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Description

FIELD OF THE INVENTION AND PRIOR ART

[0001] The present invention relates to a sign according to the preamble of claim 1.
US 5 412 971 A and US 5 709 122 A disclose a sign of the type comprising a number of sign elements mounted in a base profile, which has over-folded longitudinal edge portions so that the base profile will get a C-like shape in cross-section. Each sign element is normally provided with a symbol in the form of a letter of a digit and several sign elements may be combined to form a desired sequence of symbols. The sign elements have the form of rectangular plates and, when a sign is assembled, a desired combination of sign elements is inserted into the base profile so that the over-folded edge portions of the base profile overlap upper and lower edge portions of the sign elements. Fastening of the sign elements in the base profile is accomplished by deforming the over-folded edge portions at their ends by means of a suitable tool so that the sign elements are kept in place in the base profile and prevented from sliding out of it. Through holes are provided in the end portions of the base profile so that the sign through these holes may be fixed to an object by means of fastening members, for instance in the form of screws, nails or rivets. Signs of this type may be used as markings on many different types of installations, such as for instance power line poles, lighting poles and electric cabinets. In order to be weatherproof, the signs are usually made of metal, such as for instance aluminium. In connection with inspection or maintenance of an installation provided with a sign of the type here in question, it may be desirable to automatically read information about the installation in question. To make this possible, it is desirable that the sign is provided with a bar code label with suitable information content. However, a bar code label is sensitive to environmental influence and will in course of time be decayed and impossible to read if it is subjected to sun, wind, rain or salt during a longer period of time. If the sign is placed on an installation in or close to a desert area, the bar code label may also be decayed in short time if subjected to sand storm. Thus, there is a need to improve the durability of a bar code label arranged on a sign of the type here in question.
[0002] GB 506 243 A discloses a sign in the form of a registration number plate for vehicles comprising an elongated base profile, wherein several sign elements and a blank covering plate are received in the base profile. The covering plate is configured to cover an interspace between two sign elements in order to keep these sign elements at a desired distance from each other.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The object of the present invention is to achieve a simple and appropriate solution to the above-mentioned problem.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] According to the present invention, said object is achieved by means of a sign having the features defined in claim 1.
[0005] The sign according to the invention comprises:

- an elongated base profile with a bottom portion, a first over-folded edge portion arranged along a first side edge of the bottom portion and a second over-folded edge portion arranged along a second side edge of the bottom portion opposite the first over-folded edge portion, the bottom portion having a front side and a backside;
- one or more sign elements which are received in the base profile and arranged on the front side of the bottom portion, each one of these sign elements having a first edge portion which is in engagement with the first over-folded edge portion of the base profile and an opposite second edge portion which is in engagement with the second over-folded edge portion of the base profile;
- a bar code label arranged on the front side of the bottom portion between said first and second over-folded edge portions and at the side of said sign elements; and
- a covering plate which is displaceably received in the base profile and arranged on the front side of the bottom portion at the side of said sign elements, this covering plate having a first edge portion which is in engagement with the first over-folded edge portion of the base profile and an opposite second edge portion which is in engagement with the second over-folded edge portion of the base profile.

The covering plate is displaceable in relation to the bottom portion to and fro between a first displacement position, in which the covering plate is located on the bar code label and thereby protecingly covers the bar code label, and a second displacement position, in which the covering plate is located at the side of the bar code label and thereby leaves the bar code label accessible for reading.
[0006] When the covering plate is in the first displacement position, the covering plate protects the bar code label from being affected by sun, wind, rain, salt and sand storm. The covering plate also protects the bar code label from being decayed by scrawling and other vandalism. When necessary, the bar code label can in a rapid and simple manner be made accessible for reading by a lateral displacement of the covering plate. Owing to the fact that the covering plate is mounted to the base profile in the same manner as the sign elements, the covering plate may be given a similar design as the sign elements and the covering plate can thereby be integrated in the sign in a discrete manner without affecting the overall impression of the sign to any appreciable extent.
[0007] According to the invention, the sign comprises

a springy locking member which is intended to be clamped to the base profile by engagement with the first and second over-folded edge portions of the base profile to thereby keep the covering plate in said first displacement position. Under the effect of this locking member, the covering plate is kept in the protecting position on the bar code label so that an unintentional displacement of the covering plate away from the bar code label is avoided, at the same time as the clamping force of the locking member easily can be overcome by hand in order to uncover the bar code label if the spring force of the locking member is appropriately dimensioned.

