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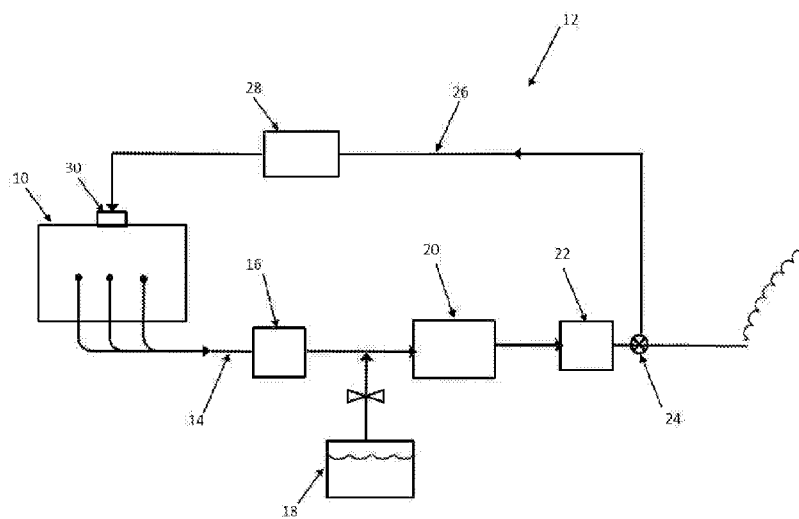
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: EXHAUST SYSTEM HAVING N₂O CATALYST IN EGR CIRCUIT

FIG. 1
Exhaust System



(57) Abstract: An exhaust system for an internal combustion engine is disclosed. The exhaust system comprises a particulate filter, one or more NO_x reduction catalysts, and a low pressure exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) circuit for connecting the exhaust system downstream of the filter and the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts to an intake of the engine. The EGR circuit comprises a N₂O-producing catalyst.

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EXHAUST SYSTEM HAVING N₂O CATALYST IN EGR CIRCUIT

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to an exhaust system that contains an exhaust gas
5 recirculation (EGR) circuit, having a N₂O-producing catalyst.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Internal combustion engines produce exhaust gases containing a variety
of pollutants, including hydrocarbons, particulate matter, sulfur oxides, carbon
10 monoxide, and nitrogen oxides ("NO_x"), which include nitric oxide (NO), nitrogen
dioxide (NO₂), and nitrous oxide (N₂O). Increasingly stringent national and
regional legislation has lowered the amount of pollutants that can be emitted
from such diesel or gasoline engines. Many different techniques have been
applied to exhaust systems to clean the exhaust gas before it passes to
15 atmosphere.

Exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) is a method for reducing NO_x emissions
from an engine by returning a portion of the engine's exhaust gas to the engine
combustion chambers via the air intake. EGR works by lowering the oxygen
concentration in the combustion chamber, thereby decreasing the peak
20 temperature of the fuel combustion flame as well as through heat absorption.
EGR has been used since the mid-1970s in gasoline fueled passenger car
engines. Following the gasoline application, EGR was also introduced to diesel
passenger cars and, from the early 2000s, to heavy-duty diesel engines.

Generally, there are two exhaust system arrangements comprising EGR:
25 (i) high pressure loop EGR, in which the exhaust gas is recirculated from
upstream of a turbocharger; and (ii) low pressure loop EGR (also called long
loop EGR), where exhaust gas is often recirculated from downstream of a
particulate filter, allowing all the exhaust gas to be utilized in the turbo. Exhaust
gas pressure downstream of the filter is generally lower than at the intake
30 manifold, allowing exhaust gas to flow from the filter to the intake manifold.

The use of EGR systems has been taught in, for example, PCT Intl. Appl.
WO 2012/120347 which discloses an exhaust system for a vehicular lean burn
internal combustion engine that comprises a low pressure EGR circuit for
connecting the exhaust system downstream of a filter to an air intake of the

engine, wherein the EGR circuit comprises an ammonia oxidation catalyst. In addition, PCT Intl. Appl. WO 2012/114187 teaches an exhaust system for a vehicular lean burn internal combustion engine comprising a low pressure EGR circuit having a NO_x adsorber catalyst (NAC) comprising a nitric oxide (NO) adsorbent.

