



(51) International Patent Classification:
B65C 9/00 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/EP2011/060845

(22) International Filing Date:
28 June 2011 (28.06.2011)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
MI2010A001554 13 August 2010 (13.08.2010) IT

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **P.E. LA-BELLERS S.P.A.** [IT/IT]; Viale Europa, 25, I-46047 Porto Mantovano (IT).

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **CORDIOLI, Andrea** [IT/IT]; Via Monte Sabotino, 22, I-46048 Roverbella (IT).

(74) Agent: **MODIANO, Micaela**; Modiano & Partners, Via Meravigli, 16, I-20123 Milano (IT).

(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RS, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report (Art. 21(3))

(54) Title: LABELING MACHINE, PARTICULARLY FOR LABELING CONTAINERS

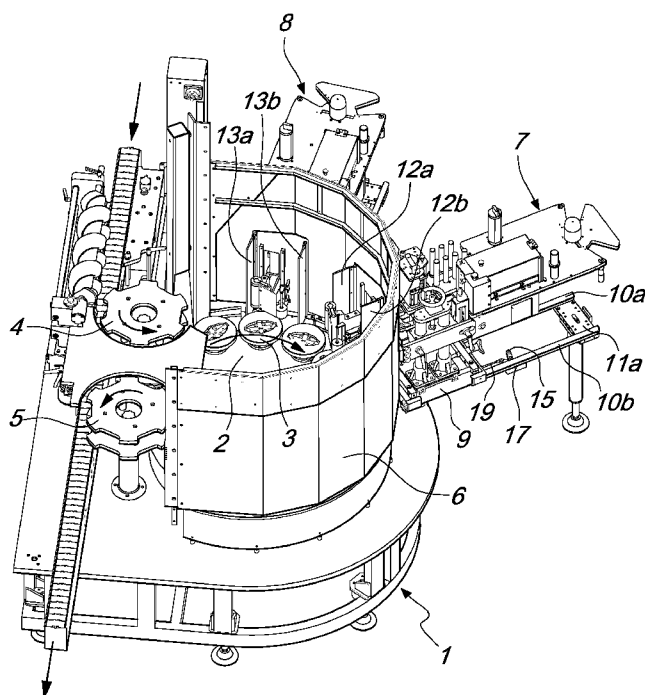


Fig. 1

(57) Abstract: Labeling machine (1), particularly for labeling containers, comprising a rotating carousel (2) for supporting pans (3) adapted for the resting of the individual containers to be labeled and provided with a protective structure (6) which prevents, during operation, access to the rotating carousel (2), at least one pair of identical labeling assemblies (7, 8) being provided which are arranged consecutively at the peripheral region of the rotating carousel (2), each one of the labeling assemblies (7, 8) being associated with a slider (9) slidable on guides (10a, 10b) between a forward active position, for applying the labels to the containers supported by the rotating carousel (2), and a retracted position, designed to load a reel of tape provided with the labels, the protective structure (6), which surrounds the rotating carousel (2), having, at each labeling assembly (7, 8), a door movable by the action of means that connect the door to the slider (9) which supports the labeling assembly (7, 8) between an open position, assumed when the labeling assembly (7, 8) is in the forward position, and a closed position, assumed when the labeling assembly (7, 8) is in the retracted position.

LABELING MACHINE, PARTICULARLY FOR LABELING CONTAINERS

Technical Field

The present invention relates to a labeling machine, particularly for
5 labeling containers.

Background art

Nowadays, labeling machines are known which comprise a rotating carousel for supporting pans adapted for the resting of individual containers to be labeled, and also comprising at least one pair of identical labeling
10 assemblies which are arranged consecutively at the peripheral region of the carousel.

Each labeling assembly is associated with a slider slidable on guides between a forward active position, in which the labels taken from a tape wound on reels are applied to the containers, and a retracted position
15 designed to load the labels on the reel of tape.

During the operation of the machine, the labeling assemblies are in the forward position, and while one of the assemblies is performing the application of labels onto the containers, gradually consuming the associated reel of tape, the other assembly is waiting and is provided with an
20 intact reel.

When the reel of the labeling assembly that has performed the application of labels has run out, the assembly that was waiting automatically comes into operation, so as to ensure the continuity of operation of the machine.

25 This exchange takes place with the help of an operator who brings the slider for supporting the labeling assembly that has finished its reel of tape into the retracted position, mounts a new reel of tape, and brings the assembly into the forward position again.

In this manner, the situation is restored wherein both of the
30 assemblies are situated in the forward position, ready to perform the

alternation of operation described above.

Obviously, the rotating carousel is provided with a protective structure that prevents access to the carousel proper during operation.

Since the forward position of each labeling assembly is such that the front part of the assembly is situated beyond the protective structure, on the carousel side, and since the retracted position of the assembly is such that this same front part is outside the protective structure, it implies that the presence is necessary, for each labeling assembly, of means that are capable of preventing intrusions beyond the protective structure when the labeling assembly is in the retracted position, and which are capable of allowing the assembly to pass through when it needs to be brought to the forward active position.

The means available today are not entirely satisfactory.

Disclosure of the invention

Therefore the aim of the present invention is to provide a labeling machine, particularly for labeling containers, in which the means of protection against interventions with the rotating carousel exhibit the utmost operational efficiency.

