limit stop preventing the inner container (3) from being opened further with respect to the outer container (4).

2) A package as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the first connecting tab (20) is folded into a U, and comprises an inner portion (21) coplanar with the rear wall (9) of the inner container (3); and an outer portion (22) folded along a fold line (23) onto the inner portion (21).

3) A package as claimed in Claim 2, wherein:

the outer container (4) comprises a second connecting tab (24), which is integral with the rear wall (17) of the outer container (4), and extends upwards from a top edge of, and is folded onto, the rear wall (17) of the outer container (4); and

the rear wall (12) of the lid (6) and the rear wall (17) of the outer container (4) are connected mechanically by engagement of the first and second connecting tab (20, 24).

4) A package as claimed in Claim 2 or 3, wherein the appendix (26) of the first connecting tab (20) projects downwards from the fold line (23) separating the inner portion (21) from the outer portion (22).

5) A package as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the appendix (26) is defined by part of the outer portion (22) of the first connecting tab (20), and is separated from the outer portion (22) by a U-shaped through cut originating from the fold line (23).

6) A package as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 5, wherein:

the rear wall (9) of the inner container (3) and

the rear wall (12) of the lid (6) are formed by two superimposed, glued panels (9'-12', 9''-12''); and

the first window (25) only involves an outer panel (9''-12'') of the two superimposed panels (9'-12', 9''-12'').

7) A package as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 6, wherein the first window (25) is formed in the rear wall (9) of the inner container (3) and the rear wall (12) of the lid.

8) A package as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the rear wall (9) of the inner container (3) and the rear wall (12) of the lid have a U-shaped cut defining both the first window (25) and the first connecting tab (20).

9) A package as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 8, wherein the outer container (4) has a second window (19) allowing access to the inner container (3) underneath, to exert thrust on the inner container (3).

10) A package as claimed in Claim 9, wherein the second window (19) is located astride a longitudinal edge.

11) A package as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 10, wherein the inner container (3) and outer container (4) are parallelepiped-shaped with an equilateral triangular cross section.

12) A package as claimed in Claim 11, wherein the inner container (3) is formed from a first blank (29) having two transverse fold lines (31), and a number of longitudinal fold lines (32) defining, between the two

transverse fold lines (31), a first panel (9'-12') forming an inner portion of the rear wall (9) of the inner container (3) and an inner portion of the rear wall (12) of the lid (6); a second panel (10'-13') forming a front wall (10) of the inner container (3) and a front wall (13) of the lid (6); a third panel (10''-13'') forming another front wall (10) of the inner container (3) and another front wall (13) of the lid (6); and a fourth panel (9''-12'') forming an outer portion of the rear wall (9) of the inner container (3) and an outer portion of the rear wall (12) of the lid (6).

13) A package as claimed in Claim 12, wherein:

the second panel (10'-13') has two wings (8', 11'), which form an inner portion of a bottom wall (8) of the inner container (3) and an inner portion of a top wall (11) of the lid (6) respectively, and are separated from the second panel (10'-13') by the transverse fold lines (31);

the third panel (10''-13'') has two wings (8'', 11''), which form an inner portion of the bottom wall (8) of the inner container (3) and an inner portion of the top wall (11) of the lid (6) respectively, and are separated from the third panel (10''-13'') by the transverse fold lines (31); and

the fourth panel (9''-12'') has two wings (8'', 11''), which form an outer portion of the bottom wall (8) of the inner container (3) and an outer portion

of the top wall (11) of the lid (6) respectively, and are separated from the fourth panel (9''-12'') by the transverse fold lines (31).

14) A package as claimed in Claim 11, 12 or 13,
5 wherein the outer container (4) is formed from a second blank (30), which has two transverse fold lines (35), and a number of longitudinal fold lines (36) defining, between the two transverse fold lines (35), a fifth panel (17') forming an inner portion of the rear wall
10 (17) of the outer container (4); a sixth panel (18') forming a front wall (18) of the outer container (4); a seventh panel (18'') forming another front wall (18) of the outer container (4); and an eighth panel (17'') forming an outer portion of the rear wall (17) of the
15 outer container (4).

15) A package as claimed in Claim 14, wherein:

the sixth panel (18') has a wing (15'), which forms an inner portion of the bottom wall (15) of the outer container (4), and is separated from the sixth panel
20 (18') by a transverse fold line (35);

the seventh panel (18'') has a wing (15''), which forms an inner portion of the bottom wall (15) of the outer container (4), and is separated from the seventh panel (18'') by a transverse fold line (35); and

25 the eighth panel (17'') has a wing (15'''), which forms an outer portion of the bottom wall (15) of the outer container (4), and is separated from the eighth panel (17'') by a transverse fold line (35).

