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(54) Title: SELF-SEALING FASTENER AND GARMENT

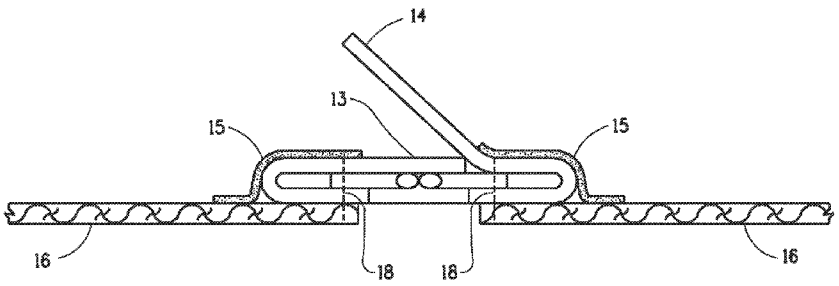

FIG. 1B

(57) Abstract: This invention relates to a fastener assembly and a garment (16) comprising same, comprising a first fastener tape and a second fastener tapes having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon attached to first and second closing tapes, the first and second closing tapes (13, 14) folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed, • i) the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap, • ii) the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the meshed area of fastening elements, and • iii) the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape (13) by the external edge of the second closing tape (14) extends past the meshed area of fastening elements.

Title of the Invention

Self-Sealing Fastener and Garment

Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention. This invention relates to an improved fastener assembly suitable for use with protective apparel and a garment comprising that fastener assembly.

Description of Related Art. One function of certain personal protective apparel worn by workers is to prevent or reduce environmental contaminants from contacting the skin. Such apparel can include an encapsulating liquid-resistant and/or chemical-resistant suits or garments, or suits or garments designed to prevent dry particulates, or suits or garments designed to prevent a variety of hazards from contacting the skin. Such apparel can include such things as coveralls, shirts, coats, pants, bib coveralls, or a combination of these items. The apparel can be made with a wide variety of proprietary protective garment fabrics, barrier fabrics, laminates, and films. The apparel can also include nonwoven and/or woven fabrics and laminates of such materials with films. In some embodiments the apparel material is a multilayer-film-and-nonwoven laminate. In some embodiments the apparel material is a nonwoven that resists penetration by liquids and/or particulates.

Clearly, in preventing liquid and/or particulate intrusion into apparel, openings in the apparel are potential weak points, since the openings must be present in order for the apparel to be donned, and after donning the openings must then be adequately sealed. Any improvement in the sealing of such apparel is desired.

Brief Summary of the Invention

This invention relates to a fastener assembly for use with a garment comprising a) a fastener having a first fastener tape and a second fastener tape, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface, each fastener tape further having a first

end and a second end with the first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon; and

b) first and second closing tapes, each closing tape having an internal edge and an external edge, wherein the second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the first closing tape, and the second endof the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the second closing tape; and wherein the first closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the first fastener tape, and the second closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the second fastener tape, such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed,

i) the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap,

ii) the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the meshed area of fastening elements, and

iii) the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape by the external edge of the second closing tape extends past the meshed area of fastening elements.

This invention also relates to a garment comprising protective apparel fabric and a fastener assembly for joining a first and a second area of protective apparel fabric, wherein

a) the fastener assembly comprises

i) a fastener having a first fastener tape and a second fastener tape, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface, each fastener tape further having a first end and a second end with the first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon; and

ii) first and second closing tapes, each closing tape having an internal edge and an external edge,

wherein the second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the first closing tape, and the second end of the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the second closing tape; and wherein each of the first closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the first fastener tape, and the second closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the second fastener tape, such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of

fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed, the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap, the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the meshed area of fastening elements, and the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape by the external edge of the second closing tape extends past the meshed area of fastening elements; and

b) the garment having first stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the first area of protective apparel fabric through the internal and external edges of the first closing tape and the first fastener tape, and second stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the second area of protective apparel fabric through the internal and external edges of the first closing tape and the second fastener tape, with the proviso the first stitches do not stitch through the second closing tape and the second stitches do not stitch through the first closing tape.

This invention also further relates to a garment comprising protective apparel fabric and a fastener assembly for joining a first and a second area of protective apparel fabric, wherein

a) the fastener assembly comprises

i) a fastener having a first fastener tape and a second fastener tape, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface, each fastener tape further having a first end and a second end with the first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon; and

ii) first and second closing tapes, each closing tape having an internal edge and an external edge,

wherein the second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the first closing tape, and the second end of the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the second closing tape; and

wherein each of the first closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the first fastener tape, and the second closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the second fastener tape,

such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed, the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap, the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the

meshed area of fastening elements, and the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape by the external edge of the second closing tape extends past the meshed area of fastening elements;

b) the garment having first stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the first area of protective apparel fabric through the internal edge of the first closing tape and the first fastener tape, and second stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the second area of protective apparel fabric through the internal edge of the second closing tape and the second fastener tape,

with the proviso the first stitches do not stitch through the second closing tape and the second stitches do not stitch through the first closing tape.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig 1A is a representation of a fastener assembly for use with a garment, shown unfolded and then partially folded for clarity.

Fig 1B is a representation of a fastener assembly in a partially folded for clarity condition and attached to first and second areas of apparel fabric and with optional outer sealing tape over the stitches and the joint with the apparel fabric.

Fig 1C is a representation of a fastener assembly for use with a garment, shown unfolded for clarity and with optional inner sealing tape attaching the fastener tapes to the closing tapes.

Fig 2A is a representation of the orientation of the closing tape fold, which is parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements; in this illustration the fastener elements are one type of slide fastener elements, particularly the teeth on a zipper.

Fig 2B is a representation of the orientation of the closing tape fold, which is parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements; in this illustration the fastener elements are one type of velvet-type hook-and-loop fastener.

Fig 3 is a representation of various features that can be used either separately or together with the fastener assembly in a garment; the fastener assembly is shown unfolded, partially folded for clarity, and attached to first and second areas of apparel fabric, with optional outer sealing tape.

Fig 4 is a representation of another attachment of a fastener assembly to first and second areas of apparel fabric, with optional inner sealing tape shown partially folded for clarity.

