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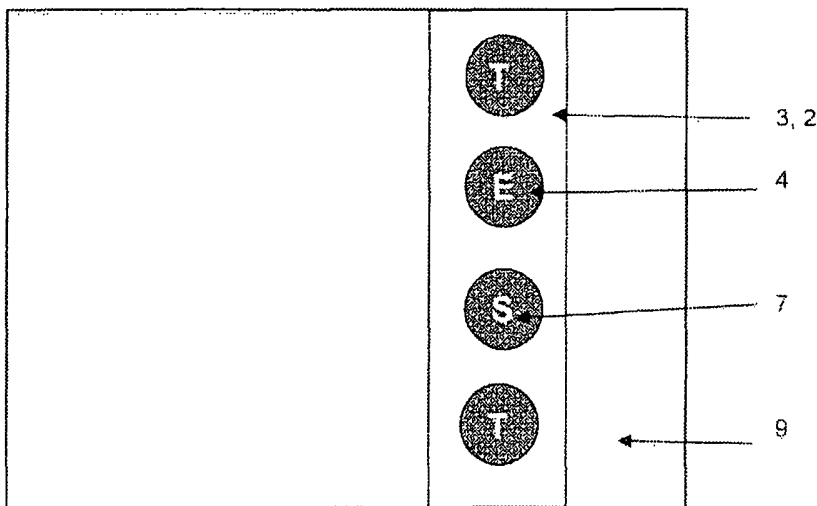
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(54) Title: SECURITY DEVICE AND SECURITY SUPPORT COMPRISING SAME



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a security device comprising a security element composed of: a carrier substrate (1) provided with at least one optically variable effects generating structure (2) situated in defined areas of the said carrier, a first reflective layer (3) visible at least where it coincides with the said optically variable effects generating structures (2) and comprising a reflection enhancing material, - at least one second distinctive reflective layer (4) visible only outside the optically variable effects generating structures (2) and comprising a reflective material different from that of the first layer (3). These layers (3, 4) can comprise further patterns (7). The invention relates to a security support (9) or document comprising the said security device too.

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Security device and security support comprising same

The invention relates to a security device comprising a security element comprising optically variable effects (OVE) generating structure(s) and at least
5 two distinctive reflective visible parts to improve its security function against counterfeiting.

The invention relates to a security support or document comprising the said security device or element too.

Security supports comprising at least one security element such as a security
10 thread or stripe or patch are well known for making security documents in particular valuable documents such banknotes, cheques, vouchers or identity papers/cards.

Optically variable effects generating structures are widely known and used as security features. These structures are commonly formed as relief structures,
15 reflection structures, reflection gratings, holographic structures, and the like, in a substrate, which is then provided with a reflective coating, for example a continuous or partial metallic layer to enhance the optically variable effect.

The most often security elements comprising these structures, which are in form of a patch or stripe, are then adhered to a support for making the article or
20 document which is to be secured. Alternatively, the security element can be a thread partially embedded in the support, the optically variable effects being visible in a window.

WO 02/00446 discloses a security device comprising a substrate formed with a
25 surface relief defining an optically variable effect generating structure and at least two different reflection enhancing materials, which are provided on, or on the same side of the substrate with respect to, the surface relief. The optically variable effect can be viewed against a background defined by the reflection enhancing materials.

30 These security devices display optically variable effects which have their diffraction spectrum spatially modulated by the reflective hue of the underlying

metallic pattern. This metallic pattern is formed by two different metallic layers and cannot be easily matched by dyeing or colouring material layers.

It is one object of the invention to provide a security device and consequently a security support respectively a security document or article with security elements having an enhanced first level security feature which is easily observable and recognised by the public.

These security elements may optionally have an enhanced second level security features which is detectable by a portative and small apparatus/device and third level security features i.e. detectable by a sophisticated apparatus/device.

Object of the invention is therefore a security device comprising a security element composed of:

- a carrier substrate (1) provided with at least one optically variable effects generating structure (2) situated in a defined area of the said carrier,
- a first reflective layer (3) visible at least where it coincides with the said optically variable effects generating structure (2) and comprising a reflection enhancing material,
- at least one second distinctive reflective layer (4) visible only outside the optically variable effects generating structure (2) and comprising a reflective material different from that of the first layer (3).

