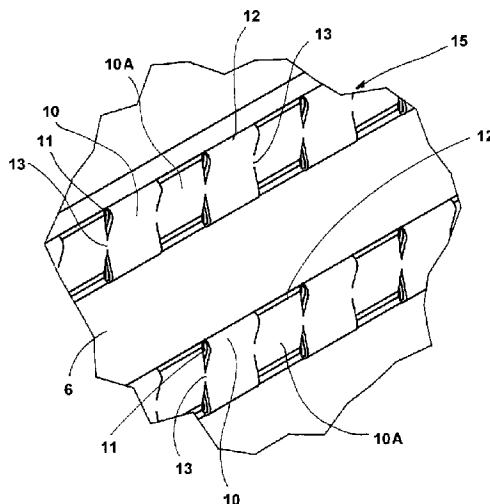




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(54) Titre : BARRE DE STRUCTURE DE SUPPORT POUR FAUX-PLAFOND ET PROCEDE DE TRAITEMENT POUR TRAVAILLER LA BARRE
(54) Title: BAR OF A SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR A FALSE CEILING AND WORKING PROCESS FOR WORKING THE BAR



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

The present disclosure relates to a bar (1) of a support structure for a false ceiling. The bar has an elongated shape along a longitudinal direction (L) and includes at least two sheet metal portions (5, 6) located side by side or overlapped, in contact or adherent, with each other along said longitudinal direction (L), or short side direction. In the bar a transverse direction (T), or short-side direction, extending transverse to, or intersecting, said longitudinal direction (L) is defined. At least one of the sheet metal portions (5, 6) has cuts (9) defining partially cut parts (10, 10A, 11, 11A), wherein a partially cut part (10, 10A, 11, 11A) of said at least one of the sheet metal portions (5, 6) protrudes towards the other of said sheet metal portions (5, 6) in a thickness direction so as to determine an interference of parts in the thickness direction. The cuts (9) are arranged, are directed, or extend along said transverse direction (T) and the partially cut parts (10, 10A, 11, 11A) have, when viewed in perspective, an at least partially curvilinear or concave profile.

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ABSTRACT

The present disclosure relates to a bar (1) of a support structure for a false ceiling. The bar has an elongated shape along a longitudinal direction (L) and includes at least two sheet metal portions (5, 6) located side by side or overlapped, in contact or adherent, with each other along said longitudinal direction (L), or short side direction. In the bar a transverse direction (T), or short-side direction, extending transverse to, or intersecting, said longitudinal direction (L) is defined. At least one of the sheet metal portions (5, 6) has cuts (9) defining partially cut parts (10, 10A, 11, 11A), wherein a partially cut part (10, 10A, 11, 11A) of said at least one of the sheet metal portions (5, 6) protrudes towards the other of said sheet metal portions (5, 6) in a thickness direction so as to determine an interference of parts in the thickness direction. The cuts (9) are arranged, are directed, or extend along said transverse direction (T) and the partially cut parts (10, 10A, 11, 11A) have, when viewed in perspective, an at least partially curvilinear or concave profile.

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**BAR OF A SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR A FALSE CEILING AND WORKING
PROCESS FOR WORKING THE BAR**

DESCRIPTION

The present disclosure refers generally to support structures, or load-bearing
5 structures, for false ceilings, i.e. support structures for sheets or panels placed
underneath a regular ceiling and connected to the ceiling by means of a so-called
hanger, steel rods, a wire, bars or other coupling articles.

Support structures for false ceilings comprise a support frame intended to
support or retain panels or sheets, wherein the frame includes metal bars joined
10 together and intersecting by means of a special joint so as to ideally form a grid,
which defines a supporting plane for the panels or sheets of the false ceiling.

Even more particularly, the present disclosure refers to a metal bar and a
working process for the metal bar.

It is known that a metal bar for support structures for false ceilings is an article
15 of elongated shape having a T-shaped or a U-shaped or C-shaped section, or other
T shapes, which is obtained by folding a metal sheet, so as to obtain overlapping of
two sheet metal portions, such as to define sheet metal portions which are adjacent
and/or located side by side.

In practice, the metal bar includes at least two sheet metal portions, or walls,
20 located side by side and overlapped along a longitudinal direction, or short-side
direction, of the bar.

It is also known that there is the need to use metal sheets for the
manufacturing of metal bars that are made of a material which is as light as possible
and of reduced thickness, so as to affect as little as possible the weight and the cost
25 of the support structure.

However, the use of lightweight materials is often incompatible with the
possibility of ensuring an adequate mechanical strength and stability performance of
the metal bar on-site. In particular, it has been noted that a metal bar manufactured
in the manner described above, wherein two sheet metal walls are longitudinally
30 located side by side, is subject to torsion about a longitudinal axis when subjected to
load. As can be understood, such a torsional tendency influences negatively the
mechanical performance and the load applied to the bar itself.

The present disclosure is based on a recognition by the inventor, that the
torsional tendency is mainly due to a tendency of the two sheet metal portions to
35 slide relative to one another. Consequently, to reduce the torsional tendency and
increase the stiffness of the bar in the longitudinal direction, the idea which has
occurred is that of preventing sliding of the sheet metal parts.

Some solutions for joining together the two sheet metal portions could include bonding or welding. Such techniques are, however, very expensive and must be adapted from time to time to the type of bar being manufactured, i.e. to the shape, size and material of the metal bar.

5 Moreover the present disclosure is based on a recognition by the inventor that the two sheet metal portions, if not suitably connected together, may tend to become disengaged from each other and remain mutually spaced. In this condition of "disengagement", the bar is practically free during torsion, making ineffective any attempt to create friction or interference between the two sheet metal portions of the
10 bar. Moreover the two sheet metal portions, since they are separated and connected only in the folding zone, are subject to possible relative movements.

The present disclosure stems from the technical problem of providing a metal bar for a false ceiling and a working process for working a metal bar which are able to overcome the drawbacks mentioned above in relation to the prior art and/or to
15 achieve further advantages or features.

In particular, the subject-matter of the present disclosure represents an improvement to a metal bar according to the international patent application PCT/IB2012/053862 dated 27 July 2012.

In particular, according to some aspects of the present disclosure, in order to
20 join or connect together the at least two sheet metal portions, a half cut is made in at least one of the sheet metal portions, such as to obtain half-cut parts of the two sheet metal portions wherein such half-cut parts may protrude, at least partially, in a thickness direction towards the other of the two sheet metal portions and create an interference. In practice, at least one of the two sheet metal portions has one or
25 more pairs of cuts defining partially cut parts that, as a result of the cut, are partially cut and shifted towards the other sheet metal portion. More particularly both the sheet metal portions have cuts which are arranged, directed or extend in said transverse direction. Said cuts define partially cut parts which have, when viewed in perspective, a profile which is at least partially curvilinear or concave. Pairs of the
30 partially cut parts are therefore overlapped and shifted in pairs in the thickness direction with respect to an adjacent zone of the respective sheet metal portion.

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Even more particularly, of each pair of parts overlapped and shifted in the thickness direction, a part of a sheet metal portion is protruding towards the outside with respect to said thickness and defines a free zone in said thickness and at least the concave or curved profile of the other partially cut part of the other of said sheet metal portions (5, 6) is arranged at least partially in said free zone of the thickness of the one sheet metal portion, creating an interference between the two sheet metal portions in the transverse direction.

Within the scope of the present disclosure, the term "half-cut" indicates a process such as to create in at least one sheet metal portion "partially cut parts", therefore parts partially joined to a remaining part of the bar, wherein an area joined with the remaining part of the bar - where in fact the half-cut part deforms with respect to the remaining part of the bar - defines a sort of hinge line or zone.

According to an aspect of the present disclosure, to counteract the bar torsion and to obtain a bar of satisfactory torsional rigidity, the cuts are arranged, or extend, along a transverse direction of the bar (or short-side direction), i.e. in a transverse direction with respect to the longitudinal direction (or long-side direction). A transverse direction, or short-side direction, may be orthogonal, or oblique with respect to the longitudinal direction of the bar, in fact it is a direction that "crosses" or "intersects" the longitudinal direction. The transverse direction may be understood as being a direction which is straight or with a wavy or curved progression.

In particular, the extension of the cuts in the transverse direction is such as to create an interference (so-called "anti-torsion" interference) between the sheet metal portions extending in said transverse direction. As mentioned above, such an interference of parts in said direction, has proved to be particularly effective for preventing or reducing torsion of the metal bar.

According to another aspect of the present disclosure, in order to counteract further torsion of the bar and obtain a bar of satisfactory torsional rigidity, the partially cut parts have, when viewed from the side of the bar thickness, namely when viewed in perspective or in vertical section, a curvilinear profile, namely a profile which is not linear and not straight.

The curvilinear profile may be felt when passing a finger over the outer surface of the profile along the zone of the half-cut parts.

As a result of the profile which is not linear and not straight, it is possible to obtain a further interference or clinching effect (so-called "anti-disengagement" interference) between the sheet metal portions in the thickness direction, said clinching effect occurring in a curved or folded zone of the partially cut part, and consequently a further connection between the sheet metal portions of the metal

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bar. In particular, the author of the present patent application has also found that with such a bar with half-cut parts having a curvilinear profile it is possible to obtain a stable engagement of the sheet metal portions and prevent accidental separation of the sheet metal portions during use.

5 Within the scope of present disclosure the term "curvilinear profile" is to be understood as meaning a profile which can be obtained by means a half-cut with a punch having a head with a profile which is not straight, for example V-shaped, W-shaped or with a concave C-shape, or with a variety of such profiles, in the transverse direction. Consequently, the half-cut parts, when observed viewing the
10 thickness of the bar from one side, or obliquely, have a similar profile which is not straight, for example V-shaped, or W-shaped or with a concave C-shape, or has a variety of such profiles in the transverse direction.

 The curvilinear profile may also have a sinusoidal profile. It is possible, therefore, to obtain both an "anti-torsion" effect between the sheet metal portions
15 and an "anti-disengagement" effect between the sheet metal portions.

 In particular the author of the present disclosure has recognized that, to obtain the aforementioned "anti-torsion" effect and "anti-disengagement" effect between the sheet metal portions, it is preferable to make at least three, or even better five, cuts in succession along the bar so as to obtain at least two, or four, half-cut parts,
20 also called punched zones or points, in sequence along the bar.

 In some embodiments, the cuts or the associated partially cut parts may be made in such a way that the projection towards the other of the sheet metal portions, and the relative interference, does not extend in the transverse direction over the entire height, or thickness, of the half-sheared part. In practice, the half-sheared part may protrude only partially towards the other sheet metal portion, for
25 example, in the region of said hinge line area, or deformed area. In some embodiments, such hinge line area coincides with a corner area of the half-cut part.

