

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
13 July 2006 (13.07.2006)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2006/074468 A3

(51) International Patent Classification:
F16K 25/00 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2006/000872

(22) International Filing Date: 10 January 2006 (10.01.2006)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/642,796 10 January 2005 (10.01.2005) US

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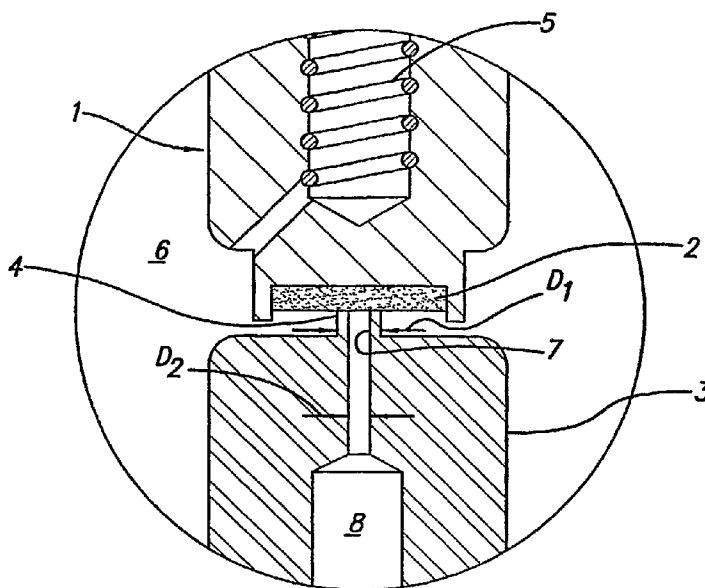
(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LC,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

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR SUPPORTING A MEMBER AND CONTROLLING FLOW



(57) Abstract: A material is used in an apparatus that regulates a fluid to provide sufficient support for a member, such as a seal, yet allow the passage of the fluid in a passageway. The material can be a porous metal which is placed in the passageway so as to be closely aligned with the passageway's opening. The placement of the porous metal at or near the opening allows the seal to rest on the cross-section of the passageway as well as on the support provided by the porous metal. The increase in surface area upon which the seal is support reduces the risk that the seal will be cut and/or abraded, particularly in high pressure environments. The use of the material in the passageway further provides design control over the flow of the fluid.

WO 2006/074468 A3



(88) Date of publication of the international search report:

15 November 2007

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US06/00872

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - F16K 25/00 (2007.01)

USPC - 251/368

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) - F16K 25/00 (2007.01)

USPC - 251/368

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)

MicroPatent, IP.com, DialogPro

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2004/0107997 A1 (TOM) 10 June 2004 (10.06.2004) entire document	1-5, 11, 13-15
Y		6-10, 12, 16-20
Y	US 4,040,440 A (ZAKI) 09 August 1977 (09.08.1977) entire document	6 and 7
Y	US 4,739,795 A (EWBANK et al) 26 April 1988 (26.04.1988) entire document	8-10, 16-20
Y	US 6,439,334 B1 (MYERS et al) 27 August 2002 (27.08.2002) entire document	12

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

04 June 2007

Date of mailing of the international search report

24 AUG 2007

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P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Facsimile No. 571-273-3201

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