[0008] According to an embodiment of the invention, the locking member is fixed to the covering plate so as to be displaceable in relation to the base profile together with the covering plate. Hereby, the locking member is prevented from being lost.

[0009] Other preferable features of the sign according to the invention will appear from the dependent claims and the description following below.

BRIEF DESCPRITION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] The invention will in the following be more closely described by means of embodiment examples, with reference to the appended drawings. It is shown in:

Fig. 1 a planar view of a sign according to a first embodiment of the present invention, with the covering plate of the sign in a first displacement position,

Fig.2 a perspective view of the sign of Fig. 1, with the covering plate of the sign in the first displacement position,

Fig. 3 a cut according to the line III - III in Fig. 1,

Fig. 4 a cut according to the line IV - IV in Fig. 1,

Fig. 5 a planar view of the sign of Fig. 1, with the covering plate of the sign in a second displacement position,

Fig. 6 a perspective view of the sign of Fig. 1, with the covering plate of the sign in the second displacement position,

Fig. 7 a planar view of a sign according to a second embodiment of the invention, with the covering plate of the sign in a first displacement position, and

Fig. 8 a perspective view of the sign of Fig. 7, with the covering plate of the sign in a second displacement position.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0011] A sign 1 according to two different embodiments of the present invention is illustrated in Figs. 1-8. The sign 1 comprises an elongated base profile 2 with a bottom portion 3, a first over-folded edge portion 4a arranged along a first side edge 5a of the bottom portion 3 and a second over-folded edge portion 4b arranged along a second side edge 5b of the bottom portion opposite the first over-folded edge portion 4a. The bottom portion 3 has a front side 6 and a backside 7. A number of sign elements 8 are received in the base profile 2 and arranged on the front side 6 of the bottom portion. The sign elements 8 are provided with desired symbols, for instance in the form of digits or letters. Each sign element 8 has a first edge portion 9a (see Fig. 3) which is in engagement with the first over-folded edge portion 4a of the base profile and an opposite second edge portion 9b which is in engagement with the second over-folded edge portion 4b of the base profile, the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile overlapping said first and second edge portions 9a, 9b of the sign elements so that the sign elements 8 thereby are kept in place in the base profile 2. The sign elements 8 suitably have the form of rectangular plates.

[0012] The symbol of a sign element 8 is with advantage punched out of the sign element so that the bottom portion 3 of the base profile is visible through the punching. In this case, the sign elements 8 suitably have another colour than the bottom portion 3 so that the symbols of the sign elements 8 will appear through contrasting effect between the sign elements and the bottom portion. The symbol of a sign element 8 could of course also be formed in another way, for instance by printing or painting.

[0013] A bar code label 10 (see Figs. 5, 6 and 8) is arranged on the front side 6 of the bottom portion between said first and second over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b and at the side of the sign elements 8. The bar code label 10 is suitably a sticker provided with a unique bar code pattern.

[0014] A preferably rectangular covering plate 11 is displaceably received in the base profile 2 and arranged on the front side 6 of the bottom portion at the side of the sign elements 8. The covering plate 11 is fastened to the base profile 2 in the same manner as the sign elements 8 and has a first edge portion 12a (see Fig. 4) which is in engagement with the first over-folded edge portion 4a of the base profile and an opposite second edge portion 12b which is in engagement with the second over-folded edge portion 4b of the base profile, the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile overlapping said first and second edge portions 12a, 12b of the covering plate so that the covering plate 11 thereby is kept in place in the base profile 2.

