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Declaration under Rule 4.17:

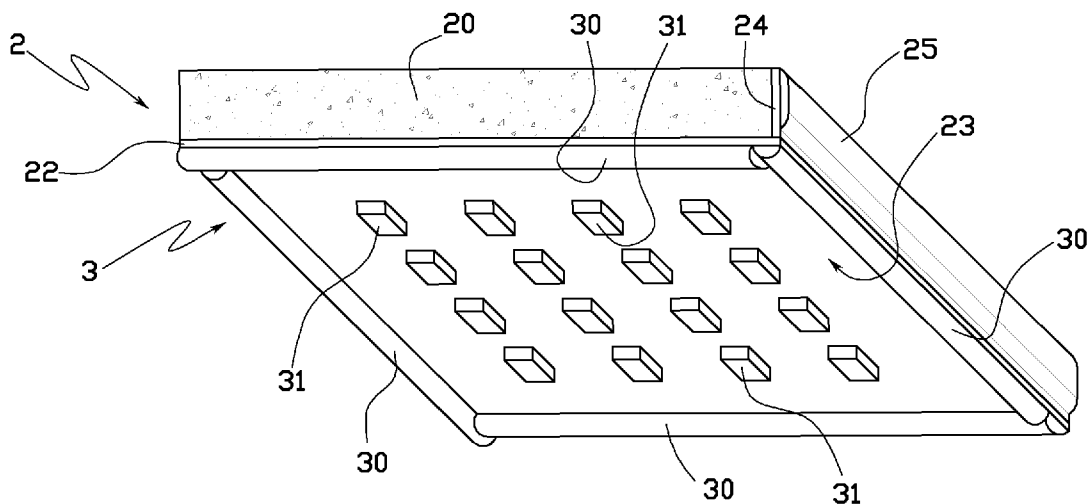
— as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))

Published:

— with international search report
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(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
27 March 2008

(54) Title: A MODULAR SYSTEM FOR COVERING SURFACES



(57) Abstract: A modular system for covering surfaces comprising a plurality of covering panels (2) that can be reciprocally brought side-by-side to give rise to an external covering of a surface, each of which covering panels (2) being associated with a support element (3) which covers at least a portion of the laying surface (23) of the covering panel (2); the support element (3) being made of a deformable closed-cell plastic material which, following a deforming action, expels the air trapped inside, creating a suction effect.

WO 2007/144244 A3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/EP2007/054800

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 INV. E04F13/08 E04F15/02 E04F13/10 E04F13/14

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)
 E04F

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.
X	DE 24 05 095 A1 (NAUE KG E A H) 21 August 1975 (1975-08-21) figures 1,2 claim 1 page 2, paragraph 5 page 3, paragraph 2 page 3, line 17 - line 20 page 3, line 30 - line 32 page 4, paragraph 4	1-8, 11, 12
A	EP 0 753 529 A2 (MONTELL NORTH AMERICA INC [US] BASSELL POLYOLEFINE GMBH [DE]) 15 January 1997 (1997-01-15) page 5, line 35 page 5, line 47 - line 50 tables 2-4	4,6

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
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- *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.
- *Z* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search 18 September 2007	Date of mailing of the international search report 21/01/2008
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Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5618 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Bastian, Almut
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
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C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 98/10015 A (DOW CHEMICAL CO [GB]; PARK CHUNG P [DE]; BROOS RENE [BE]; THOEN JOHAN) 12 March 1998 (1998-03-12) page 18, line 1 - line 3 page 18, line 10 - line 12 -----	4
A	WO 2005/049935 A (HUELSTA WERKE HUELS KG [DE]; TUENTE UDO [DE]; SCHWITTE RICHARD [DE]) 2 June 2005 (2005-06-02) paragraphs [0013], [0021] -----	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP2007/054800

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers allsearchable claims.

2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.

3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

1-14

Remark on Protest

- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. claims: 1-8

A modular system comprising covering panels and support elements associated thereto. Material properties of the material of the support elements.

1.1. claims: 1, 9-14

A modular system comprising covering panels and support elements associated thereto. Form of the support elements.

2. claims: 1, 15-19

A modular system comprising covering panels and support elements associated thereto. The covering panels comprising a finishing element and a base element.

3. claims: 1, 20

A modular system comprising covering panels and support elements associated thereto. The covering panels comprise a spacer gasket.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/EP2007/054800

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
DE 2405095	A1	21-08-1975	NONE
EP 0753529	A2	15-01-1997	AT 263787 T 15-04-2004 AU 707167 B2 01-07-1999 AU 5943496 A 23-01-1997 BR 9603083 A 05-05-1998 CA 2180987 A1 13-01-1997 DE 69632103 D1 13-05-2004 DE 69632103 T2 24-03-2005 IT MI951490 A1 13-01-1997 JP 9221549 A 26-08-1997 US 5712323 A 27-01-1998
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