This aim, as well as other objects which will become more apparent hereinafter, are achieved by a labeling machine, particularly for labeling containers, comprising a rotating carousel for supporting pans adapted for the resting of the individual containers to be labeled, provided with a protective structure which prevents, during operation, access to said rotating carousel, and further comprising at least one pair of identical labeling assemblies, which are arranged consecutively at the peripheral region of said rotating carousel, each one of said labeling assemblies being associated with a slider slidable on guides between a forward active position, for applying the labels to the containers supported by said rotating carousel, and a retracted position, designed to load a reel of tape provided with the labels, characterized in that said protective structure, which surrounds said rotating

carousel, has, at each one of said labeling assemblies, a door movable by action of means that connect said door to said slider, which supports said labeling assembly between an open position, assumed when said labeling assembly is in said forward position, and a closed position, assumed when
5 said labeling assembly is in said retracted position.

Brief description of the drawings

Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become better apparent from the description of a preferred, but not exclusive, embodiment of a labeling machine, particularly for labeling containers,
10 according to the present invention, illustrated by way of non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings wherein:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of a labeling machine, particularly for labeling containers, according to the invention, with two labeling assemblies located in their forward active position;
- 15 - Figure 2 is a perspective view from above of the slider for supporting a labeling assembly in the forward position, with the associated door, of the machine shown in Figure 1;
- Figure 3 is a perspective view from below of the supporting slider shown in Figure 2;
- 20 - Figures 4 and 5 are two enlarged-scale detailed views of two details of the supporting slider shown in Figure 3;
- Figure 6 is a perspective view from above of the detail shown in Figure 5;
- Figure 7 is a perspective view from below of the slider for
25 supporting a labeling assembly in the retracted position, with the associated door, of the machine shown in Figure 1.

Ways of carrying out the invention

With reference to the figures, the labeling machine, particularly for labeling containers, generally indicated with the reference numeral 1,
30 comprises a rotating carousel 2 for supporting pans 3 adapted for the resting

of individual containers which are fed by way of the entry star wheel 4 and evacuated by way of the exit star wheel 5.

Moreover, a protective structure of the carousel 2 is provided, generally indicated with the reference numeral 6, which prevents, during
5 operation, access to the carousel 2 and two identical labeling assemblies, 7 and 8.

Each labeling assembly 7 or 8 is associated with a slider 9 slidable on guides 10a and 10b, mutually connected to crossbars 11a and 11b, between a forward position, shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3, with the associated details
10 shown in Figures 4, 5 and 6, in which the labeling assembly 7 is in the active condition for applying the labels to the containers supported by the carousel 2, and the retracted position, shown in Figure 7, in which the labeling assembly 7 is available for the loading of an intact reel of tape.

At the labeling assembly 7, there is, as part of the protective structure
15 6, a door formed by wings 12a and 12b which are movable according to the arrows in Figure 2 between the open position shown in Figures 2 and 3, assumed when the labeling assembly 7 is in the forward position, and the closed position shown in Figure 7, assumed when the labeling assembly 7 is in the retracted position.

Moreover, a similar door is provided, formed by wings 13a and 13b,
20 which can be seen in Figure 1, for the labeling assembly 8.

The movement of the wings 12a and 12b of the door is performed by means that connect the door with the slider 9.

Such means comprise a cam 14 which is integral with the slider 9 and
25 adapted to actuate a roller 15 associated with an arm 16 which is pivoted, with an end stop 16a, on a support 17 fixed to the guide 10b and which is connected by way of a linkage 18 with one end of a tension member 19 which at the other end is pivoted on a plate 20a integral with a toothed wheel 20 which is keyed to a shaft 21 supporting the wing 12b, associated
30 with an element 22 of the structure of the labeling machine 1.

The toothed wheel 20 constitutes the first element of a kinematic chain that connects the shaft 21 supporting the wing 12b, on which the toothed wheel 20 is keyed, with a shaft 23 supporting the wing 12a associated with the element 22 as well, so as to produce simultaneous and
5 oppositely oriented movements of the wings 12a and 12b between the open and closed positions.

Such kinematic chain comprises, in addition to the toothed wheel 20, a toothed wheel 24 keyed on the shaft 23, so that the toothed wheels 20 and 24 are connected one another by means of a pair of toothed wheels 25.

10 Moreover, a spring 27 is provided connected at one end to a fixed pin 28 and at the other end to a pin 29 supported by a plate 20b which is integral with the toothed wheel 20, so as to tighten up progressively from the resting situation assumed when the slider 9 is in the forward position shown in Figure 3 and in the detail of Figure 4, and the loaded situation assumed
15 when the slider 9 is in the retracted position shown in Figure 7.

The cam 14 is shaped according to a first inclined section 14a that begins at a certain distance from the roller 15 when the slider 9 is in the forward position, and a second section 14b which proceeds straight and parallel to the direction of movement of the slider, so as to produce a
20 movement of the roller 15 connected to the cam 14 only at the central section of the stroke of the slider 9.

Operation of the labeling machine 1, according to the present invention, beginning from the situation shown in Figure 3 with the corresponding details of Figures 4, 5 and 6, which shows the slider 9 in the
25 forward position with the labeling assembly 7 in the active position, is described in the following.