[0015] The covering plate 11 is displaceable in relation to the bottom portion 3 to an fro between a first displace-

ment position (see Figs. 1, 2 and 7), in which the covering plate 11 is located on the bar code label 10 and thereby protectingly covers the bar code label, and a second displacement position (see Figs. 5, 6 and 8), in which the covering plate 11 is located at the side of the bar code label 10 and thereby leaves the bar code label accessible for reading. In the illustrated embodiments, the covering plate 11 is displaceable in relation to the base profile 2 in the longitudinal direction of the base profile, i.e. along the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile. As an alternative, the covering plate 11 could be displaceable in the cross-direction of the base profile through a slit arranged in one of the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile.

[0016] The covering plate 11 may be completely blank or provided with a company logo or other marking.

[0017] When a sign 1 is assembled, a covering plate 11 and a desired combination of sign elements 8 are inserted into the base profile 2 from an end of the base profile so that the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile are made to overlap the first and second edge portions 12a, 12b of the covering plate and the first and second edge portions 9a, 9b of the sign elements. The over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b are then deformed at their ends at the areas marked with 13 by pressing the edge portions 4a, 4b inwards against the bottom portion 3 in these areas so that the covering plate 11 and the sign elements 8 are unable to slide past these areas. Hereby, the covering plate 11 and the sign elements 8 are kept in place in the base profile 2 and prevented from sliding out of the base profile. Through holes 14 are arranged in the end portions of the base profile so that the sign 1 through these holes may be fixed to an object by means of fastening members in the form of for instance screws, nails or rivets.

[0018] The base profile 2, the sign elements 8 and the covering plate 11 are suitably made of aluminium or other suitable metal.

[0019] In the embodiment illustrated in Figs. 1-6, the covering plate 11 is provided with a handle 15 which is designed to be gripped with one or more finger or a hand by a user in order to displace the covering plate 11 in relation to the base profile 2 between the above-mentioned displacement positions.

[0020] The sign 1 comprises a springy locking member 16 which is intended to be clamped to the base profile 2 by engagement with the first and second over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile to thereby keep the covering plate 11 in said first displacement position. In the illustrated example, the locking member 16 comprises an elongated base portion 17 which extends between the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile, a first leg 18a which is configured for engagement with the first over-folded edge portion 4a of the base profile and an opposite second leg 18b which is configured for engagement with the second over-folded edge portion 4b of the base profile. The legs 18a, 18b are springingly connected to each other through the base portion 17 and are displaceable in the direction towards each other against the action of a spring force. In this case, the locking member 16 is displaceably received in the base profile 2 so as to be displaceable in relation to the base profile 2 in the longitudinal direction of the base profile, i.e. along the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile. Under the effect of said spring force, each leg 18a, 18b is pressed against the over-folded edge portions 4a, 4b of the base profile so that the locking member 16 is held to the base profile 2 in the prevailing position. By pressing the legs 18a, 18b in the direction towards each other by hand, the locking member 16 may be released from its clamping engagement with the base profile 2 so that a displacement of the locking member 16 and the covering plate 11 along the base profile is made possible. In order to facilitate such a manoeuvring of the legs 18a, 18b, each leg is at its outer end provided with a gripping part 19a, 19b which projects from the bottom portion 3 of the base profile and which is configured to be grippable by the fingers.

[0021] The base portion 17 and the legs 18a, 18b of the locking member are preferably formed in one piece of spring steel.

[0022] The locking member 16 is with advantage fixed to the covering plate 11 so as to be displaceable in relation to the base profile 2 together with the covering plate. In this case, the above-mentioned gripping parts 19a, 19b of the legs 18a, 18b of the locking member may be used as handles in connection with a displacement of the covering plate 11 along the base profile 2.

[0023] The base profile 2 and the covering plate 11 could be provided with recesses and projections which come into engagement with each other with snap-in effect when the covering plate 11 assumes the above-mentioned second displacement position and thereby keeps the covering plates in this displacement position so as to thereby secure that the bar code label 10 remains uncovered in connection with a reading thereof.