 In one embodiment, the cuts are made in pairs and staggered on opposite sides of the bar, so as to form pairs of partially cut and interfering parts of one and
30 the other sheet metal portion, which alternate in the longitudinal direction. In practice, in some embodiments, each of the at least two sheet metal portions have pairs of adjacent cuts. The pairs of cuts are two by two staggered in said longitudinal direction and on opposite sides. Such cuts determine an alternate shifting in opposite directions of pairs of partially cut parts. This alternate shifting allows an
35 increased interference between the parts to be obtained.

 The pairs are therefore alternately shifted towards the one sheet metal portion and the other sheet metal portion. A sequence of half-cuts that defines an

interference line or seam line is therefore performed.

In an alternative embodiment, the cuts are carried out on a single or same part of the bar, therefore only on one of the two sheet metal portions, so as to form pairs of alternating successive cuts on at least one of the two sheet metal portions, resulting in a partial cut or a deformation of the other sheet metal portion. It follows that, in this embodiment, the pairs of cuts are spaced by areas where there are no cuts.

The seam line may be a continuous or broken line. Several seam lines may also be provided.

In one embodiment, the cuts are made so as to have a depth at least equal to the thickness of the respective sheet metal portion.

In one embodiment, the cuts are made so as to have a depth less than half the thickness of the respective sheet metal portion.

In a further embodiment, the cuts are made so as to have a depth greater than half the thickness of the relative sheet metal portion, and enable a satisfactory interference to be obtained.

According to some aspects of the present disclosure, the aforementioned double "anti-torsion" and "anti-disengagement" effect may be obtained in any zone of the bar where the cuts are made.

For example in one embodiment of the present disclosure, the bar includes an integral engaging element located at one end of the bar and forming an integral part of the bar.

The cuts according to the present disclosure may be made in the integral engaging element so as to connect by means of mutual clinching the sheet metal portions which define the integral engaging element and prevent mutual separation and opening of the sheet metal portions which could result in the integral engaging element being unutilizable.

In accordance with some embodiments of the present disclosure, the bar is made of highly resistant material, as defined in the international patent application PCT/IB2012/056221 in the name of the same inventor of the present patent application and cited herein in its entirety by way of a reference.

With this material it is possible to obtain a bar for a false ceiling which has a very small thickness, for example below 0.25 mm and up to 0.10 mm, and at the same time a high strength which may withstand punching without undesirable deformations despite a small thickness. In other words, the inventor of the present patent application has realized that a steel bar having the aforementioned mechanical characteristics may be punched, despite having a small thickness,

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without the risk of deformations which may adversely affect the mechanical performance of the bar.

Other features and the modes of use of the subject of the present disclosure will become clear from the following detailed description of a number of preferred
 5 embodiments thereof, provided by way of a non-limiting example. It is clear, however, that each embodiment may have one or more of the advantages listed above; in any case it is not required that each embodiment should have simultaneously all the advantages listed.

Reference will be made to the figures of the annexed drawings, wherein:

- 10 - Figure 1 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings, according to one embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figure 2 shows a view of a detail II of Figure 1;
- Figure 3 shows a side view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings, according to one embodiment of the present disclosure;
- 15 - Figure 4A shows a longitudinal section along the line IVA-IVA of Figure 3;
- Figure 4B shows a longitudinal section along the line IVB-IVB of Figure 3;
- Figure 4C shows a longitudinal section along the line IVC-IVC of Figure 3;
- Figure 5 shows a vertically sectioned view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure;
- 20 - Figure 6 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings, according to a further embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figure 7 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings according to a further embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figure 8 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false
 25 ceilings according to a further embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figure 9 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings according to a further embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figure 10 shows a view, on a larger scale, of a detail X of Figure 9;
- Figure 11 shows a view, on a larger scale, of a detail of a bar according to an
 30 embodiment of the present disclosure, which is an alternative to the detail in Figure 10;
- Figure 12 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings according to a further embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figure 13 shows a longitudinally sectioned view of the bar shown in Figure 12;
- 35 - Figure 14 shows a perspective view of a bar of a support structure for false ceilings according to a further embodiment of the present disclosure;
- Figures 15-17 show longitudinally sectioned views of a bar according to a

corresponding number of embodiments of the present disclosure;

- Figures 18-23 show respective perspective views of bars for a support structure for false ceilings, according to further embodiments of the present disclosure.

With reference to the attached figures, a bar for forming a frame of a support
5 structure of a false ceiling according to some embodiments of the present disclosure is denoted by the reference number 1. The bar is adapted to be joined to another metal bar 1 by means of a clip 2 fixed to one end of the metal bar 1. For example, more particularly, the clip 2 may be inserted into a slot (not shown) of a second metal bar 1 to be engaged with an edge that defines the slot in the metal bar 1 so as
10 to create a join between two metal bars 1.

In the example, the metal bar 1 has a T-shaped section and is obtained by folding a metal sheet, so as to obtain overlapping of at least two sheet metal portions 5, 6. The metal bar 1 may be different from the one illustrated, for example, with a different section, such as for example a C-shaped or U-shaped section, or
15 even with a further different section/T-shape.

What is important in the scope of the present disclosure is that the metal bar 1 should include at least two sheet metal portions 5, 6, or walls, located side by side and/or overlapped, as shown for example in Figure 5. The two sheet metal portions 5, 6 may be adherent, i.e. in contact, with one another.

20 The metal bar 1 extends in a prevailing direction, also called longitudinal direction, which is indicated by a broken line in Figure 3 and denoted by the reference letter L. In other words, the metal bar is an elongated body wherein a long side, extending in said longitudinal direction, and a short side, extending transversely with respect to the long side, are distinguished.

25 With respect to this longitudinal direction L, in the metal bar 1 it is possible to identify a transverse direction T (extending from a long side to the other long side of the bar, when viewing Figures 3 and 8) which traverses, crosses or intersects the longitudinal direction and which consequently extends from a base area 8 (first long side) of the metal bar 1 to a top area 7 (second long side) of the metal bar 1.

30 Such a transverse direction T may be understood as being a direction orthogonal to the longitudinal direction L or also be understood as being a direction extending obliquely and therefore forming an acute angle with the longitudinal direction L, in a short-side direction of the bar. The transverse direction T may be partially curved or completely curved.

35 According to one aspect of the present disclosure, at least one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 includes one or more half-cut areas, i.e. incomplete cut areas (such as to leave a joining zone), wherein the half-cut extends in the transverse

direction T of the metal bar 1. More particularly, at least one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 includes one or more parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A partially sheared by means of a partial cut, i.e. by one or more cuts 9 which determines a shifting, with bending, of that part 10, 10A, 11, 11A of a sheet metal portion 5, 6 towards the other sheet metal portion 5, 6. Such a part 10, 10A, 11, 11A of a sheet metal portion 5, 6 is shifted so as to protrude and interfere with the other sheet metal portion 5, 6. In other words, the partially cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A of a sheet metal portion 6 is shifted so as to occupy a thickness zone of the other sheet metal portion 5, 6. In particular, the cuts 9 carried out in the transverse direction T are such as to determine a shifting or bending of the partially cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A of at least one of the sheet metal portions 5, 6 towards the other sheet metal portion 5, 6, and a consequent projection towards the other sheet metal portion 5, 6.

It should be noted that the interference of a half-cut part with respect to the other sheet metal portion may occur along the whole of the cut 9, or only in a bending zone, for example in a corner zone of the half-cut part.

In practice, one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 includes a part 10, 10A, 11, 11A, which being partially cut, is shifted towards the other sheet metal portion 5, 6. It follows that the partially cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A of one of the sheet metal portions 5, 6 is able to interfere with the other sheet metal portion 5, 6, and such interference occurs, or extends, mainly in a transverse direction T.

It is pointed out moreover that, in addition to the bending zone 12, each half-cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A has an uncut central zone 13 joined to the remaining part of the metal sheet 5, 6. The central zone 13 of all the partially cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A defines a central line, which is a line of symmetry, for the partially cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A and which extends parallel to the longitudinal direction L. According to one aspect of the present disclosure, the partially cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A has, when viewed from a thickness side, or in perspective, or in vertical section, of the bar 1, a "curvilinear profile", namely a profile which is not straight, for example V-shaped, as shown in Figure 5. In other embodiments, the partially cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A has a W-shaped or concave C-shaped profile, or a variety of such profiles repeated in the transverse direction.

It can be seen that, in one embodiment of the present disclosure, such as the embodiment shown in the drawings, the central zone 13 coincides with a zone of maximum concavity, or curved zone, of the profile of the partially cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A, for example with the tip zone of the V shape.

Owing to an interference in this transverse direction T, together with the aforementioned curvilinear profile, it is possible to minimize the possibility of torsion

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of the metal bar 1 about an axis parallel to the longitudinal direction L, compared to metal bars made of the same material and with the same thickness of sheet metal or other characteristics, such as the elastic limit and tensile strength. In other words, the extension of the cuts 9 in the transverse direction of the metal bar 1, together
5 with the aforementioned curvilinear profile, determines the formation of half-sheared parts protruding, with a maximum interference owing to the curvilinear profile, in said transverse direction.

Such half-sheared parts therefore create projections, which are V-shaped and have a similar curvature, in the transverse direction and a consequent interference
10 that is able to create an effective obstacle to relative slipping of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6, and consequently an effective impediment to torsion of the bar about an axis parallel to the longitudinal direction L (anti-torsion effect).

This interference, in addition to preventing relative slipping of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6, results in clinching together of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 (anti-disengagement effect) such as to prevent also fortuitous disengagement of the
15 sheet metal portions 5, 6.

In some embodiments, such as, by way of example, the one shown in Figures 1-5, each of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 comprises the aforementioned cuts 9 defining the partially sheared parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A, i.e. obtained by means of a
20 partial cut.

In particular, each sheet metal portion 5, 6 has pairs of adjacent cuts 9, wherein each of said pairs of cuts 9 defines the part 10, 10A, 11, 11A (half-sheared or half-cut part 10, 10A, 11, 11A).

In the example of embodiment in Figures 1-5, the pairs of cuts 9 of one of the two
25 sheet metal portions 5, 6 alternate (are staggered) with respect to the pair of cuts of the other of the two sheet metal portions. In other words, the cuts 9 are made in pairs, alternatively on one side and on the other side of the bar, so as to form pairs of staggered cuts. In practice, in some embodiments, such as those illustrated, the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 have pairs of adjacent/staggered cuts in said
30 longitudinal direction L and on opposite sides. Such cuts 9 determine an alternate shifting in opposite directions of overlapped pairs of partially cut parts, as can be seen in Figure 2 and Figure 5. This alternate shifting enables an increased interference between the parts to be obtained.