Suitable as a carrier substrate (1) according to the invention are, for example, carrier films, preferably flexible plastics films, for example of PI, PP, MOPP, PE, PPS, PEEK, PEK, PEI, PSU, PAEK, LCP, PEN, PBT, PET, PA, PC, COC, POM, ABS, PVC. The carrier films preferably have a thickness of 5 - 700 μm , preferably 5 - 200 μm , particularly preferably 5 - 50 μm .

Besides, paper or composites with paper, for example, paper/plastic composites with a grammage of 20 - 500 g/m^2 , preferably 40 - 200 g/m^2 , can be used as carrier substrates.

Moreover, fabrics or nonwovens, such as endless fibre nonwovens, staple fibre nonwovens and the like, which may possibly be needled or calendered, can be used as carrier substrates. Such fabrics or nonwovens preferably consist of plastics, such as PP, PET, PA, PPS and the like, but fabrics or nonwovens of
5 natural, possibly treated fibres, such as viscose fibre nonwovens, can also be used. The fabrics or nonwovens used have a grammage of about 20 g/m² to 500 g/m². If appropriate, the fabrics or nonwovens can be surface-treated.

The structure (2) defining an optically variable effect may be a surface relief, a holographic structure, for example a holographic image generating
10 microstructure, a diffraction grating or a diffraction pattern, a reflection grating or a reflection pattern.

In the case of the security element comprises several structures (2) defining an optically variable effect, these structures have a defined extension and are spaced apart and they may be different or identical, preferably they form
15 repeating patterns.

The reflective layer (3) enhances the optically variable effect of the structure (2), so it can be qualified as a reflection enhancing layer.

The layer (3) is applied directly on or below the structure (2) defining the optically variable effect or may be applied on the opposite side of the carrier
20 substrate with respect to said structure.

The reflection enhancing layer (3) may be made of a material selected from the group of metal or metallic layers, metallic inks, high reflective index layers such as layer of ZnS.

Appropriate metal or metallic layers or inks are preferably layers comprising at
25 least one of the following compounds: aluminium, copper, tin, chromium, silver, gold, nickel, or appropriate alloys, such as stainless steel, Cr/Ni or the like.

They also can comprise a compound selected among Zn, Cd, Bi, TiO₂, Cr oxides, ZnS, ITO, Bi oxide, ATO, FTO, ZnO, Al₂O₃, Zn chromate, Fe oxides, CuO, Cu-Al alloys, Cu-Zn alloys, iron alloys, steel, colour pigments, azurite or
30 malachite and the like.

The reflection enhancing layer (3) may be a continuous or a partial layer. In a particular embodiment of the invention, this layer (3) defines recesses and/or deposits in the form of patterns. Patterns can be signs, indicia, characters, symbols, lines and the like. Further the reflection enhancing layer (3) may be
5 laid down in dots.

In a particular embodiment, the reflection enhancing layer (3) covers the structure (2) defining an optically variable effect only partially.

In a particular embodiment, the layer (4) is visible around the area of the structure (2) generating an optically variable effect.

10 In another particular embodiment, the carrier substrate (1) is provided with several optically variable effects generating structures (2) situated in respective defined areas of the said carrier and the layer (4) is visible in the spaces between the said defined areas of the structures (2).

In another particular embodiment, the layer (4) is situated only outside the said
15 structure (2).

This second layer (4) may be made of a reflective material as those described for layer (3).

In a particular embodiment, these layers (3,4) may be made of a metal or metallic layer coated or printed with coloured ink.

20 This second layer (4) may be laid down in the form of pattern(s) defining recesses and/or deposits. Patterns can be characters, symbols, lines, indicia, signs and the like. Further the second reflection layer (4) may be laid down in dots in register with the first reflection enhancing layer (3).

The layers (3,4) of the said security element may also be in the form of
25 detection antennas of electronic chips.

Both layers (3,4) may be produced by known deposition or printing techniques such as offset printing, offset lithography, gravure printing, intaglio gravure printing seamless and sheet fed, intaglio printing, screen printing flexo printing, digital printing, physical vapour deposition (PVD), chemical vapour deposition
30 (CVD) or sputtering processes.

