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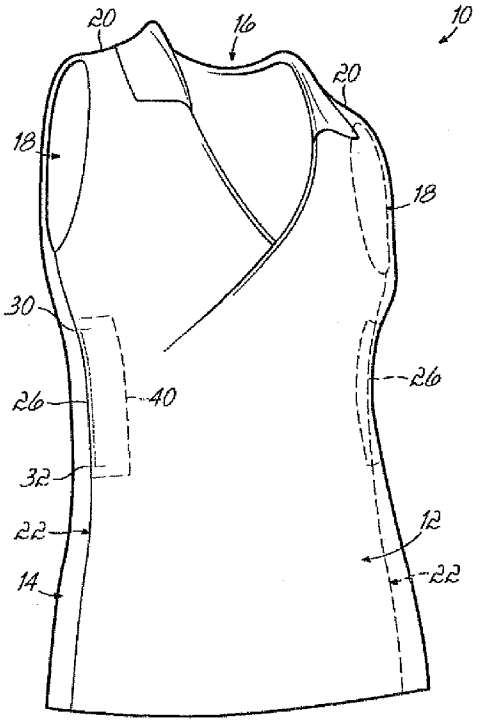


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: A garment (10) to be worn by a person has a first fabric panel (12) having a first side edge (34) and a second fabric panel (14) having a second side edge (36). The first and second panels (12, 14) are joined by stitching to form a seam (22) near the first and second side edges (34, 36). An aperture (26) is formed between the fabric panels by an interruption in the stitching (42). The aperture (26) may be formed directly on the garment (10), or may be provided as a set-in (60) that is attached to the garment (10). The aperture (26) may be positioned on the garment (10) so that it will be located under the arm of a person wearing the garment (10).

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ARTICLE OF CLOTHING WITH SIDE ACCESS

Cross Reference to Related Applications

[0001] This application claims priority to Provisional U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 60/947,191, filed June 29, 2007 (now pending), and to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 11/839,019, filed August 15, 2007 (now pending), the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference herein in their entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates generally to articles of clothing, and more particularly to articles of clothing that provide access to portions of the body beneath the articles of clothing.

BACKGROUND

[0003] People wear clothing of various types, specifically designed for various purposes ranging from heavy duty work overalls for construction, to light and lacy garments meant to appeal to another and entice them into intimate interaction. If a person successfully entices another, then often the two individuals may wish to engage in intimate touching involving skin to skin contact, but for various reasons they may not wish to remove their clothes. For example, persons engaging in such intimate contact may wish to remain clothed due to the temperature of the surroundings, such as a cold night in a bedroom or outdoors, or the nature of the location, such as an elevator where the period of privacy may be short.

[0004] Therefore, there exists a need for a garment that facilitates the entrance of one person's hands through the garment to portions of the wearer's body hidden beneath the garment without drawing attention to the activity. Even if

such a garment's features are not used during a particular wearing, it is a desirable garment for two intimate people to have, knowing that it is present to provide for such intimate contact should the occasion arise.

[0005] While garments exist that provide such access, for example an evening gown with arm holes that are open all the way to the waist, there is a need for garments having an improved feature, that is more secretive, discreet, and covers more skin thus providing additional warmth. The inventive features of garments in accordance with the present disclosure provide benefits beyond those of currently available garments.

SUMMARY

[0006] In one embodiment, a garment to be worn by a person has a first fabric panel having a first side edge and a second fabric panel having a second side edge. The first and second fabric panels are joined by stitching to form a seam near the first and second side edges. An aperture is formed between the fabric panels by an interruption in the stitching. A flap near the aperture extends underneath at least one of the fabric panels and across the seam so that the skin of the person wearing the garment is not readily viewable through the aperture when the aperture is opened.

[0007] In another embodiment a set-in for a garment has a first flap and a second flap that contacts the first flap. The flaps define a non-fastenable aperture. A perimeter circumscribes the flaps and is adapted to be sewn into a garment.

[0008] In yet another embodiment, a method of manufacturing a garment includes obtaining first and second fabric panels having respective first and second side edges, stitching the first and second panels proximate the first and second side

edges to form a seam, interrupting the stitching to form an aperture in the seam between the first and second panels, and providing a flap proximate the aperture and extending underneath at least one of the first or second panels.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0009] The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification, illustrate embodiments of the invention and, together with a general description given above, and the detailed description given below, serve to explain the principles of the invention.

[0010] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary garment in accordance with this disclosure.

[0011] FIG. 2 is an enlarged detail view of a portion of the garment of FIG. 1.

[0012] FIG. 2A is a cross-section taken along line 2A-2A of FIG. 2.

[0013] FIG. 2B is a cross-section taken along line 2B-2B of FIG. 2.

[0014] FIG. 2C is a cross-sectional view similar to FIG. 2B with the aperture shown in the open condition.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of another exemplary garment in accordance with this disclosure.

[0016] FIG. 4 is an enlarged detail view of a portion of the garment of FIG. 3.

[0017] FIG. 4A is a cross-section taken along line 4A-4A of FIG. 4.

[0018] FIG. 4B is a cross-section taken along line 4B-4B of FIG. 4.

[0019] FIG. 4C is a cross-sectional view similar to FIG. 4B with the aperture shown in the open condition.

[0020] FIG. 5 is an alternative embodiment of the garment of FIG. 3, as seen in an inside view of a portion under the left armhole.

[0021] FIG. 5A is a cross-sectional view taken along line 5A-5A of FIG. 5.

[0022] FIG. 6 is an outside front view of the portion of the garment depicted in FIG. 5.

[0023] FIG. 7 is an elevational view of another exemplary embodiment of this disclosure.

[0024] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of another exemplary garment in accordance with the exemplary embodiment of FIG. 7.

[0025] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of another exemplary garment in accordance with the exemplary embodiment of FIG. 7.

[0026] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of another exemplary garment in accordance with the exemplary embodiment of FIG. 7.

[0027] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of another exemplary garment in accordance with this disclosure.

[0028] FIG. 12 is an enlarged elevational view as seen under the right arm portion of the garment of FIG. 11.

[0029] FIG. 12A is a cross-sectional view taken along line 12A-12A of FIG. 12.

[0030] FIG. 12B is a cross-sectional view similar to FIG. 12A, illustrating another exemplary embodiment.

[0031] FIG. 13 is a perspective view of another exemplary garment in accordance with this disclosure.

[0032] FIG. 14 is an enlarged detail view of a portion of the garment of FIG. 13.

[0033] FIG. 15A is an enlarged detail view of a portion of an exemplary garment in accordance with this disclosure.

[0034] FIG. 15B is an alternate embodiment of the enlarged detail view of FIG. 15A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0035] As used herein, the articles "a", "an", "the", and "said" are intended to mean that there are one or more of the elements. The terms "comprising", "including", and "having" are intended to be inclusive and mean that there may be additional elements other than the listed elements. Moreover, the use of "top" and "bottom", "front" and "rear", "above" and "below" and variations of these and other terms of orientation is made for convenience, but does not require any particular orientation of the components.

[0036] The descriptions that follow will predominately describe just one side of a symmetric garment. It will be understood that the same features could be manufactured on the other side of the garment, and persons of ordinary skill in the art know how to make the features in the mirror image as necessary. To enhance clarity, it will sometimes be explained whether the illustration provided is under the right arm or the left arm of a person wearing the garment.

[0037] FIG. 1 depicts an exemplary garment 10 in the form of a collared top, but this could also be a camisole or any other top to be worn on the torso of a user. The garment 10 includes a front panel 12, a back panel 14, a neck hole 16 at an upper end for receiving the neck of the wearer, and armholes 18 to receive the arms therethrough. The front panel 12 and back panel 14 are joined, such as by sewing, at the top 20 between the neck hole 16 and the armholes 18. Front panel 12 and back panel 14 are also joined, such as by sewing, forming side seam 22 below the armhole 18. Aperture 26 is formed through the garment 10 and is in line with side

seam 22. This aperture 26 is formed by an un-joined portion of the side seam 22. Above and below aperture 26 are tacking stitches 30 and 32, respectively, for reinforcement of the side seam 22, so that the pressure of a hand entering through the aperture 26 will not tear the side seam 22. The un-sewn portions of the garment 10 that form the aperture 26 can be of any length, but should be at least large enough to comfortably fit a human hand therethrough. For example, the aperture 26 may be about five to seven inches in length. Although larger or smaller apertures 26 may be used, the larger the aperture 26, the more prone it is to open in response to a wearer's movements. Apertures that are long and narrow, in other words, having a small distance between one side, such as the front panel 12 and the other side, such as the back panel 14, are especially hard to detect yet they allow access through the aperture.