In this situation, the wings 12a and 12b of the door are open, and the labeling assembly is located with the front part beyond the door.

When it is necessary to change the reel of tape of the labeling
30 assembly 7 because it has run out, an operator manually causes the

translational movement of the slider 9 from the forward position to the retracted position, and for a first section of the stroke the cam 14 cannot touch the roller 15, so that the wings 12a and 12b of the door do not move, thus allowing the passage of the labeling assembly 7.

5 At a certain point the contact of the roller 15 with the cam 14 begins, and more precisely contact with the inclined section 14a thereof, and from this moment the roller 15 is moved so as to produce a traction on the tension member 19 which actuates the toothed wheel 20 and all of the kinematic chain deriving from it; in this manner the movement of the wings 12a and
10 12b towards the closed position is produced, which position is reached when the roller 15 has finished the path on the inclined section 14a of the cam 14.

The motion of the slider 9 then proceeds until the retracted position is reached, with a section of stroke where the roller 15 is in contact with the
15 section 14b of the cam which causes no movement of the roller: consequently the wings 12a and 12b remain motionless in the closed position thus reached, and the labeling assembly 7 moves away from them so as to allow an operator to perform the necessary interventions.

During the described movement of the slider 9, the loading of the
20 spring 27 has been achieved, which, during the return stroke of the slider 9 to the forward position, performs the function of ensuring contact of the roller 15 with the cam 14.

The labeling machine, particularly for labeling containers, thus conceived, is susceptible of numerous modifications and variations, all of
25 which are within the scope of the appended claims.

Moreover, all the details may be replaced by other, technically equivalent elements.

In practice the materials employed, provided they are compatible with the specific use, and the contingent dimensions and shapes, may be any
30 according to requirements and to the state of the art.

The disclosures in Italian Patent Application No. MI2010A001554 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

Where technical features mentioned in any claim are followed by
5 reference signs, those reference signs have been included for the sole purpose of increasing the intelligibility of the claims and accordingly, such reference signs do not have any limiting effect on the interpretation of each element identified by way of example by such reference signs.

CLAIMS

1. A labeling machine (1), particularly for labeling containers, comprising a rotating carousel (2) for supporting pans (3) adapted for the resting of the individual containers to be labeled, provided with a protective
5 structure (6) which prevents, during operation, access to said rotating carousel (2), and further comprising at least one pair of identical labeling assemblies (7, 8), which are arranged consecutively at the peripheral region of said rotating carousel (2), each one of said labeling assemblies (7, 8) being associated with a slider (9) slidable on guides (10a, 10b) between a
10 forward active position, for applying the labels to the containers supported by said rotating carousel (2), and a retracted position, designed to load a reel of tape provided with the labels, characterized in that said protective structure (6), which surrounds said rotating carousel (2), has, at each one of said labeling assemblies (7, 8), a door movable by action of means that
15 connect said door to said slider (9), which supports said labeling assembly (7, 8) between an open position, assumed when said labeling assembly (7, 8) is in said forward position, and a closed position, assumed when said labeling assembly (7, 8) is in said retracted position.