It follows that, with reference to Figures 4A, 4B, 4C and 5, according to some
35 aspects of the present disclosure, each of said sheet metal portions 5, 6 has a thickness S such that a direction which crosses the thickness S is a thickness direction DS. The partially cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A of Figure 4c are overlapped in

said thickness direction DS and are shifted in pairs in the thickness direction DS with respect to an adjacent area of the respective sheet metal portion 5, 6. In particular, the partially cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A are shifted in pairs in the thickness direction DS and one of the partially shifted parts 10A, 11A is protruding towards the outside
5 with respect to said thickness S and defines a free area in said thickness S. The other of said partially cut parts 10, 11, with the respective curved profile, is arranged at least partially in the free area of the thickness S of the one sheet metal portion 5, 6, so as to create the interference in the longitudinal direction and in the transverse direction. Such interference allows a satisfactory anti-torsion action to be obtained.

10 It may be noted that, in the exemplary embodiment of Figures 1-5, the pairs of parts 10, 11A and 11, 10A follow one another adjacent without interruption in the bar 1. In practice the cuts 9 are in each case common to two pairs of half-cut parts which are adjoining in the sequence.

In some embodiments, such as those illustrated in Figures 12 and 13, only
15 one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 includes the cuts 9 defining the partially cut parts 10 (sheared by a partial cut) which determine a shifting and possible cut of a corresponding part 11A of the other sheet metal portion.

In particular, a single sheet metal portion 5, 6 has one or more, for example pairs of adjacent cuts 9, wherein each of said pairs of cuts 9 defines pairs of parts.
20 For example, the pairs of cuts 9 of one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 are made at intervals along the longitudinal direction at a constant pitch, or with a given pitch, so as to define a plurality of pairs of cuts 9. In practice, it can be noted that the pairs of parts 10, 11A follow one another spaced at regular intervals. Owing to the geometry of the parts described above, the pairs of parts 10, 11A alternate with
25 parts 110, 111 of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 which are not cut, i.e. have not been worked.

The spacing between successive pairs 10, 110, 11A, 111, denoted by l in Figure 13 corresponds, for example, to the mutual distance d between the two cuts 9 of each pair. In other words, pairs of cuts 9 are made only on one side of the bar,
30 at more or less regular intervals. In this embodiment, the cuts 9 determine a shift in the same direction of the parts 10, 11A.

It follows that, with reference to Figure 13, according to some aspects of the present disclosure, each of said sheet metal portions 5, 6 has a thickness S such that a direction which crosses the thickness S is a thickness direction DS. The
35 partially cut parts 10, 11A of Figure 13 are overlapped in said thickness direction DS and are shifted in pairs in the thickness direction DS with respect to an adjacent area of the respective sheet metal portion 5, 6. In particular, the partially cut parts

10, 11A are shifted in pairs in the thickness direction S and one of the partially shifted parts 11A is protruding towards the outside with respect to said thickness S and defines a free area in said thickness S. The other of said parts 10 is arranged at least partially in the free area of the thickness S, so as to create interference
5 between the sheet metal portions 5, 6.

In other embodiments, such as that shown in Figure 14, it is also possible to provide a combination of the two preceding embodiments, wherein the pairs of cuts 9 may be made at intervals along the longitudinal direction at a constant pitch, or with a given pitch, as in the embodiment of Figure 13 and, at the same time,
10 alternatively on the one and on the other sheet metal portion 5, 6 as in the embodiment of Figures 1-5.

It follows that, in some embodiments, the cuts 9 define a sequence or series of half-cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A, which alternate continuously or at intervals, so as to form a half-cut line. Such a half-cut line is also called, by analogy of ideas, a seam
15 line or seam.

The seam line 15 or half-cut line may be in turn continuous, as shown in Figure 1, Figure 7 and Figure 8, or may be a discontinuous line, or a broken line, as shown in Figures 6 and 9 and Figures 18-20.

Furthermore, according to further aspects of the present disclosure, the metal
20 bar 1 may include two or more series or half-cut lines 15 arranged on two different levels in said transverse direction, comprised between the base area 8 and the top area 7, as shown by way of example in Figure 17 or Figure 18.

Even more particularly in order to adjust and control a degree of interference between the first sheet metal portion 5 and the second sheet metal portion 6, it is
25 possible, for each of the embodiments of the present disclosure such as those described above or a combination thereof, to adjust the depth of cut 9 with respect to the thickness S or height of the sheet metal portion 5, 6 of the bar.

It is to be understood that the depth or penetration of the cut 9 with respect to the thickness is chosen according to the interference capacity (and therefore the anti-torsion capacity) of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 which is to be obtained
30 and depends on the thickness of each sheet metal portion 5, 6, on the material of the sheet metal portion 5, 6, on its elastic limit and on its tensile strength, or on the presence of possible surface machining on the faces of the sheet metal portions 5, 6.

35 A working process for working a metal bar 1 according to an exemplary embodiment of the present disclosure is illustrated below. Such process may be used to make any of the bars described above.

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A metal bar 1 is provided with for example a T-shaped section or another section and is obtained by bending a metal sheet, so as to have a pair of portions or sheet metal walls 5, 6 which are overlapped.

One, both, or more, portions or sheet metal walls 5, 6 are subjected to a partial cut by means of a device known to a person skilled in the art, suitable for making partial cuts in sheet metal. In particular, a punch with a head having a profile which is not straight, for example V-shaped or W-shaped or in the shape of a concave C, or a variety of these shapes which are repeated in the transverse direction, is used.

The partial cut is performed so as to make staggered pairs of cuts 9 on opposite sides of the two sheet metal portions 5, on the one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 towards the other of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6, such as those visible in Figure 5, or pairs of cuts 9 at regular distances on only one of the two sheet metal portions 5, 6, or cuts as in any one of the embodiments of Figures 12 and 13. These cuts 9 extend, i.e. are directed, in the transverse direction T of the metal bar 1. The half-cut parts, when viewed in the thickness direction DS, have a profile which is not straight, for example V-shaped or W-shaped or with a concave C-shape, or with a variety of such shapes which are repeated in the transverse direction.

The curvilinear profile may also be a sinusoidal profile.

More particularly, the half-cut is made so as to define pairs of half-cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A, which in the exemplary embodiment of Figures 1 to 5 alternate continuously in the longitudinal direction and pairs of parts 10, 11 which in the exemplary embodiment of Figure 10 or 11 are arranged at regular intervals in the longitudinal direction. Owing to the half-cut in the transverse direction an intersection in the transverse direction and in the longitudinal direction between the two sheet metal portions 5, 6 is produced, thus preventing relative sliding of said portions.

More particularly, with reference to Figures 9 to 11, it should be noted that, according to one aspect of the present disclosure, in order to obtain an effective interference between the sheet metal portions and the aforementioned "anti-torsion" effect and "anti-disengagement" effect between the metal portions, it is preferable to make at least three, or even better five, cuts 9 in succession along the bar so as to obtain at least two, or four, half-cut parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A in sequence along the bar 1.

It should be noted, moreover, that the shape of the parts 10, 10A, 11, 11A, when viewed from one side of the bar 1 is substantially rectangular. This shape is not to be considered essential for the present disclosure. Many forms or different

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shapes of half-sheared parts may be provided. It is important that the half-cut is performed to art, making sure that any play resulting from machining is very small and that interference between the parts is ensured.

5 In accordance with further embodiments, not shown, instead of the clip 2, the bar includes an integral engaging element located at one end of the bar and forming an integral part of the bar.

10 The cuts 9 according to the present disclosure may be performed in the integral engaging element so as to connect together by means of mutual clinching the sheet metal portions which define the integral engaging element and prevent mutual separation and opening of the sheet metal portions, which would result in the integral engaging element being unutilizable.

15 The subject-matter of the present disclosure has been described hitherto with reference to preferred embodiments thereof. It is understood that there may be other embodiments which relate to the same inventive concept, all falling within the protective scope of the claims set forth hereinafter.

CLAIMS

1. A bar for a support structure of a false ceiling, the bar being elongated in a longitudinal direction (L) and including at least two sheet metal portions located side by side or overlapping, in contact, or adherent, with each other along the longitudinal
5 direction (L), or long-side direction,

wherein, in the bar, a transverse direction (T), or short-side direction, extending transverse to, or intersecting, the longitudinal direction (L), is defined,

wherein both the sheet metal portions have cuts which are arranged, are directed, or extend, along the transverse direction (T), the cuts define partially cut
10 parts, pairs of partially cut parts of the sheet metal portions being overlapped and shifted in pairs in a thickness direction (DS) with respect to an adjacent area of the respective sheet metal portion, and

wherein, of each pair of parts overlapped and shifted in the thickness direction (DS), a part of a sheet metal portion is protruding outwards with respect to the
15 thickness (S) and defines a free zone in the thickness (S), and at least the concave or curved profile of the other partially cut part of the other of the sheet metal portions is arranged at least partially in the free zone of the thickness (S) of the one sheet metal portion, creating an interference between the two sheet metal portions in the transverse direction (T),

20 wherein the partially cut parts have along the transverse direction and, when viewed in perspective, a profile which is at least partially curvilinear or concave, and

wherein each pair of the partially cut parts have respective uncut central zones defining a central line intersecting the cuts and joined with a remaining part of the sheet metal portion.

25 2. The bar according to claim 1, wherein the curvilinear profile is V-shaped or W shaped or with a concave C-shape or has a variety of the curvilinear shapes which are repeated in the transverse direction.

3. The bar according to claim 1 or 2, whereon the curvilinear profile is symmetrical with respect to the central line.

30 4. The bar according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the central zone

coincides with a zone of maximum concavity, or maximum bending or curvature, of the curvilinear profile.

5. The bar according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the pairs of the partially cut parts alternate along the longitudinal direction (L), wherein a first pair of the partially cut parts is in a shifted condition towards the one sheet metal portion,
5 and wherein a second pair of the partially cut parts is in a shifted condition towards the other sheet metal portion.

6. The bar according to claim 5, wherein the pairs of the partially cut parts are distributed along the longitudinal direction (L) adjacent,

10 wherein the first pair of the partially cut parts shifted towards the one sheet metal portion is adjacent and in contact with the second pair of the partially cut parts shifted towards the other sheet metal portion.

7. The bar according to claim 5 or claim 6, wherein at least two or four partially cut parts of the two sheet metal portions are arranged in sequence along the
15 longitudinal direction (L).

8. The bar according to any one of claims 5 to 7, wherein a cut is common to two pairs of partially cut parts which are adjoining in sequence.