As with any automotive system and process, it is desirable to attain still further improvements in exhaust gas treatment systems. We have discovered a new system that utilizes a N₂O-producing catalyst within the EGR circuit in order to increase oxygen atom availability within the combustion process to reduce the number of unwanted diesel particulates.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is an exhaust system for an internal combustion engine. The exhaust system comprises a particulate filter, one or more NO_x reduction catalysts, and an exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) circuit for connecting the exhaust system downstream of the filter and the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts to an intake of the engine. The EGR circuit is suitable for low pressure exhaust gas recirculation. It is preferably a low pressure exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) circuit.

The EGR circuit comprises a N₂O-producing catalyst. The N₂O generated within the EGR circuit will increase oxygen atom availability within the engine for the combustion process to result in a reduction in the number of unwanted diesel particulates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a schematic flow diagram of one embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The exhaust system of the invention comprises a particulate filter, one or more NO_x reduction catalysts, and a low pressure exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) circuit.

Suitable NO_x reduction catalysts include a lean NO_x trap. NO_x traps (e.g. lean NO_x traps) are devices that adsorb NO_x under lean exhaust conditions,

release the adsorbed NO_x under rich conditions, and reduce the released NO_x to form N₂.

A NO_x trap (e.g. a lean NO_x trap) typically includes a NO_x adsorbent for the storage of NO_x and an oxidation/reduction catalyst. Typically, nitric oxide
5 reacts with oxygen to produce NO₂ in the presence of the oxidation catalyst. Second, the NO₂ is adsorbed by the NO_x adsorbent in the form of an inorganic nitrate (for example, BaO or BaCO₃ is converted to Ba(NO₃)₂ on the NO_x adsorbent). Lastly, when the engine runs under rich conditions, the stored inorganic nitrates decompose to form NO or NO₂ which are then reduced to
10 form N₂ by reaction with carbon monoxide, hydrogen and/or hydrocarbons (or via NH_x or NCO intermediates) in the presence of the reduction catalyst. Typically, the nitrogen oxides are converted to nitrogen, carbon dioxide and water in the presence of heat, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons in the exhaust stream.

15 The NO_x adsorbent component is preferably an alkaline earth metal (such as Ba, Ca, Sr, and Mg), an alkali metal (such as K, Na, Li, and Cs), a rare earth metal (such as La, Y, Pr, and Nd), or combinations thereof. These metals are typically found in the form of oxides. The oxidation/reduction catalyst is preferably one or more noble metals, more preferably platinum, palladium,
20 and/or rhodium. Preferably, platinum is included to perform the oxidation function and rhodium is included to perform the reduction function. The oxidation/reduction catalyst and the NO_x adsorbent are preferably loaded on a support material such as an inorganic oxide for use in the exhaust system.

Suitable NO_x reduction catalysts also include selective catalytic reduction
25 (SCR) catalysts. A SCR catalyst is a catalyst that reduces NO_x to N₂ by reaction with nitrogen compounds (such as ammonia or urea) or hydrocarbons (lean NO_x reduction). Preferably, the SCR catalyst is comprised of a vanadia-titania catalyst, a vanadia-tungsta-titania catalyst, or a transition metal/molecular sieve catalyst. The transition metal/molecular sieve catalyst
30 comprises a transition metal and a molecular sieve, such as an aluminosilicate zeolite or a silicoaluminophosphate.

Preferably the transition metal is selected from chromium, cerium, manganese, iron, cobalt, nickel and copper, and mixtures of any two or more thereof. Iron or copper are particularly preferred.