[0038] Referring to FIGS. 2 and 2A-2C, front panel 12 and back panel 14 have rolled edges 34, 36, respectively, to prevent fraying, to provide a finished visually pleasing edge, and to enhance the stiffness and straightness of the garment 10. Stitching may be placed in a manner that eliminates or minimizes visibility on the outside of the garment 10, although this is a matter of style and preference, and visible stitching may alternatively be used. Stitches 38, keep front panel 12 rolled over in the area of aperture 26, and similar stitches (not shown) may be used on the back panel 14 in the area of aperture 26.

[0039] The aperture 26 is formed such that one panel, such as the back panel 14, extends under the other panel, such as the front panel 12, to discretely cover the wearer's skin when the aperture 26 is not being used for access as seen in Fig. 2B. This is one of many arrangements of material proximate aperture 26 to be that may be used to cover the wearer's skin should aperture 26 open as a result of the

wearer's movement. In this embodiment, extension 40 of back panel 14 extends underneath front panel 12 so that if aperture 26 opens at a time when a hand is not entering the aperture, the user's skin is hidden by extension 40. This coverage of the skin by extension 40 also provides added warmth to the wearer. In other embodiments, extension 40 may originate from directions other than the back panel 14. For example, the extension 40 may be a part of the front panel 12, or descend from above aperture 26, or ascend from below aperture 26. Extension 40 may alternatively be a separate piece of material attached to the garment 10, as will be discussed with respect to FIGS. 3 - 6 below, or it may be omitted altogether, as will be discussed in later figures.

[0040] FIG. 2A is a cross-section taken through side seam 22 above the aperture 26 in the location and direction shown in FIG. 2. Front panel 12 and back panel 14 are stitched together by seam stitch 42 and then are folded over toward the interior of garment 10 to form rolled edges 34 and 36 respectively. The free edges 43a, 43b of the front panel 12 and the back panel 14 may be wrapped by encasement stitching 44 to prevent fraying.

[0041] FIG. 2B is a cross-section taken through side seam 22 through the aperture 26 in the location and direction shown in FIG. 2. Front panel 12 has a rolled edge 34 formed by stitches 38, and a free edge 43c that is wrapped by encasement stitching 44 to prevent fraying. Back panel 14 has an extension 40 that passes inboard of front panel 12. Aperture 26 is closed by the contact between extension 40 and the rolled edge 34 of front panel 12. If a wearer's movements cause front panel 12 to bend and gap away from back panel 14 at aperture 26, the wearer's skin would not be exposed to the air, nor would it be visible to a casual observer because extension 40 is laying against the wearer's skin. The free edges

43b, 43c, of the back panel 14 and extension 40 are wrapped by encasement stitching 44 to prevent fraying.

[0042] FIG. 2C illustrates how aperture 26 may be opened such as by a hand following the path of the arrow to slide between the rolled edge 34 and the extension 40.

[0043] FIG. 3 depicts another exemplary embodiment of a garment 110 that is similar to garment 10 of FIGS. 1, 2, and 2A-2C, but wherein an inner panel 48 that is not formed from back panel 14 is stitched to back panel 14. Inner panel 48 extends across aperture 26 within the interior of garment 110 in place of extension 40 of FIGS. 1, 2 and 2A-C. Similar features are similarly numbered. Inner panel 48 is shown by the closed rectangle of four hidden lines in FIGS. 3 and 4.

[0044] FIG. 4 is an enlarged view of a portion of the side seam 22 of the garment 110 in FIG. 3. Inner panel stitch 50 is located in-line with side seam 22 and secures inner panel 48 to back panel 14 in the distance between upper tack stitch 30 and lower tack stitch 32. Upper tack stitch 30 and lower tack stitch 32 reinforce seam stitch 42 (FIG. 4A) above and below the aperture 26, to counteract the tension force that a hand entering the aperture 26 would exert on the seam stitch 42. These tack stitches 30 and 32 connect the front panel 12 and the back panel 14, as does the seam stitch 42. Tack stitches 30 and 32 also connect the inner panel 48 with the front panel 12 and the back panel 14, and aid to keep inner panel 48 straight.

[0045] FIG. 4A is a cross-section taken through side seam 22 above the aperture 26 in the location and direction shown in FIG. 4. This figure and description are identical to that described for FIG. 2A. In particular, front panel 12 and back panel 14 are stitched together by seam stitch 42 and then are folded over toward the interior of garment 10 to form rolled edges 34 and 36 respectively. The free edges

43a, 43b of the front panel 12 and the back panel 14 may be wrapped by encasement stitching 44 to prevent fraying.

[0046] FIG. 4B is a cross-section taken through side seam 22 and aperture 26 in the location and direction shown in FIG. 4. Front panel 12 has a rolled edge 34 formed by stitches 38, and a free edge 43a that is wrapped by encasement stitching 44 to prevent fraying. Inner panel 48 is stitched to back panel 14 by inner panel stitches 50 that go through one layer of back panel 14, so that the inner panel stitches 50 are visible in the interior of garment 110 but are not visible on the exterior of garment 110. Alternatively, inner panel stitches 50 could go through both layers of back panel 14, so that the inner panel stitches 50 are visible on both the interior and the exterior of garment 110. Inner panel 48 is inboard of front panel 12 or on the interior side of the garment 110. Inner panel 48 may be made from the same fabric as front panel 12 and back panel 14 so that it is less visible, or it may be made from material of a different color or type of fabric. Aperture 26 is closed against casual observation, but is not fastened, by abutting rolled edges 34 and 36 and by contact between inner panel 48 and rolled edge 34 of front panel 12. If a wearer's movements cause front panel 12 to bend and gap away from back panel 14 at aperture 26, the wearer's skin would not be exposed to the air, nor would it be visible to a casual observer, because inner panel 48 lies against the wearer's skin. The free edges 43a, 43b of the back panel 14 and free edges 49a, 49b of inner panel 48 are wrapped by encasement stitching 44 to prevent fraying.

[0047] FIG. 4C illustrates how aperture 26 may be opened, such as by a hand following the path of the arrow to slide between rolled edges 34, 36 and the inner panel 48 to thereby enter the aperture 26.

[0048] Referring to FIGS. 5, 5A, and 6, an aft inner trim panel 54 and a forward inner trim panel 55 are sewn to back panel 14 and forward panel 12 on the interior side of garment 110 by upper horizontal stitch 53 so that aft inner trim panel 54 and forward inner trim panel 55 are supported from front panel 12 and back panel 14 and extend over part of inner panel 48. In this embodiment, horizontal stitches 52 attach to and suspend inner panel 48 from aft inner trim panel 54 and forward inner trim panel 55. In the embodiment shown, horizontal stitches 52 are not visible on the outside of the garment. Alternatively, the horizontal stitches 52 could penetrate through front panel 12 and back panel 14 in which case they would be visible on the exterior of garment 110. Alternatively, since both tack stitches 30 and horizontal stitches 52 are horizontal, tack stitches 30 may be eliminated, and the horizontal stitches 52 could perform the reinforcing function otherwise performed by tack stitches 30.

[0049] In this embodiment, garment 110 is a women's garment that encompasses the breast area. To provide a more aesthetically pleasing appearance, a dart 59 (FIG. 6), a technique that is well known in the art, is utilized to shape the area. The dart 59 is formed by a dart stitch 56 in the front panel 12. The dart stitch 56 captures excess material from the front panel 12 into a dart fold 57 having a dart fold edge 58, to contour the material to conform to the female anatomy. Alternatively, the dart 59, dart stitch 56, dart fold 57, and dart fold edge 58 may be omitted. Tack stitches 30, 32, and dart 59 are visible on the exterior of garment 110. Aperture 26 extends between tack stitches 30 and 32.

[0050] FIG. 7 is another exemplary embodiment depicting a self-contained aperture frame 60, commonly referred to as a set-in that may be sewn into any location on any garment. The frame 60 is manufactured to its finished shape by, for

example, forming, weaving, or stitching processes. Frame 60 has an outside edge 62, a first flap 64 and a second flap 66. Flaps 64 and 66 overlap, essentially as shown in FIGS. 12A and 12B, or alternatively abut, to define an aperture 26. At the top and bottom of the aperture 26 are gaps 68 and 70 where first and second flaps 64 and 66 overlap, or alternatively abut, a frame top 72 and a frame bottom 74. This arrangement allows the flaps 64 and 66 to be parted to facilitate the movement of a hand therethrough. With appropriate slack, the gaps 68, 70 may be set at angles other than as shown, and one or both gaps 68, 70 may be eliminated without departing from the concepts of this disclosure. Installation, or "setting-in" of frame 60 may be performed on any garment. The garment need not have a through opening or gap prior to attachment of the frame 60 to the garment, since attachment of the frame 60 will provide a border in the fabric of the garment, and then the fabric of the garment can be severed in line with the aperture 26 with the frame 60 maintaining a neat border. The provisioning and the installation of a set-in such as frame 60 is similar to that of a zipper. A variety of decorative set-ins may be manufactured that include decorative features such as rhinestones or nails. The set-ins may also include closure features such as zippers, VELCRO, buttons, or other closure structure.