9. A support structure for a false ceiling including a metal bar according to any one of claims 1 to 8.

20 10. A process for working a metal bar, comprising:

providing a bar elongated along a longitudinal direction or long side (L) and including at least two sheet metal portions located side by side in contact with each other along the longitudinal direction (L),

cutting at least partially at least one of the sheet metal portions in a
25 transverse direction (T), or short side, transverse with respect to, or intersecting, the longitudinal direction, so as to define a partially cut part along the transverse direction (T),

wherein both the sheet metal portions are cut such that pairs of partially cut parts of the sheet metal portions are overlapped and shifted in pairs in the thickness

direction (DS) with respect to an adjacent zone of the respective sheet metal portion, and so that, of each pair of parts overlapped and shifted in pairs in the thickness direction (DS), a part of a sheet metal portion projects outwardly with respect to the thickness (S) and defines a free zone in the thickness (S) and at least
5 the concave or curved profile of the other partially cut part of the other of the sheet metal portions is arranged at least partially in the free zone of the thickness (S) of the one sheet metal portion, creating an interference between the two sheet metal portions in the transverse direction (T),

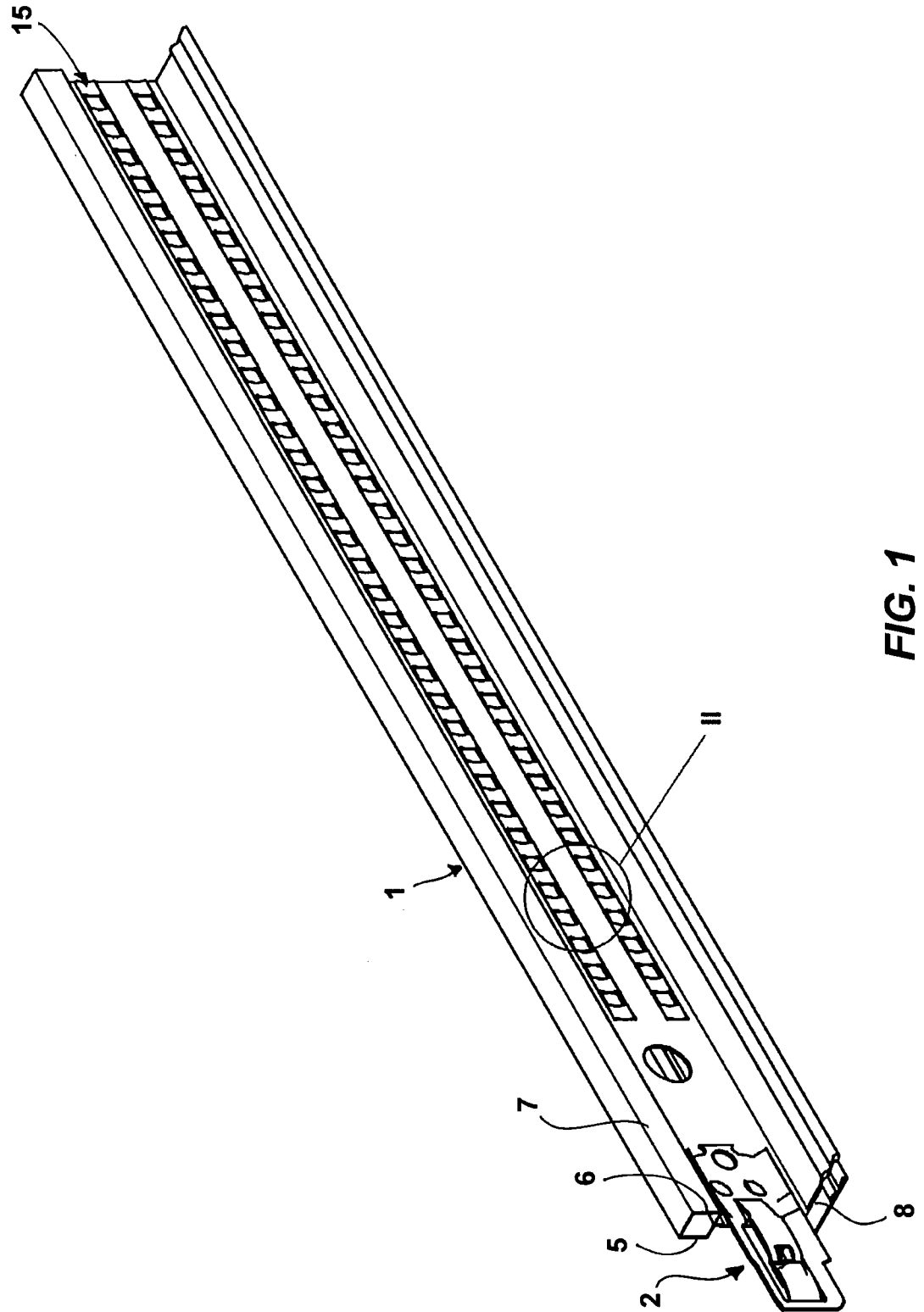
wherein the partially cut parts have along the transverse direction and, when
10 viewed in perspective, a profile which is at least partially curvilinear or concave, and

wherein the parts are partially cut so as to have uncut central zones defining a central line intersecting the cuts and joined with a remaining part of the sheet metal portion.

11. The process according to claim 10, wherein the parts are partially cut by
15 means of a punch with a head having a profile which is curvilinear, V-shaped, W-shaped or with a concave C-shape or has a variety of the curvilinear shapes which are repeated in the transverse direction.

12. The process according to claim 10 or 11, wherein the central joining line extends parallel to the longitudinal direction (L).

20 13. The process according to any one of claims 10 to 12, wherein a first pair of cuts is made on a first sheet metal portion so as to form a first pair of partially cut parts and a second pair of cuts is made on the other sheet metal portion so as to form a second pair of partially cut parts, so that the first pair and the second pair of partially cut parts alternate and are adjacent in the longitudinal direction (L) and
25 shifted alternately towards the one of the of the sheet metal portions and towards the other of the sheet metal portions.



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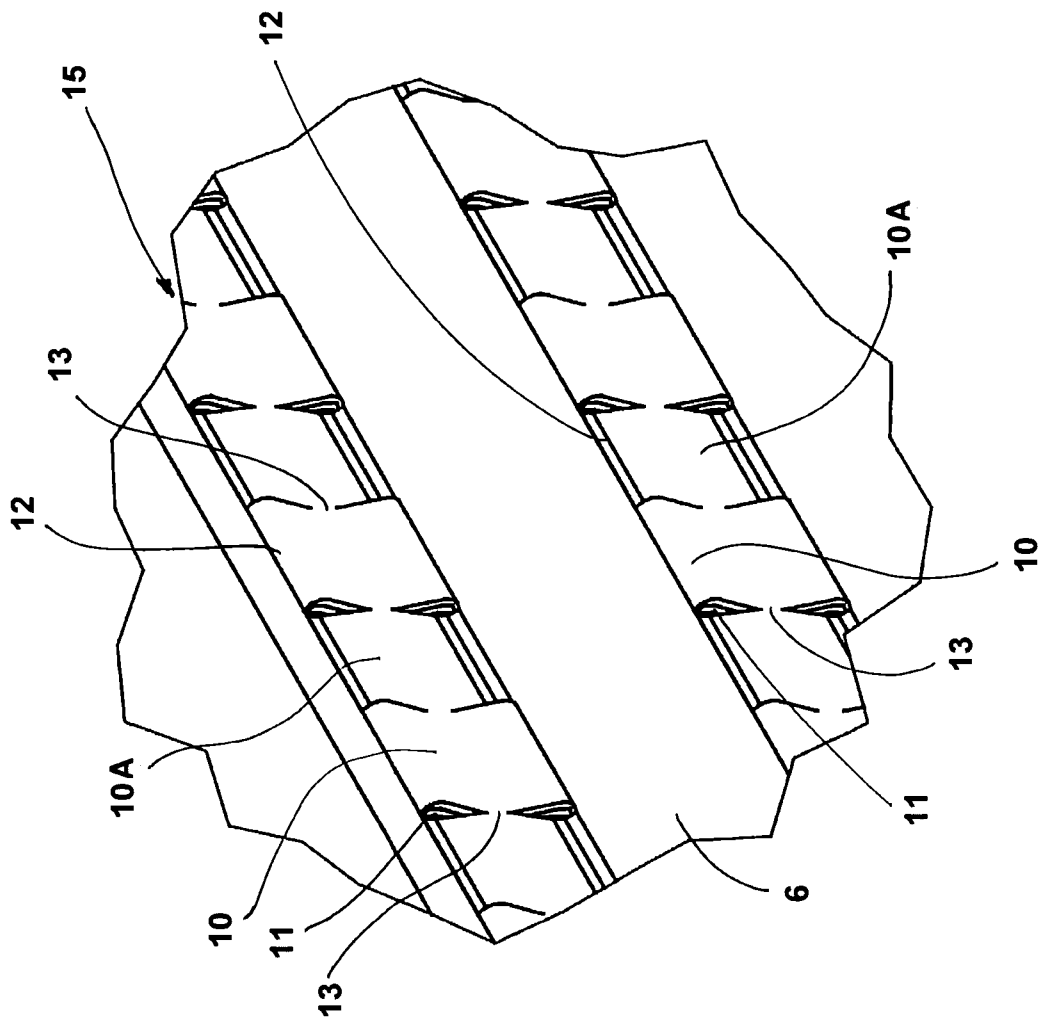