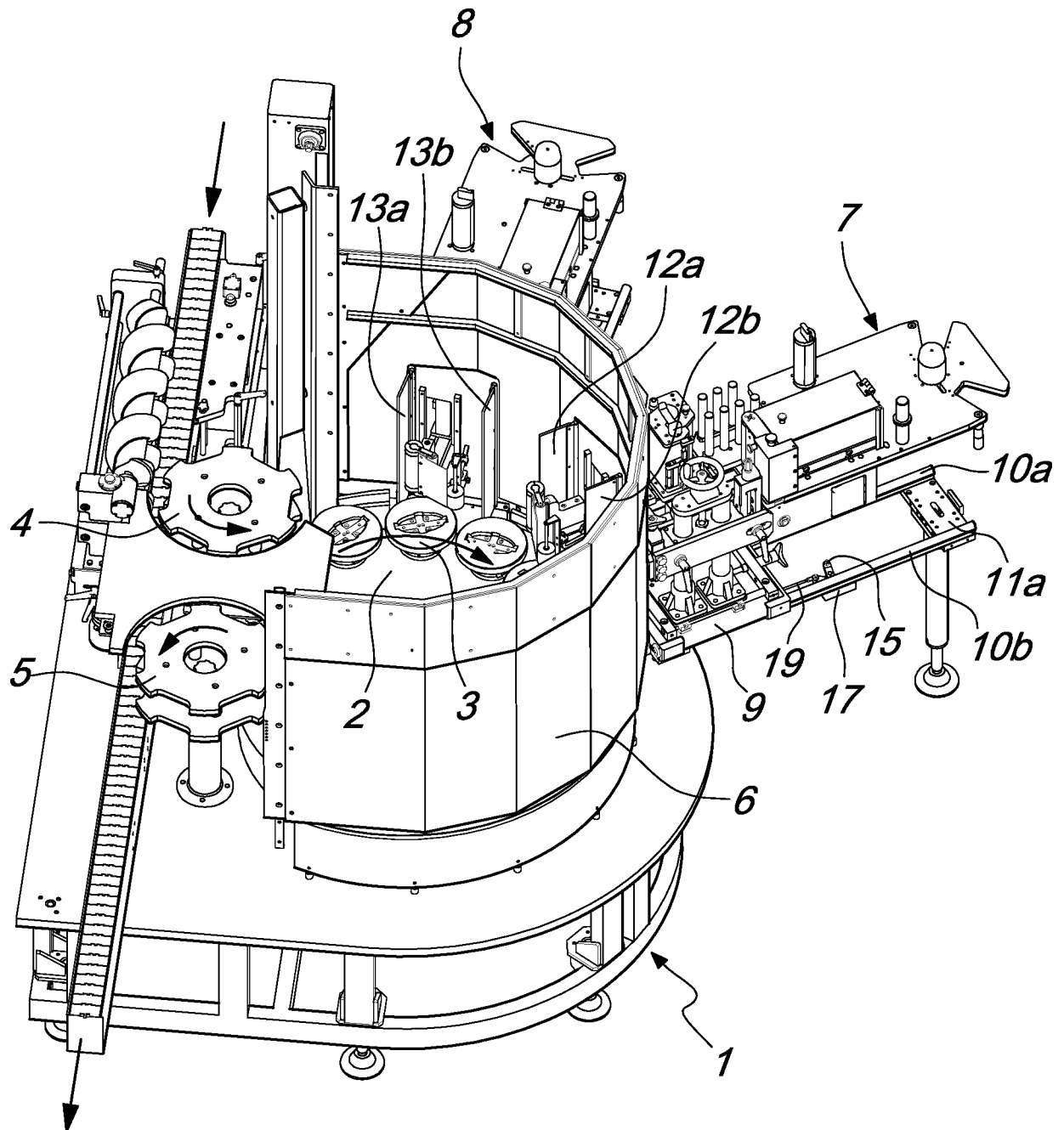
2. The labeling machine (2) according to claim 1, characterized in that
20 said slider (9) for supporting said labeling assembly (7, 8) is provided with a cam (14) for actuating a roller (15) which is associated with an arm (16), which is pivoted on a fixed support (17) and connected by means of a linkage (18) to a tension member (19) for actuating a kinematic chain which connects two shafts (21, 23), each designed to support a wing (12a, 12b) of
25 the door inserted in said protective structure (6) so as to produce simultaneous and oppositely oriented movements of said wings (12a, 12b) between the open and closed positions of said door.

3. The labeling machine (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized in that said kinematic chain, which connects said