Both layers (3,4) comprising metals or metal compounds or alloys may be produced by selective metallisation or by known metallisation / demetallisation

processes. Thus a second optical effect is generated in the spaces between and/or around the structures (2) generating an optically variable effect due to different colours of the metals.

In the spaces between and/or around the structures (2) generating an optically variable effect the layers (3,4) may be laid down one on the other in some area. Advantageously they may be spaced apart by one or more intermediate layer(s), which is (are) preferably transparent. The intermediate layer may comprise a dielectric, thus the layer may be laid down in a pattern forming a RF resonant circuit.

Furthermore, an electrically conductive polymer layer can also be applied as the electrically conductive layer or intermediate layer. The electrically conductive polymers can be, for example, polyaniline or polyethylene dioxythiophene or derivatives thereof.

Further the substrate carrier (1) may be provided with positive and/or negative features in the form of patterns (characters, symbols, signs, indicia, bar codes and the like) to give an additional information or security feature, these features being made by printing or by a process of selective metallisation or a process of metallisation/demetallisation.

The optical appearance of said features can be completed by using visible dyestuffs or pigments, luminescent dyestuffs or pigments which fluoresce or phosphoresce in the visible, in the UV range or in the IR range, effect pigments, such as liquid crystals, pearl lustre, bronzes and/or multilayer colour-change pigments and/or thermochromic colours or pigments. These can be employed in all possible combinations. In addition, phosphorescent pigments can also be employed on their own or in combination with other dyestuffs and/or pigments.

Further layers having magnetic properties may be associated with the security element. Suitable inks or varnishes having magnetic properties are magnetic-pigment inks with pigments based on Fe oxides, such as Fe_2O_3 or Fe_3O_4 , iron, nickel, cobalt and their alloys, cobalt/samarium, barium-ferrites or cobalt-ferrites, hard and soft magnetic steel grades in aqueous or solvent-containing

dispersions. Suitable solvents are, for example, i-propanol, ethyl acetate, methyl ethyl ketone, methoxypropanol, aliphatics or aromatics and their mixtures:

The pigments are preferably introduced into acrylate polymer dispersions with a molecular weight of 150 000 to 300 000, in acrylate-urethane dispersions, acrylate-containing, styrene-containing or PVC-containing dispersions or in solvent-containing such dispersions.

Particularly suitable are magnetic inks with pigments based on Cr/Ni steel, Al/Fe₃O₄ and the like. These magnetic inks, as opposed to the conventional magnetic inks, which appear black, brown or grey, exhibit a silvery appearance and, at the same time, exhibit the above-described required magnetic properties. This makes it possible to produce the metallically glossy appearance, desired or required for many applications, in one operation merely by printing these magnetic inks. Overprinting or coating with metallic or metal layers in order to produce the desired appearance is therefore not needed, but can be carried out without difficulty, for example in order to introduce further identification features.

The magnetic layers may be provided in coded or not coded form as patches or stripes or the like.

The carrier substrate (1) can, additionally have a protective varnish or ink layer, which can be unstructured or structured. The varnish layer can be, for example, a transfer varnish layer which is capable of release, it can be cross-linked or cross-linkable by radiation, for example UV radiation, and can be finished so as to be scratch-resistant and/or antistatic. Both aqueous and solid varnish systems are suitable, in particular varnish systems based on polyester-acrylate or epoxy acrylate, or colophonium, acrylate, alkyd, melamine, PVA, PVC, isocyanate, urethane systems, which can be conventionally or reactively curing (mixture or radiation-curing).

These varnish layers can be pigmented or non-pigmented. The pigment used can be chosen among all known pigments, such as titanium dioxide, zinc sulphide, kaolin, ITO, ATO, FTO, aluminium, chromium and silicon oxide and

also coloured pigments. Here, varnish systems containing solvent and also systems without solvent can be used.

Various natural or synthetic binders are suitable as binders.

5 Furthermore, the said security element can be provided with a hot-melt or cold-seal adhesive or a self-adhesive coating for application to the security support. It is also possible to laminate the security element to a further carrier substrate which, if appropriate, has further functional layers and/or decorative layers.