[0051] FIGS. 8 and 9 illustrate exemplary embodiments of the use of frame 60 on a garment 210 proximate a side seam 22, or a garment 310 without a side seam 22.

[0052] FIG. 10 shows another exemplary embodiment of a garment 410 having a frame 60 that has an aperture 26 that is not located on a side seam. A main panel 76 of garment 410 is wrapped around to meet at a rear seam 78 (shown as a hidden line) to form a tube that encloses at least the wearer's torso. Seam 78

may alternatively be a front seam, and could be fastened by zipper or other similar structure rather than sewn. Alternatively, seam 78 may be omitted and the garment 410 constructed using woven tubular fabric. The garment 410 has two straps 80a, 80b to hold the garment 410 in position on the user with the user's arms passing between the straps 80a, 80b and the main panel 76. In this embodiment one strap 80b is longer than the other strap 80a, to provide more exposure on the left side of the garment 410 than on the right. The bottom of garment 410 has a bottom portion 81 in the form of a skirt. Many variations of garment 410 are possible. For example, the bottom portion 81 could comprise leggings or shorts, thus making garment 410 in the form of a leotard or exercise apparel.

[0053] FIGS. 11, 12, 12A, and 12B depict another exemplary garment 510 in the form of an evening dress or a nightgown which may be worn on formal occasions. It will be appreciated, however, depending on the style of materials used, that this embodiment of aperture 26 may be used with other garments as well. As shown in FIG. 11, garment 510 has a back panel 14, a left front panel 84, and a right front panel 86. The two front panels 84, 86 may be of different colors for aesthetic design reasons. Apertures 26 are provided on the side seams 22 between left front panel 84 and back panel 14, and right front panel 86 and back panel 14. Above the apertures 26, the side seams 22 construction are essentially the same as illustrated in FIG. 2A.

[0054] With reference to FIGS. 12, 12A, and 12B, a top trim 88 is attached to the right front panel 86 and a bottom trim 90 is attached to the back panel 14. The top trim 88 lays over the bottom trim 90 so that the aperture 26 through the garment 510 is secretly hidden under the top trim 88. The top trim 88 and bottom trim 90 may be billowy and sewn onto front panel 86, and back panel 14 as shown in FIG

12A. Alternatively, top trim 88 and bottom trim 90 may be created by adding inserts 88a and 90a along the un-sewn portion of side seam 22 and then folding over front panel 86 and an extension 40 of back panel 14 to form enlarged rolled edges 34a and 36a as shown in FIG. 12B. Insert 88a and 90a may be a flexible foam material, or any other material chosen by the clothing designer.

[0055] FIG. 13 is an exemplary embodiment of a garment 610 wherein aperture 26 has been left fully open and exposed, to allow skin 92 to show. FIG. 14 is a detail view of aperture 26 of FIG. 13. The wearer's skin 92 is visible through the aperture 26.

[0056] FIG. 15A illustrates another exemplary embodiment, similar to the embodiment depicted in FIG. 4, but wherein aperture 26 further comprises an aligning stitch 94, in the form of a box stitch, across seam 22 at the bottom of aperture 26. Aligning stitch 94 helps maintain rolled edges 34 and 36 neatly in alignment with one another to help keep the aperture 26 closed against casual observation. Aligning stitch 94 may also serve to reinforce seam 22. FIG. 15B depicts yet another embodiment wherein aligning stitch 94a is in the form of embroidered letters. It will be appreciated that aligning stitch 94 may alternatively comprise various other configurations suitable for maintaining aperture 26 in a normally closed arrangement. It will also be appreciated that aligning stitch 94 may be used with any of the various embodiments disclosed herein.

[0057] Although various embodiments shown and described herein have depicted garments for the upper body, and having the appearance usually associated with garments for females, this disclosure is not limited to female clothing or upper body clothing. The apertures shown and described herein are suitable for

use on any type of garment, and may be concealed or not concealed, and can be at a variety of locations and in any quantities on any garment.

[0058] The apertures presented above have generally been described as being partially closed such as by flaps, extensions, or panels passing under other panels, but have not utilized closure mechanisms. It will be appreciated that closure structure of various types, for example zippers, buttons, or VELCRO, may be included to securely latch the apertures in a closed position when desired.

[0059] While the present invention has been illustrated by the description of one or more embodiments thereof, and while the embodiments have been described in considerable detail, they are not intended to restrict or in any way limit the scope of the appended claims to such detail. Various features shown and described herein may be used alone or in any combination. Additional advantages and modifications will readily appear to those skilled in the art. The invention in its broader aspects is therefore not limited to the specific details, representative apparatus and method and illustrative examples shown and described. Accordingly, departures may be made from such details without departing from the general inventive concept.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A garment to be worn by a person, comprising:

a first fabric panel having a first side edge;

a second fabric panel having a second side edge;

said first and second panels joined proximate said first and second side edges by stitching to form a seam;

an aperture formed between said first and second fabric panels and adjacent said seam by an interruption in said stitching; and

a flap proximate said aperture and extending underneath at least one of said first or second panels and across said seam such that the person's skin is not readily viewable through said aperture when said aperture is opened.

2. The garment of claim 1, wherein said flap is formed by extending a portion of said second panel beneath said first panel.

3. The garment of claim 1, wherein said aperture is positioned so as to be approximately under an arm of the person wearing the garment.

4. The garment of claim 1, further comprising an aligning stitch below said aperture and through said first fabric panel and said second fabric panel.

5. The garment of claim 1, wherein said flap comprises a third panel joined to said first panel or said second panel, or to both said first and second panels.

6. The garment of claim 5, further comprising an inner trim panel above said aperture, wherein an upper portion of said third panel is sewn to a lower portion of said inner trim panel.

7. The garment of claim 5, further comprising:

an aft inner trim panel above said aperture; and

a forward inner trim panel above said aperture;

wherein an upper portion of said third panel is sewn to a lower portion of said forward inner trim panel and a lower portion of said aft inner trim panel.

8. The garment of claim 7, wherein said aperture is positioned so as to be approximately under the arm of the person wearing the garment.

9. A set-in for a garment, comprising:

a first flap;

a second flap that contacts said first flap;

said first and second flaps defining a non-fastenable aperture; and

a perimeter circumscribing said first and second flaps and adapted to be sewn into the garment.

10. The garment set-in of claim 9, wherein the first flap abuts the second flap.

11. The garment set-in of claim 9, wherein the first flap extends under the second flap.

12. The garment set-in of claim 9, wherein at least one of said first flap or said second flap has fabric trim along the contact with the other said flap.

13. A garment, comprising:

at least one panel covering the skin of a person wearing the garment;

a set-in joined to said panel, said set-in comprising:

a non-fastenable aperture in said set-in,

a first flap on said set-in,

a second flap that contacts said first flap, and

a perimeter circumscribing said first and second flaps and joining said set-in to said panel.

14. The garment of claim 13, wherein said first flap abuts said second flap.

15. The garment of claim 13, wherein said first flap extends under said second flap.

16. The garment of claim 13, wherein at least one of said first flap or said second flap has fabric trim along the contact with the other of said first flap or said second flap.

17. The garment of claim 13, wherein said set-in is positioned so as to be approximately located under an arm of a person wearing the garment.

18. A method of manufacturing a garment to be worn by a person comprising:

obtaining a first fabric panel having a first side edge;

obtaining a second fabric panel having a second side edge;

stitching the first and second panels proximate the first and second side edges to form a seam;

interrupting the stitching to form an aperture in the seam between the first and second panels; and

providing a flap proximate the aperture and extending underneath at least one of the first or second panels and across the seam, such that the skin of the person wearing the garment is not readily viewable through the aperture when the aperture is opened.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein providing a flap further comprises:

stitching a third panel into the garment.

20. The method of claim 18, further comprising:

positioning the aperture to be approximately under the arm of the person wearing the garment.

21. The method of claim 18, further comprising sewing a top trim along at least one of the first side edge or the second side edge proximate the aperture.

22. A method of manufacturing a garment with provisions for intimate contact comprising:

obtaining at least one panel covering the skin of a person wearing the garment;

obtaining a set-in comprising:

a non-fastenable aperture,

a first flap,

a second flap that contacts the first flap,

a perimeter circumscribing the first and second flaps; and

joining the set-in to the panel.

23. The method of claim 22, further comprising:

positioning the aperture to be approximately under the arm of the person wearing the garment.