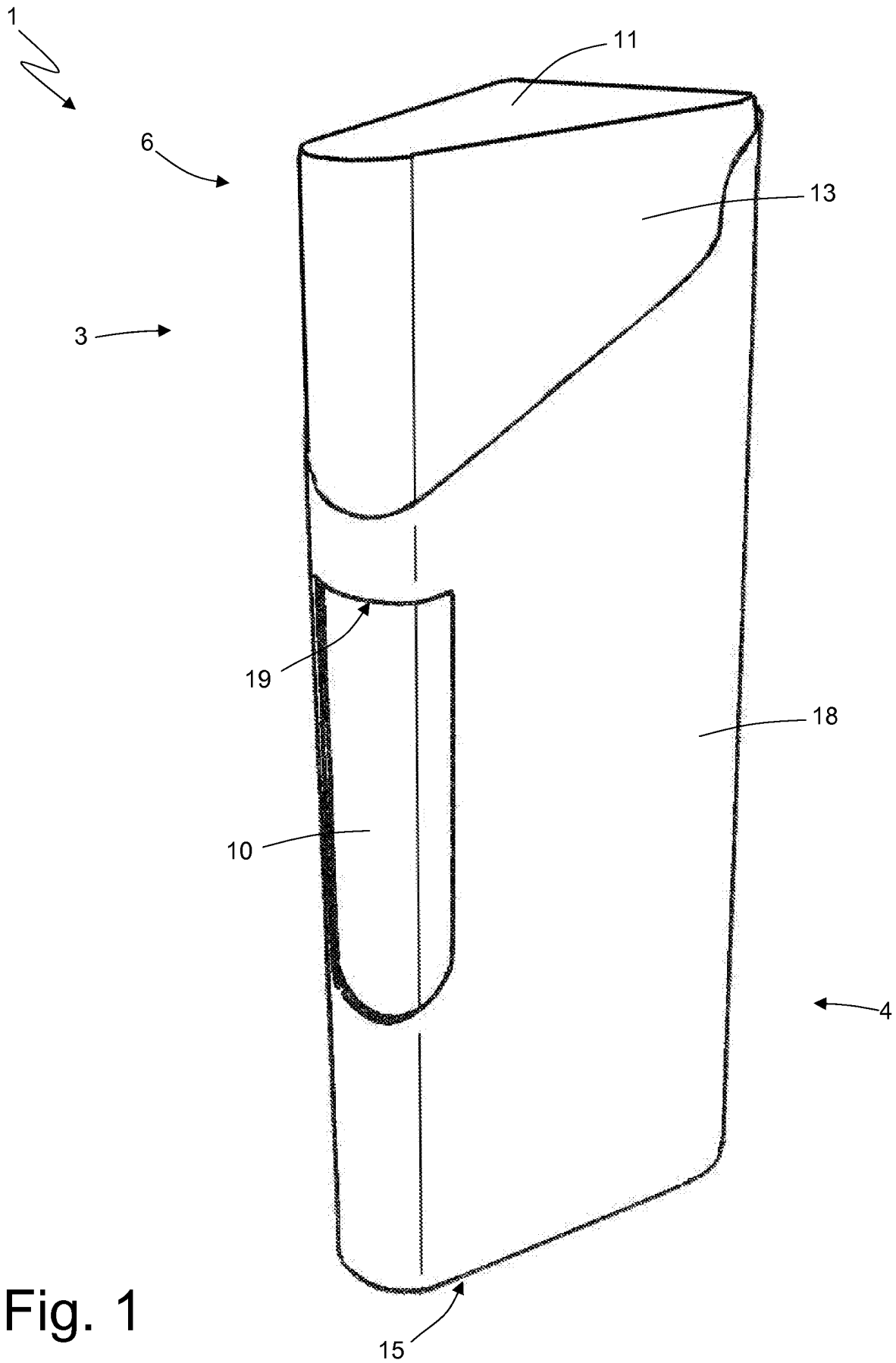


Fig. 1

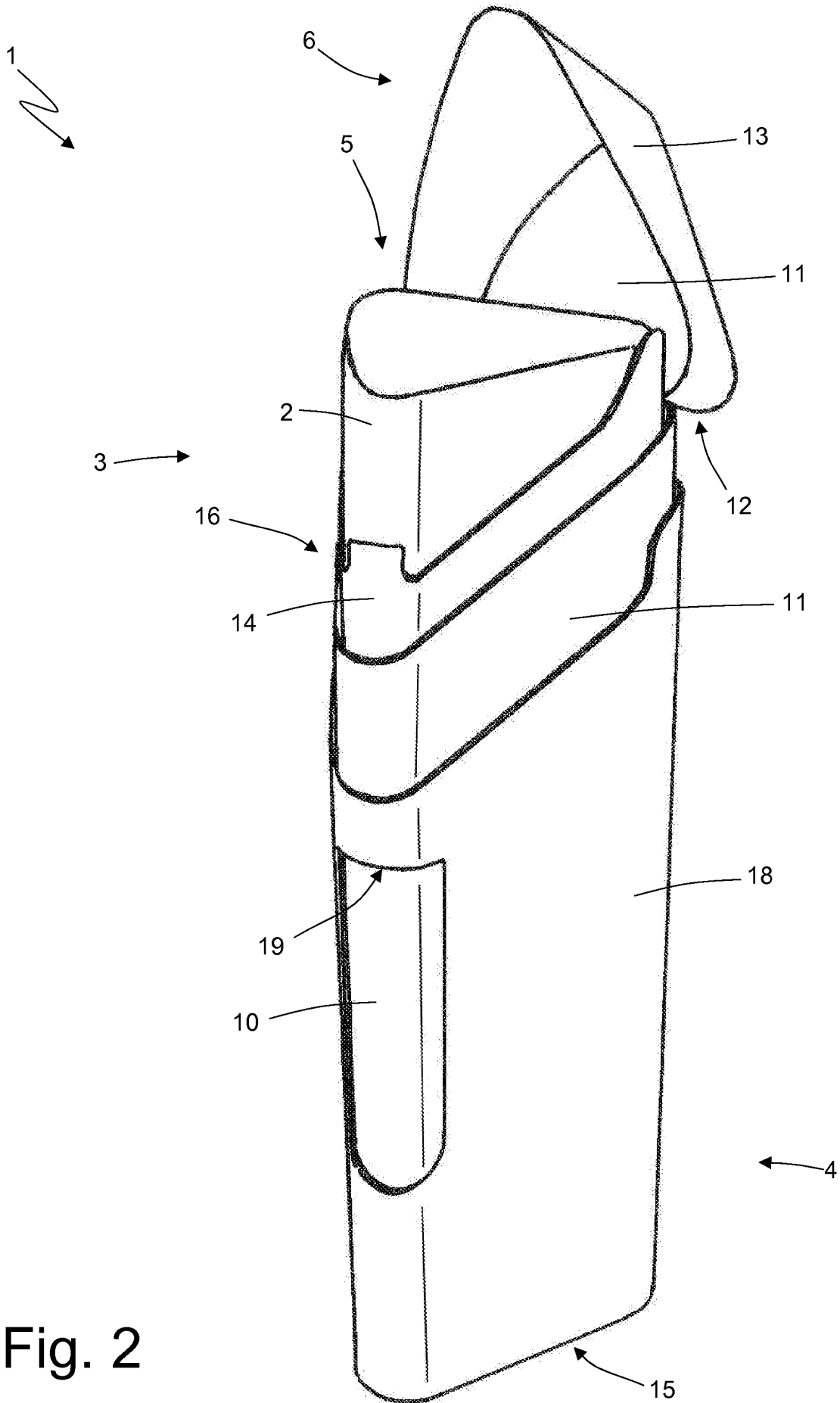


Fig. 2

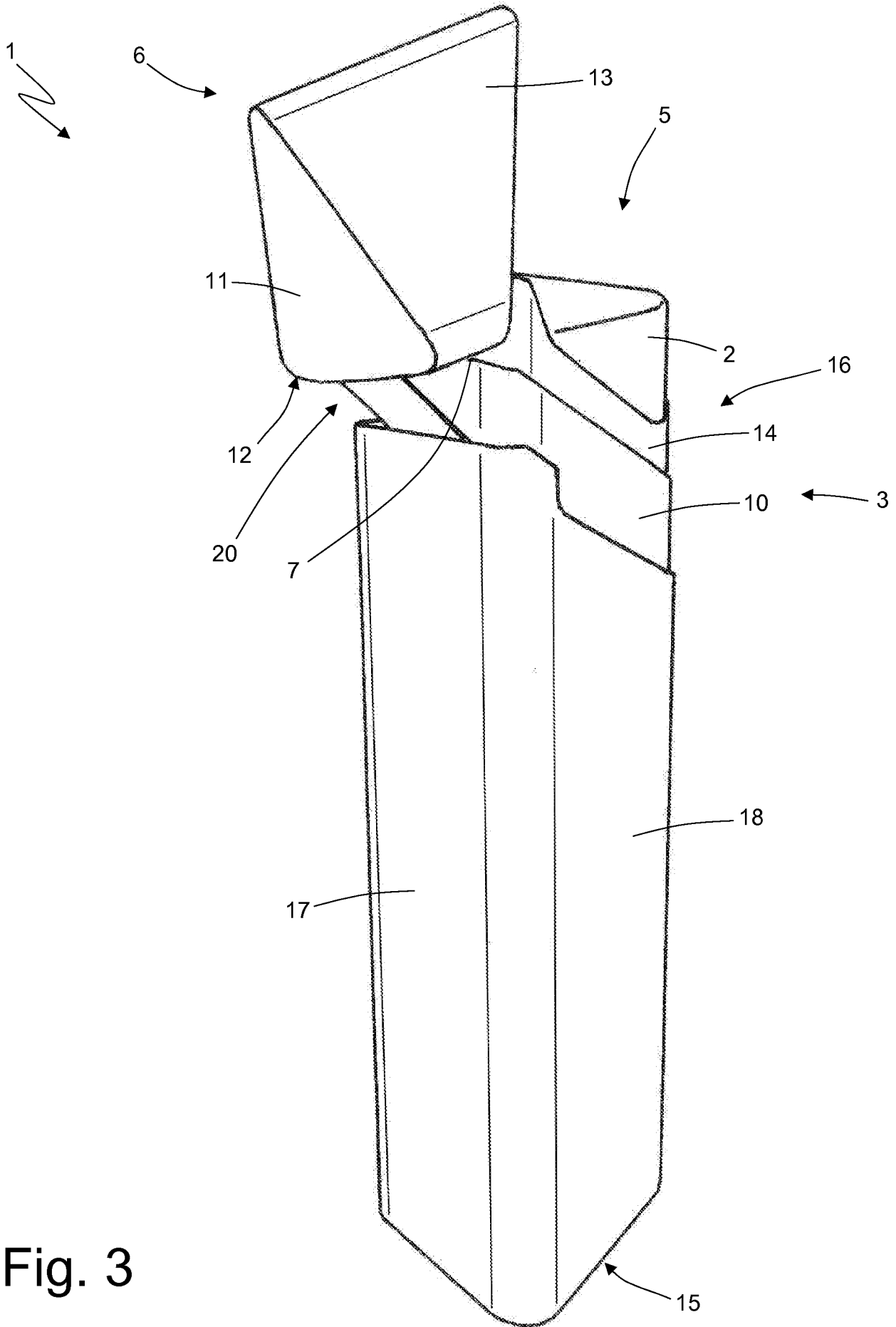


Fig. 3

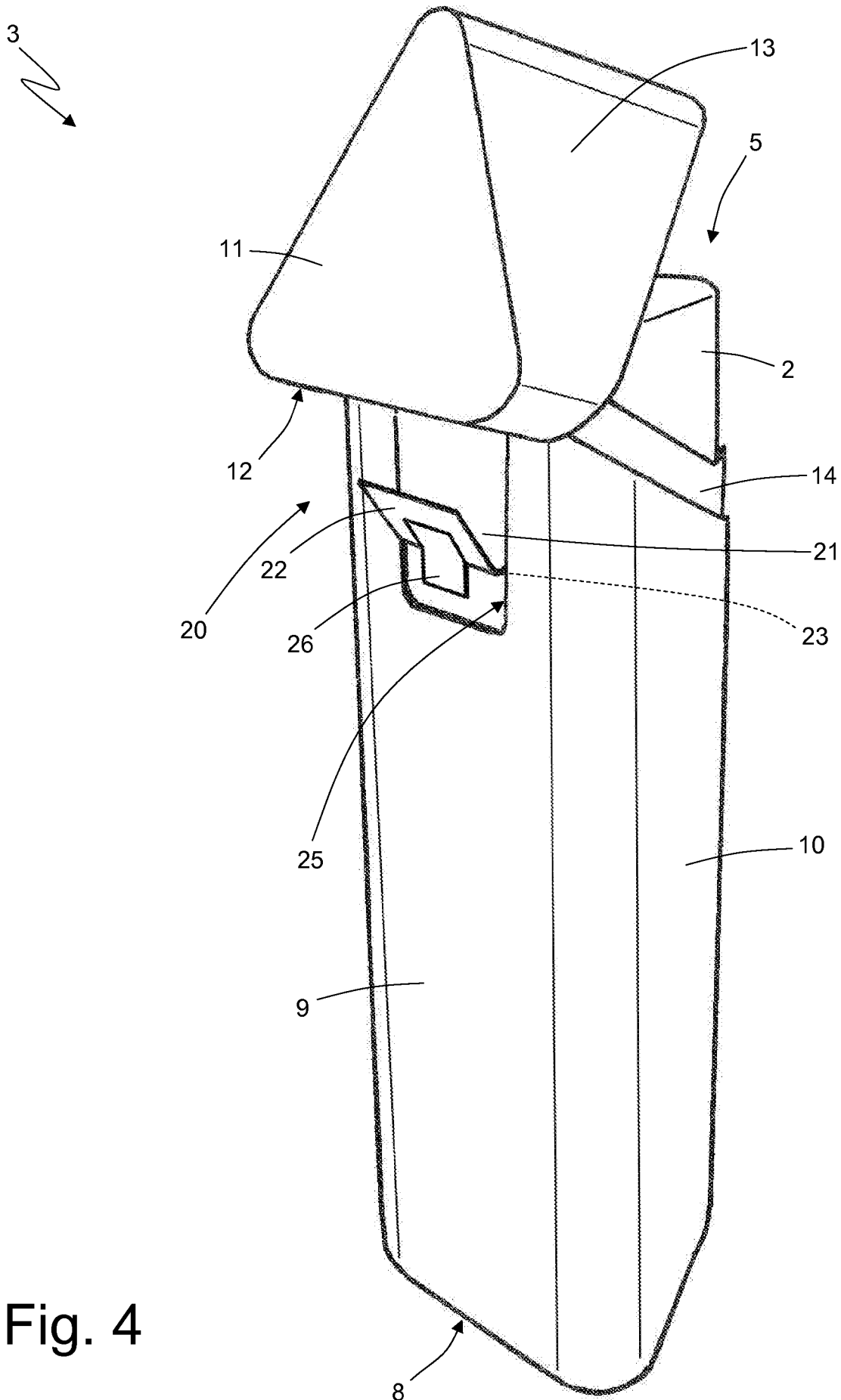


Fig. 4