30 shafts (21, 23), each designed to support said wings (12a, 12b) of said door,

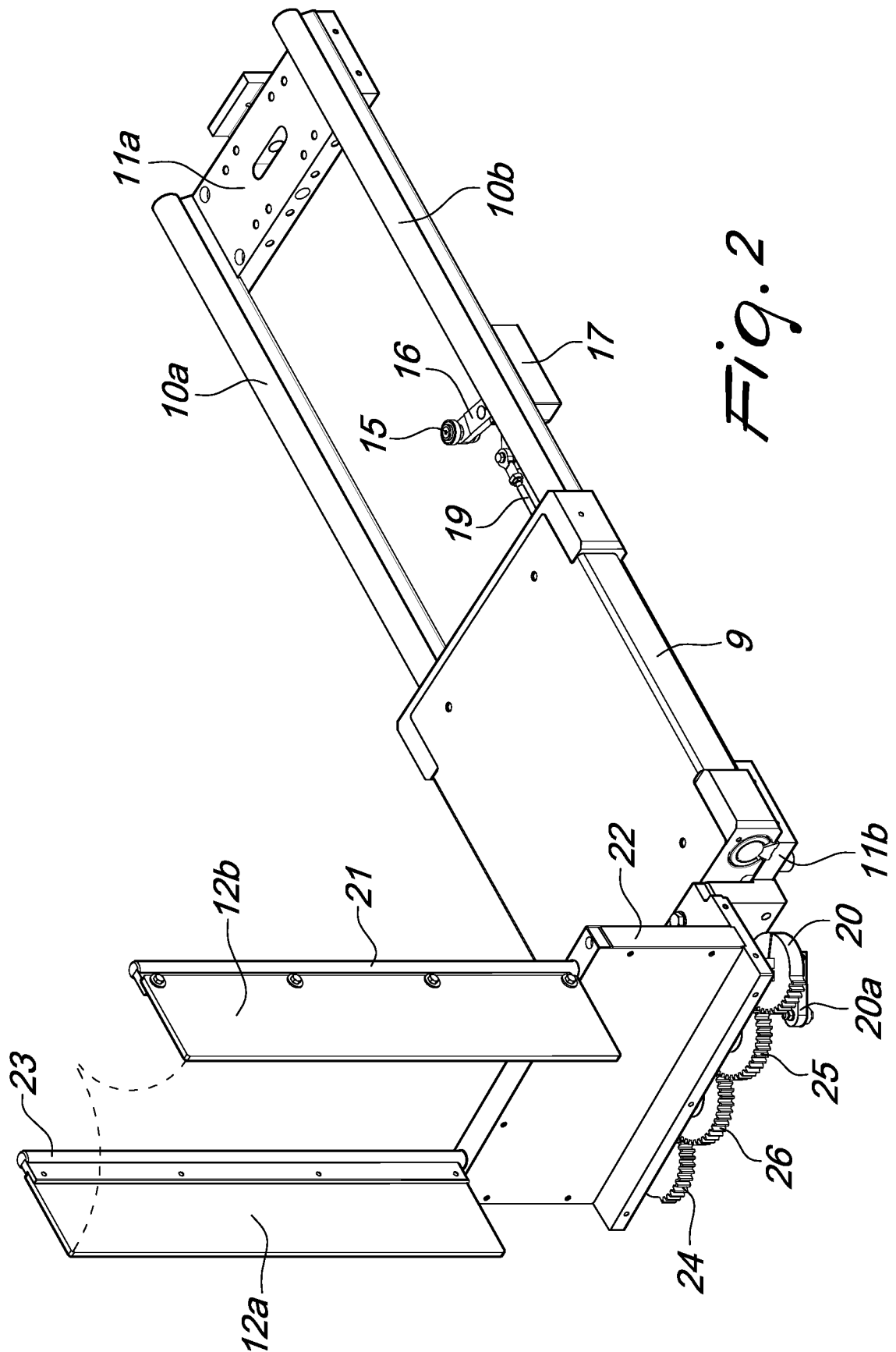
comprises a first gear (20), which is connected to said tension member (19) for actuation and is keyed directly onto said shaft (21) of a first wing (12a), and a second gear (24), which is keyed directly onto said shaft (23) of the second wing (12b) and is connected to said first gear (20) by a pair of gears (25, 26), a spring (27) being provided, fixed at one end and connected at the other end to a tab that protrudes from said first gear (20), so as to be progressively stretched during the motion of said slider (9) in the direction from the forward position to the retracted position.