Detailed Description of the Invention

Fastener Assembly

As shown in **Fig 1A**, the fastener assembly for use with a garment comprises a fastener having a first fastener tape **12a** and a second fastener tape **12b**, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface. Further, fastener tape **12a** has a first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements **11a** mounted thereon and a second end **2**. Fastener tape **12b** has a first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements **11b** mounted thereon and a second end **3**. The fastener assembly further comprises a first closing tape **13** having an internal edge **20** and an external edge **22**; a second closing tape **14** having an internal edge **21** and an external edge **23**. The second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge **20** of the first closing tape, and the second end of the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge **21** of the second closing tape.

Further, the length of internal edge **20** is shorter than the length of external edge **22** and the length of internal edge **21** is shorter than the length of external edge **23**. In some embodiments, the fastener tape and the closing tape have barrier properties equivalent to or greater than the barrier properties of the protective apparel fabric that will be joined by the fastener assembly.

The first closing tape **13** is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements **11a** on the first fastener tape and the second closing tape **14** is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements **11b** on the second fastener tape. **Fig 2A** is a representation of the orientation of the closing tape **14** fold, wherein the fold **30** is represented by a dotted line, the fold being parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements **11b**; in this illustration the row of fastener elements **11b** is one type of slide fastener elements, particularly the teeth on a zipper. **Fig 2B** is a similar representation of the orientation of the closing tape fold **32**, which is parallel to the row of cooperating

fastener elements **31**. In this illustration the row of fastener elements **31** is a strip of one side of the type of velvet-type hook-and-loop fastener such as the one disclosed in United States Patent Number 2,717,437 to de Mestral more commonly known as a Velcro® fastener. Fastener tape **13** has mirror-image corresponding folds, options, and compatible or mating fastener elements to those shown in **Fig 2A & 2B.** While these types of fastener tapes and fastener elements are useful, they are not intended to be limiting. In addition to these, it is believed a variety of fastener tapes and fastener elements can be used, including such things as magnetic sealing strips such as sold by Gooper Hermetic.

The overall length of each of the first and second closing tapes, and the relative length of the internal and external edges of the closing tapes, is selected such that when the fastener is closed the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap, and both cover the closed fastener. In particular, when the fastener is closed, the cooperating fastener elements **11a** and **11b** from the first and second fastener tapes mesh together, and the external edge of each closing tape is selected such that it extends over the meshed area to fully cover that area. As shown partially folded for clarity in **Fig 1A**, the length of first closing tape **13** is selected such that folded external edge **22** covers the outside surface of fastener tape **12a** and extends, or is long enough, to fully cover the meshed area. The length of second closing tape **14**, which overlaps first closing tape **13**, is also independently chosen such that folded external edge **23** covers a portion of the outside surface of fastener tape **12b** and is long enough to extend past the meshed area of fastening elements, which lies beneath the first closing tape. In other words, the area of meshed fastening elements is completely covered by two layers of closing tape that are overlapped above that meshed area, each of the layers being wide enough to fully cover the meshed area independently. This helps ensure the meshed area will be fully sealed from any liquid and/or particulate material.

In some preferred embodiments, the length of first closing tape **13** is selected such that, when the fastener is closed, the external edge **22** extends past the meshed area to the area between the meshed area and the second end of second fastener tape **12b.** In some embodiments, the length of second closing tape **14** is selected such that, when the fastener is closed, the external edge **23** extends past the meshed area to the area between the meshed area and the second end of first fastener tape **12a.** In some preferred

embodiments, the length of second closing tape **14** is selected such that, when the fastener is closed, the external edge **23** extends past the second end of first fastener tape **12a.** In some embodiments the length of external edge **23** is longer than the length of external edge **22**. Further, if desired, additional closing devices that can be easily and quickly opened and closed, such as additional strips of a velvet-type hook-and-loop fastener (like a Velcro®-type), other hook/loop devices, doubled-sided adhesive tape, interlocking spline and groove systems (such as zip lock systems), magnetic sealing strips, and the like can be used to secure the external edge **23** of closing tape **14** to the protective apparel fabric or to closing tape **13.** Likewise, if desired, such additional closing devices can be used to secure the external edge **22** to internal edge **21** of closing tape **14**.

While multiple types of fasteners and cooperating fastener elements are contemplated, in a preferred embodiment the fastener is a slide fastener, the first and second fastener tapes are stringer tapes, and the fastener elements are cooperating slide fastener elements mounted on the stringer tapes, with the slide fastener further comprising a slide cooperating with the fastener elements on the stringer tapes to open and close the slide fastener. Some slide fasteners are commonly known as "zippers". As shown in **Fig 1C**, in one embodiment, the fastener tapes **12a** & **12b** (or stringer tapes in the case of a slide fastener) are attached to the closing tapes **13** & **14** by use of a suitable inner sealing tape **17**. Inner sealing tapes can include chlorinated polyethylene or thermo plastic synthetic rubber or other materials that are compatible with the materials being sealed. Representative commercially available inner sealing tapes are obtainable from such manufacturers as Adhesive Films, Inc., Bemis Associates, Inc., Worthen Industries, and others. In other embodiments the fastener tapes can be attached to the closing tapes by use of heat sealing, ultrasonic sealing, chemical welding, glue welding, and the like; and either the fastener tape or the closing tape may additionally be coated with a compatible material to assist in this sealing.

Garment

The garment preferably comprises a protective apparel fabric and the fastener assembly as previously described. The term "protective apparel fabric" is meant to

include a wide variety of protective garment fabrics, barrier fabrics, laminates, and films. The term "protective apparel fabric" also includes nonwoven and/or woven fabrics and laminates of such materials with films or multilayer films. In some preferred embodiments the protective apparel fabric, and therefore the apparel material, is a multilayer-film-and-nonwoven laminate. In some embodiments the apparel material is a nonwoven that resists penetration by liquids and/or particulates, such as a nonwoven like Tyvek® spunbonded polyethylene. Other useful protective apparel fabrics protect against a wide variety of threats and include but are not limited to those disclosed in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,626,947 (Hauer et al.); 4,855,178 (Langley); 4,272,851 (Goldstein); 4,772,510 (McClure); 5,035,941 (Blackburn); 4,214,321 (Nuwayser); 4,920,575 (Bartasis); 5,162,148 (Boye); 4,833,010 (Langley).