[0024] The invention is of course not in any way limited to the embodiments described above. On the contrary, several possibilities to modifications thereof should be apparent to a person skilled in the art without thereby deviating from the basic idea of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

Claims

1. A sign comprising:

- an elongated base profile (2) with a bottom portion (3), a first over-folded edge portion (4a) arranged along a first side edge (5a) of the bottom portion and a second over-folded edge portion (4b) arranged along a second side edge (5b) of the bottom portion opposite the first over-folded edge portion (4a), the bottom portion (3) having a front side (6) and a backside (7);

- one or more sign elements (8) which are received in the base profile (2) and arranged on the front side (6) of the bottom portion, each one of these sign elements (8) having a first edge portion (9a) which is in engagement with the first over-folded edge portion (4a) of the base profile and an opposite second edge portion (9b) which is in engagement with the second over-folded edge portion (4b) of the base profile; and
- a covering plate (11) displaceably received in the base profile (2) and arranged on the front side (6) of the bottom portion at the side of the sign elements (8), this covering plate (11) having a first edge portion (12a) which is in engagement with the first over-folded edge portion (4a) of the base profile and an opposite second edge portion (12b) which is in engagement with the second over-folded edge portion (4b) of the base profile,

characterized in:

- **that** a bar code label (10) is arranged on the front side (6) of the bottom portion between said first and second over-folded edge portions (4a, 4b) and at the side of the sign elements (8);
- **that** the covering plate (11) is displaceable in relation to the bottom portion (3) to and fro between a first displacement position, in which the covering plate (11) is located on the bar code label (10) and thereby protectingly covers the bar code label, and a second displacement position, in which the covering plate (11) is located at the side of the bar code label (10) and thereby leaves the bar code label accessible for reading; and
- **that** the sign (1) comprises a springy locking member (16) which is intended to be clamped to the base profile (2) by engagement with the first and second over-folded edge portions (4a, 4b) of the base profile to thereby keep the covering plate (11) in said first displacement position.

2. A sign according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the covering plate (11) is displaceable in relation to the base profile (2) in the longitudinal direction of the base profile.

3. A sign according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said locking member (16) comprises a first leg (18a) which is configured for engagement with the first over-folded edge portion (4a) of the base profile and an opposite second leg (18b) which is configured for engagement with the second over-folded edge portion (4b) of the base profile, these legs (18a, 18b) being springingly connected to each other and displaceable in the direction towards each other against the action of a spring force.

4. A sign according to any of claims 1-3, **characterized in that** said locking member (16) is displaceably receivable in the base profile (2) so as to be displaceable in relation to the base profile (2) in the longitudinal direction of the base profile.

5. A sign according to claim 4, **characterized in that** said locking member (16) is fixed to the covering plate (11) so as to be displaceable in relation to the base profile (2) together with the covering plate.

6. A sign according to any of claims 1-5, **characterized in that** the covering plate (11) is provided with a handle (15) which is configured to be gripped by a user for displacement of the covering plate in relation to the base profile (2).

Patentansprüche

1. Schild, aufweisend:
ein länglicher Basisprofil (2) mit einem unteren Bereich (3), einem ersten gefalzten Randbereich (4a), der entlang eines ersten Seitenrands (5a) des unteren Bereichs angeordnet ist, und einem zweiten gefalzten Randbereich (4b), der entlang eines zweiten Seitenrands (5b) des unteren Bereichs gegenüber dem ersten gefalzten Randbereich (4a) angeordnet ist, wobei der untere Bereich (3) eine Vorderseite (6) und eine Rückseite (7) aufweist;

- ein oder mehrere Schildelemente (8), das bzw. die im Basisprofil (2) aufgenommen und auf der Vorderseite (6) des unteren Bereichs angeordnet ist bzw. sind, wobei jedes dieser Schildelemente (8) einen ersten Randbereich (9a), der mit dem ersten gefalzten Randbereich (4a) des Basisprofils in Eingriff steht, und einen entgegengesetzten zweiten Randbereich (9b) aufweist, der in Eingriff mit dem zweiten gefalzten Randbereich (4b) des Basisprofils steht; und
- eine Abdeckplatte (11), die verschiebbar in dem Basisprofil (2) aufgenommen und auf der Vorderseite (6) des unteren Bereichs seitlich der Schildelemente (8) angeordnet ist, wobei diese Abdeckplatte (11) einen ersten Randbereich (12a), der in Eingriff mit dem ersten gefalzten Randbereich (4a) des Basisprofils steht, und einen entgegengesetzten zweiten Randteilbereich (12b) aufweist, der in Eingriff mit dem zweiten gefalzten Randbereich (4b) des Basisprofils steht,

dadurch gekennzeichnet:

- **dass** ein Strichcode-Etikett (10) auf der Vor-

derseite (6) des unteren Bereichs zwischen dem ersten und dem zweiten gefalzten Randbereich (4a, 4b) und seitlich der Schildelemente (8) angeordnet ist;
- **dass** die Abdeckplatte (11) in Bezug auf den unteren Bereich (3) hin und her verschiebbar zwischen einer ersten Verschiebungsposition ist, in der sich die Abdeckplatte (11) auf dem Strichcode-Etikett (10) befindet und dadurch das Strichcode-Etikett schützend abdeckt, und einer zweiten Verschiebungsposition, in der sich die Abdeckplatte (11) seitlich des Strichcode-Etiketts (10) befindet und dadurch das Strichcode-Etikett (10) zum Ablesen zugänglich belässt; und
- **dass** das Schild (1) ein federnd arretierendes Element (16) aufweist, das dazu vorgesehen ist, durch einen Eingriff mit dem ersten und dem zweiten gefalzten Randbereich (4a, 4b) des Basisprofils am Basisprofil (2) festgeklemmt zu werden, um dadurch die Abdeckplatte (11) in der ersten Verschiebungsposition zu halten.

2. Schild nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Abdeckplatte (11) in Bezug auf das Basisprofil (2) in der Längsrichtung des Basisprofils verschiebbar ist.

3. Schild nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** das arretierende Element (16) einen ersten Schenkel (18a), der zum Eingriff mit dem ersten gefalzten Randbereich (4a) des Basisprofils ausgelegt ist, und einen entgegengesetzten zweiten Schenkel (18b) aufweist, der zum Eingriff mit dem zweiten gefalzten Randbereich (4b) des Basisprofils ausgelegt ist, wobei diese Schenkel (18a, 18b) federnd miteinander verbunden und in der Richtung aufeinander zu gegen die Wirkung einer Federkraft verschiebbar sind.

4. Schild nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** das arretierende Element (16) verschiebbar in dem Basisprofil (2) aufnehmbar ist, um in Bezug auf das Basisprofil (2) in der Längsrichtung des Basisprofils verschiebbar zu sein.

5. Schild nach Anspruch 4, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** das arretierende Element (16) an der Abdeckplatte (11) befestigt ist, um in Bezug auf das Basisprofil (2) zusammen mit der Abdeckplatte verschiebbar zu sein.

6. Schild nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 5, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** die Abdeckplatte (11) mit einem Handgriff (15) versehen ist, der dazu ausgelegt ist, von einem Benutzer zur Verschiebung der Abdeckplatte in Bezug auf das Basisprofil (2) ergriffen zu werden.

Revendications

1. Enseigne comprenant :

- un profil de base allongé (2) avec une portion de fond (3), une première portion de bord repliée (4a) agencée le long d'un premier bord de côté (5a) de la portion de fond et une seconde portion de bord repliée (4b) agencée le long d'un second bord de côté (5b) de la portion de fond opposée à la première portion de bord repliée (4a), la portion de fond (3) ayant un côté avant (6) et un côté arrière (7) ;
- un ou plusieurs éléments d'enseigne (8) qui sont reçus dans le profil de base (2) et agencés sur le côté avant (6) de la portion de fond, chacun de ces éléments d'enseigne (8) ayant une première portion de bord (9a) qui est en enclenchement avec la première portion de bord repliée (4a) du profil de base et une seconde portion de bord opposée (9b) qui est en enclenchement avec la seconde portion de bord repliée (4b) du profil de base ; et
- une plaque couvrante (11) reçue de façon déplaçable dans le profil de base (2) et agencée sur le côté avant (6) de la portion de fond à côté des éléments d'enseigne (8), cette plaque couvrante (11) ayant une première portion de bord (12a) qui est en enclenchement avec la première portion de bord repliée (4a) du profil de base et une seconde portion de bord opposée (12b) qui est en enclenchement avec la seconde portion de bord repliée (4b) du profil de base,

caractérisée en ce :