The molecular sieve is preferably a beta zeolite, a faujasite (such as an X-zeolite or a Y-zeolite, including NaY and USY), an L-zeolite, a ZSM zeolite (e.g., ZSM-5, ZSM-48), an SSZ-zeolite (e.g., SSZ-13, SSZ-41, SSZ-33), a ferrierite, a mordenite, a chabazite, an offretite, an erionite, a clinoptilolite, a silicalite, an aluminum phosphate zeolite (including a metalloaluminophosphate, such as SAPO-34), a mesoporous zeolite (e.g., MCM-41, MCM-49, SBA-15), or mixtures thereof; more preferably, the molecular sieve is a beta zeolite, a ferrierite, or a chabazite. Preferred SCR catalysts include Cu-CHA, such as Cu-SAPO-34, Cu-SSZ-13, and Fe-Beta zeolite.

10 The NO_x reduction catalyst is preferably an SCR catalyst.

The NO_x reduction catalyst is preferably coated on a ceramic or a metallic substrate. The substrate is typically designed to provide a number of channels through which vehicle exhaust passes, and the surface of the channels will be preferably be coated with the NO_x reduction catalyst.

15 A ceramic substrate may be made of any suitable refractory material, e.g., alumina, silica, titania, ceria, zirconia, magnesia, zeolites, silicon nitride, silicon carbide, zirconium silicates, magnesium silicates, aluminosilicates and metallo aluminosilicates (such as cordierite and spodumene), or a mixture or mixed oxide of any two or more thereof. Cordierite, a magnesium aluminosilicate, and silicon carbide are particularly preferred.

A metallic substrate may be made of any suitable metal, and in particular heat-resistant metals and metal alloys such as titanium and stainless steel as well as ferritic alloys containing iron, nickel, chromium, and/or aluminum in addition to other trace metals.

25 The substrate for the NO_x reduction catalyst may be a filter substrate or a flow-through substrate. Preferably, the NO_x reduction catalyst is coated onto a filter (e.g. a filter substrate). When the NO_x reduction catalyst is an SCR catalyst, the combination of an SCR catalyst and a filter is known as a selective catalytic reduction filter (SCRTM catalyst). An SCRTM catalyst is a single-substrate device that combines the functionality of an SCR and particulate filter.

30 When the NO_x reduction catalyst is an SCR catalyst, the exhaust system preferably comprises a means for introducing a nitrogenous reductant into the exhaust system upstream of the SCR catalyst. It may be preferred that the means for introducing a nitrogenous reductant into the exhaust system is

directly upstream of the SCR catalyst (e.g. there is no intervening catalyst between the means for introducing a nitrogenous reductant and the SCR catalyst).

The reductant is added to the flowing exhaust gas by any suitable means
5 for introducing the reductant into the exhaust gas. Suitable means include an injector, sprayer, or feeder, and is preferably an injector. Such means are well known in the art.

The nitrogenous reductant for use in the system can be ammonia *per se*, hydrazine or an ammonia precursor selected from the group consisting of urea
10 ((NH₂)₂CO), ammonium carbonate, ammonium carbamate, ammonium hydrogen carbonate and ammonium formate. Urea is particularly preferred.

The exhaust system may also comprise a means for controlling the introduction of reductant into the exhaust gas in order to reduce NO_x therein. Preferred control means include an electronic control unit, optionally an engine
15 control unit, and may additionally comprise a NO_x sensor located downstream of the NO reduction catalyst.

The exhaust system of the invention also comprises a particulate filter. The particulate filter is preferably a wall-flow filter.

The filter and NO_x reduction catalyst can be arranged in any suitable
20 configuration. For instance, the NO_x reduction catalyst may be located downstream of the filter. The NO_x reduction catalyst may be located directly downstream of the filter (e.g. there is no intervening catalyst between the filter and the NO_x reduction catalyst).

If a means for introducing nitrogenous reductant is utilized when the NO_x
25 reduction catalyst is an SCR catalyst, the means for introducing reductant into a flowing exhaust gas is suitably located between the filter and the SCR catalyst.

Preferably, the NO_x reduction catalyst is located on the particulate filter, most preferably in the form of a selective catalytic reduction filter (SCRTM catalyst). Where the filter is a wall-flow filter, the NO_x reduction catalyst can be
30 formulated as a washcoat that permeates the walls of the filter. This can be done, for example, by milling the catalyst to an average particle size of ≤ 5 μm.