FIG. 2

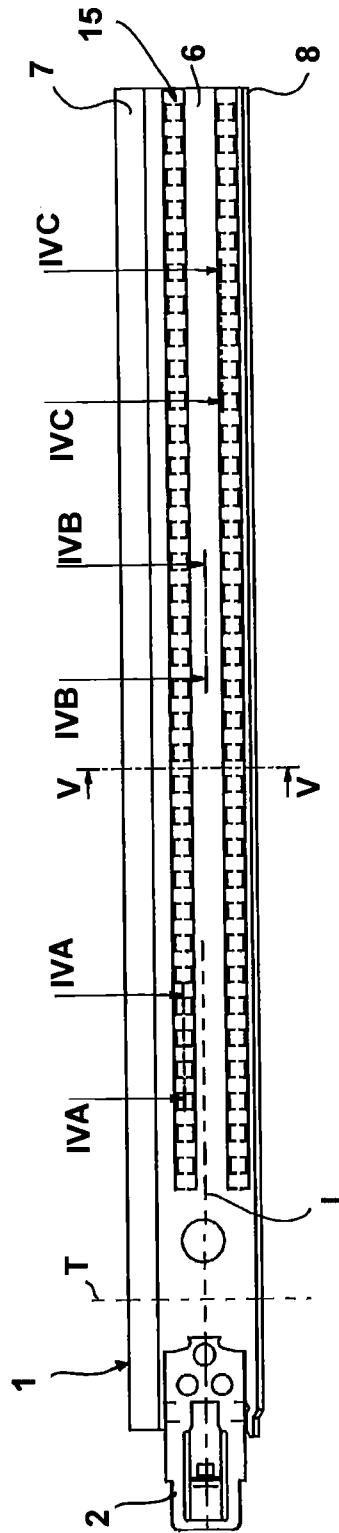
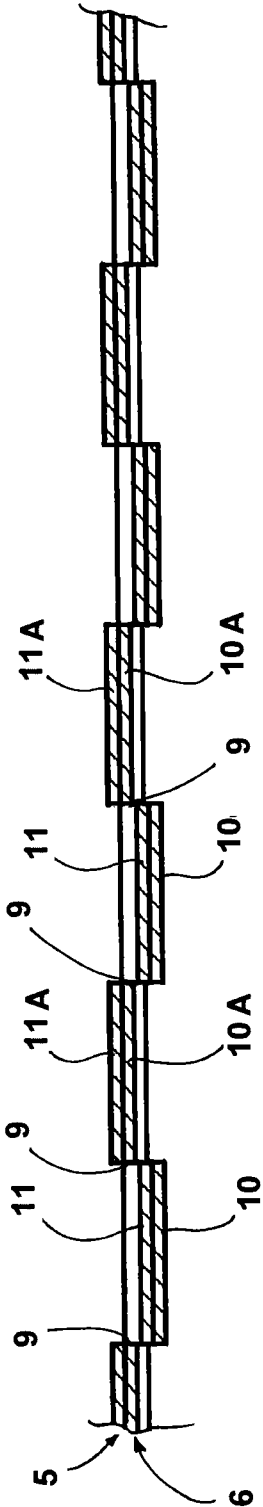
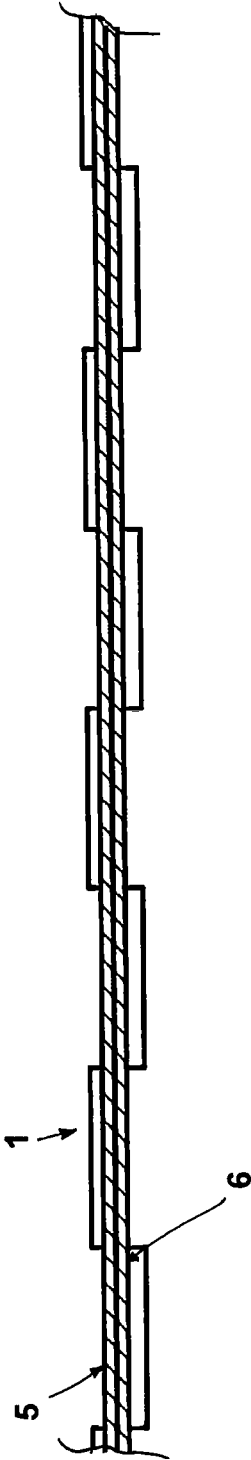
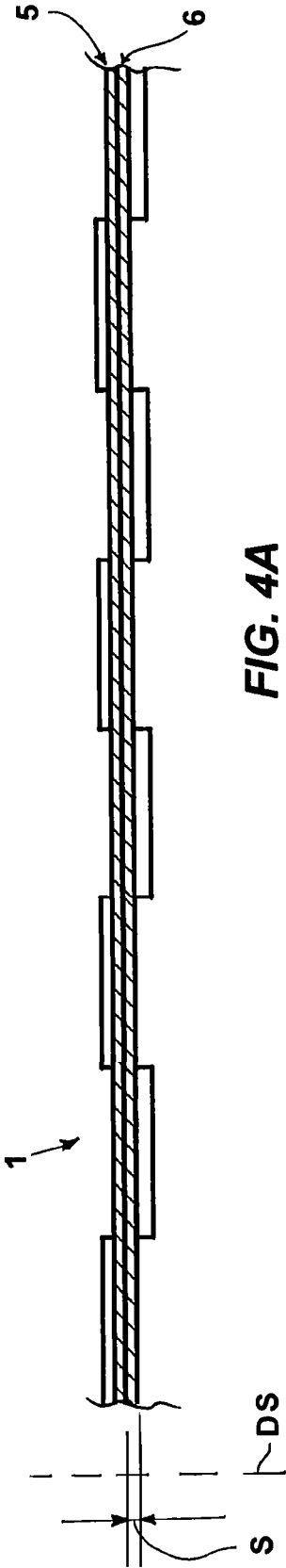
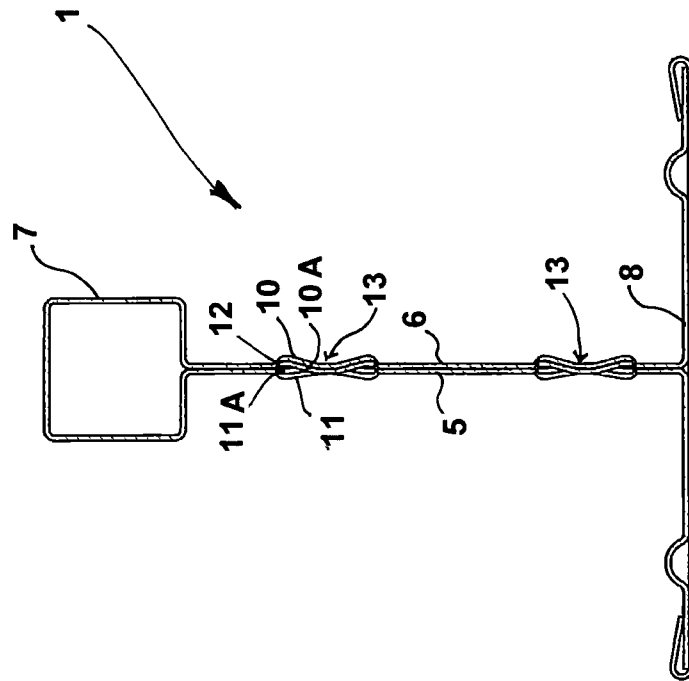


