

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization  
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date  
25 October 2007 (25.10.2007)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number  
**WO 2007/119232 A3**

(51) International Patent Classification:

A61B 17/34 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/IE2007/000050

(22) International Filing Date: 19 April 2007 (19.04.2007)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:

60/792,954 19 April 2006 (19.04.2006) US

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

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

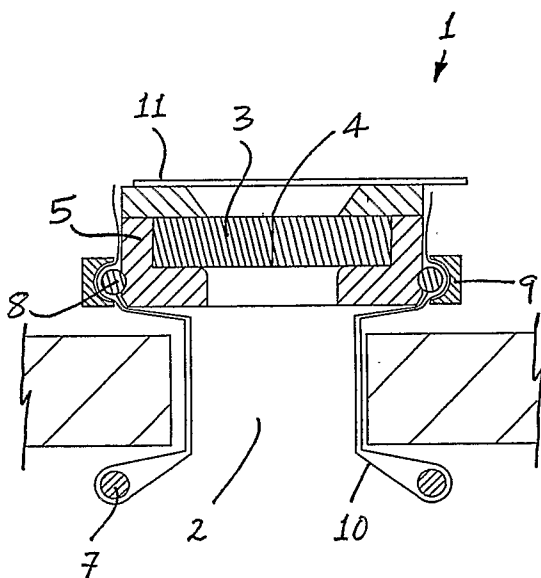
Published:

- with international search report
- before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

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

14 February 2008

(54) Title: AN INSTRUMENT ACCESS DEVICE



(57) Abstract: An instrument access device (1) comprises an instrument seal, a wound retractor for retracting a wound opening (2), and an opening element for at least partially opening the seal to facilitate insertion of an instrument (6) through the seal. The instrument seal comprises a gelatinous elastomeric seal (3) with a pinhole opening (4) extending therethrough, and a housing (5) around the seal (3). The opening element may be employed to at least partially open the pinhole opening (4) to facilitate insertion of the instrument (6) through the pinhole opening (4). The opening element comprises a sheet (11) of flexible material. The sheet (11) is movable distally relative to the seal (3) between a rest configuration and an opening configuration. In the rest configuration the sheet (11) is substantially planar. In the opening configuration, the pointed, the leading end (16) of the sheet (11) enters the pinhole opening (4) and moves distally through the pinhole opening (4) to at least partially open the pinhole opening (4).

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/IE2007/000050

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

INV. A61B17/34

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)

A61B

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 practical, 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	US 2005/267419 A1 (SMITH ROBERT C [US]) 1 December 2005 (2005-12-01)	1-7, 9-11, 16, 19-23
Y	paragraph [0030] - paragraph [0032] -----	8, 12, 18
Y	US 5 342 315 A (ROWE C DANIEL [US] ET AL) 30 August 1994 (1994-08-30) column 11, line 10 - line 12 column 9, line 39 - line 43 -----	8, 18
Y	US 2004/260244 A1 (PIECHOWICZ MICHAEL E [US] ET AL) 23 December 2004 (2004-12-23) paragraph [0039] -----	12
A	US 2006/047293 A1 (HABERLAND GARY W [US] ET AL) 2 March 2006 (2006-03-02) the whole document -----	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 document 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.

\*Z\* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

30 July 2007

Date of mailing of the international search report

12/12/2007

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**FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210**

Continuation of Box II.1

Claims Nos.: 40-47

Rule 39.1(iv) PCT - Method for treatment of the human or animal body by surgery

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Continuation of Box II.2

Claims Nos.: 40

Subject-matter claimed by referring to the drawings is not clear (Article 6 PCT).

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure. If the application proceeds into the regional phase before the EPO, the applicant is reminded that a search may be carried out during examination before the EPO (see EPO Guideline C-VI, 8.5), should the problems which led to the Article 17(2) declaration be overcome.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/IE2007/000050

### Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☒ Claims Nos.: 40-47  
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:  
Rule 39.1(iv) PCT - Method for treatment of the human or animal body by surgery
2. ☒ Claims Nos.: 40  
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:  
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:  
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

### Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This international Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers allsearchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search reportcovers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

see annex

#### Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

**FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210**

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. claims: 1-16,18-23

An instrument access device directed an opening element comprising a first part of a sheet material overlapping a second part of the sheet material.

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2. claim: 17

An instrument acces device directed an opening element being substantially rigid.

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3. claims: 24-39

An instrument seal having an opening, comprising a reinforcement element located radially outwardly of the opening.

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# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/IE2007/000050

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2005267419	A1	01-12-2005	NONE
US 5342315	A	30-08-1994	NONE
US 2004260244	A1	23-12-2004	NONE
US 2006047293	A1	02-03-2006	NONE