4. The labeling machine (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized in that said cam (14) integral with the slider (9) for supporting said labeling assembly (7, 8) is shaped so as to move said roller (15) connected thereto only at the central portion of the stroke of said slider (9).

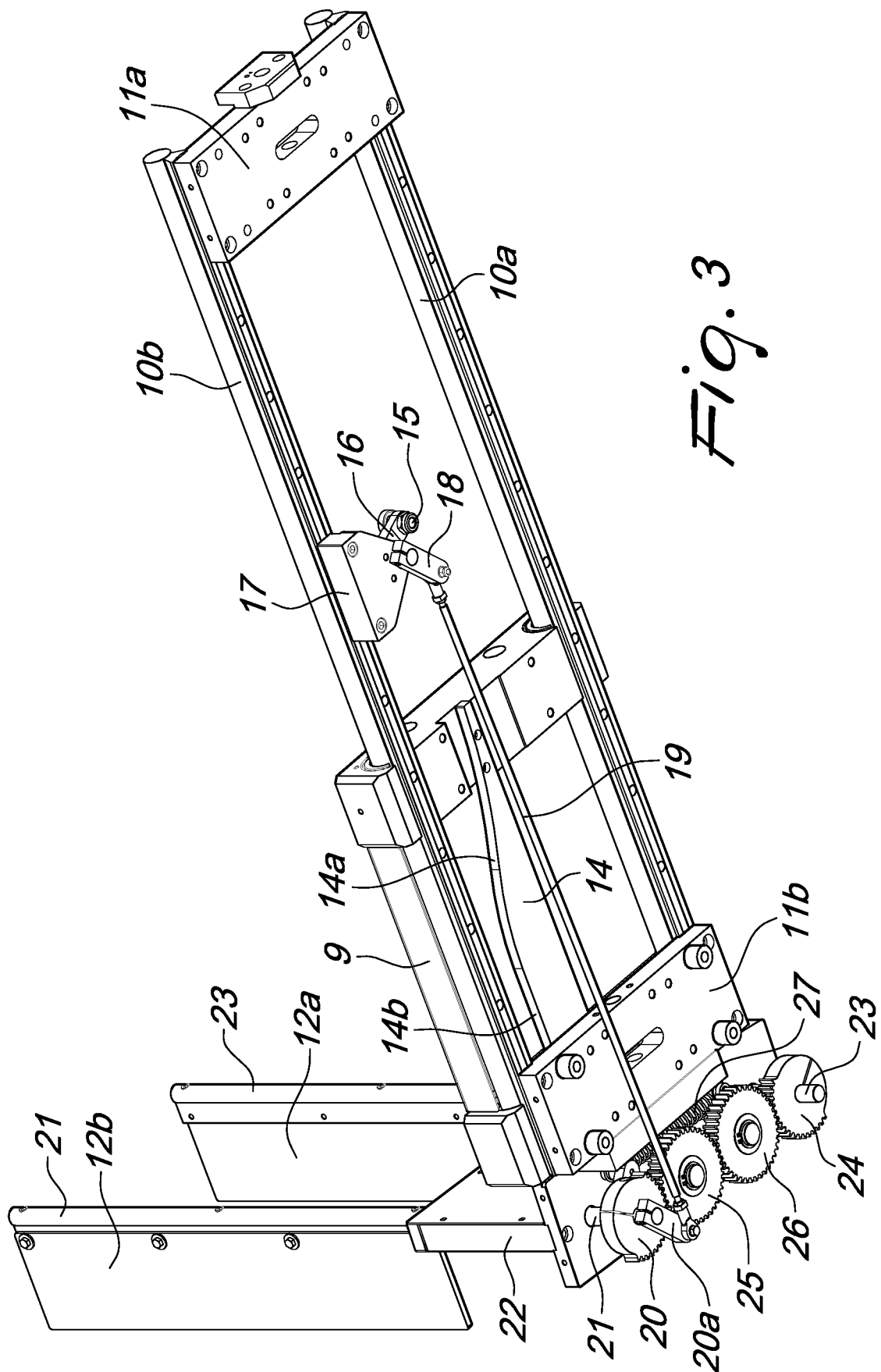
1 / 6

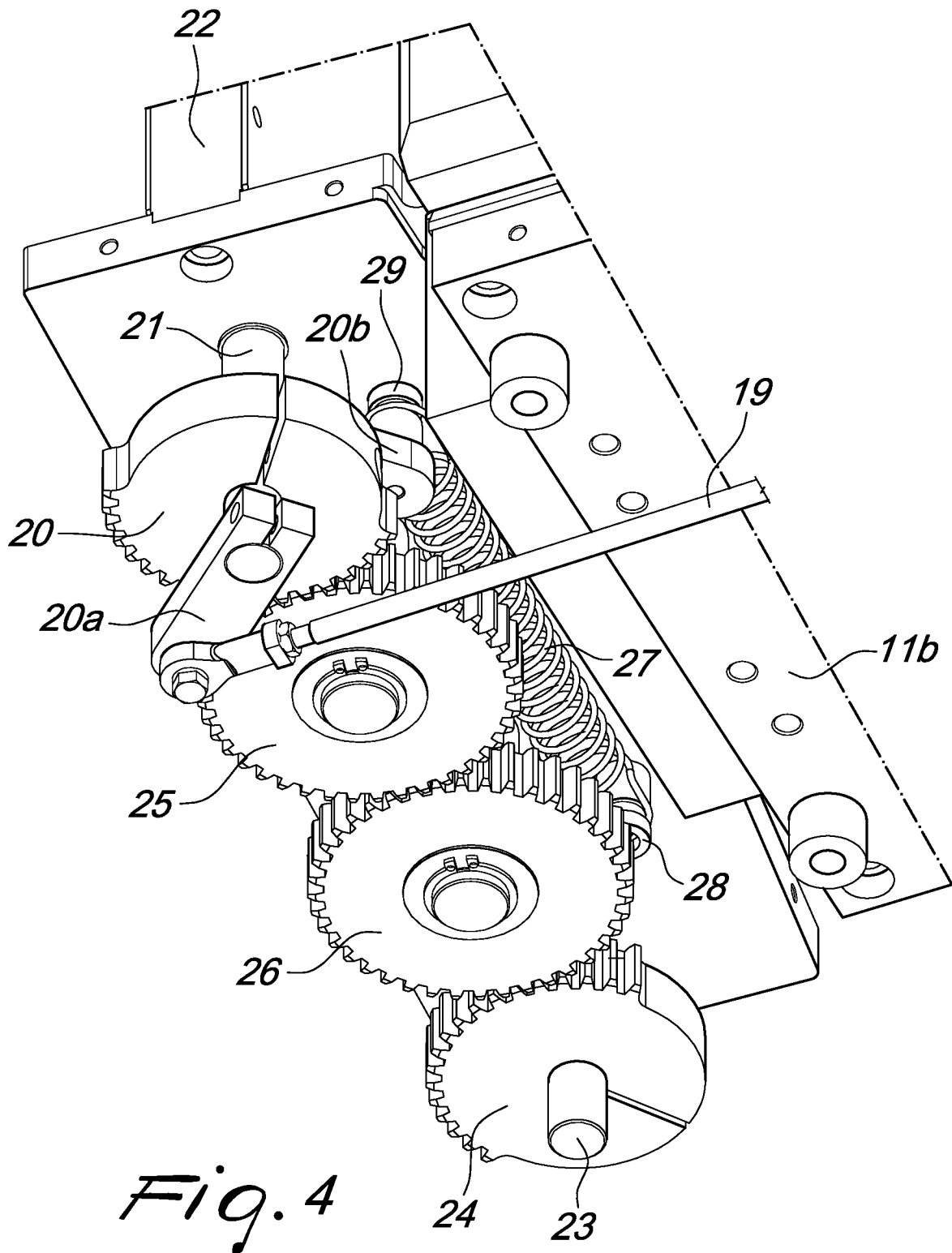
*Fig. 1*

2 / 6

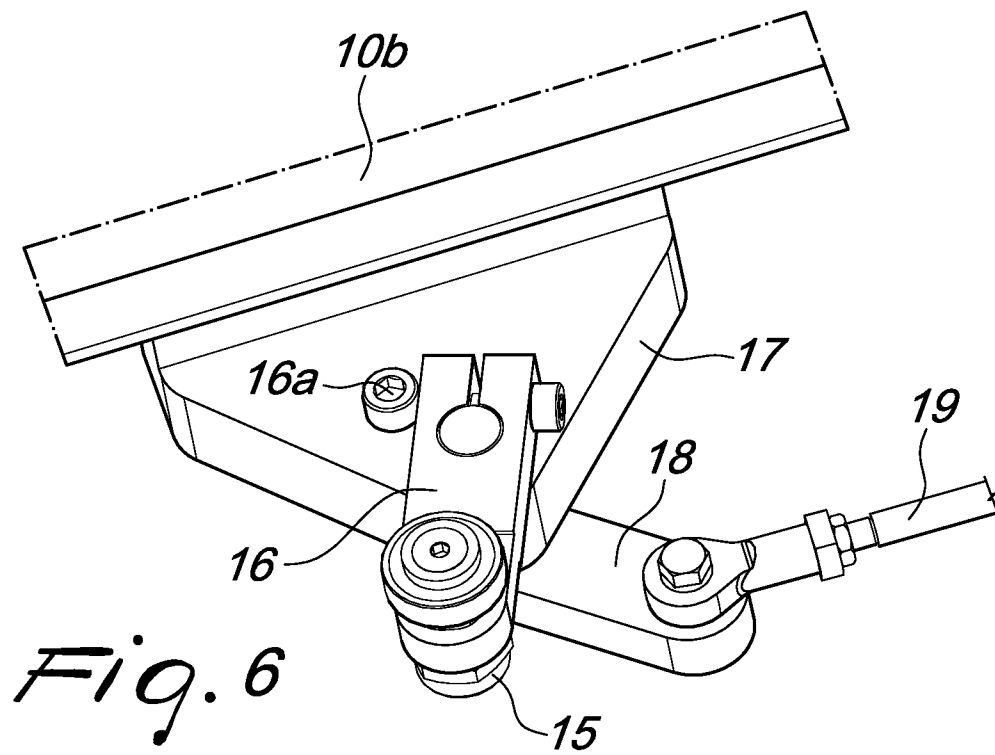
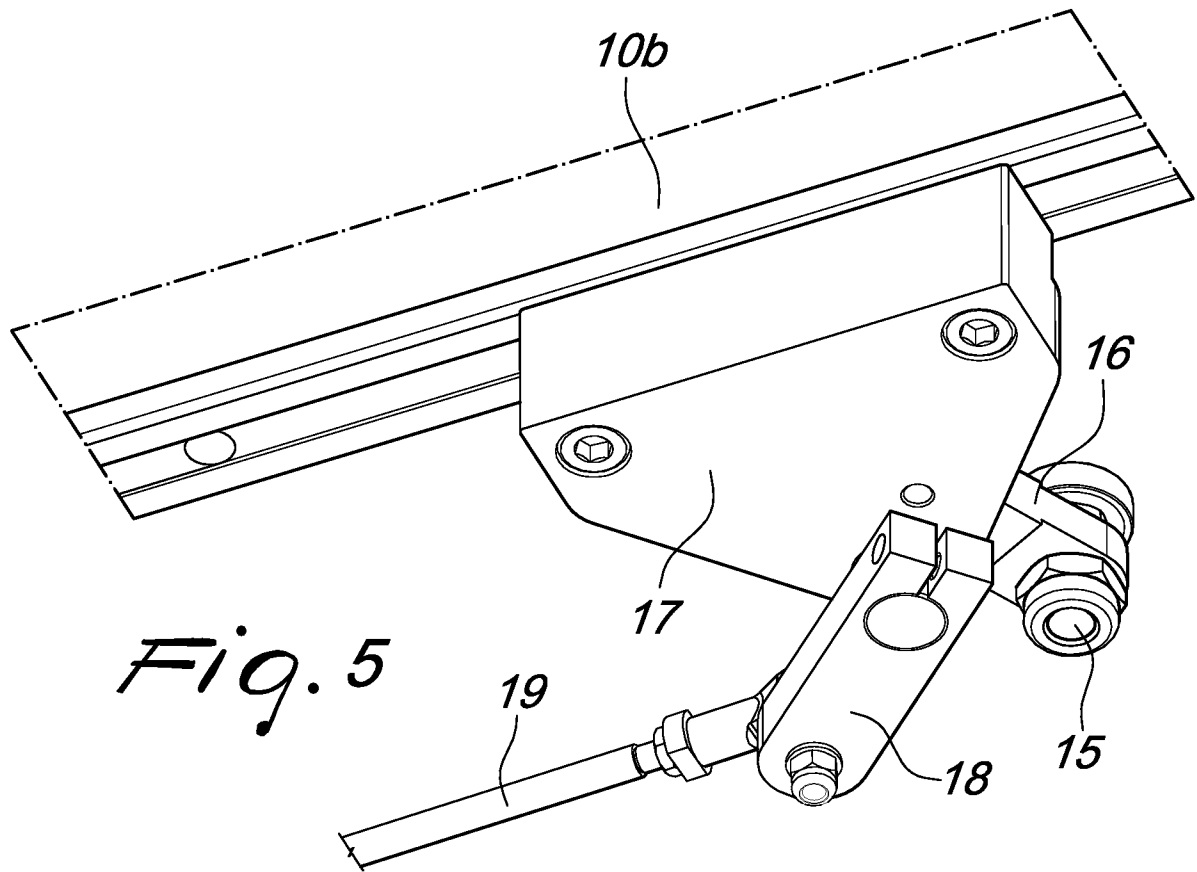