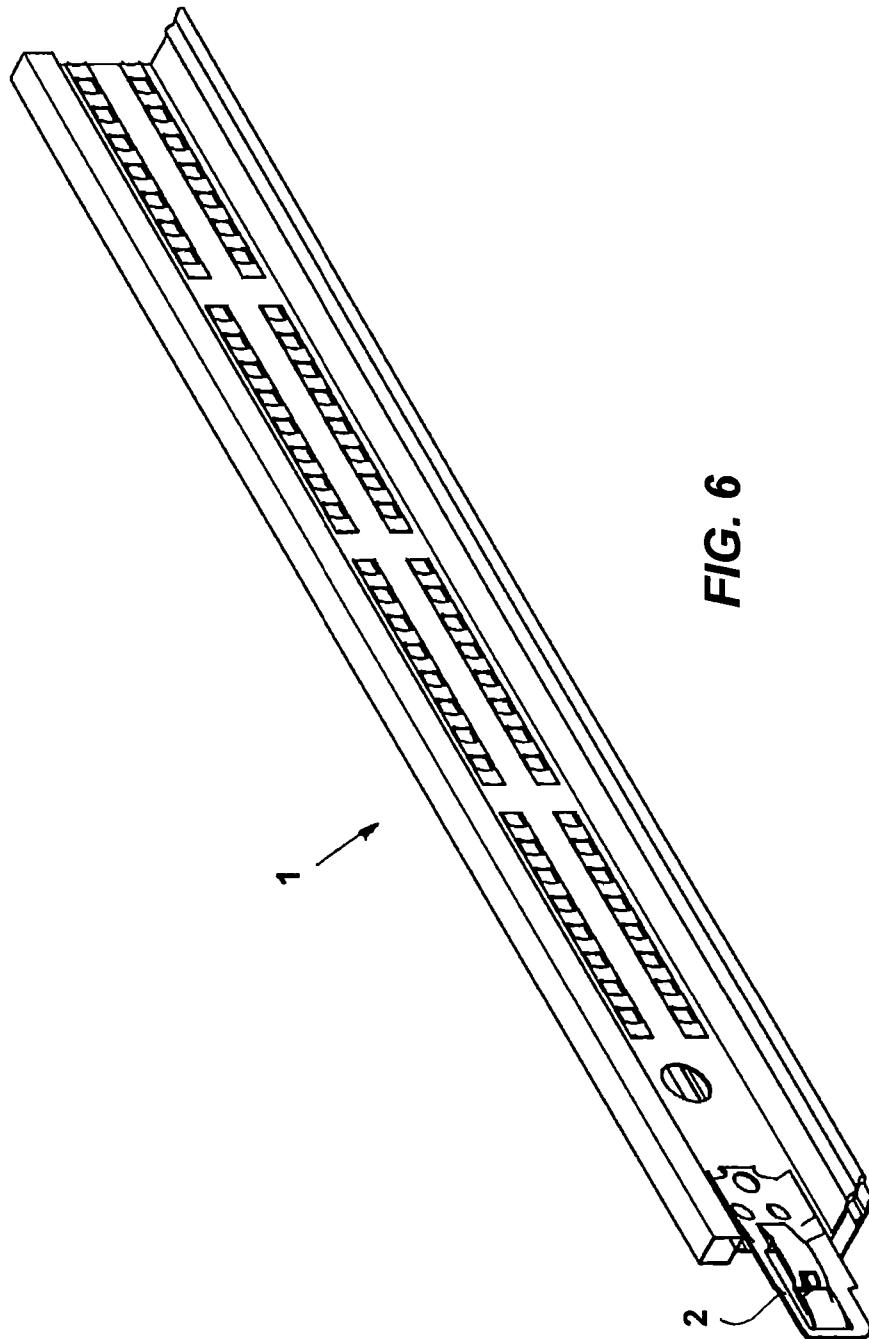
FIG. 3



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**FIG. 5**

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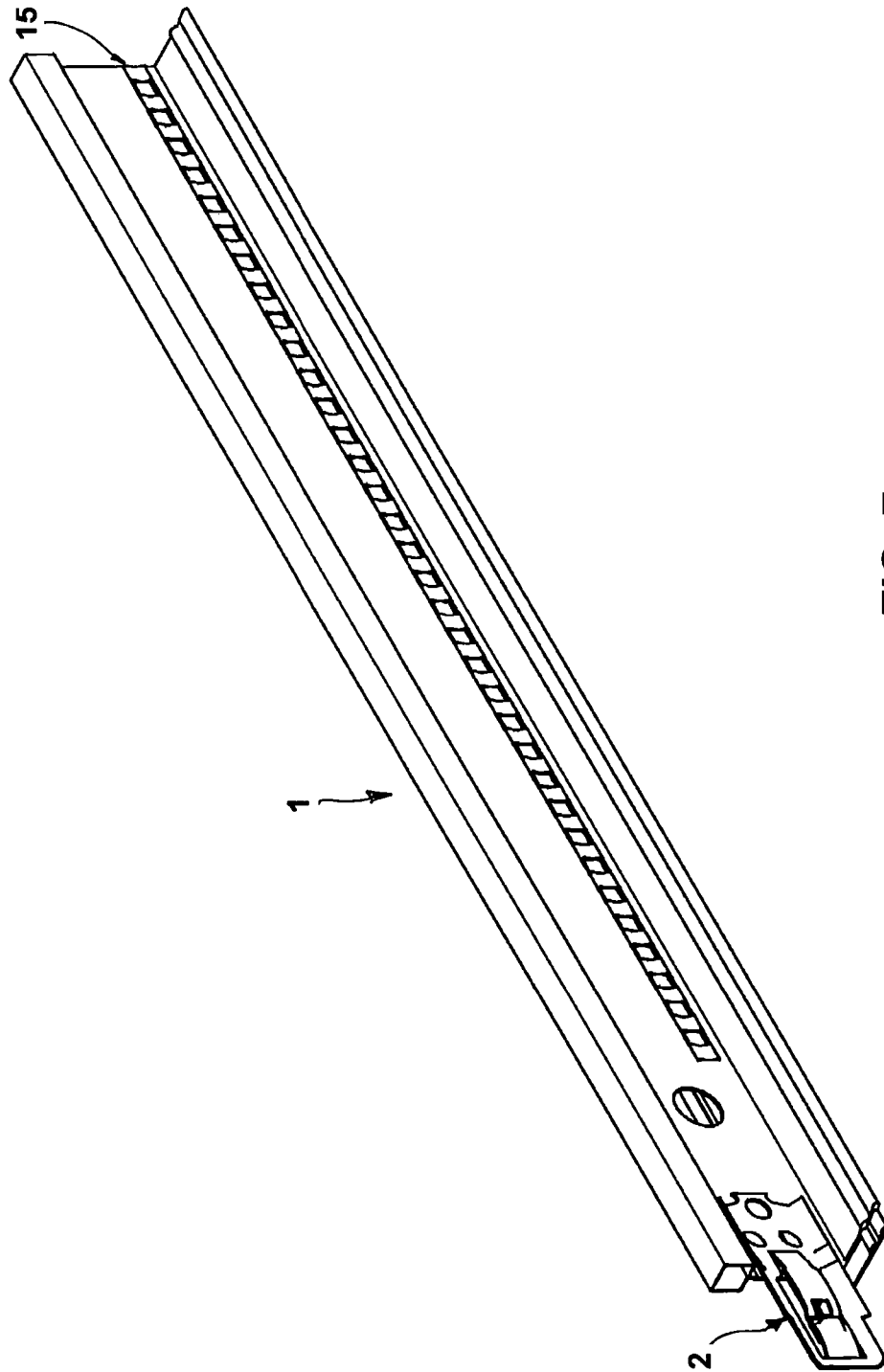
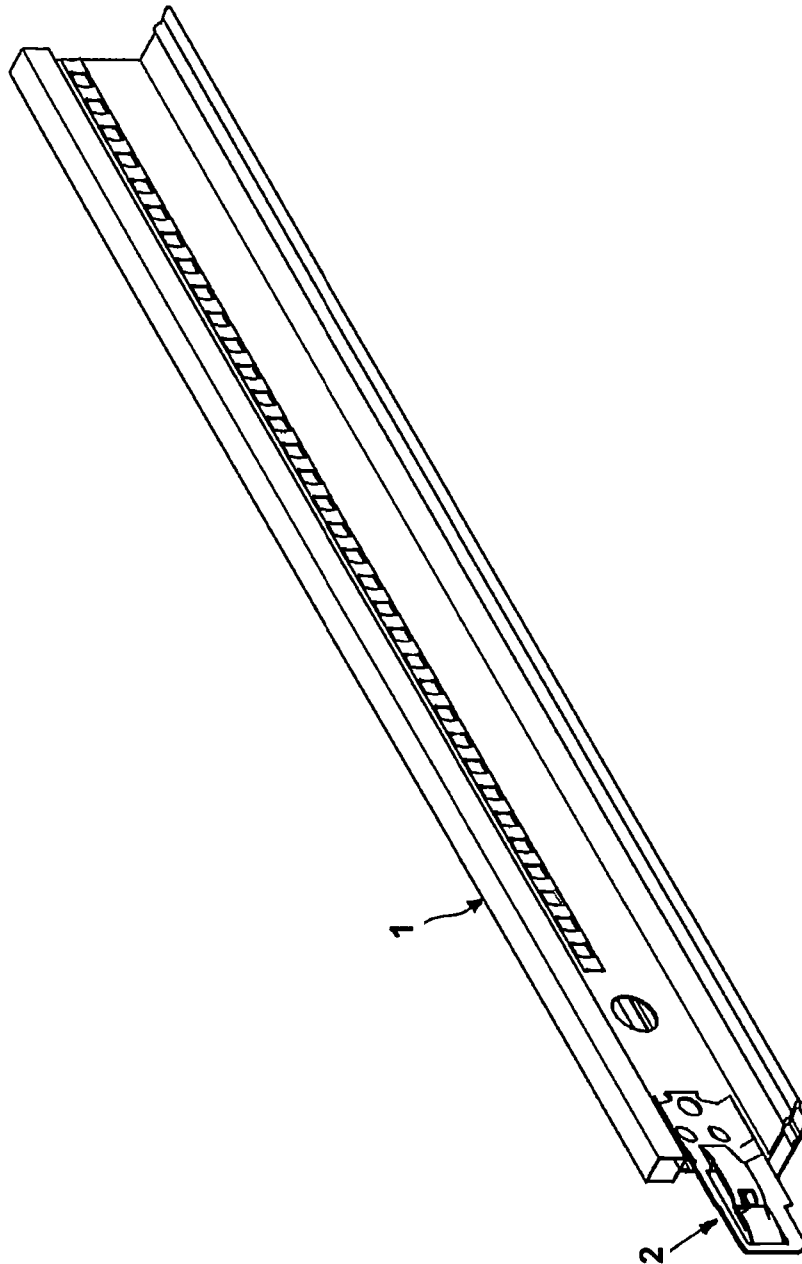
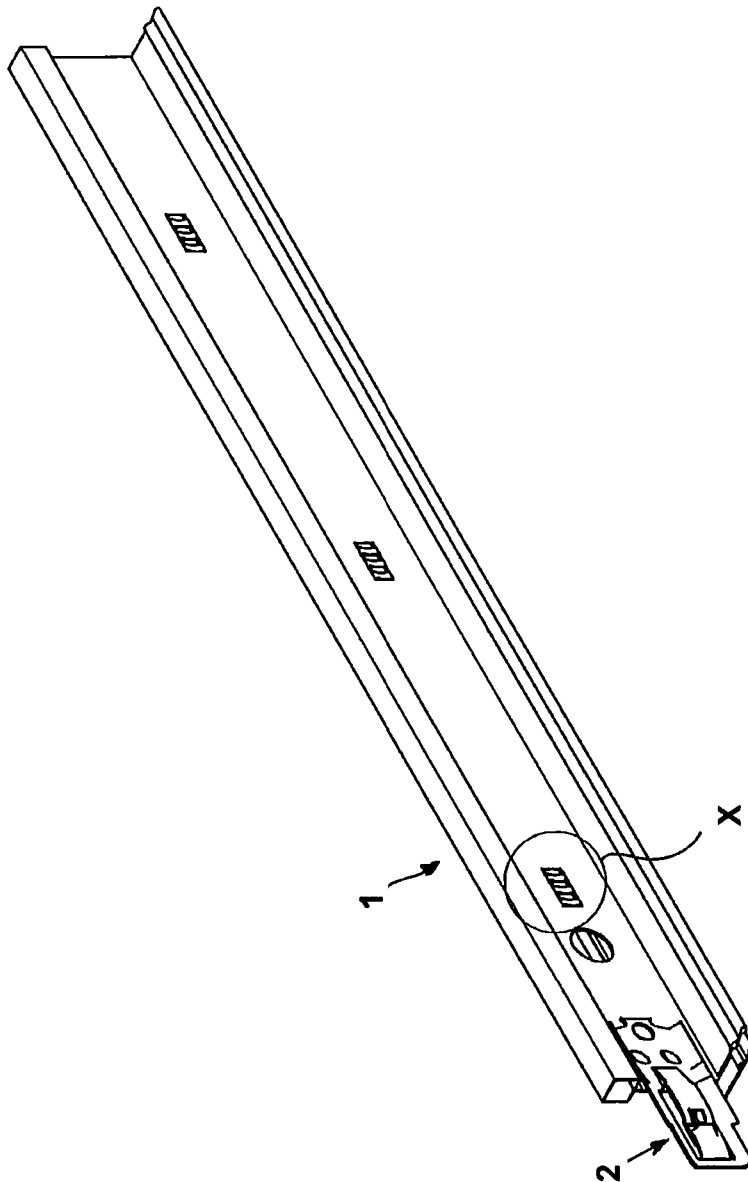


FIG. 7

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**FIG. 8**

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**FIG. 9**

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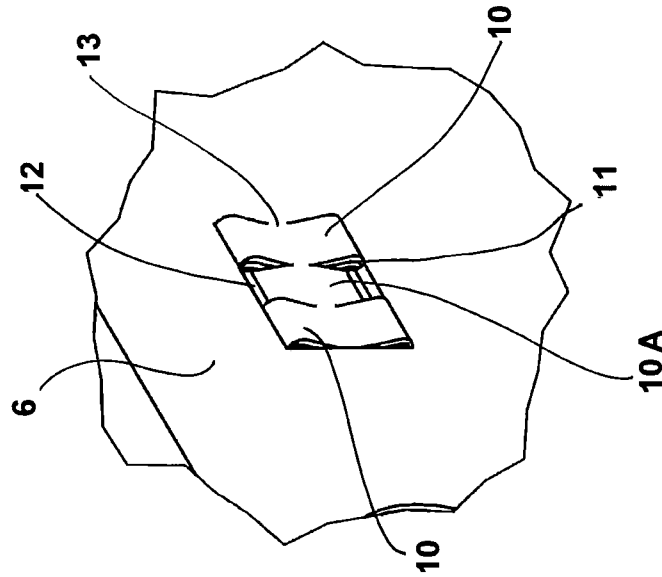