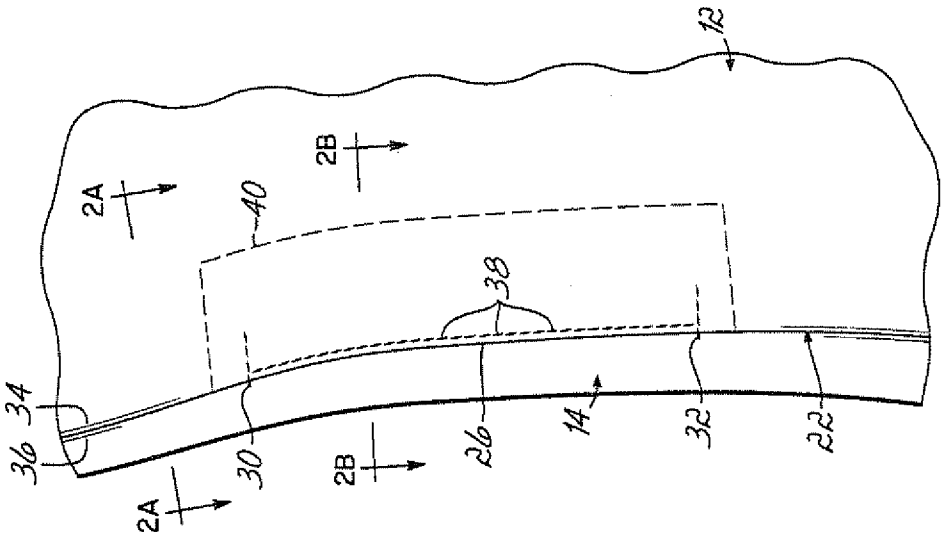

12
2A
2B
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36
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32
22

