(54) Title: MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING VISIBILITY, QUALITY CONTROL AND AUDIT CAPABILITY FOR UNDERGROUND FACILITY LOCATING AND MARKING OPERATIONS

(57) Abstract: A holistic approach to management and oversight of locate and marking operations is provided. Initial requests to perform such operations are improved, and such requests are intelligently assessed to appropriately allocate resources to perform operations. Technicians are effectively dispatched and may be provided with process guides to facilitate performance. A host of information regarding the performance of locate operations and their environs is acquired (e.g., via improved intelligent instrumentation employed by technicians). A quality of operations (e.g., completeness, accuracy, efficiency) is assessed, corrective actions may be taken in essentially real-time as necessary, and information regarding operations and their quality assessments is archived for auditing purposes. Requesting parties and/or other interested parties (e.g., excavators, facility owners, locate contractors, municipalities, regulators, auditors, damage investigators, insurance companies, etc.) also may be provided with detailed information regarding the performance of operations and quality assessment of same.
A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - G06Q 10/00 (2010.01)
USPC - 705/1.1

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Search Terms</th>
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<tr>
<td>IPC(8)</td>
<td>G06Q 10/00 (2010.01)</td>
<td>Google, Search Terms: locating location locat mark designat label underground ground &quot;below surface&quot; excavat dig operat communicat transmission transfer transmit talking correspondenc interfac memory memories cache storage disk database processor computer laptop CPU microprocessor microcontroller</td>
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C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>US 2009/001328 A1 (NIELSEN et al.) 15 January 2009 (15.01.2009), entire document, especially: abstract, para. [0005]-[0008], [0012], [0027], [0012], [0030],[0032],[0034],[0043],[0050],[0058],[0062],[0067],[0069],[0071]</td>
<td>1-4, 6-8, 13-18, 29-37</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>US 2006/0178918 A1 (MIKURIKA) 10 August 2006 (10.08.2006), entire document, especially: para. [0012], [0069], [1654], [2256], [2745], [2775]</td>
<td>21, 23, 24</td>
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

* Special categories of cited documents:

  "X": 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

  "Y": 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

  "Z": 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

  "G": document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search: 12 August 2010 (12.08.2010)

Date of mailing of the international search report: 30 AUG 2010

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

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