10 The invention is also related to a security support comprising the said security device or security element.

The security device or element may be at least partially embedded into said security support or at least partially applied thereon.

In a particular embodiment of the invention, the security device or element is a
15 thread partially embedded in the said support, the visible parts of the layers (3) and (4) appearing in at least one window. This thread can be embedded with a window in a paper support according to the process describes in the patent EP59056. It could be also embedded between two fibrous or film layers comprising window(s).

20 In another particular embodiment of the invention, the security device or element is a patch or stripe applied to the said security support.

The security support according to the invention can be made basically of fibrous material such as cellulose and/or cotton and/or synthetic fibres. In particular, the support is a paper or a nonwoven.

25 The security support according to the invention can also be made basically of a plastic film (or plastic sheet) or of a laminate of plastic films or of laminate of at least one fibrous material web and one plastic film.

The plastic film can be a synthetic paper, for example a film Polyart ® made by the company ARJOBEX Ltd.

30 The security support can comprise also at least one electronic chip that is possibly detectable from a distance, the integrated circuit of which is a silicon base or a polymer base as disclosed in patent application WO 99/54842.

The security devices according to the invention, if required further appropriate tailoring (for example to form threads, ribbons, stripes, patches or other formats), are therefore used as security features in data supports, in particular valuable documents such as identity papers, cards, banknotes or labels, seals and the like, but also in packaging materials for sensitive goods, such as pharmaceuticals, foodstuffs, cosmetics, data carriers, electronic components and the like. Furthermore, the security devices or elements can be applied to packaging materials for an extremely wide range of goods, for example to films, blister foils, paper, boxes, cartons and the like.

10

The invention is also related to a security document or article comprising the said security device or element or security support. Security documents are valuable/identity documents such as banknotes, cheques, bonds, share certificates, vouchers, data carriers, cards in particular identity cards, visas, passports, licences, brand authentication labels, tamper evidence labels, legal documents and the like. Security article can be packaging material for pharmaceutical, electronics and/or foodstuffs industry, for example in the form of blister films, folding boxes, covers, film packs.

20 Some examples of security device according to the invention will now be described with reference to the figures 1 to 3, not in proportional scale for clarity of figures.

Figure 1 is a schematic, cross-section through one example of a security device for making a hot stamping security stripe.

25 Figure 2 is a plan view of a security support carrying a security device according to the invention.

Figure 3 is a plan view of another example of a security device according to the invention.

The security device of Figure 1 comprises:

- 30
- a carrier 1 which will be peeled away when the complete structure (layers 6,3,4,2) is applied on the security support or document,
 - a release layer 5,

- onto one surface which has been partially embossed with an optically variable microstructure 2 generating an holographic effect. This surface layer is vacuum coated with a metal layer 3 (Aluminium for instance), typically 20 –100nm thickness, which is then partially demetallised exactly in the parts which are not optically variable in a design pattern to render it transparent;
- these demetallised parts of layer 3 are then treated with a thicker layer of metal 4 (copper for instance or any other metal or alloy different from metal of layer 3), typically 40-200nm thickness,
- a hot-melt adhesive layer 6, typically 0.5 –20µm thickness.

A variety of different types of security feature can be created with addition of dielectric layer, fluorescent materials, organic/inorganic coating(s),

Figure 2 illustrates a security stripe having a similar structure of the device of figure 1 but combined with demetallisations 7, this stripe being applied on a security paper support 9.

The stripe comprises:

- parts made of metal layer 4 (Copper for instance) but comprising no optically variable structure; each part being combined with a fine demetallised pattern 7;
- parts of metal layer 3 (Aluminium for instance) which comprise optically variably embossed structures 2. Alternatively, these parts can also comprise a demetallised pattern.

Figure 3 illustrates another possible combination, a security patch having a width of 15 mm and :

- an optically variable structure 2 which is a stereogram
- a copper layer as enhancing layer 3,
- an aluminium layer as reflective layer 4 outside the structure 2, this layer 4 comprising a demetallised text 7 and a positive printed pattern 8 with a magnetic patch background.