As shown in **Fig 1B**, the fastener assembly joins first and second areas **16** of protective apparel fabric. The garment has stitches **18** attaching the fastener assembly to the first and second areas **16** of protective apparel fabric. In one embodiment, the first set of stitches **18** are sewn through the internal and external edges of the first closing tape **13,** the first fastener tape **12a**, and the first area of protective apparel fabric; and the second set of stitches are sewn through the internal and external edges of the second closing tape **14**, the second fastener tape **12b**, and the second area of protective apparel fabric. However, so that the fastener can be opened and closed, the first stitches through the first closing tape **13** do not stitch through the second closing tape **14** and the second stitches through the second closing tape **14** do not stitch through the first closing tape **13**.

If the fastener assembly includes fastener tapes attached to the closing tapes by use of a suitable inner sealing tape **17** as shown in **Fig 1C,** then stitches **18** preferably also pass through this sealing tape when the fastener assembly is stitched to the protective apparel fabric. In other embodiments the fastener tapes can be attached to the closing tapes by use of heat sealing, ultrasonic sealing, and the like; and either the fastener tape or the closing tape may additionally be coated with a compatible material to assist in this sealing.

Further, as shown in **Fig 1B**, in some embodiments after the fastener assembly is stitched to the areas of protective fabric, the first closing tape **13** is further attached to the first area of protective apparel with outer sealing tape **15** that covers the first stitches.

Likewise the second closing tape **14** is also attached to the second area of protective apparel with outer sealing tape **15** that covers the second stitches. The outer sealing tape **15** should be compatible with both the closing tape material and the protective fabric, and it also serves to cover the joint between the protective apparel fabric area and the folds in the closing tapes. Useful sealing tapes include tapes that are made from the barrier and resistant components of the protective apparel fabric. In some embodiments, the outer sealing tape **15** is made from the protective apparel fabric used in the garment. Representative commercially available outer sealing tapes are obtainable from such manufacturers as the Adhesive Films, Inc., Bemis Associates, Inc., Worthen Industries, and others; with the tape adhesives including polyurethane, polyethylene, acrylic, thermoplastic rubber, and/or hot melt systems, and others.

Fig 3 illustrates other embodiments of various features that can be used either separately or together in the fastener assembly and its attachment to the protective apparel fabric. In one feature, the external edge **22** of closing tape **13** has an additional reverse fold forming internal flap **41**. Like the mirror image to fold **30** (as shown in **Fig 2A)**, the fold in the first closing tape **13** creating internal flap **41** is parallel to both the fold and the row of cooperating fastener elements **11a** but in the opposite direction. As shown partially folded for clarity in **Fig 3**, when the fastener is attached to first and second areas **16** of protective apparel fabric via stitches and optional outer sealing tape **15** and then closed, the reverse fold of internal flap **41** nests in the fold underneath fastener tape **14** between internal edge **21** and external edge **23** and provides a further coverage to the second closing tape stitched area. It is believed the internal flap **41** can help prevent any material or liquid that might inadvertently get underneath external edge **23** from reaching the stitched area of second closing tape **14**.

In another feature, one or both of the internal edges of closing tapes **13** and/or **14** may be provided with one or more extension flaps that are positioned underneath the meshed fastener elements and cover that meshed area when the fastener is closed. As shown in **Fig 3**, the internal edge **20** of closing tape **13** may have an extension flap **19** that extends beneath the inner surface of fastener tape **12a** and beyond fastener element **11a**. When the fastener is closed and the fastener elements **11a** and **11b** meshed, extension flap **19** extends beneath and beyond the meshed area and at least part of the

inner surface of fastener tape **12b**, and preferably abuts the internal edge **21** of closing tape **14**. Alternatively, the extension flap can extend from the other closing tape **14** in a similar manner (not shown). It is believed this feature of covering the meshed area of the fastening elements on the inside of the closure provides an additional sealing layer against the interior of the fastener, potentially reducing the exhaust of "good air" from inside the suit that could result in "pulling" air from the environment into the suit.

Fig. 4 illustrates another embodiment of a fastener assembly and its attachment to first and second areas of apparel fabric which finds use in garments where the threat is primarily particulate intrusion, shown partially folded for clarity. The fastener assembly joins first and second areas **16** of protective apparel fabric. The garment has stitches **44** attaching the fastener assembly to the first and second areas **6** of protective apparel fabric. In this embodiment, the first set of stitches **44** are sewn through the first fastener tape **12a**, the internal edge **20** of closing tape **13** and the first area of protective apparel fabric **16**; and the second set of stitches **44** are sewn through second fastener tape **12b,** the internal edge **21** of second closing tape **14,** and the second area of protective apparel fabric **16**. However, so that the fastener can be opened and closed, the first stitches through the first closing tape **13** do not stitch through the second closing tape **14,** and the second stitches through the second closing tape **14** do not stitch through the first closing tape **13**. Further, in this embodiment, the stitches only pass through the internal edges of the closing tapes (**20, 21**); the stitches do not pass through the external edges (**22, 23**). **Fig 4** also shows the optional use of inner sealing tape **17** covering the stitches **44** and the joint between the fastener tape and the closing tape. Also shown is the previously-described internal flap feature **41**. As before, if desired, additional closing devices that can be easily and quickly opened and closed, such as additional strips of a velvet-type hook-and-loop fastener (like a Velcro®-type), other hook/loop devices, doubled-sided adhesive tape, interlocking spline and groove systems (such as zip lock systems), magnetic strips, and the like can be used to secure the external edge **23** of second closing tape **14** to the protective apparel fabric or to closing tape **13.** Likewise, such additional closing devices can be used to secure the external edge **22** of closing tape **13** to the internal edge **21** of closing tape **14**.