FIG. 2

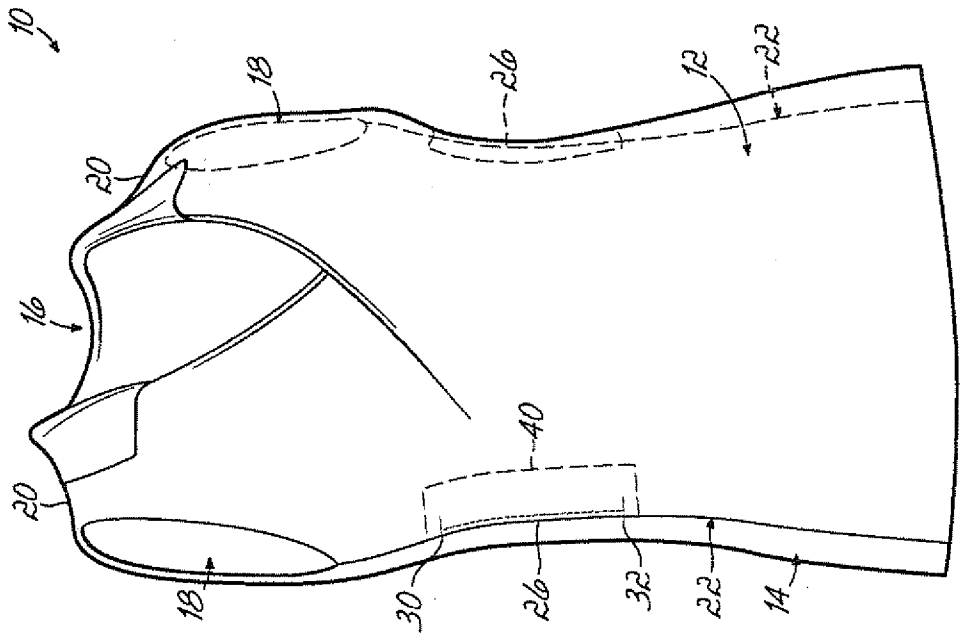

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FIG. 1

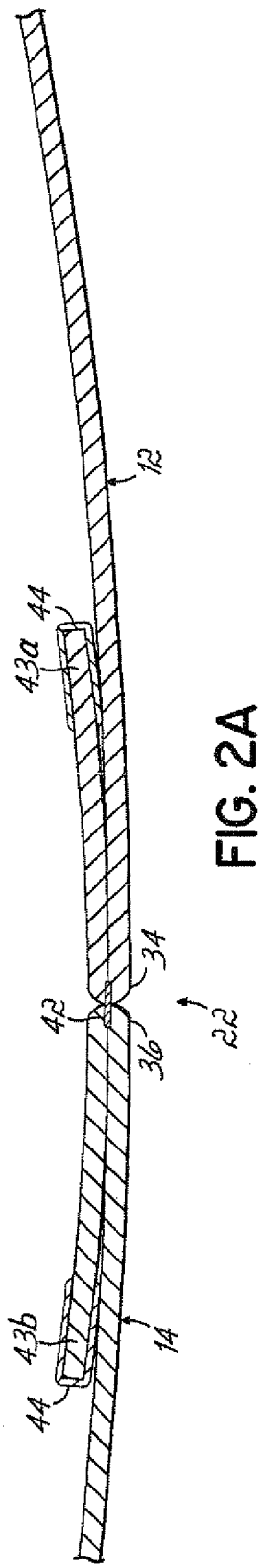


FIG. 2A

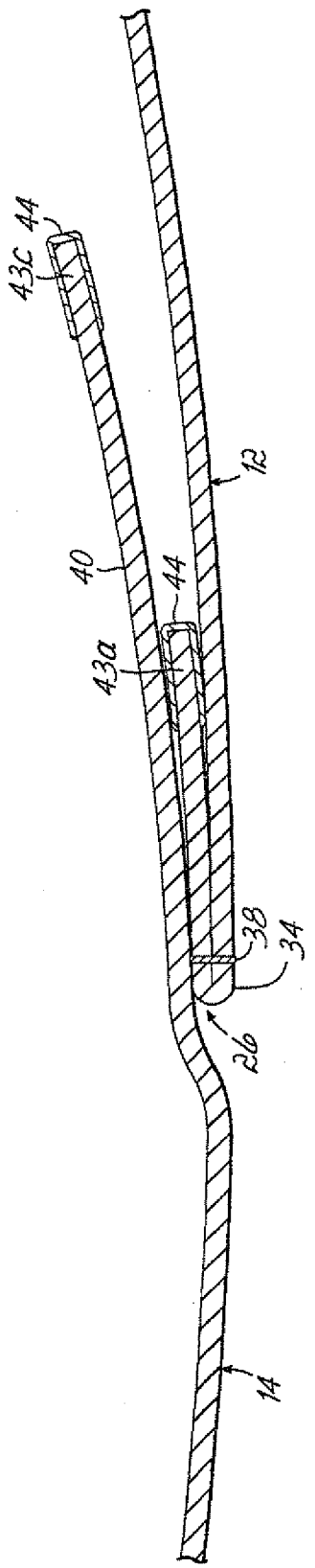


FIG. 2B

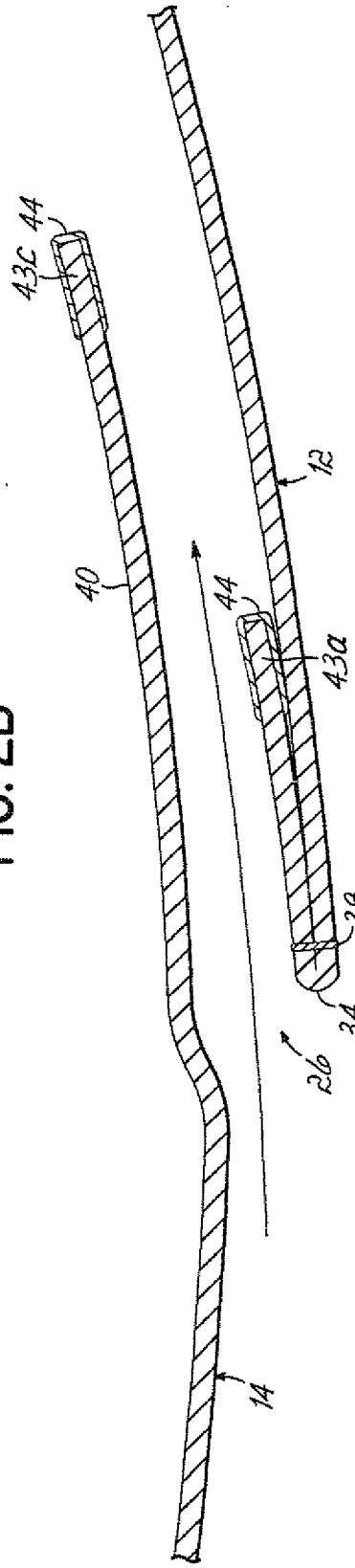


FIG. 2C

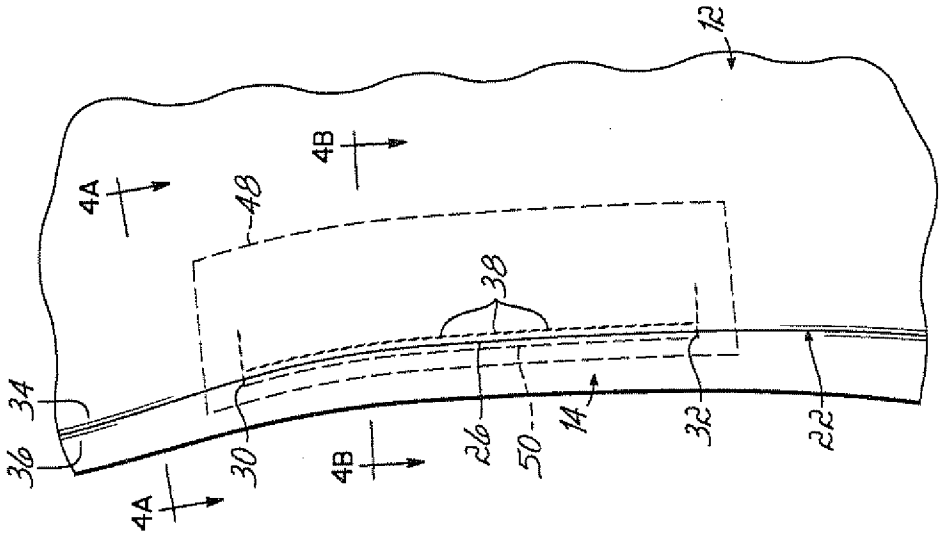


FIG. 4

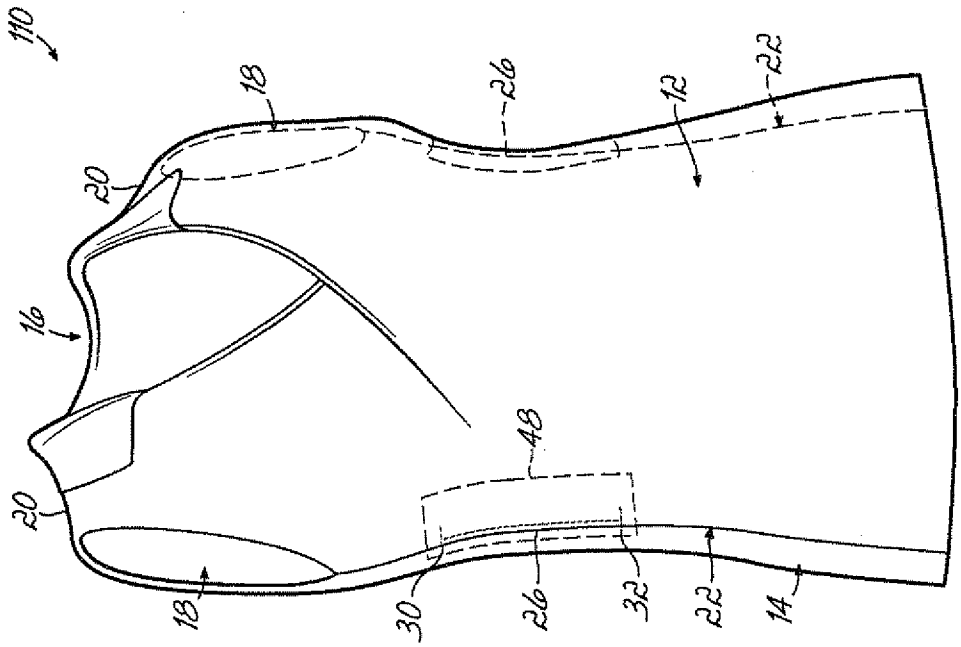


FIG. 3

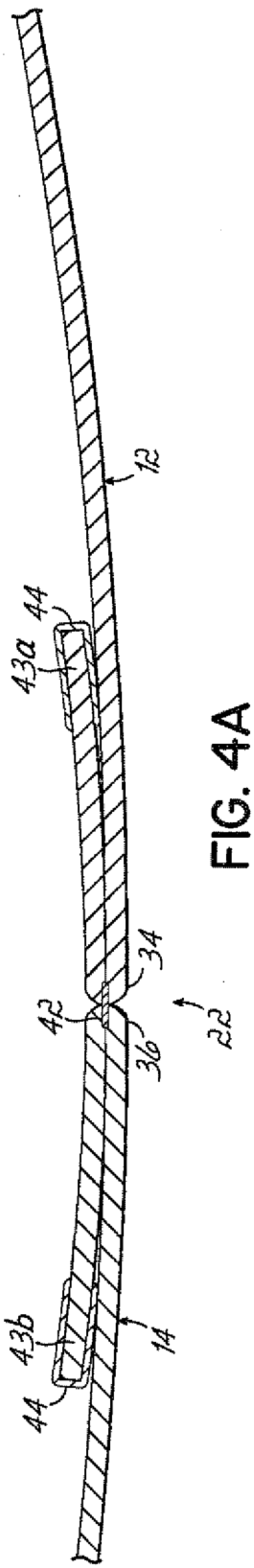


FIG. 4A

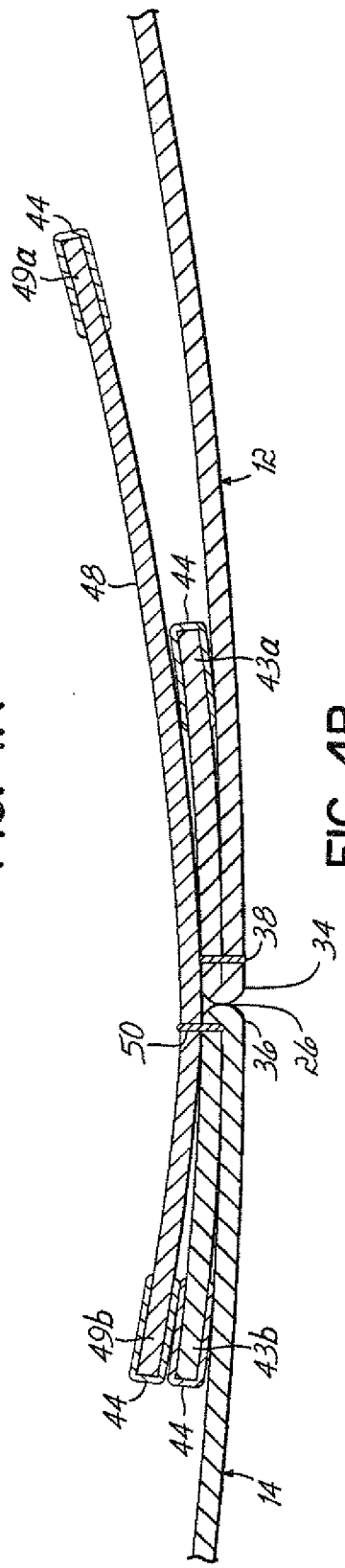


FIG. 4B

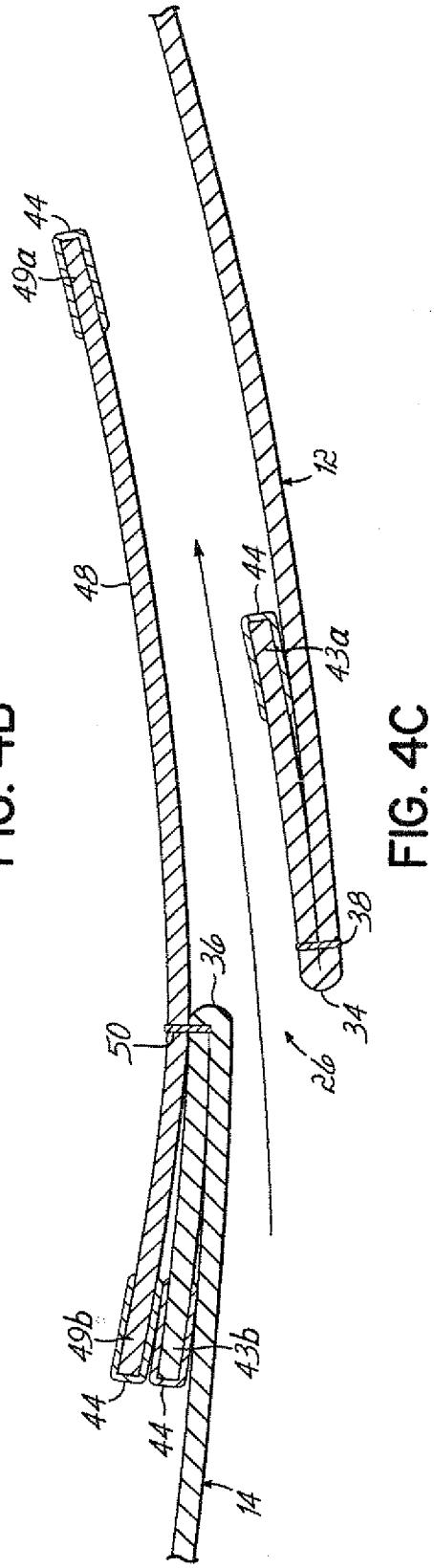


FIG. 4C

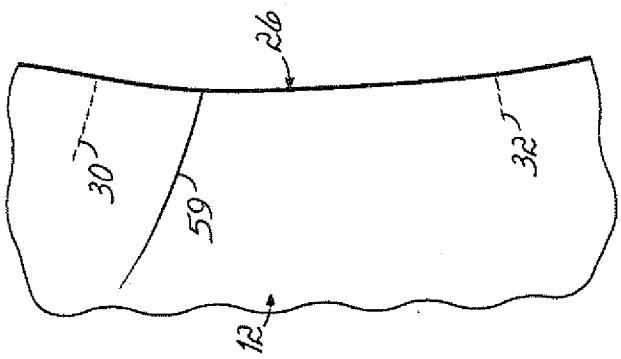

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FIG. 6

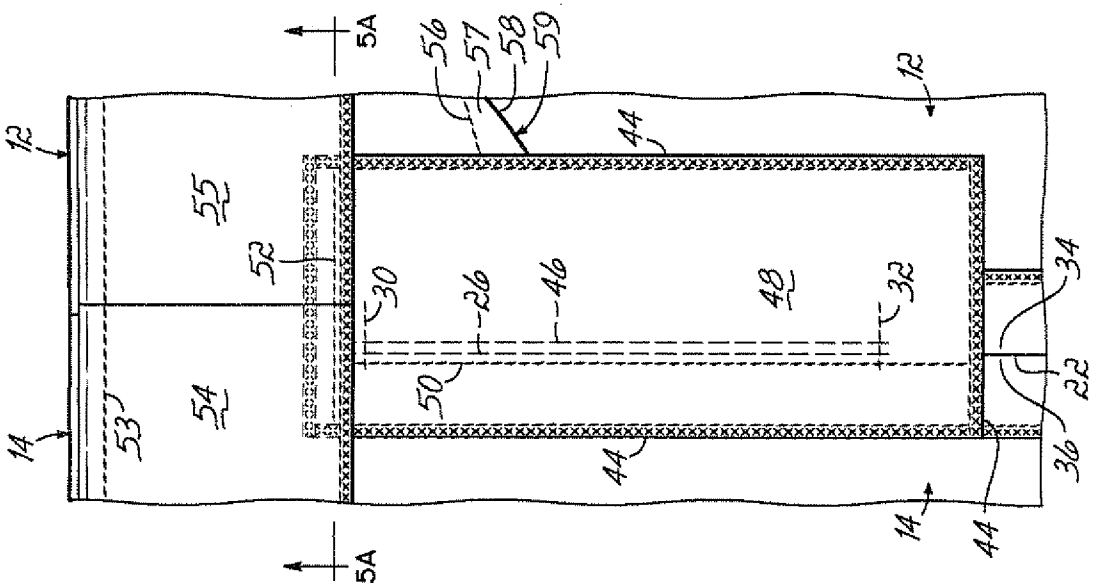

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5A