CLAIMS

1) Security device comprising a security element composed of:

- 5
- a carrier substrate (1) provided with at least one optically variable effects generating structure (2) situated in a defined area of the said carrier,
 - a first reflective layer (3) visible at least where it coincides with the said optically variable effects generating structure (2) and
 - 10 comprising a reflection enhancing material,
 - at least one second distinctive reflective layer (4) visible only outside the optically variable effects generating structure (2) and comprising a reflective material different from that of the first layer (3).

15

2) Security device according to claim 1, characterised in that the said optically variable effects generating structure (2) is a surface relief structure.

20

3) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 2, characterised in that the first layer (3) covers only partially the said optically variable effects generating structure (2).

25

4) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 3, characterised in that the said layer (4) is visible around the said defined area of the structure (2).

30

5) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 4, characterised in that the carrier substrate (1) is provided with several optically variable effects generating structures (2) situated in respective defined areas of the said carrier and the layer (4) is visible in the spaces between the said defined areas of the structures (2).

- 5 6) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 5, characterised in that the carrier substrate (1) is provided with an optically variable effects generating structure (2) situated in a defined area of the said carrier and the layer (4) is situated only outside the said structure (2).
- 10 7) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 6, characterised in that at least one of the layers (3) (4) is provided in the form of recesses and/or deposits defining patterns.
- 15 8) Security device according to one of the claims 1 to 7, characterised in that the first layer (3) comprises as enhancing reflection material, a material selected among a metal, a metal compound, an alloy and a metallic ink.
- 20 9) Security device according to one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the second layer (4) comprises as reflective material, a material selected among a metal, a metal compound, an alloy and a metallic ink.
- 25 10) Security device according to one of the claims 8 or 9, characterised in that the material is selected among Al, Cu, Fe, Ag, Au, Cr, Ni, Zn, Cd, Bi, TiO₂, Cr oxides, ZnS, ITO, Bi oxide, ATO, FTO, ZnO, Al₂O₃, Zn chromate, Fe oxides, CuO, Cu-Al alloys, Cu-Zn alloys, iron alloys, steel, colour pigments, azurite and malachite.
- 30 11) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 10, characterised in that the first and the second layers (3) (4) are laid down one on the other in some areas and separated by at least one intermediate layer(s) in these areas.

- 12) Security device according to the preceding claim 11, characterised in that the said intermediate layer comprises a dielectric material.
- 5 13) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 12, characterised in that the security element further comprises positive and/or negative patterns.
- 10 14) Security device according to one of claims 1 to 13, characterised in that the security element comprises partial or continuous layers with electrical and/or magnetic properties.
- 15 15) Security device according to one of Claims 1 to 14, characterised in that the security element is provided with a protective varnish layer on one or both of its sides.
- 16) Security device according to Claim 15, characterised in that the protective varnish layer is pigmented.
- 20 17) Security device according to one of Claims 1 to 16, characterised in that the security element is laminated to one or more carrier substrate(s) which, if appropriate, has/have functional and/or decorative layers.
- 25 18) Security device according to one of the Claims 1 to 17, characterised in that it comprises a laminating adhesive, in particular a pigmented adhesive.
- 30 19) Security device according to Claim 18, characterised in that the said laminating adhesive is a hot-melt or a cold-seal adhesive or a self-adhesive.

- 20) Security device according to one of the claims 18 or 19, characterised in that the said laminating adhesive is present in the entire or partially area or in a structured manner of the security element.
- 5 21) Security support comprising at least one security device or element according to one of claims 1 to 20.
- 22) Security support according to claim 21, wherein the security device or element is in the form of a thread and is at least partially embedded in
10 the said support, the visible parts of the layers (3) and (4) appearing in at least one window.
- 23) Security support according to claim 21, wherein the security device or element is in the form of a patch or stripe applied at least partially to at
15 least one surface of the said support.
- 24) Security support according to one of the claims 21 to 23, characterised in that it is made basically of fibrous material such as cellulose and/or cotton and/or synthetic fibres.
20
- 25) Security support according to one of the claims 21 to 24, characterised in that it is made basically of a plastic film or of a composite of plastic films or of composite of at least one fibrous material and a plastic film.
- 25 26) Security document or article comprising a security device or element according to one of claims 1 to 20 or a security support according to one of claims 21 to 25.
- 30 27) Security document or article according to claim 26, being chosen among identity cards, visas, passports, banknotes, authentication brand labels, tamper evidence labels, seals, and packaging material in particular for pharmaceutical, electronics or foodstuffs industry.