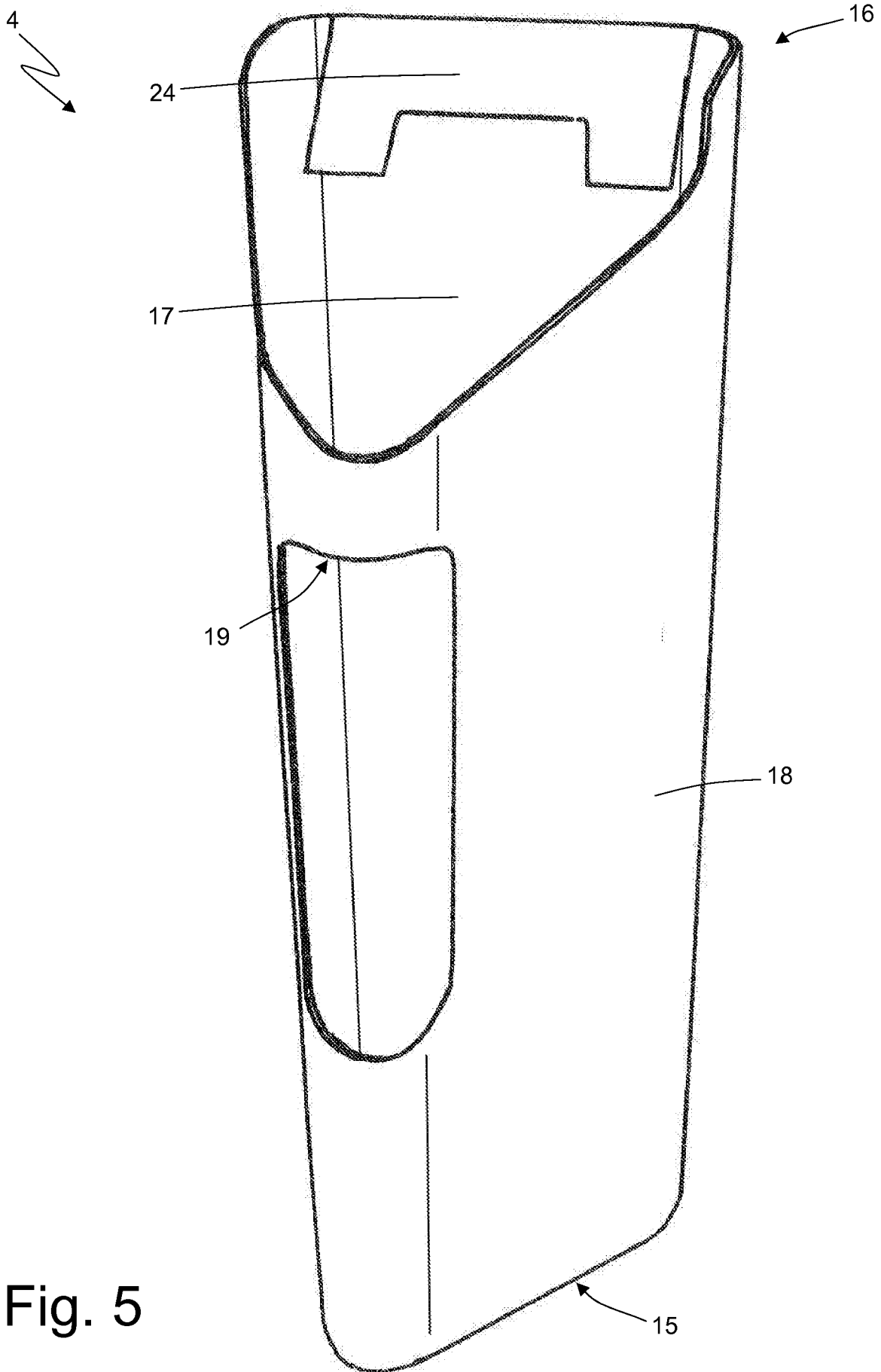


Fig. 5

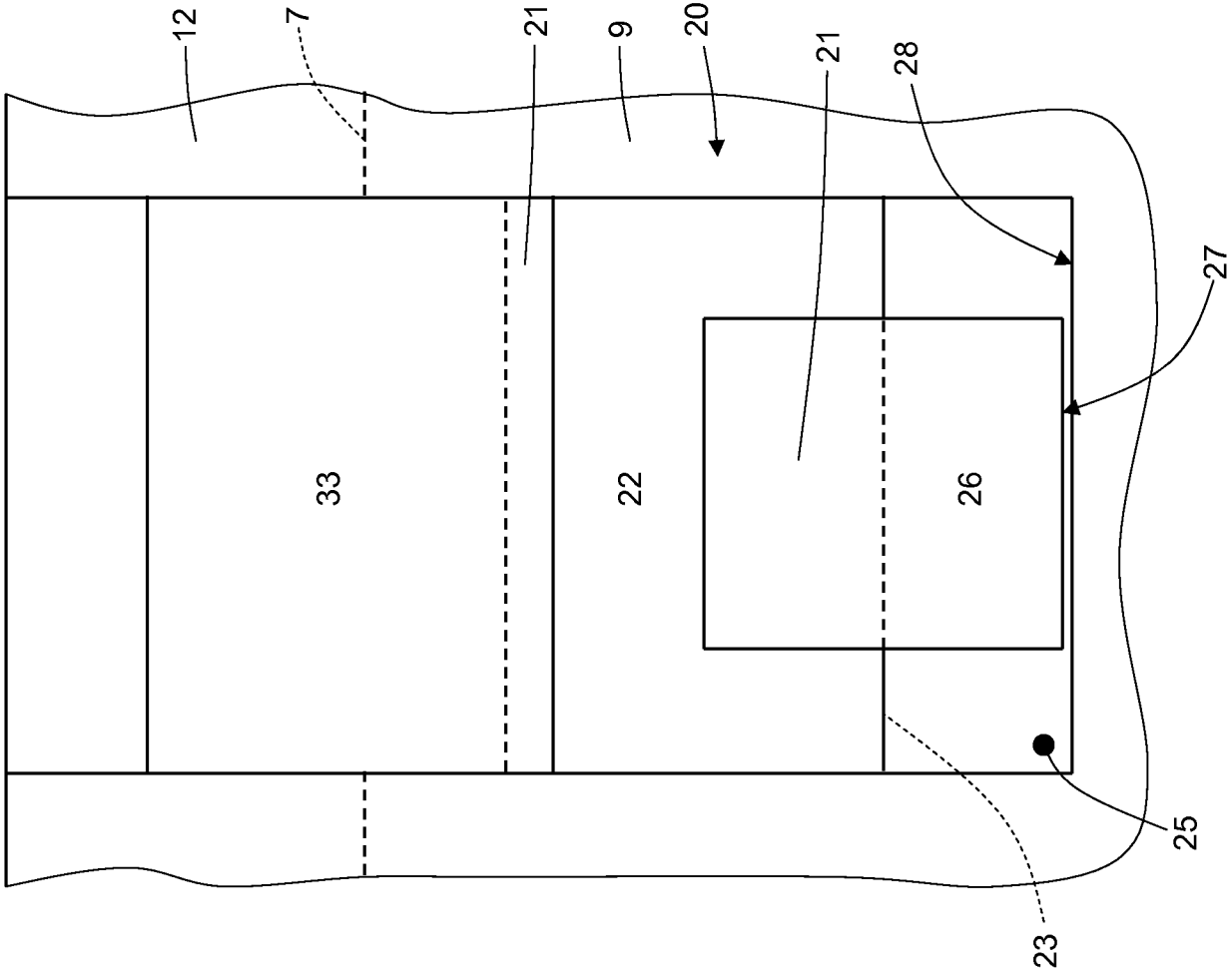


Fig. 6

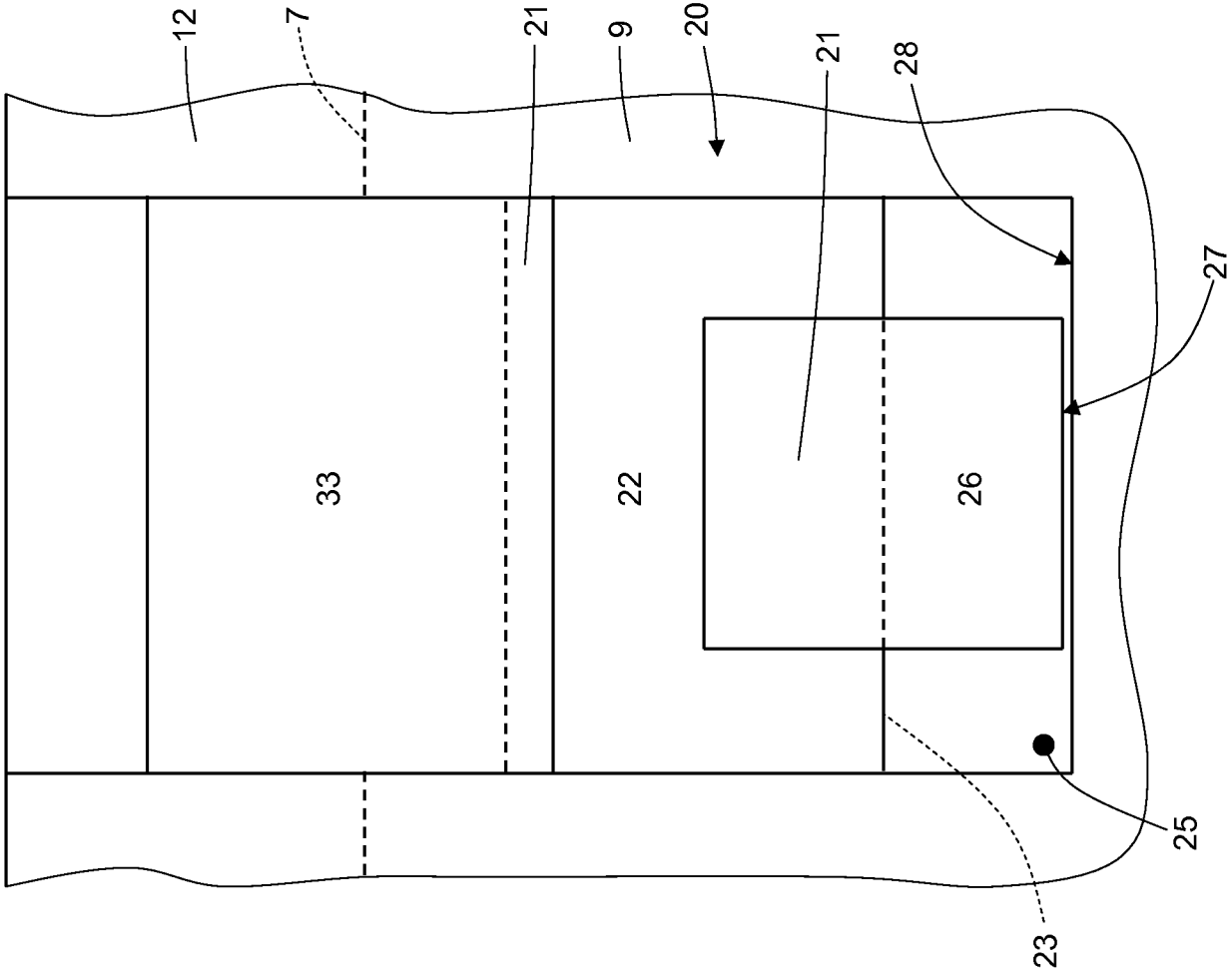


Fig. 7

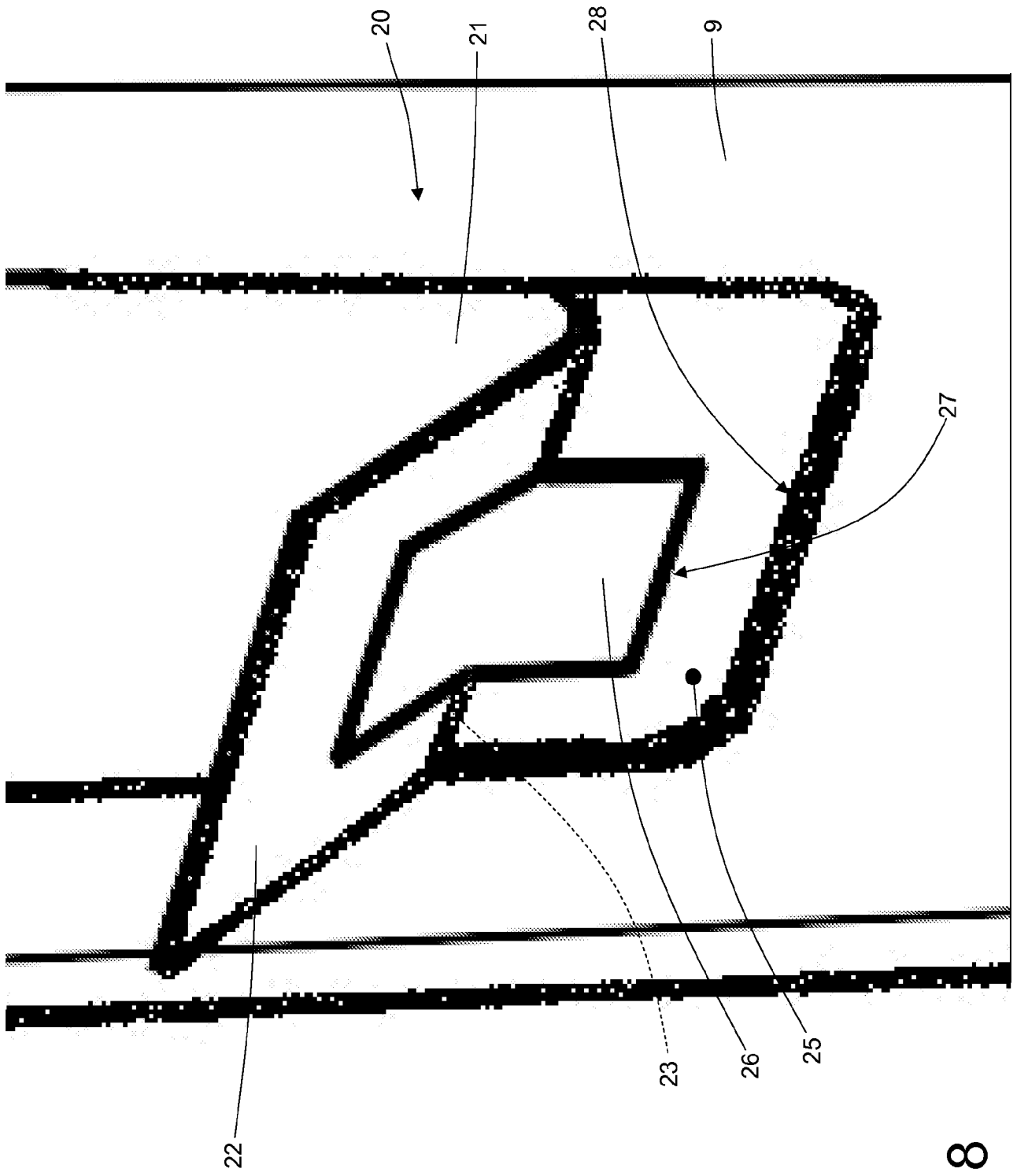


Fig. 8