FIG. 5

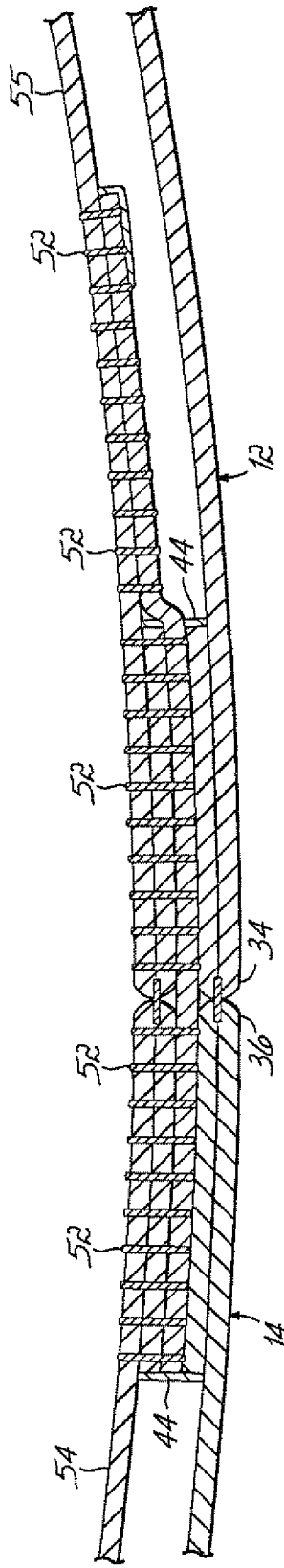


FIG. 5A

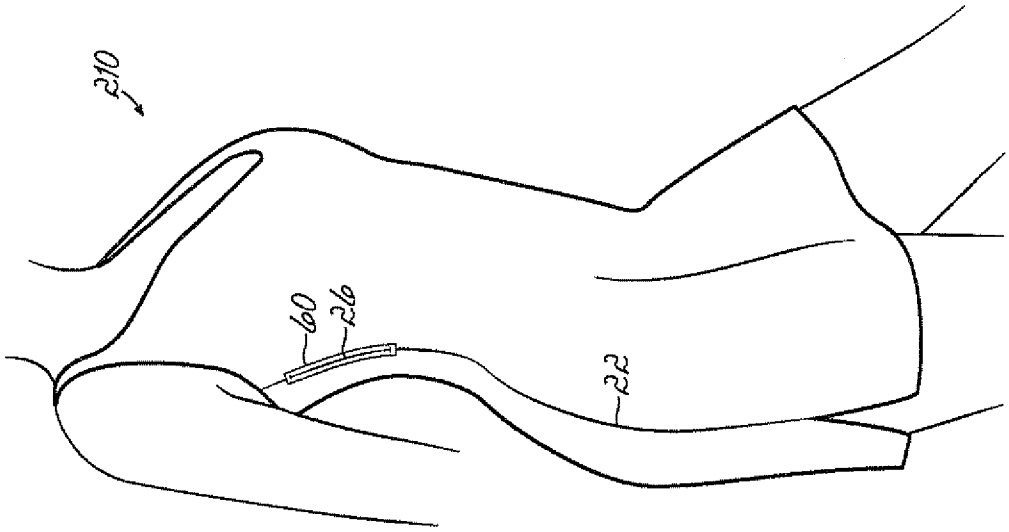


FIG. 8

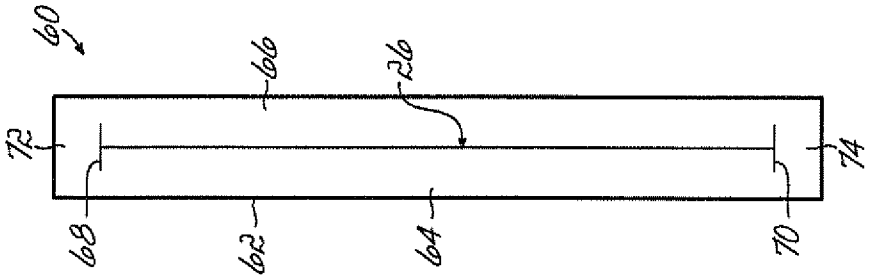


FIG. 7

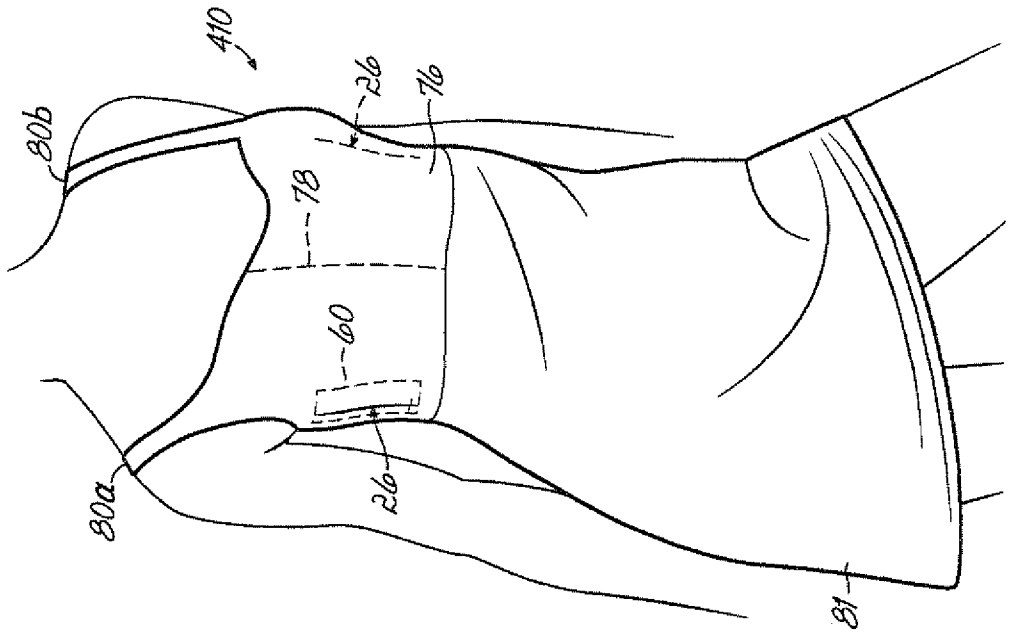


FIG. 10

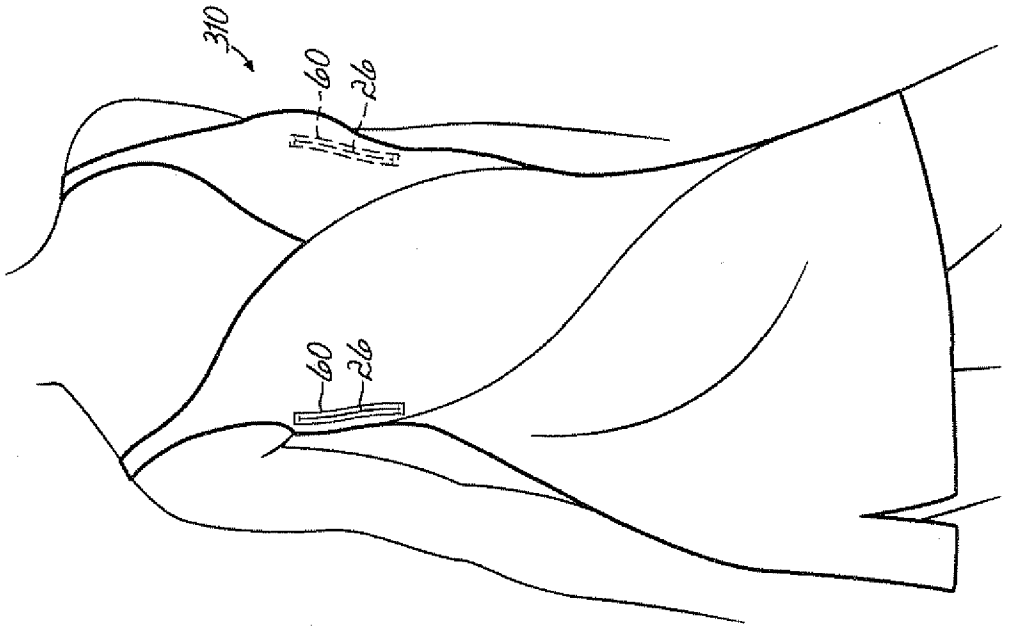


FIG. 9

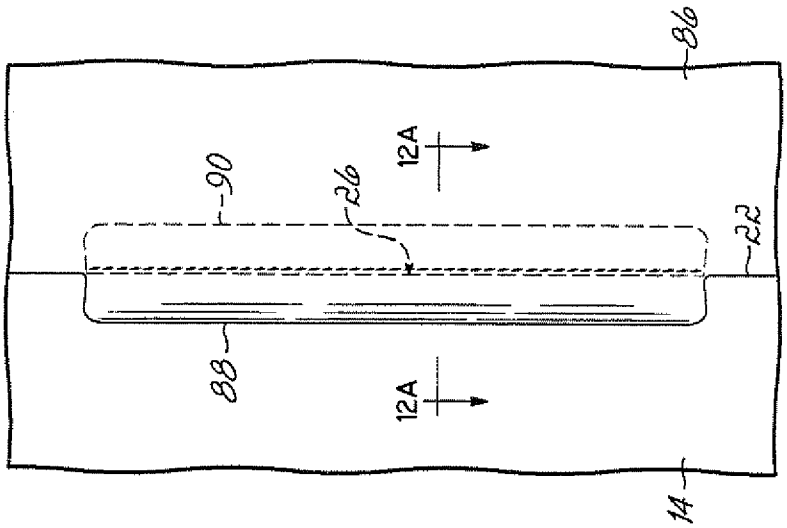


FIG. 12

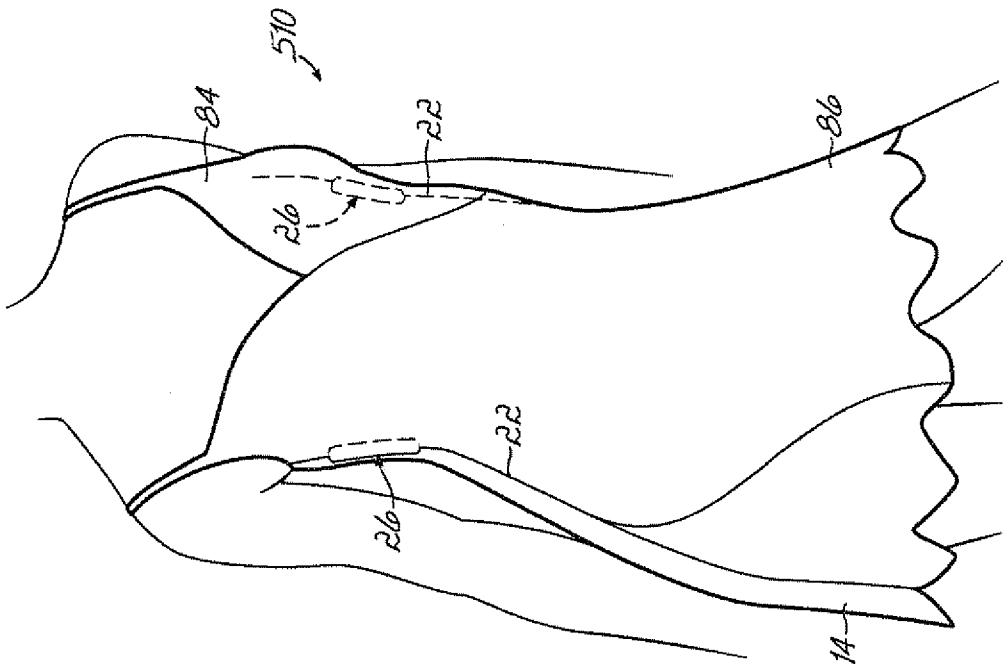


FIG. 11

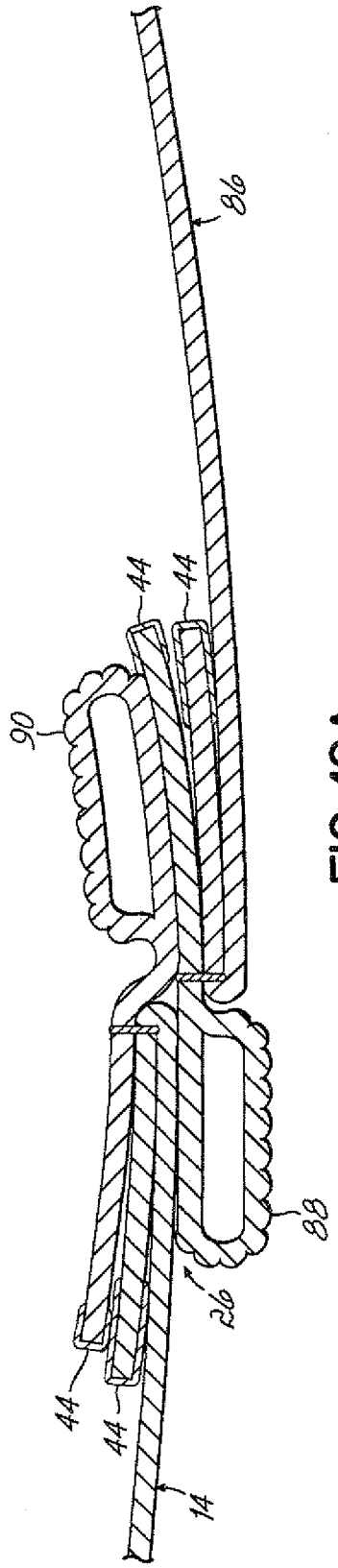


FIG. 12A

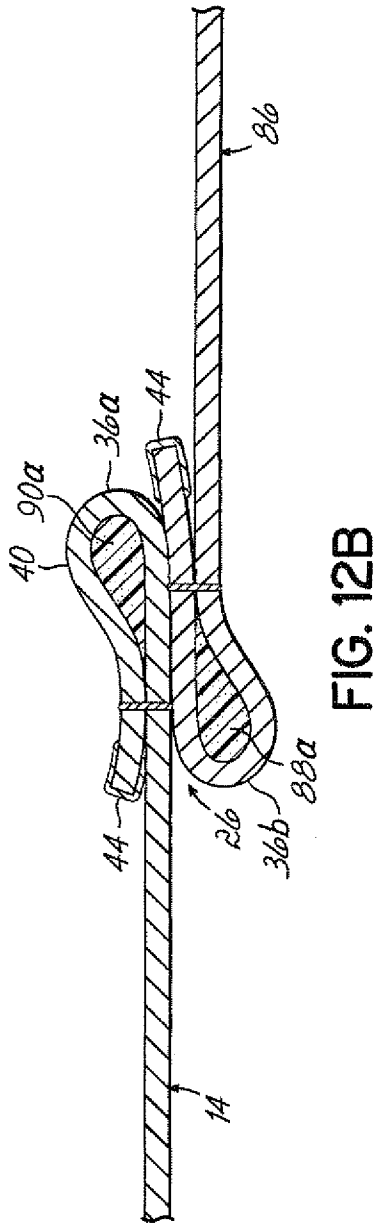


FIG. 12B

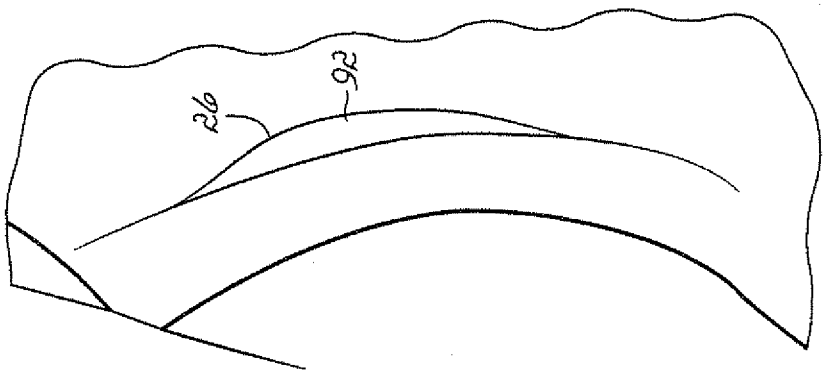


FIG. 14

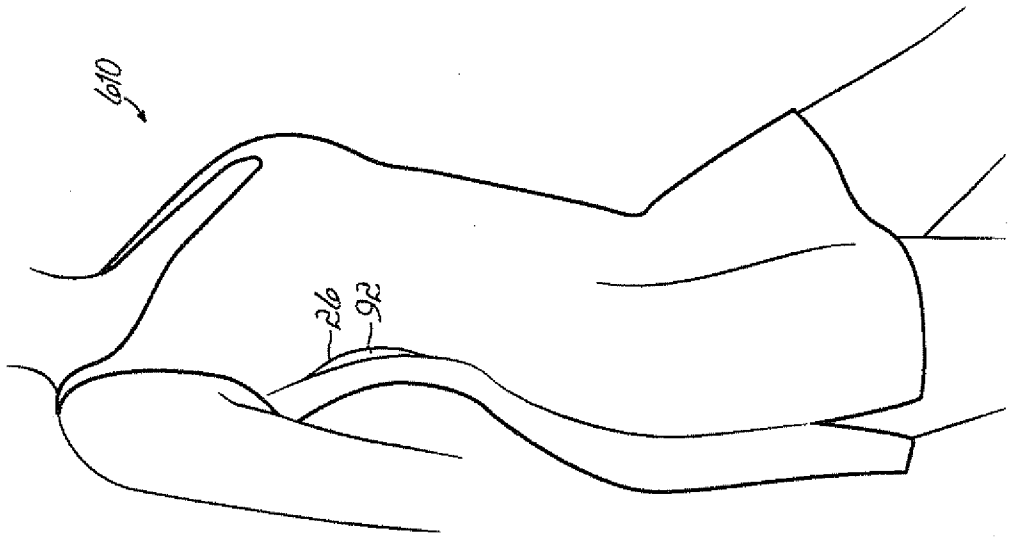


FIG. 13

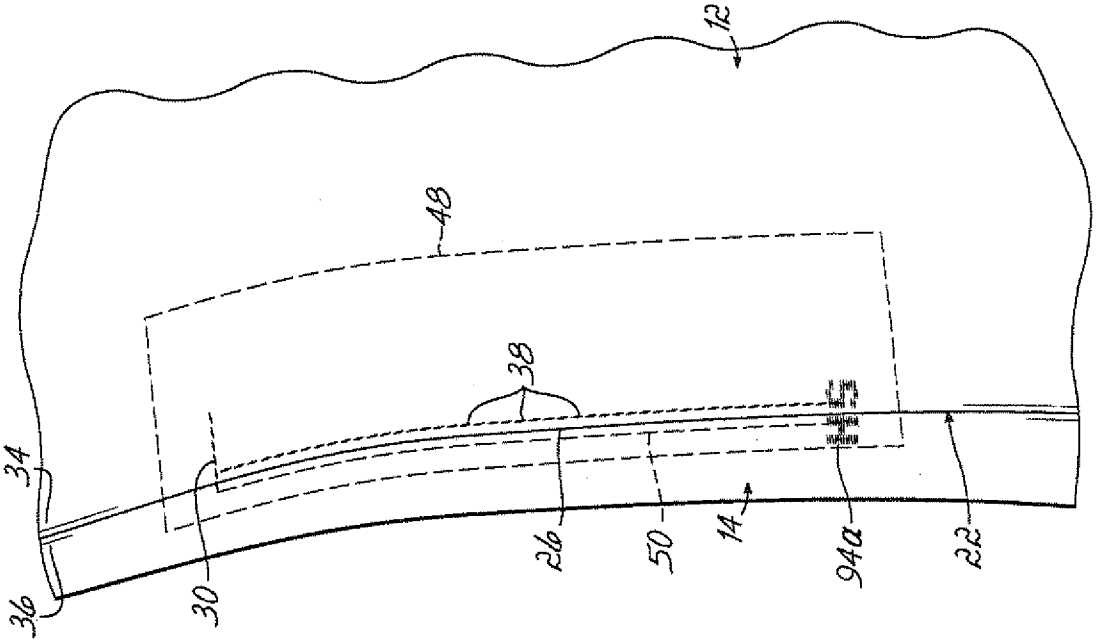


FIG. 15B

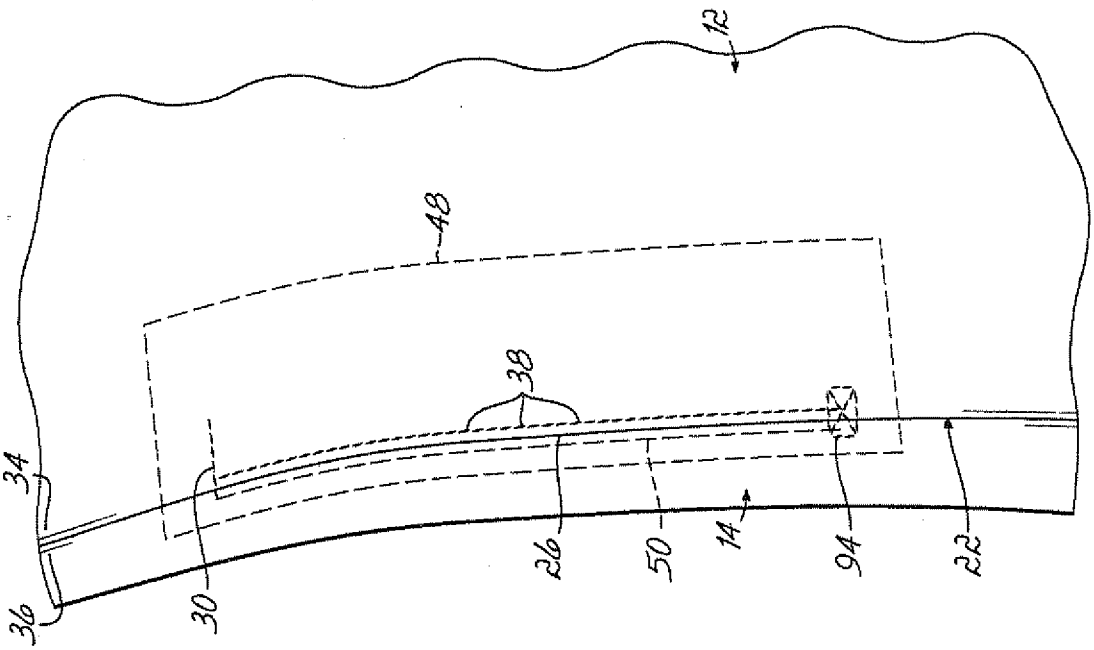


FIG. 15A

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US07/80276

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC(8) - A41D 1/18 (2008.01)
USPC - 2/106
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)
IPC(8) - A47D 1/18, 27/10 (2008.01)
USPC - 2/106, 113, 114, 218, 247, 275, 405

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)
PatBase

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X --- Y	US 4,208,743 A (WHITCRAFT) 24 June 1980 (24.06.1980) entire document	1-3, 5, 18-20 --- 4, 6-8, 13-17, 21-23
X --- Y	US 4,385,403 A (RICHARDSON et al) 31 May 1983 (31.05.1983) entire document	9-11 --- 12-17, 22-23
Y	US 2,335,664 A (GOLDMAN et al) 30 November 1943 (30.11.1943) entire document	4
Y	US 7,043,771 B1 (ALESSI) 16 May 2006 (16.05.2006) entire document	6-8
Y	US 146,879 A (CULVER) 27 January 1874 (27.01.1874) entire document	12, 16, 21

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. ☐

* 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 application or patent 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	Date of mailing of the international search report
22 February 2008	26 MAR 2008

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US	Authorized officer:
Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. 571-273-3201	Blaine R. Copenheaver PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300 PCT OSP: 571-272-7774

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (April 2007)