- **qu'**une étiquette à code-barres (10) est agencée sur le côté avant (6) de la portion de fond entre lesdites première et seconde portions de bord repliées (4a, 4b) et à côté des éléments d'enseigne (8) ;
- **que** la plaque couvrante (11) est déplaçable par rapport à la portion de fond (3) vers et depuis une première position de déplacement, dans laquelle la plaque couvrante (11) est située sur l'étiquette à code-barres (10) et couvre ainsi pour la protéger l'étiquette à code-barres, et une seconde position de déplacement, dans laquelle la plaque couvrante (11) est située à côté de l'étiquette à code-barres (10) et laisse ainsi l'étiquette à code-barres accessible pour être lue ; et
- **que** l'enseigne (1) comprend un organe de verrouillage à ressort (16) qui est destiné à être serré sur le profil de base (2) par enclenchement avec les première et seconde portions de bord repliées (4a, 4b) du profil de base pour conserver ainsi la plaque couvrante (11) dans ladite

première position de déplacement.

2. Enseigne selon la revendication 1, **caractérisée en ce que** la plaque couvrante (11) est déplaçable par rapport au profil de base (2) dans la direction longitudinale du profil de base.

3. Enseigne selon la revendication 1 ou 2, **caractérisée en ce que** ledit organe de verrouillage (16) comprend une première patte (18a) qui est configurée pour s'enclencher avec la première portion de bord repliée (4a) du profil de base et une seconde patte opposée (18b) qui est configurée pour s'enclencher avec la seconde portion de bord repliée (4b) du profil de base, ces pattes (18a, 18b) étant raccordées l'une à l'autre par ressort et déplaçables dans la direction l'une vers l'autre contre l'action d'une force de ressort.

4. Enseigne selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, **caractérisée en ce que** ledit organe de verrouillage (16) peut être reçu de façon déplaçable dans le profil de base (2) de façon à être déplaçable par rapport au profil de base (2) dans la direction longitudinale du profil de base.

5. Enseigne selon la revendication 4, **caractérisée en ce que** ledit organe de verrouillage (16) est fixé à la plaque couvrante (11) de façon à pouvoir être déplaçable par rapport au profil de base (2) conjointement à la plaque couvrante.

6. Enseigne selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 5, **caractérisée en ce que** la plaque couvrante (11) est pourvue d'une poignée (15) qui est configurée pour être saisie par un utilisateur pour déplacer la plaque couvrante par rapport au profil de base (2).

