(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
25 September 2008 (25.09.2008)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2008/115966 A1

(51) International Patent Classification:
B65G 67/60 (2006.01) *B66C 17/20* (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2008/057451

(22) International Filing Date: 19 March 2008 (19.03.2008)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/895,507 19 March 2007 (19.03.2007) US

(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: **TUBULAR RAIL, INC.** [US/US]; 5000 Milwee, #43, Houston, Texas 77092 (US).

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant *(for US only)*: **PULLIAM, Robert, C.** [US/US]; 5000 Milwee, #43, Houston, Texas 77092 (US).

(74) Agents: **ROSE, David, A.** et al.; CONLEY ROSE, P.C., P.O. Box 3267, Houston, Texas 77253-3267 (US).

(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, 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, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RS, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SV, SY, 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, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:
— *with international search report*
— *with amended claims*

Date of publication of the amended claims: 18 December 2008

(54) **Title:** CONTAINER UTILITY SYSTEM

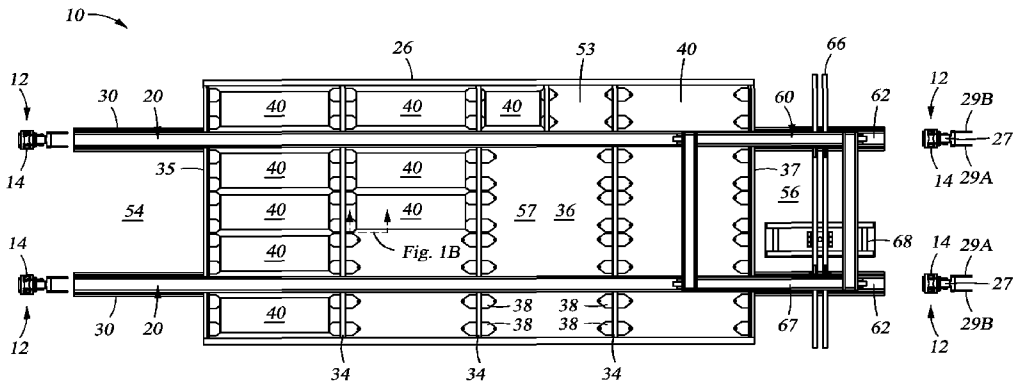

Fig. 2

(57) **Abstract:** A transport system for moving containers comprises a plurality of elevated supports having powered rollers and a transport having rails engaging the powered rollers. The transport has a member(s) for supporting the containers and means for moving the transport over the elevated supports.

WO 2008/115966 A1

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 01 October 2008 (01.10.08)]

1. A transport system for moving cargo containers comprising:

a plurality of elevated supports having powered rollers;

a transport having rails engaging the powered rollers;

the transport having a member for supporting the containers; and

a motor for moving the transport over the elevated supports.

2. The transport system of claim 1 wherein the transport includes a body having parallel longitudinal beams and cross members attached to the parallel longitudinal beams.

3. The transport system of claim 2 wherein the cross beams are cantilevered and extend past the longitudinal beams.

4. The transport system of claim 2 wherein the longitudinal beams and cross members form bays.

5. The transport system of claim 1 wherein the transport includes releasable connection means for connecting the containers to the transport.

6. The transport system of claim 2 wherein the rails are disposed on the parallel longitudinal beams.

7. The transport system of claim 1 wherein the rollers and rails include a geometric surface to maintain alignment.

8. The transport system of claim 7 wherein the geometric surface is a conforming arcuate surface.

9. The transport system of claim 1 further including power means for rotating the rollers.

10. The transport system of claim 2 wherein the parallel longitudinal beams include cantilevered portions extending past the last fore and aft cross members.

11. The transport system of claim 10 wherein the cantilevered portions have a length that prevents deflection of the transport prior to engaging the next adjacent rollers.

12. The transport system of claim 1 further including a loader/unloader movably disposed on the transport.

13. The transport system of claim 13 wherein the unloader/loader includes wheels that engage a track disposed on the parallel longitudinal beams.

14. The transport system of claim 12 wherein the loader/unloader includes means for releasably connecting the loader/unloader to a container.

15. The transport system of claim 13 wherein the track is U-shaped.

16. A cargo container transport system for moving cargo containers, the system comprising:

a plurality of elevated supports having powered rollers;

a transport having longitudinal beams with rails engaging the powered rollers and cross members cantilevered from the longitudinal beams;

the longitudinal beams and cross members forming bays for the passage of the cargo containers;

power means for rotating the rollers to move the transport over the elevated support; and

a loader/unloader movably mounted on the longitudinal beams for loading and unloading the containers in a bay.

17. A method for moving containers, the method comprising:

powering a plurality of rollers rotatably mounted on elevated supports;

engaging rails on a transport with the powered rollers;

supporting containers on the transport; and

rotating the rollers to move the transport over the supports.

18. The method of claim 17 further including moving a loader/unloader on the transport for loading an unloading the cargo containers on the transport.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the loader/unloader moves the cargo containers within bays formed on the transport.