In some embodiments, the fastener in the fastener assembly in the garment is a slide fastener, the first and second fastener tapes are stringer tapes, and the fastener elements are cooperating slide fastener elements mounted on the stringer tapes. The slide fastener further comprises a slide cooperating with the fastener elements on the stringer tapes to open and close the slide fastener. In some embodiments, the fastener in the fastener assembly in the garment is a velvet-type hook-and-loop fastener having hook and loop fastener elements. Suitable slide fasteners include, for example, urethane-coated water resistant zippers such as YKK® Aquaguard® uretek coated zippers or other water resistant zippers coated with urethane, polyethylene, or other water resistant coatings. Preferably the slide fastener has an overall length equal to the garment opening being closed. In some embodiments, the slide fastener has an overall length of from 30 to 48 inches.

While in the garment this type of fastener tapes and fastener elements is useful, is are not intended to be limiting. All of the features previously described for the fastener assembly can be used in the garment. For example, it is believed a variety of fastener tapes and fastener elements can be used, including velvet-type hook-and-loop fastener such as the one disclosed in United States Patent Number 2,717,437 to de Mestral more commonly known as a Velcro® fastener.such things as magnetic sealing strips such as sold by Gooper Hermetic.

In some embodiments the garment comprising protective apparel fabric and the fastener assembly is a Level A, B, C or D protective garment. Level A garments are used in situations that require the highest level of skin, respiratory, and eye protection, and are generally totally encapsulating vapor protective garments. Level B garments are used in situations that require the highest level of respiratory protection but a lesser level of skin protection is needed. Level C garments are used in situations where atmospheric contaminants, liquid splashes, and other direct contact will not adversely affect or be absorbed by any exposed skin. Level D garments are used in situations where contamination is only a nuisance. There may be some instances where combinations of protective apparel rated for A, B, C, or D level may be used together.

Test Methods

Garments incorporating this closure can be tested by M. I. S. T. (Man in Simulant Test) for NFPA 1994; liquid permeation resistance according to ASTM F 1359; and resistance to protection airborne hazardous particles according to ISO 16602 Type 5 as tested by ISO 17491 methods.

Example 1

A fastener assembly is made by mounting, as shown in **Fig 1A**, the two stringer tapes (**12a, 12b**) of a YKK® Aquaguard® uretek coated zipper having an overall length of 36 inches onto the internal edges of first and second closing tapes made from Tychem® multilayer-film-and-nonwoven laminate. The stringer tapes are mounted by sealing the stringer to the closing tape by use of a thermoplastic rubber inner sealing tape **17** as is shown in **Fig 1C**. As generally illustrated in **Fig 1A**, the width of the first closing tape (**13**) is chosen such that when folded, it has an internal edge (**20**) that is approximately 7/8 inches wide and an external edge (**22**) that is approximately 1 inch wide. The width of the second closing tape (**14**) is chosen such that when folded, it has an internal edge (**21**) that is approximately 7/8 inches wide and an external edge (**23**) that is approximately 1.5 inches wide.

When the fastener is closed, that is, the fastening elements are meshed, the second edge **22** of the first fastener tape **2** extends to between the meshed area and the fold in second fastener tape **3**, without being caught in the stitches in fastener tape **3**; and the second edge **23** of the second fastener tape **3** extends past and the meshed area. If desired, a longer second edge 23 can be chosen such that it extends past both the meshed area and the fold in fastener tape **2.**

Example 2

A garment in the form of a coverall designed to limit and/or resist the ingress of liquids is made by incorporating the fastener assembly of Example 1 at the entry opening

of the coveralls. The fastener assembly is attached to first and second areas of Tychem® BR multilayer-film-and-nonwoven laminate to join that fabric at the entry point in the coveralls. The fastener assembly is stitched to the first and second areas of the protective apparel fabric as shown in **Fig. 1B**. In particular, first stitches **18** are sewn through the internal and external edges of the first closing tape **13,** the first fastener (stringer) tape **12a**, and the first area of protective apparel fabric; and the second set of stitches are sewn through the internal and external edges of the second closing tape **14**, the second fastener (stringer) tape **12b**, and the second area of protective apparel fabric. However, so that the fastener can be opened and closed, the first stitches through the first closing tape **13** do not stitch through the second closing tape **14** and the second stitches through the second closing tape **14** do not stitch through the first closing tape **13**. Outer sealing tape **15**, also made from the Tychem® multilayer-film-and-nonwoven laminate, is applied to cover the stitches and the joint between the fastener assembly and the protective apparel fabric. In addition, the fastener assembly has the additional feature of an extension flap **19**, as shown in **Fig 3**, that extends beneath and beyond the fastener elements 11a and 11b when the fastener elements are meshed,

The garment is tested via the M. I. S. T. (Man in Simulant Test) for NFPA 1994 and for liquid permeation resistance according to ASTM F 1359 and shows no ingress of liquid through the fastener assembly.

Example 3

A garment in the form of a coverall designed to limit and/or resist the ingress of particulates is made by incorporating the fastener assembly of Example 1 at the entry opening of the coverall. As in Example 2, the fastener assembly is attached to first and second areas of protective fabric to join that fabric at the entry point in the coveralls, however in this example the fabric is Tychem® QC polyethylene-coated nonwoven laminate. The fastener assembly is stitched to the first and second areas of the protective apparel fabric as shown in **Fig. 4**. In particular, first stitches **44** are sewn through the first fastener tape **12a**, the internal edge **20** of closing tape **13** and the first area of protective apparel fabric **6**; and the second set of stitches **44** are sewn through second fastener tape

12b, the internal edge **21** of second closing tape **14,** and the second area of protective apparel fabric **6**. However, so that the fastener can be opened and closed, the first stitches through the first closing tape **13** do not stitch through the second closing tape **14,** and the second stitches through the second closing tape **14** do not stitch through the first closing tape **13**. Further, in this embodiment, the stitches only pass through the internal edges of the closing tapes (**20, 21**); the stitches do not pass through the external edges (**22, 23**). Since the goal is to eliminate particulate ingress sealing tape is not needed. Also shown in **Fig. 4** is inner sealing tape **17** applied to cover the stitch point and the joint between the fastener tape and the internal edges. The garment is tested for resistance to airborne hazardous particles according to ISO 16602 Type 5 as tested by ISO 17491 methods and shows no ingress of particulates through the fastener assembly.