Preferably, the exhaust system will comprise a NO oxidation catalyst (for example, a diesel oxidation catalyst) for oxidizing NO to nitrogen dioxide. The NO oxidation catalyst is preferably located upstream, such as directly upstream,

of the filter and/or the NO_x reduction catalyst, relative to the direct of exhaust gas flow through the system. The NO oxidation catalyst preferably comprises a platinum group metal, most preferably platinum.

5 The exhaust system may also comprise an ammonia oxidation catalyst (or "ammonia slip catalyst") disposed downstream of the NO_x reduction catalyst and upstream of the EGR, relative to the direct of exhaust gas flow through the system.

10 Preferably, the ammonia oxidation catalyst includes platinum, palladium, or a combination thereof, with platinum or a platinum/palladium combination being preferred.

Preferably, the ammonia oxidation catalyst comprises platinum and/or palladium supported on a metal oxide, more preferably a high surface area support, including but not limited to alumina.

15 The ammonia oxidation catalyst may be applied to a flow-through monolith substrate, such as flow-through metallic or cordierite honeycombs, but is preferably loaded onto the same substrate as the NO_x reduction catalyst, wherein the upstream zone is loaded with the NO_x reduction catalyst and the downstream zone is loaded with the ammonia oxidation catalyst, relative to the direction of exhaust gas flow through the system.

20 Preferred embodiments of the exhaust system, prior to the low pressure EGR circuit, may thus comprise a variety of different configurations, including: (1) a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC), followed by a particulate filter, then a means for introducing a nitrogenous reductant, followed by an SCR catalyst; or (2) a DOC, a means for introducing a nitrogenous reductant, then a selective
25 catalytic reduction filter (SCRTM catalyst), followed by a SCR catalyst; or (3) a DOC, followed by a selective catalytic reduction filter (SCRTM catalyst), then an ammonia oxidation catalyst; and other possible combinations.

30 The system then comprises a low pressure exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) circuit for connecting the exhaust system downstream of the filter and the NO_x reduction catalyst to an intake of the engine.

The EGR circuit comprises an N₂O-producing catalyst. The N₂O-producing catalyst reacts NH₃ with NO₂ in the EGR circuit to produce N₂O. Any catalyst that converts NH₃ and NO₂ to N₂O is suitable. Preferred N₂O-

producing catalysts include manganese supported on an inorganic oxide, but may also include any other transition metal supported on an inorganic oxide.

The inorganic oxide most commonly includes an oxide of Groups 2, 3, 4, 5, 13 and 14 elements. Useful inorganic oxides preferably have a surface area
5 in the range 10 to 700 m²/g, a pore volume in the range 0.1 to 4 mL/g, and a pore diameter from about 10 to 1000 Angstroms.

The inorganic oxide is preferably alumina, silica, titania, zirconia, niobia, a tantalum oxide, a molybdenum oxide, a tungsten oxide, a rare earth oxide (in particular ceria or neodymium oxide), or a mixed oxide or a composite oxide of
10 any two or more thereof, e.g. silica-alumina, ceria-zirconia or alumina-ceria-zirconia. The inorganic oxide can also be a zeolite.

The N₂O-producing catalyst is preferably prepared by adding a manganese compound (such as manganese acetate) to the inorganic oxide by any known means, the manner of addition is not considered to be particularly
15 critical. For example, the manganese compound may be added to the inorganic oxide by impregnation, adsorption, ion-exchange, incipient wetness, precipitation, or the like to produce the N₂O-producing catalyst.

The N₂O-producing catalyst is preferably located in or on a flow-through monolith substrate.

20 The flow-through substrate is preferably a ceramic or metallic substrate. In particular, the flow-through substrate is a flow-through monolith preferably having a honeycomb structure with many small, parallel thin-walled channels running axially through the substrate and extending throughout the substrate. The channel cross-section of the substrate may be any shape, but is preferably
25 square, sinusoidal, triangular, rectangular, hexagonal, trapezoidal, circular, or oval.