FIG. 11

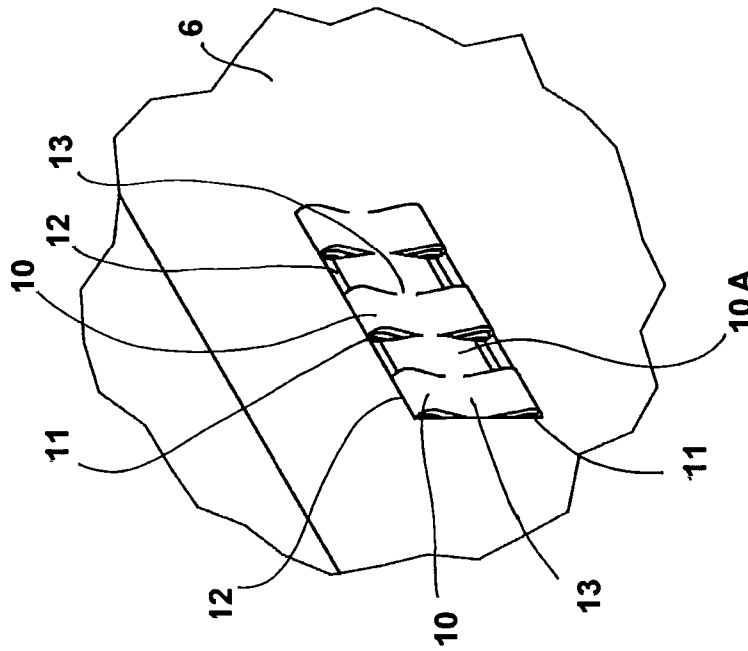


FIG. 10

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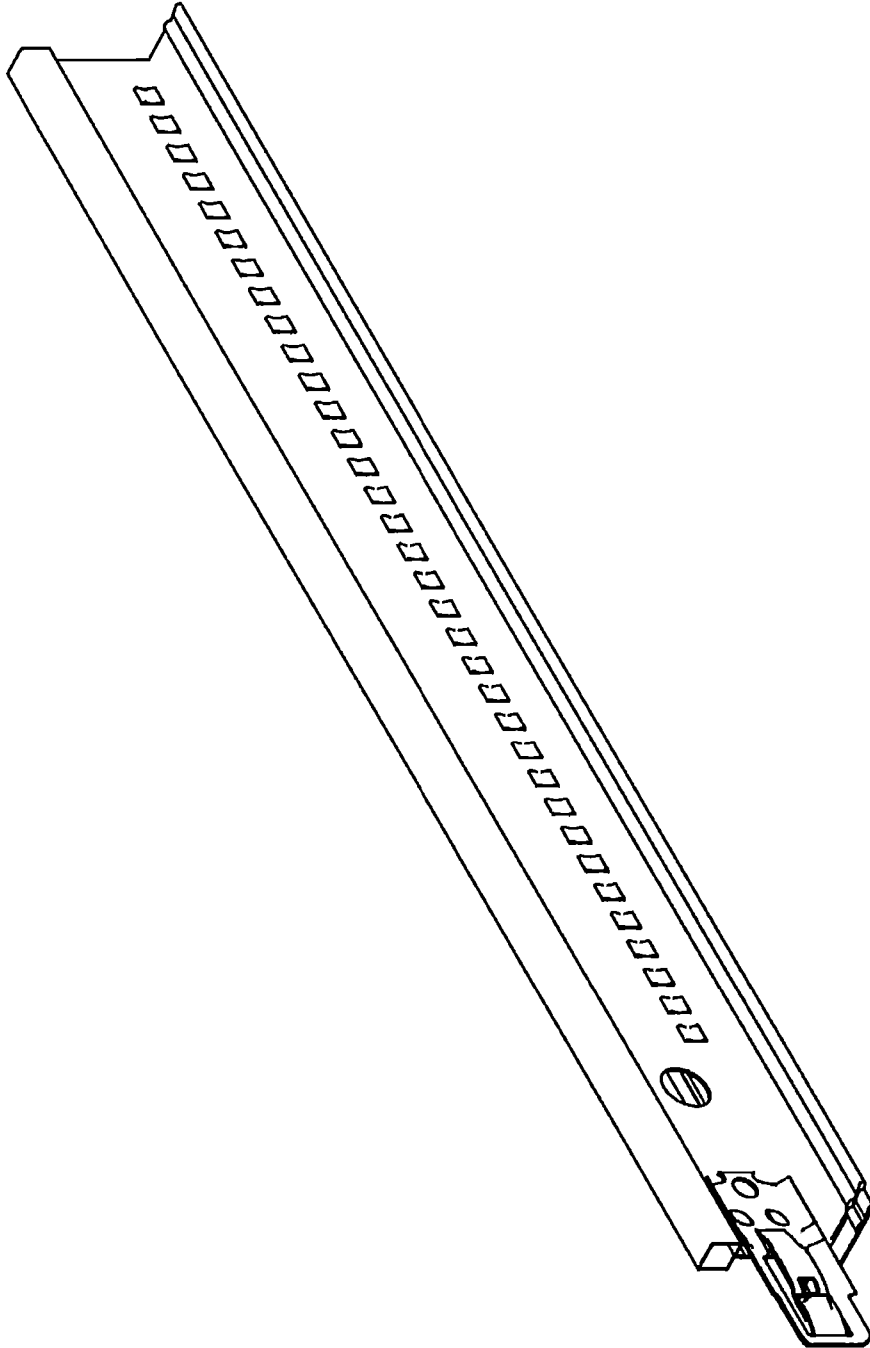


FIG. 12

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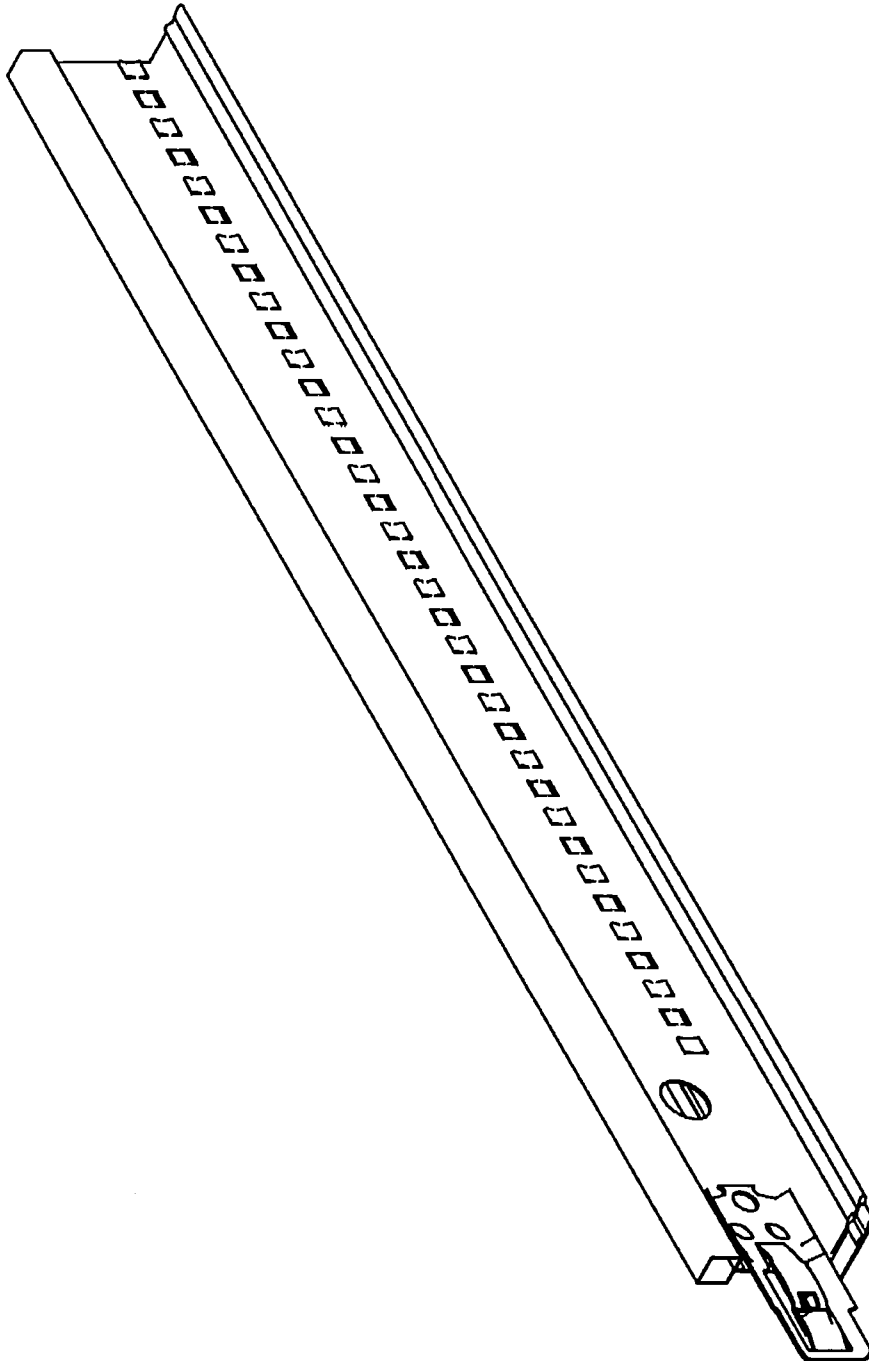


FIG. 14

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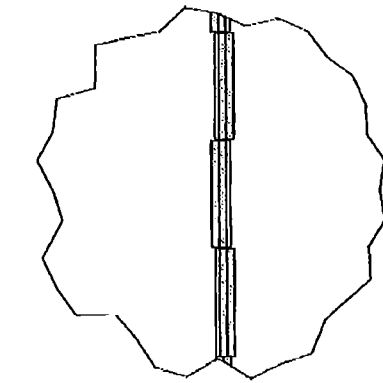