Example 4

Examples 1 thru 3 are repeated, however, the fastener assembly is constructed with the previously-described internal flap feature **41** as shown in **Fig. 3**. As in Examples 2 and 3, the garments show no ingress of liquid/particulates through the fastener assembly.

Claims

1. A fastener assembly for use with a garment comprising

a) a fastener having a first fastener tape and a second fastener tape, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface, each fastener tape further having a first end and a second end with the first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon; and

b) first and second closing tapes, each closing tape having an internal edge and an external edge,

wherein the second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the first closing tape, and the second end of the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the second closing tape; and

wherein the first closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the first fastener tape, and the second closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the second fastener tape,

such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed,

i) the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap,

ii) the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the meshed area of fastening elements, and

iii) the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape by the external edge of the second closing tape extends past the meshed area of fastening elements.

2. The fastener assembly of Claim 1 further comprising a reverse fold forming an internal flap on the external edge of the first closing tape, such that when the fastener is closed,

the fold of the internal flap nests underneath the second closing tape between its internal edge and its external edge.

3. The fastener assembly of Claim 1 wherein the internal edge of the first or second closing tapes further comprises an extension flap that covers the meshed area of fastening elements when the fastener is closed.

4. The fastener assembly of any one of Claims 1 to 3 wherein the fastener is a slide fastener, the first and second fastener tapes are stringer tapes, and the fastener elements are cooperating slide fastener elements mounted on the stringer tapes, with the slide fastener further comprising a slide cooperating with the fastener elements on the stringer tapes to open and close the slide fastener.

5. The fastener assembly of any one of Claims 1 to 3 wherein the fastener is a hook and loop fastener having hook and loop fastener elements.

6. A garment comprising protective apparel fabric and a fastener assembly for joining a first and a second area of protective apparel fabric, wherein

a) the fastener assembly comprises
i) a fastener having a first fastener tape and a second fastener tape, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface, each fastener tape further having a first end and a second end with the first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon; and
ii) first and second closing tapes, each closing tape having an internal edge and an external edge,

wherein the second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the first closing tape, and the second end of the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the second closing tape; and

wherein each of the first closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the first fastener tape, and the second closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the second fastener tape,

such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed, the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap, the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the meshed area of fastening elements, and the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape by the external edge of the second closing tape extends past the meshed area of fastening elements;

b) the garment having first stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the first area of protective apparel fabric through the internal and external edges of the first closing tape and the first fastener tape, and second stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the second area of protective apparel fabric through the internal and external edges of the second closing tape and the second fastener tape,

with the proviso the first stitches do not stitch through the second closing tape and the second stitches do not stitch through the first closing tape.

7. The garment of claim 6 wherein the first closing tape is further attached to the first area of protective apparel with outer sealing tape that covers the first stitches, and wherein the second closing tape is further attached to the second area of protective apparel with outer sealing tape that covers the second stitches.

8 The garment of claim 6 wherein the fastener assembly further comprises a reverse fold forming an internal flap on the external edge of the first closing tape, such that when the fastener is closed, the fold of the internal flap nests underneath the second closing tape between its internal edge and its external edge.

9. The garment of claim 6 wherein the internal edge of the first or second closing tapes of the fastener assembly further comprises an extension flap that covers the meshed area of fastening elements when the fastener is closed.

10. The garment of any one of claims 6 to 9 wherein the fastener is a slide fastener, the first and second fastener tapes are stringer tapes, and the fastener elements are cooperating slide fastener elements mounted on the stringer tapes, with the slide fastener further comprising a slide cooperating with the fastener elements on the stringer tapes to open and close the slide fastener.

11. The garment of any one of claims 6 to 9 wherein the fastener is a hook and loop fastener having hook and loop fastener elements.

12. A garment comprising protective apparel fabric and a fastener assembly for joining a first and a second area of protective apparel fabric, wherein

a) the fastener assembly comprises
i) a fastener having a first fastener tape and a second fastener tape, each fastener tape having an inside surface and an outside surface, each fastener tape further having a first end and a second end with the first end having a row of cooperating fastener elements mounted thereon; and
ii) first and second closing tapes, each closing tape having an internal edge and an external edge,

wherein the second end of the first fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the first closing tape, and the second end of the second fastener tape is attached to the internal edge of the second closing tape; and
wherein each of the first closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the first fastener tape, and the second closing tape is folded parallel to the row of cooperating fastener elements on the second fastener tape,

such that when the fastener is closed, and a meshed area of fastener elements from the first and second fastener tapes is formed, the external edges of each of the first and second closing tapes overlap, the external edge of the first closing tape fully covers the meshed area of fastening elements, and the overlap of the external edge of the first closing tape by the external edge of the second closing tape extends past the meshed area of fastening elements;

b) the garment having first stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the first area of protective apparel fabric through the internal edge of the first closing tape and the first fastener tape, and second stitches attaching the fastener assembly to the second area of protective apparel fabric through the internal edge of the second closing tape and the second fastener tape,

with the proviso the first stitches do not stitch through the second closing tape and the second stitches do not stitch through the first closing tape.

13. The garment of claim 12 wherein the fastener assembly further comprises a reverse fold forming an internal flap on the external edge of the first closing tape, such that when the fastener is closed, the fold of the internal flap nests underneath the second closing tape between its internal edge and its external edge.

14. The garment of claim 12 wherein the internal edge of the first or second closing tapes of the fastener assembly further comprises an extension flap that covers the meshed area of fastening elements when the fastener is closed.

15. The garment of any one of claims 12 to14 wherein the fastener is a slide fastener, the first and second fastener tapes are stringer tapes, and the fastener elements are cooperating slide fastener elements mounted on the stringer tapes, with the slide fastener further comprising a slide cooperating with the fastener elements on the stringer tapes to open and close the slide fastener.

16. The garment of any one of claims 12 to 14 wherein the fastener is a hook and loop fastener having hook and loop fastener elements.