3 / 6





5 / 6



6 / 6

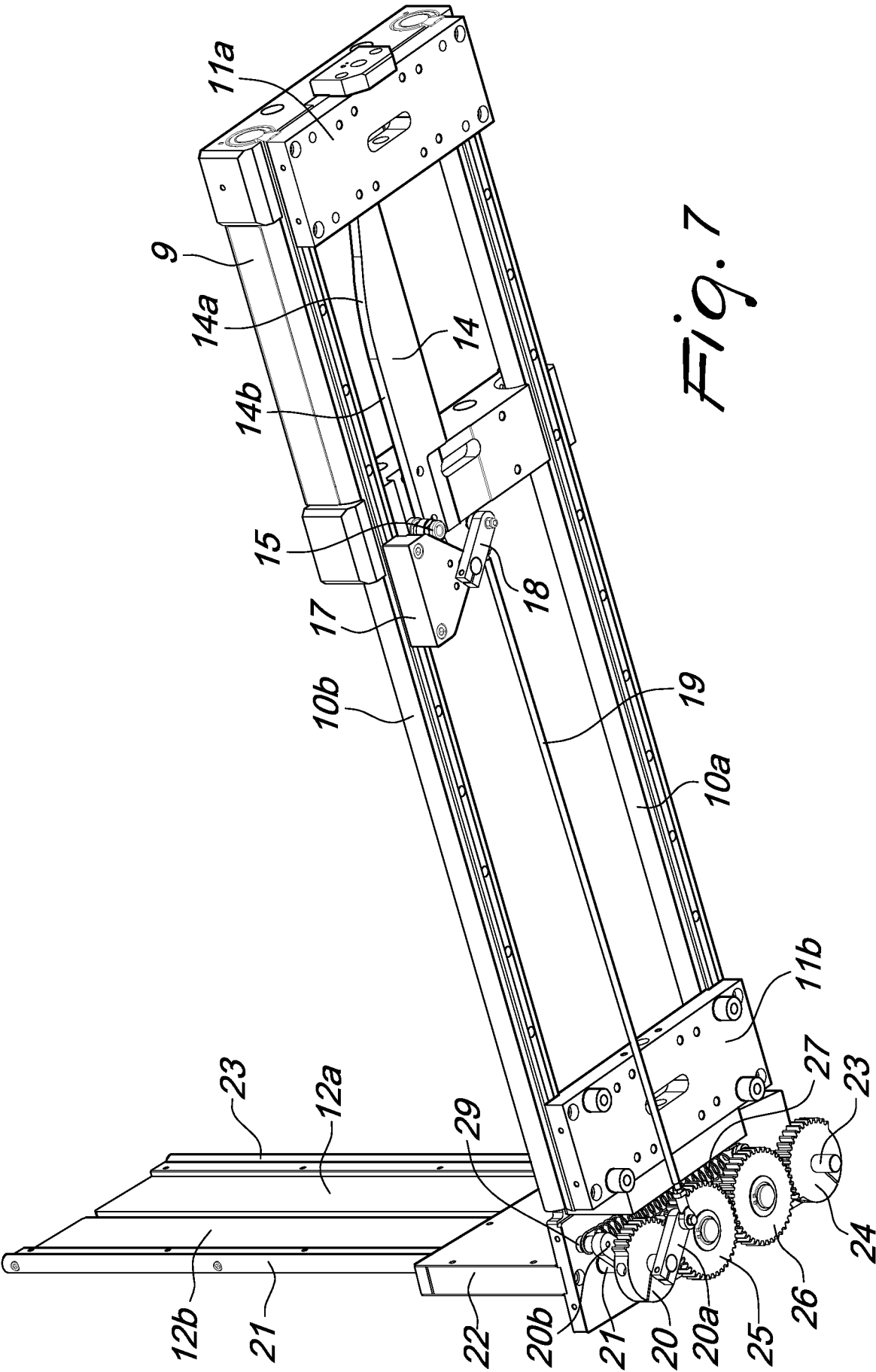


Fig. 7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/EP2011/060845

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
INV. B65C9/00
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)
B65C

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 practical, 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	EP 1 553 045 A1 (KRONES AG [DE]) 13 July 2005 (2005-07-13) paragraphs [0022], [0025]; figures 1,2,4 -----	1
A	DE 10 2005 041531 A1 (KRONES AG [DE]) 1 March 2007 (2007-03-01) paragraphs [0025], [0040]; figures 1-3 -----	1
A	WO 2010/072653 A1 (P E LABELLERS S P A [IT]; SCHINELLI NICOLA [IT]) 1 July 2010 (2010-07-01) abstract; figure 2 -----	1
A	DE 197 58 799 B4 (KRONES AG [DE]) 27 March 2008 (2008-03-27) paragraphs [0015], [0029]; figures 1,2 -----	1



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

26 August 2011

Date of mailing of the international search report

06/09/2011

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

Wartenhorst, Frank

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/EP2011/060845

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 1553045	A1	13-07-2005	NONE

DE 102005041531	A1	01-03-2007	AT 462653 T 15-04-2010
		CN 101115658 A	30-01-2008
		EP 1919779 A1	14-05-2008
		WO 2007025592 A1	08-03-2007
		JP 2009505915 A	12-02-2009
		US 2009294070 A1	03-12-2009

WO 2010072653	A1	01-07-2010	NONE

DE 19758799	B4	27-03-2008	NONE