FIG. 15

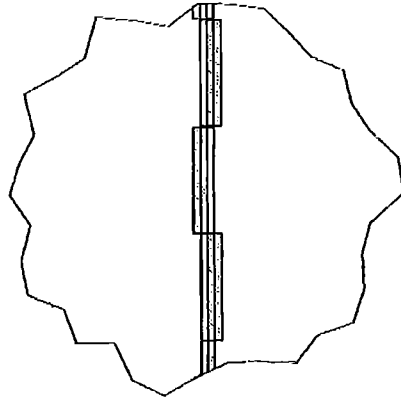


FIG. 16

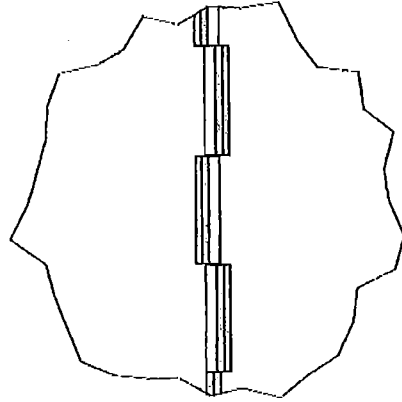


FIG. 17

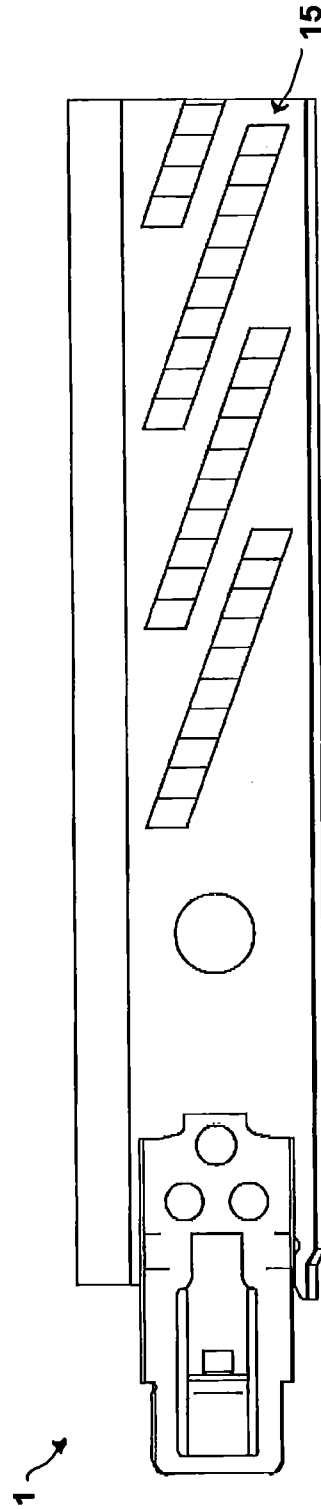
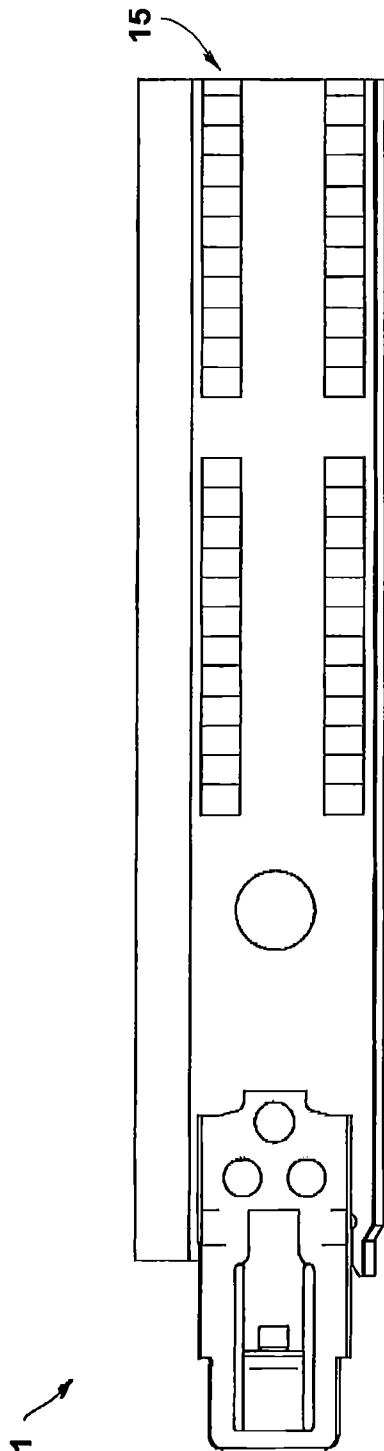
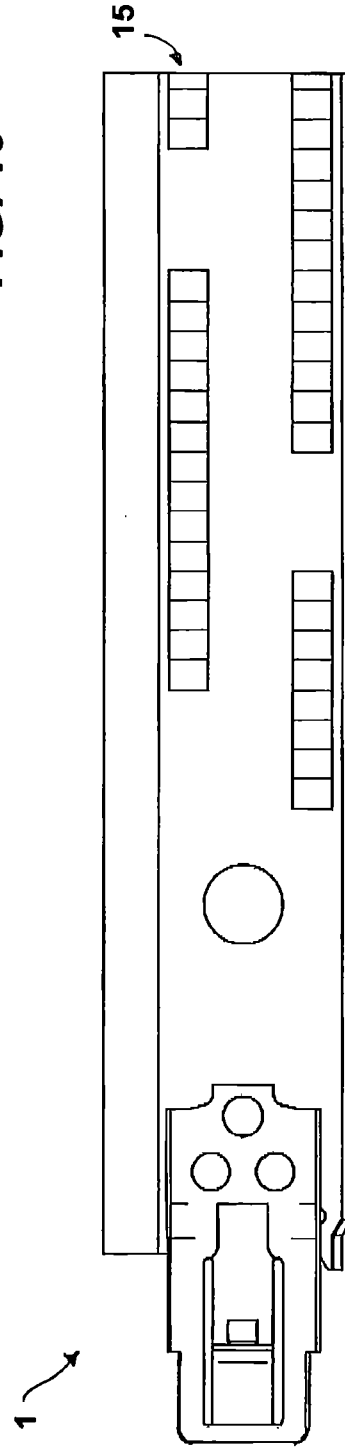


FIG. 18

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**FIG. 19****FIG. 20**

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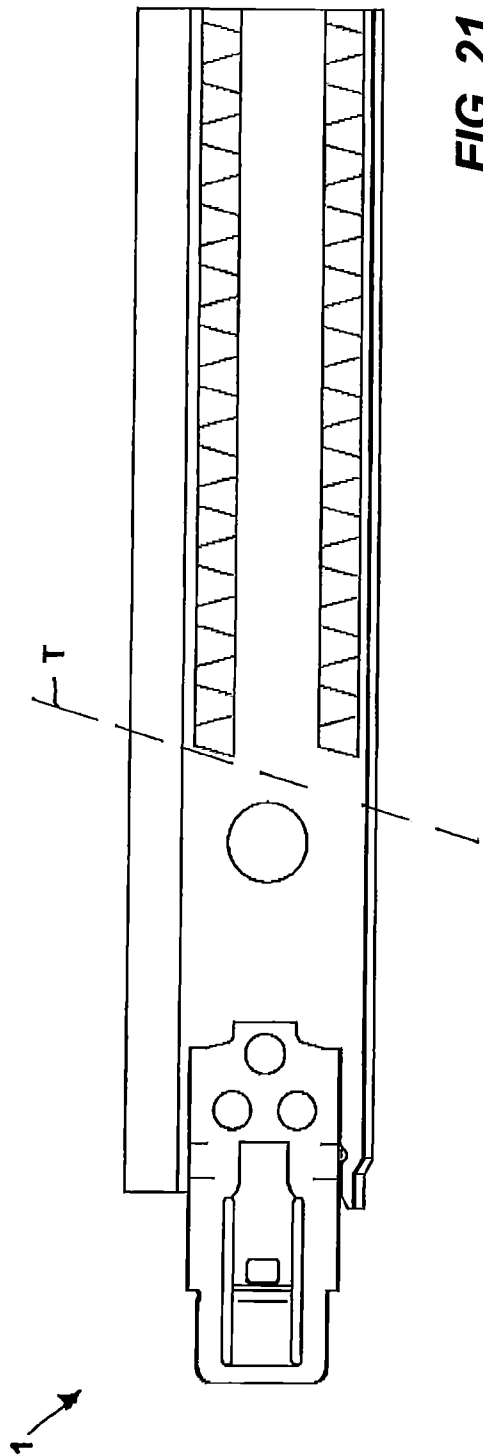


FIG. 21

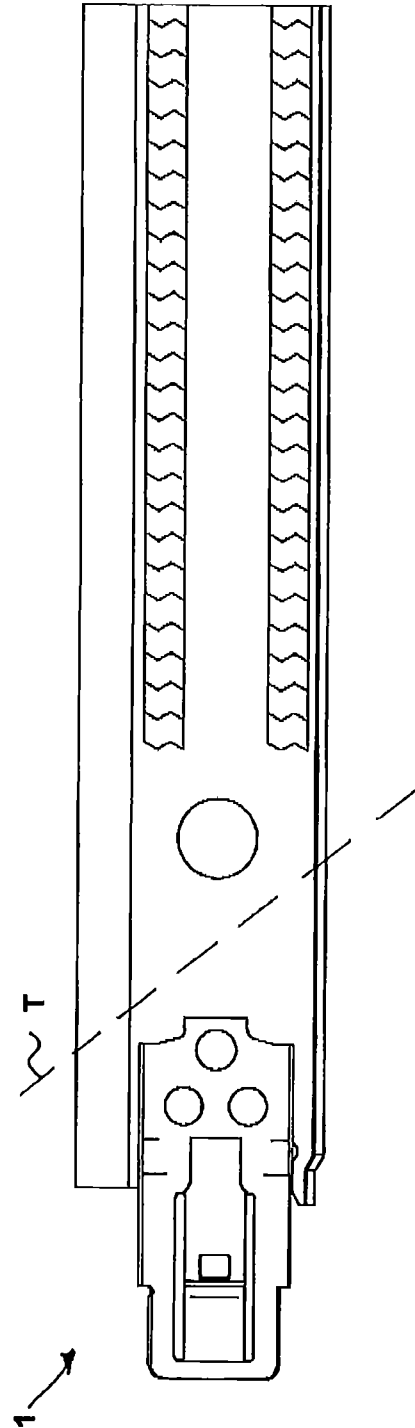


FIG. 22

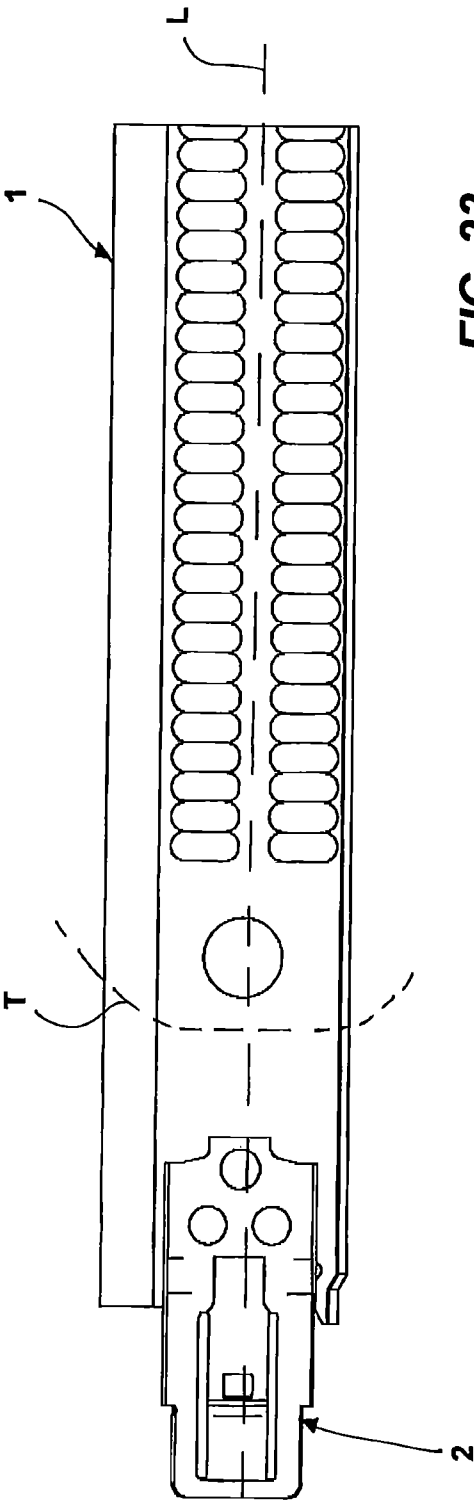


FIG. 23