1/2

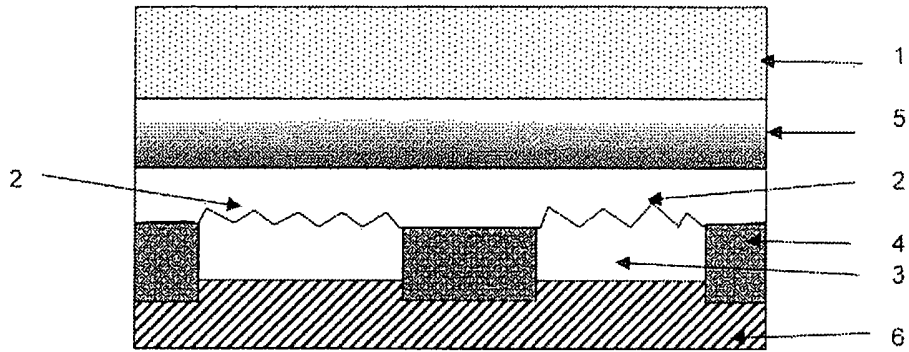


FIG. 1

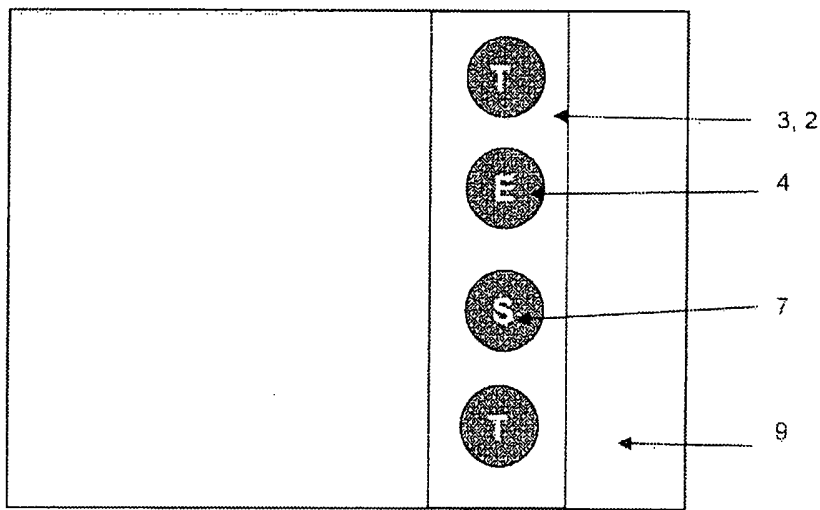


FIG. 2

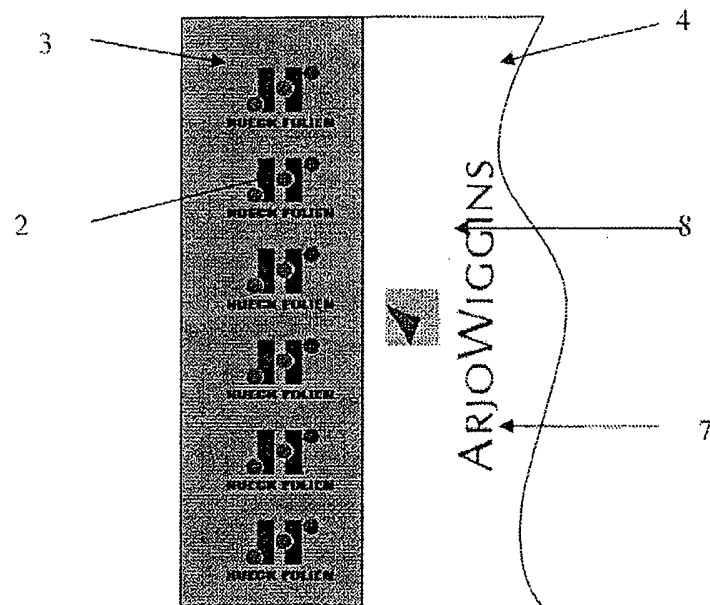


FIG. 3