The ceramic substrate may be made of any suitable refractory material, e.g., alumina, silica, titania, ceria, zirconia, magnesia, zeolites, silicon nitride, silicon carbide, zirconium silicates, magnesium silicates, aluminosilicates and
30 metallo aluminosilicates (such as cordierite and spodumene), or a mixture or mixed oxide of any two or more thereof. Cordierite, a magnesium aluminosilicate, and silicon carbide are particularly preferred. The metallic substrate may be made of any suitable metal, and in particular heat-resistant metals and metal alloys such as titanium and stainless steel as well as ferritic

alloys containing iron, nickel, chromium, and/or aluminum in addition to other trace metals.

Preferably, the N₂O-producing catalyst is coated onto the flow-through substrate by any known means, more preferably the N₂O-producing catalyst is deposited on the substrate using washcoat procedures.

The washcoating is preferably performed by first slurring finely divided particles of the N₂O-producing catalyst in an appropriate solvent, preferably water, to form the slurry. The slurry preferably contains between 5 to 70 weight percent solids, more preferably between 10 to 50 weight percent.

Preferably, the N₂O-producing catalyst particles are milled or subject to another comminution process in order to ensure that substantially all of the solid particles have a particle size of less than 20 microns in an average diameter, prior to forming the slurry.

Additional components, such as stabilizers or promoters may also be incorporated in the slurry as a mixture of water soluble or water-dispersible compounds or complexes.

The substrate may then be coated one or more times with the slurry such that there will be deposited on the substrate the desired loading of catalytic materials. The coated substrate is typically dried and then calcined by heating at an elevated temperature. Preferably, the calcination occurs at 400 to 600°C for approximately 1 to 8 hours.

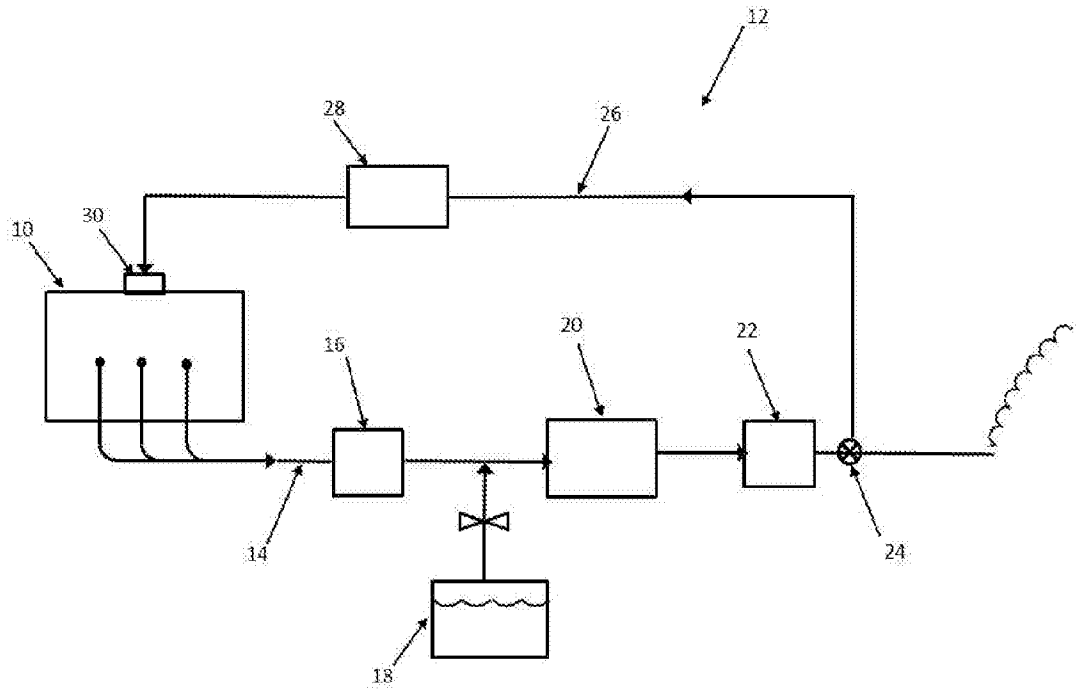
FIG. 1 shows one embodiment of the invention, showing a cross section of the apparatus. The apparatus comprises an engine **10** and an exhaust system **12**. The exhaust system comprises a conduit **14** linking the engine to an optional diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC) **16**. The exhaust gas from the engine **10** flows to the optional DOC **16** then passes to a selective catalytic reduction filter (SCRTM catalyst) **20** before passing to an optional ammonia oxidation catalyst **22**. The optional nitrogenous reductant means **18** is utilized to add a nitrogenous reductant such as urea to the exhaust gas flowing into the selective catalytic reduction filter (SCRTM catalyst) **20**. The low pressure exhaust gas recirculation circuit **26** comprises an exhaust gas recirculation valve **24**. Disposed within the EGR circuit **26**, N₂O-producing catalyst **28** is utilized to convert NH₃ and NO₂ in the EGR circuit to produce N₂O, which is then fed back to an intake **30** of the engine **10**.