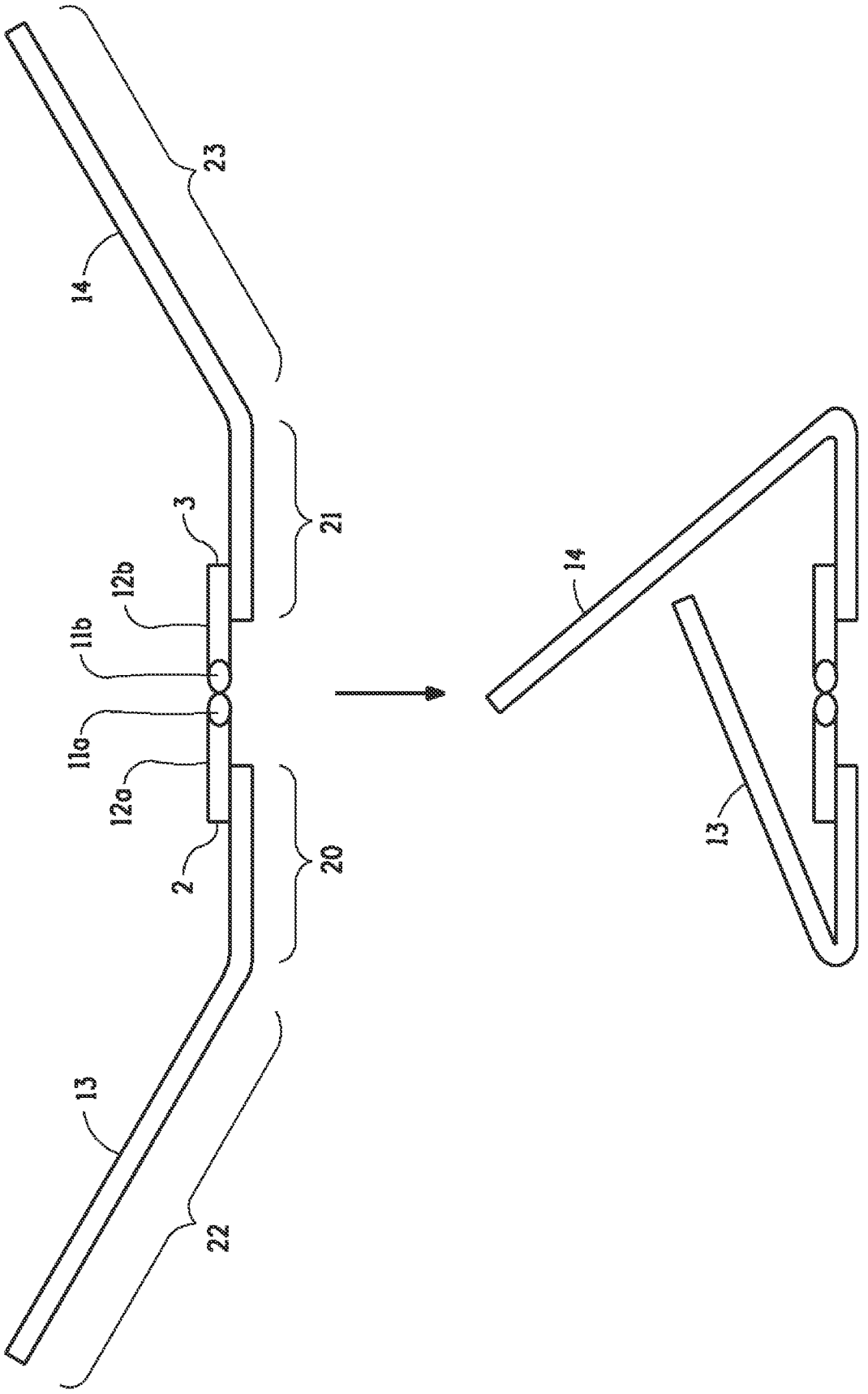

FIG. 1A

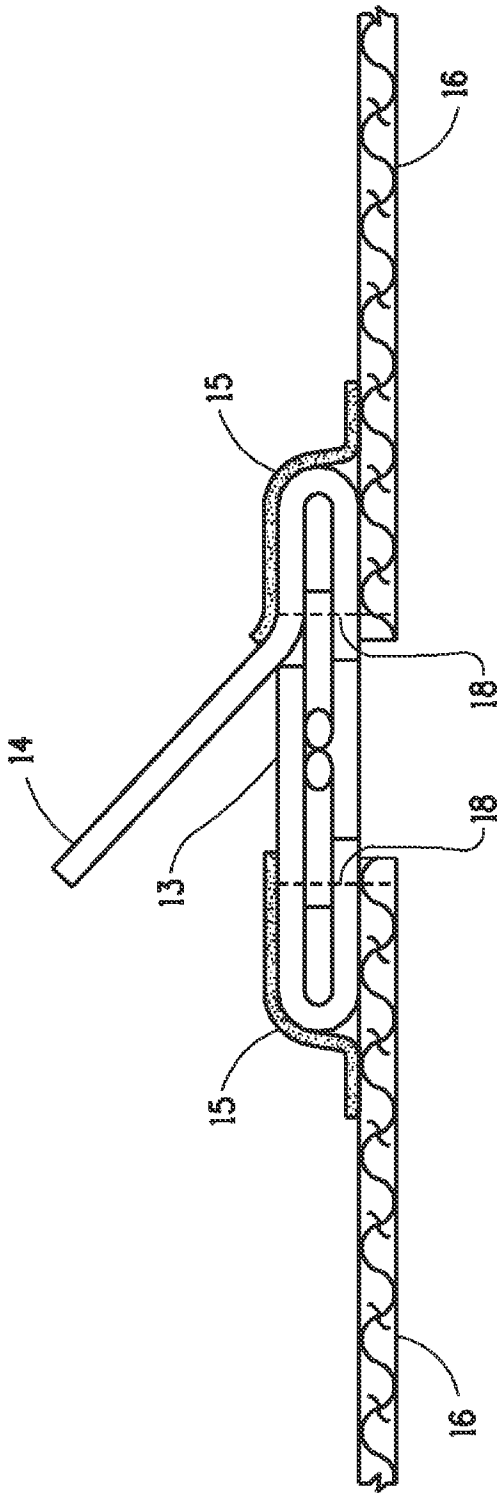

FIG. 1B

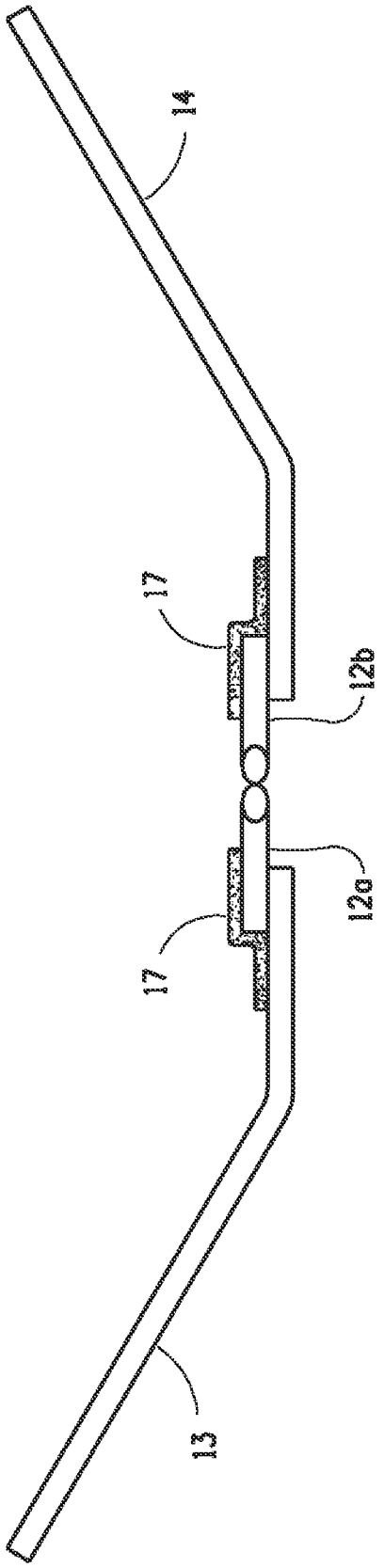

FIG. 1C

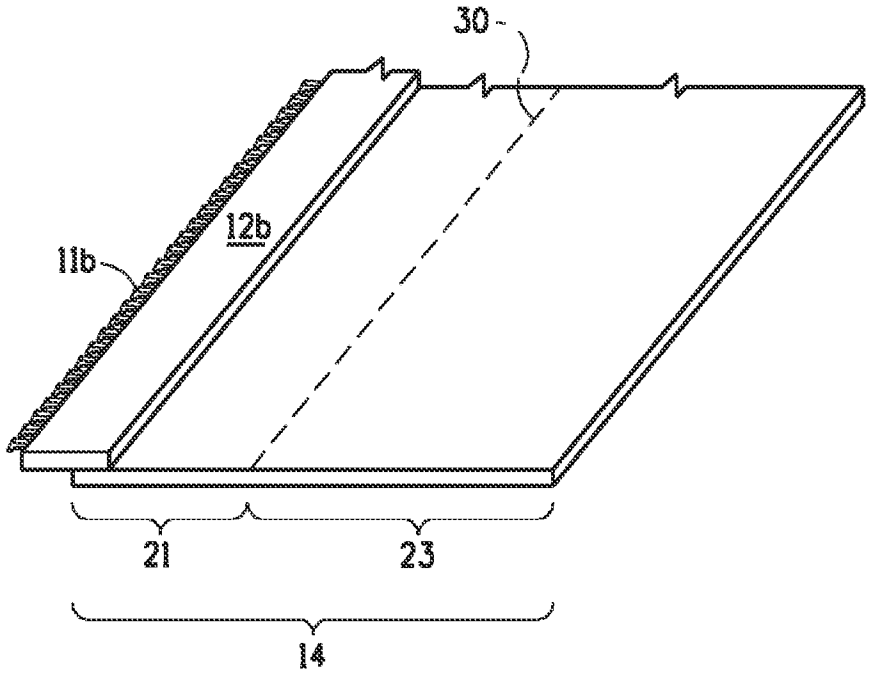

FIG. 2A

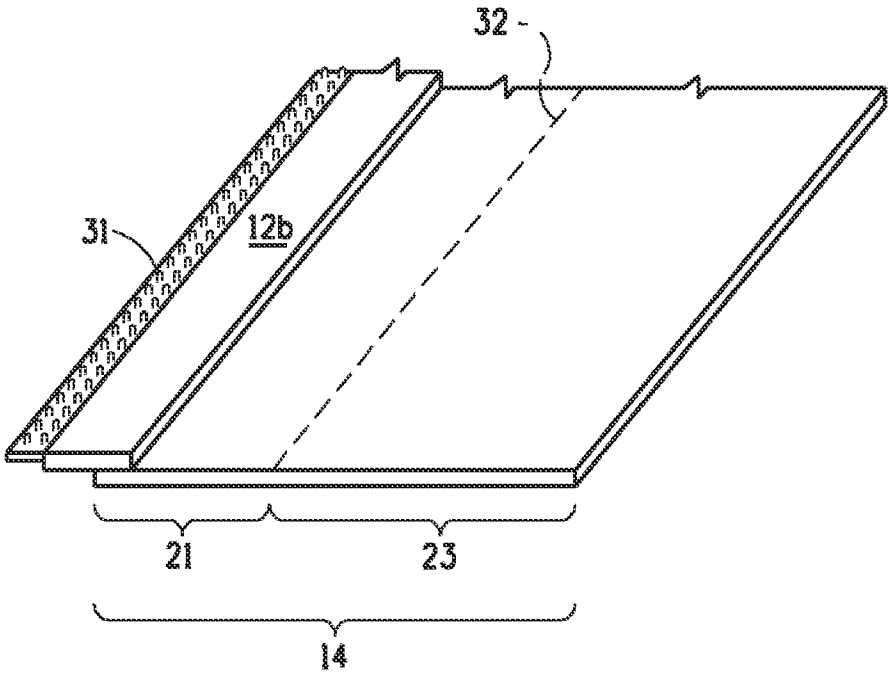

FIG. 2B

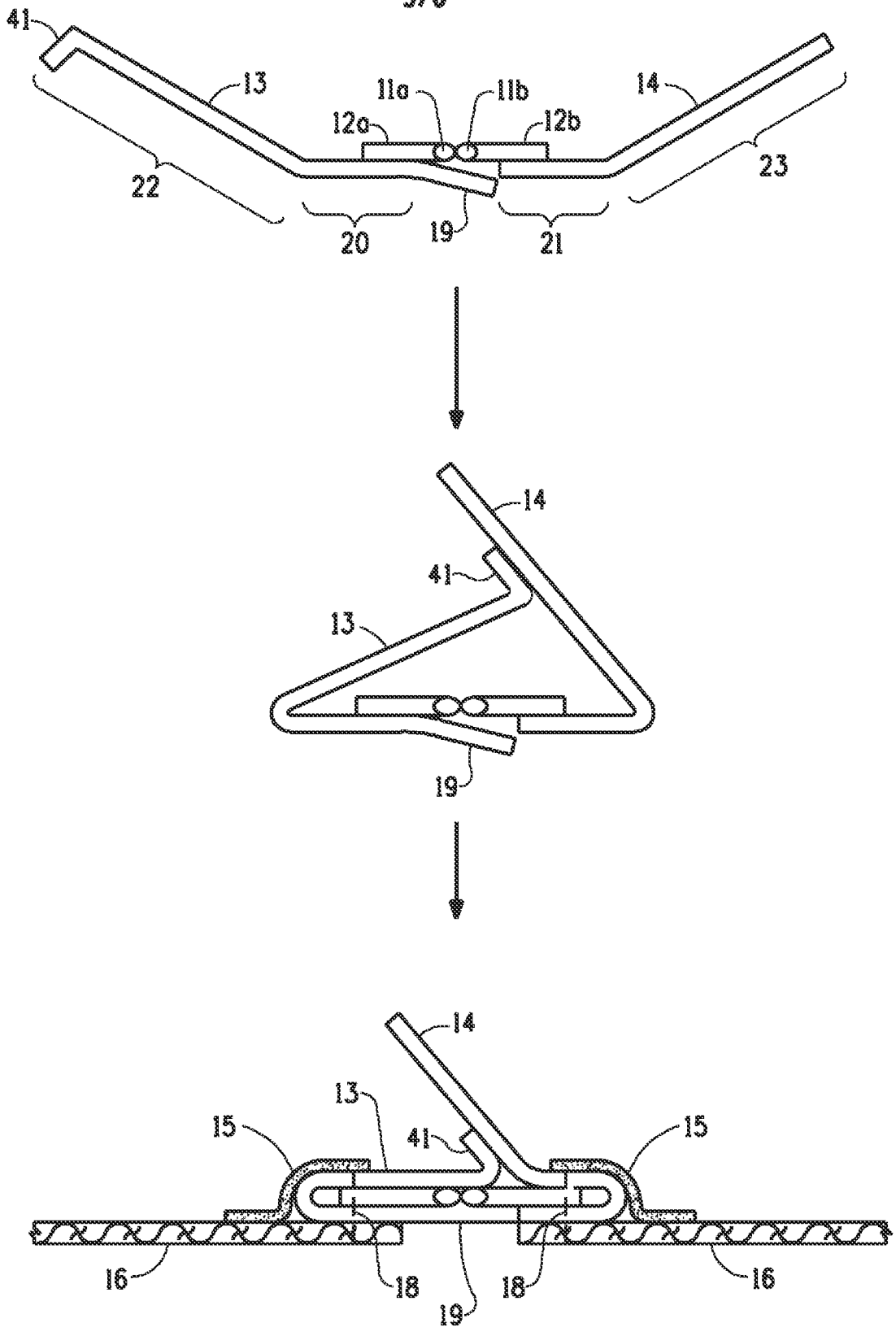
41
13
11a
11b
14
12a
12b
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FIG. 3

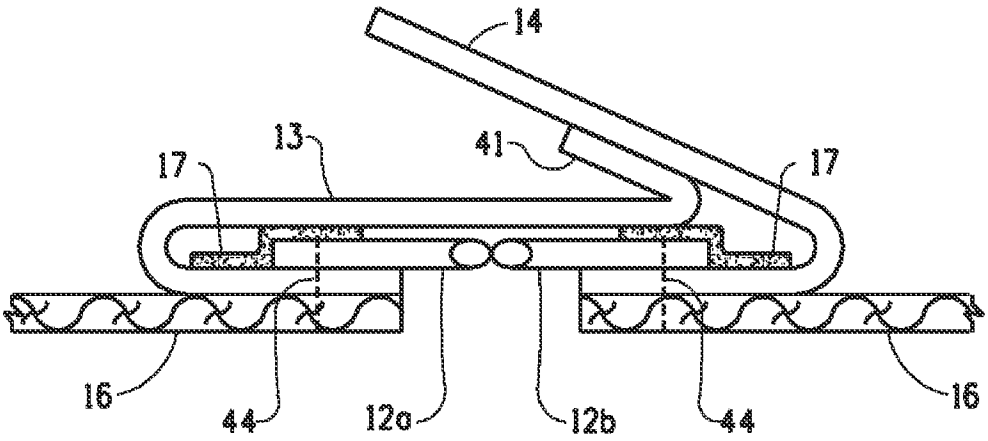

FIG. 4

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/US2014/055726

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
INV. A41H37/00
ADD.

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)
A41H A41F A44B A41D

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.
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X Y	US 6 668 384 B1 (CHANG YUNG SHENG [TW]) 30 December 2003 (2003-12-30) column 1, line 20 - line 64; figures 1-12 column 3, line 3 - column 4, line 40 -----	1-16 1-16
Y	US 2 507 333 A (COURSEY DALLAS J) 9 May 1950 (1950-05-09) column 2, line 4 - line 46; figures 4,5 -----	1-16
Y	AT 192 870 B (BENEDIKT MAESER WIRK UND STRIC) 11 November 1957 (1957-11-11) page 2, column 1, line 2 - line 6; claim 1; figure 5 -----	1-16

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[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

[X] See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
4 December 2014	12/12/2014

Name and mailing address of the ISA/	Authorized officer
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/US2014/055726

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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A	US 2006/010660 A1 (STENHALL TURO [CN] STENHAELL TURO [HK]) 19 January 2006 (2006-01-19) paragraph [0016] - paragraph [0018]; figures 1,2B -----	1-16

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Information on patent family members

International application No
PCT/US2014/055726

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