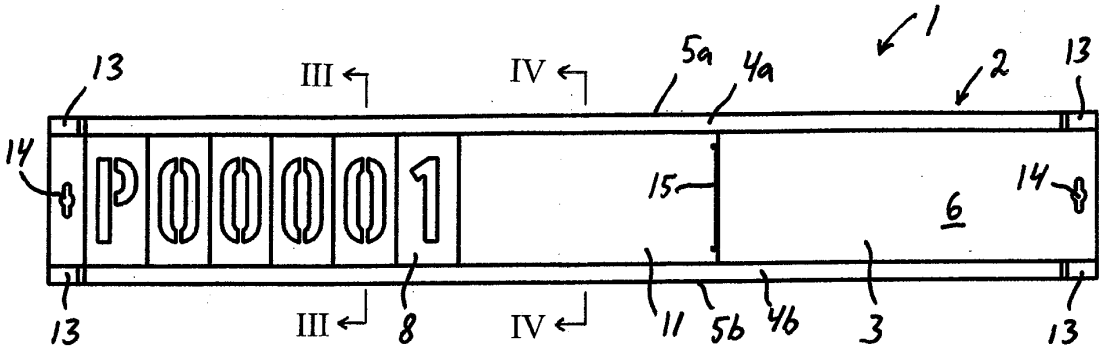

Fig 1

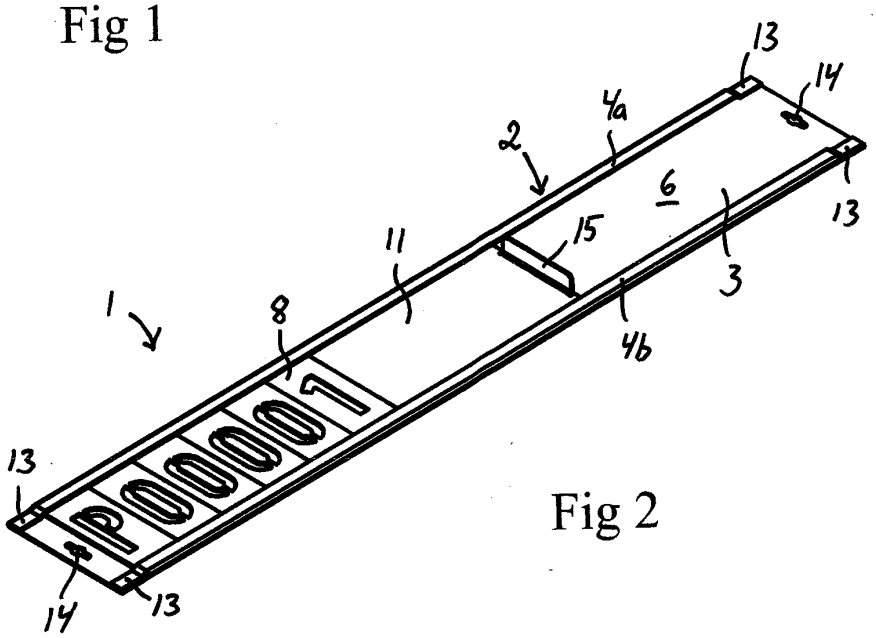

Fig 2

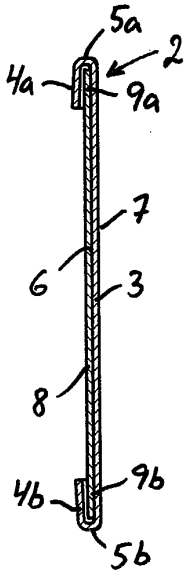

Fig 3

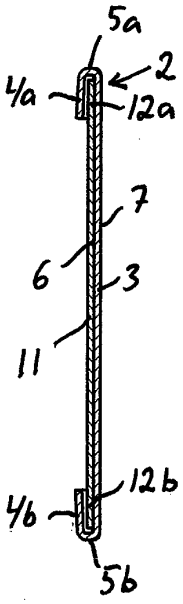

Fig 4

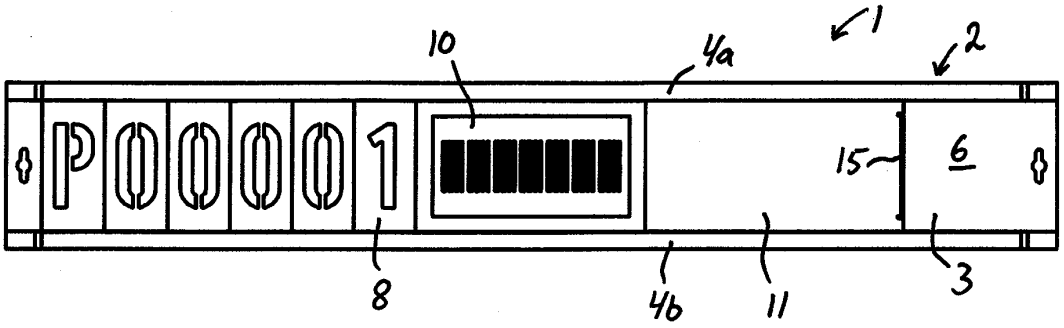

Fig 5

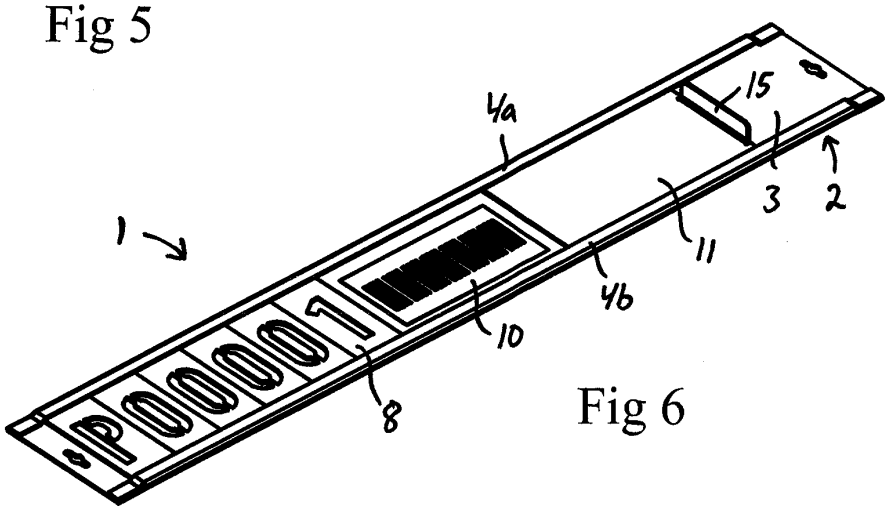

Fig 6