We claim:

1. An exhaust system for an internal combustion engine, the system comprising a particulate filter, one or more NO_x reduction catalysts, and a low pressure exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) circuit for connecting the exhaust system downstream of the filter and the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts to an intake of the engine, wherein the EGR circuit comprises a N₂O-producing catalyst.
2. The exhaust system of claim 1, wherein a NO_x reduction catalyst or the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts is located on the filter.
3. The exhaust system of claim 1, wherein a NO_x reduction catalyst or the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts are a selective catalytic reduction catalyst.
4. The exhaust system of claim 3, wherein the selective catalytic reduction catalyst comprises a transition metal and molecular sieve.
5. The exhaust system of claim 3 or claim 4, further comprising a means for introducing a nitrogenous reductant into the exhaust system upstream of the selective catalytic reduction catalyst.
6. The exhaust system of claim 5, wherein the nitrogenous reductant is ammonia, hydrazine or an ammonia precursor selected from the group consisting of urea ((NH₂)₂CO), ammonium carbonate, ammonium carbamate, ammonium hydrogen carbonate and ammonium formate.
7. The exhaust system of claims 1 to 6, wherein a NO_x reduction catalyst or the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts is a lean NO_x trap.
8. The exhaust system of any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the N₂O-producing catalyst comprises manganese supported on an inorganic oxide.
9. The exhaust system of any of claims 1 to 8, wherein the N₂O-producing catalyst is located in or on a flow-through monolith substrate.
10. The exhaust system of any of claims 1 to 9, further comprising a NO oxidation catalyst located upstream of the particulate filter.
11. The exhaust system of any of claims 1 to 10, further comprising an ammonia oxidation catalyst disposed downstream of the one or more NO_x reduction catalysts and upstream of the EGR, relative to the direction of exhaust gas flow through the system.

12. The exhaust system of claim 11, wherein a NO_x reduction catalyst and the ammonia oxidation catalyst are loaded onto the same substrate, wherein the front is loaded with the NO_x reduction catalyst and the rear is loaded with the ammonia oxidation catalyst.

FIG. 1
Exhaust System



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER INV. F02M25/07 F01N3/20 F01N3/023 F01N3/035 F01N3/08 F01N3/10 B01D53/94 B01J29/00 F02M25/10 B01J23/34 F01N13/00		
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) F02M F01N B01D B01J		
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) EPO-Internal, WPI Data		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 2012/120347 A1 (JOHNSON MATTHEY PLC [GB]; CHANDLER GUY RICHARD [GB]; COLLINS NEIL ROBE) 13 September 2012 (2012-09-13) cited in the application page 3, line 8 - page 6, line 6 -----	1-7,9-12
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A	US 7 299 793 B1 (TYO MATTHEW A [US] ET AL) 27 November 2007 (2007-11-27) claim 5 -----	1
☐ 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 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 22 April 2015		Date of mailing of the international search report 07/05/2015
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016		Authorized officer Torle, Erik

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

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