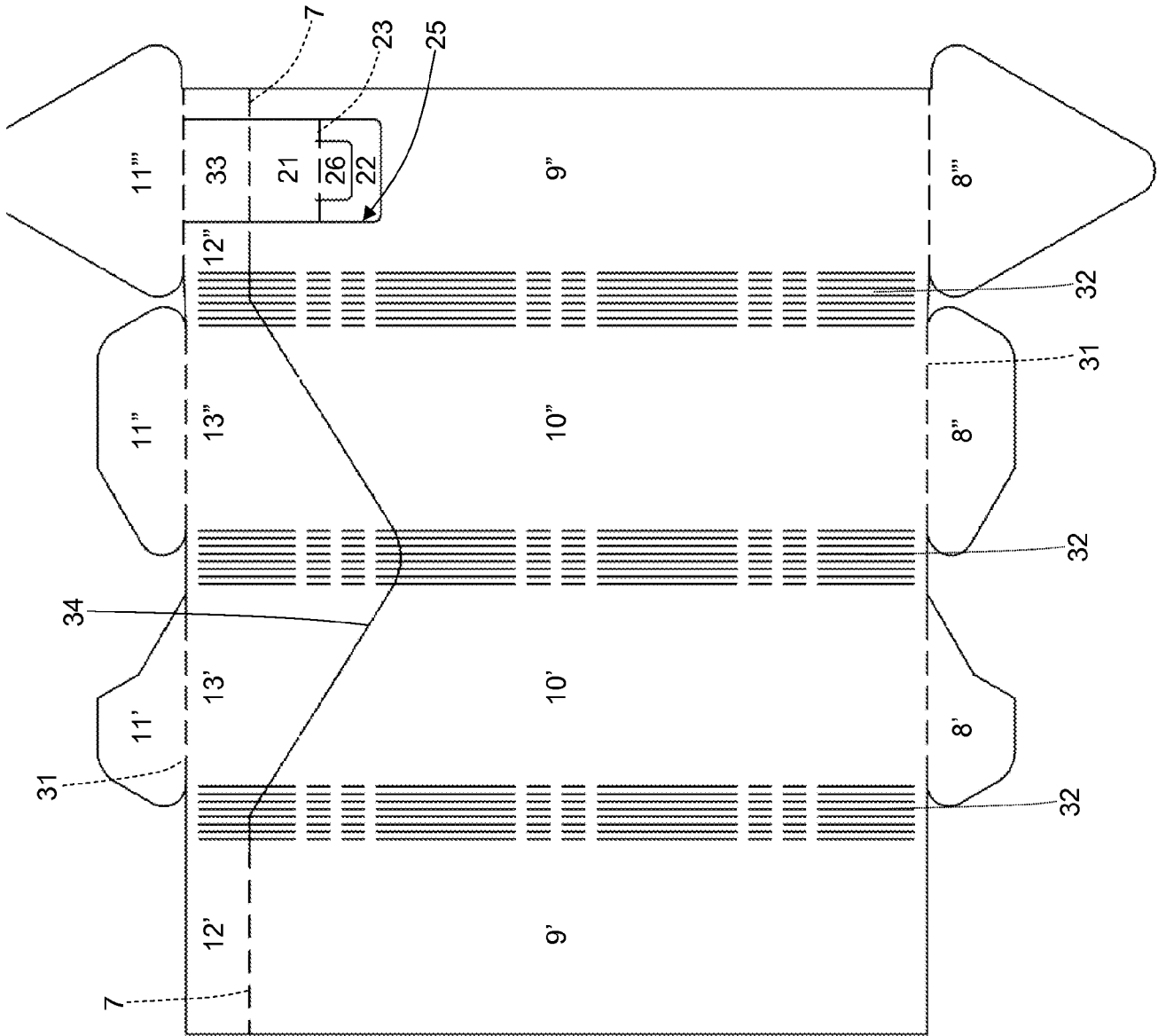


Fig. 9

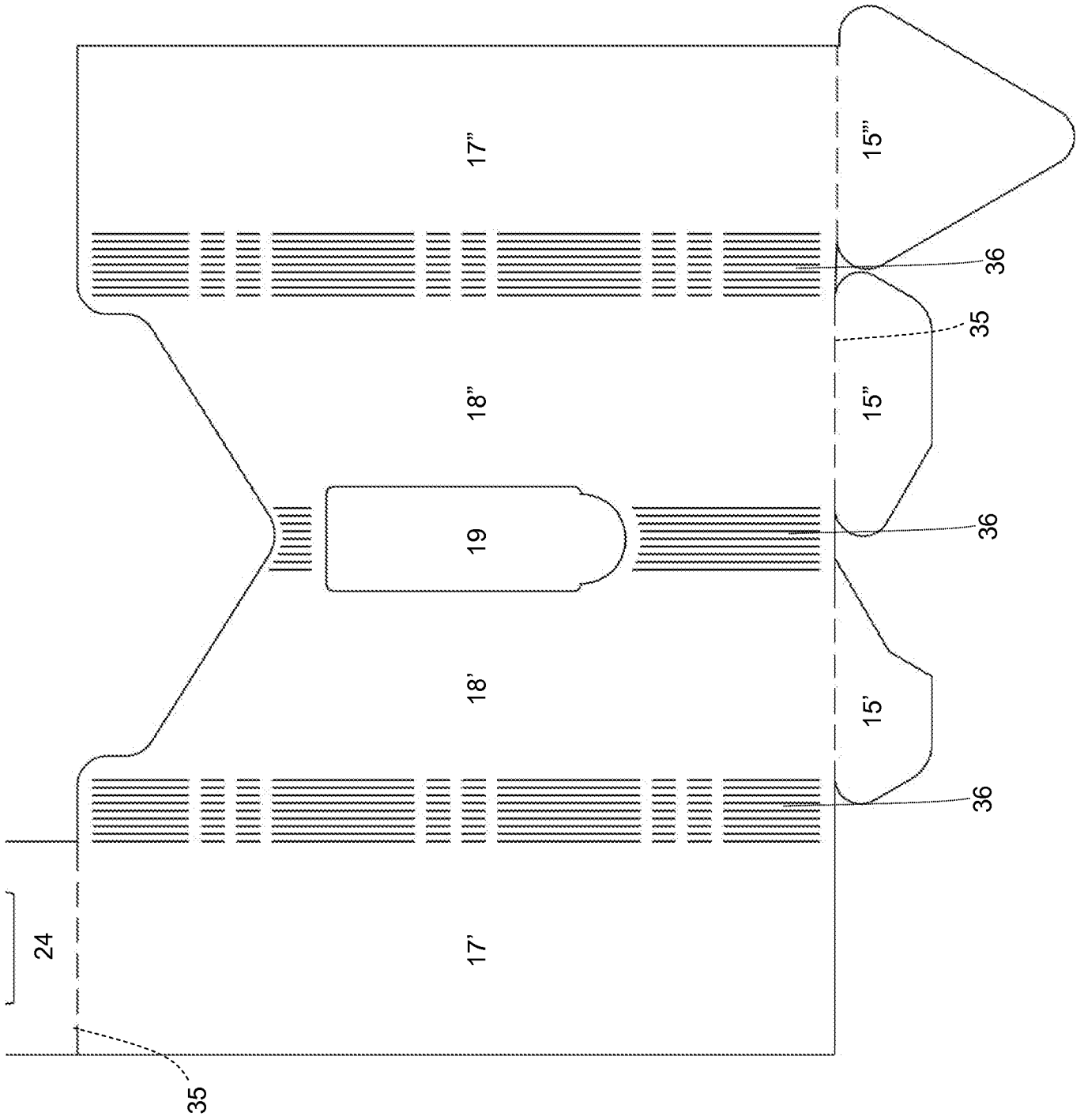


Fig. 10

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/IB2012/055478

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER INV. B65D85/10 B65D5/66 ADD.		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) B65D		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) EPO-Internal		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	DE 28 09 548 A1 (KLAUSFELDER ALBERT) 21 September 1978 (1978-09-21) page 4, line 11 - page 6, line 2; figures 1-3 -----	1-14
A	EP 0 183 397 B1 (TABAC FAB REUNIES SA [CH]) 27 December 1990 (1990-12-27) page 4, line 1 - page 6, line 12; claim 1; figure 3 -----	1-14
A	WO 2008/010041 A1 (GD SPA [IT]; MINARELLI ALESSANDRO [IT]; BERTUZZI IVANOE [IT]; POLLONI) 24 January 2008 (2008-01-24) the whole document -----	1-14
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Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Cazacu, Corneliu	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

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