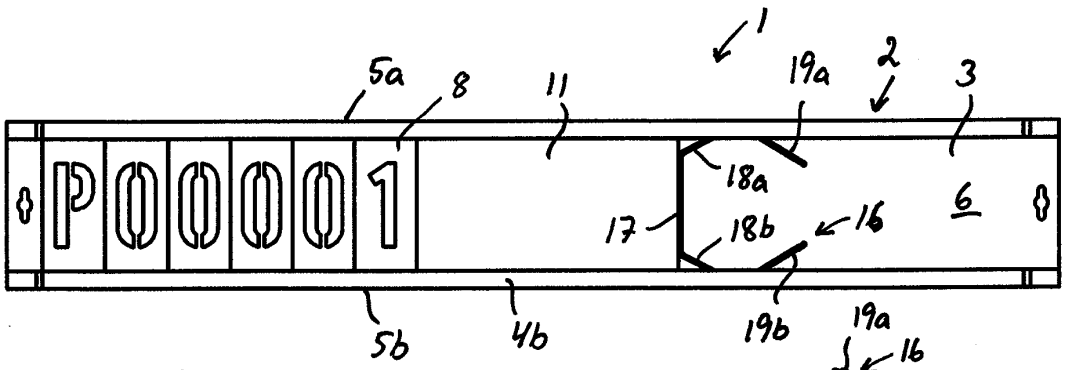

Fig 7

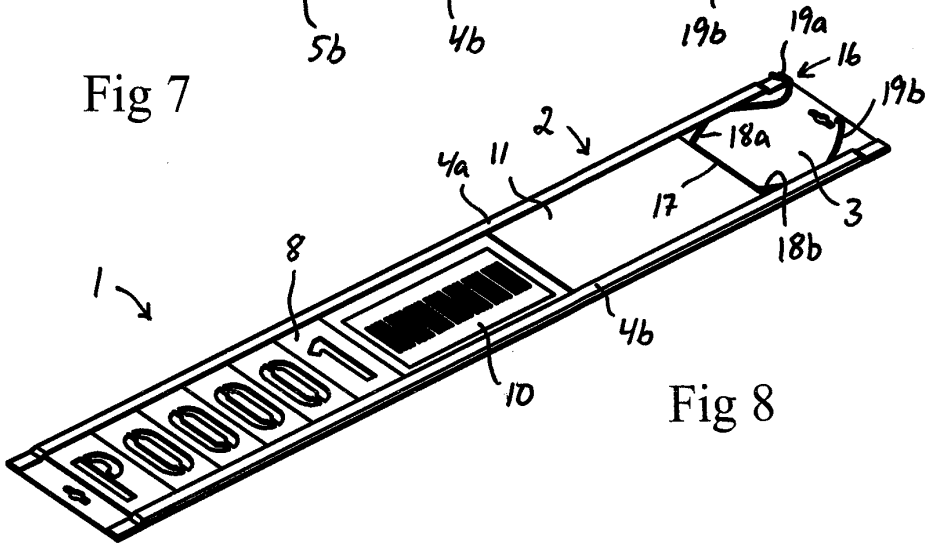

Fig 8

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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Patent documents cited in the description

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