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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		
	Filing Date		2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
	Art Unit		
	Examiner Name		
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	4390953		1983-06-28	Johnstone	
	2	5041976		1991-08-20	Marko et al.	
	3	5123017		1992-06-16	Simpkins et al.	
	4	5400018		1995-03-21	Scholl et al.	
	5	5442553		1995-08-15	Parrillo	
	6	5481906		1996-01-09	Nagayoshi et al.	
	7	5528698		1996-06-18	Kamei et al.	
	8	5722686		1998-03-03	Blackburn et al.	

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9	5758300		1998-05-26	Abe	
10	5809437		1998-09-15	Breed	
11	5922037		1999-07-13	Potts	
12	6078537		2000-06-20	Zellner et al.	
13	6175787		2001-01-16	Breed	
14	6175934		2001-01-16	Hershey et al.	
15	6181994		2001-01-30	Colson et al.	
16	6567730		2003-05-20	Tanaka	
17	6636790		2003-10-21	Lightner et al.	
18	6643571		2003-11-04	Gotvall et al.	
19	6732031		2004-05-04	Lightner et al.	

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	20	6745153		2004-06-01	White et al.	
	21	6735506		2004-05-11	Breed et al.	

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Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2007-08-09
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35,336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

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2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
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5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: Not yet known
Filed: August 9, 2007
For: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

August 9, 2007

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits a list of references potentially material to the subject matter of the above-referenced application and/or which have been made of record in one or more of the parent applications: Ser. Nos. 10/331,060, 10/188,673, 09/753,186, 09/137,918, 08/476,077, 10/174,709, 10/638,743, 10/330,938, 10/940,881, 10/613,453, 10/805,903, 11/082,739, 10/701,361, 09/925,062, 09/356,314, 09/767,020, 10/043,557, 11/039,129, 11/131,623, 11/421,500, 11/220,139, 11/120,065, 11/421,554, 11/422,240, 11/464,288, 10/931,288, and 11/470,061. Since this application is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publications has been waived.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better prior art exists. While the term "reference" is used in citing each of the publications called to the

Examiner's attention herein, applicant does not make any admission that each or all of them are "prior art" references within the meaning of the statutory and case law.

Applicant reserves the right to contend, where appropriate, that a reference asserted against any claim of the present application is not prior art under the facts and the law.

Applicant also reserves the right to present appropriate arguments and/or evidence to establish patentability over the references, should one or more of the references be applied against the claims of the present application.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner independently determine those items that the Examiner would consider the most pertinent of all the references cited herein.

It is respectfully requested that these references be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

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Enclosure
PTO-1449 (6 pages)

VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC OR PROGNOSTIC MESSAGE TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is:

1. a continuation-in-part (CIP) of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/331,060 filed Dec. 27, 2002 which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673 filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697, which is:

5 A. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/753,186 filed Jan. 2, 2001, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/137,918 filed Aug. 20, 1998, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,175,787, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/476,077 filed Jun. 7, 1995, now U.S. Pat. No. 5,809,437; and

10 B. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/174,709 filed Jun. 19, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,735,506, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/753,186 filed Jan. 2, 2001, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080;

2. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/638,743 filed Aug. 11, 2003 which is

A. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673 filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697; and

15 B. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/330,938 filed Dec. 27, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,823,244, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673 filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697;

3. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/940,881 filed Sep. 13, 2004, which is:

20 A. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/613,453 filed Jul. 3, 2003, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,850,824, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673 filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697; and

B. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/805,903 filed Mar. 22, 2004, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,050,897, which is:

25 1. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/174,709, filed Jun. 19, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,735,506; and

2. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673, filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697;

4. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/082,739 filed Mar. 17, 2005 which is:

30 A. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/701,361 filed Nov. 4, 2003, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,988,026, which is:

1. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/925,062 filed Aug. 8, 2001, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,733,036, which is:

- a. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/356,314 filed Jul 16, 1999, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,326,704, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/137,918 filed Aug. 20, 1998, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,175,787; and
- b. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/767,020 filed Jan. 23, 2001, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,533,316, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/356,314 filed Jul 16, 1999, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,326,704; and
2. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/043,557 filed Jan. 11, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,905,135, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/925,062 filed Aug. 8, 2001, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,733,036; and
3. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/174,709 filed Jun. 19, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,735,506;
4. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673 filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697;
5. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/330,938 filed Dec. 27, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,823,244;
6. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/613,453 filed Jul 3, 2003, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,850,824; and
- B. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/039,129 filed Jan. 19, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,082,359 which is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/701,361 filed Nov. 4, 2003, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,988,026;
5. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/131,623 filed May 18, 2005 which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/043,557 filed Jan. 11, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,905,135;
6. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/421,500 filed Jun. 1, 2006, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/120,065 filed May 2, 2005, now abandoned;
7. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/421,554 filed Jun. 1, 2006;
8. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/422,240 filed Jun. 5, 2006, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/120,065 filed May 2, 2005, now abandoned;
9. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/464,288 filed Aug. 14, 2006 which is:
- A) a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/931,288 filed Aug. 31, 2004, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,164,117, which is:
1. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/613,453 filed Jul. 3, 2003, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,850,824; and
2. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/805,903 filed Mar. 22, 2004, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,050,897; and

B) a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460; and

10. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/470,061 filed Sep. 5, 2006 which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/120,065 filed May 2, 2005, now abandoned.

All of the references, patents and patent applications that are referred to herein and in the parent applications are incorporated by reference in their entirety as if they had each been set forth herein in full. Note that this application is one in a series of applications covering safety and other systems for vehicles and other uses. The disclosure herein goes beyond that needed to support the claims of the particular invention set forth herein. This is not to be construed that the inventor is releasing the unclaimed disclosure and subject matter into the public domain. Rather, it is intended that patent applications have been or will be filed to cover all of the subject matter disclosed below and in the current assignee's granted patents and pending applications. Also please note that the terms frequently used below "the invention" or "this invention" is not meant to be construed that there is only one invention being discussed. Instead, when the terms "the invention" or "this invention" are used, it is referring to the particular invention being discussed in the paragraph where the term is used.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to methods and systems for transmitting a diagnostic or prognostic message from a moving object such as a vehicle to a remote site.

There are numerous apparatus, systems and methods described and disclosed herein. Many combinations of these are described but in order to conserve space the inventor has not described all combinations and permutations of these apparatus, systems and methods, however, the inventor intends that each and every such combination and permutation is an invention to be considered disclosed by this disclosure. The inventor further intends to file divisional, continuation and continuation-in-part applications to cover many of these combinations and permutations, if necessary.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A detailed background of the invention is found in the parent applications, e.g., U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/476,077 and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/753,186, incorporated by reference herein.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide new and improved methods and systems for transmitting diagnostic and prognostic messages from a moving object to a remote site.

In order to achieve this object and others, a system for monitoring the condition of at least one moving object in accordance with the invention includes at least one moving object, such as a vehicle, including a communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network, at least one sensor for monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the moving object and which is coupled to the communications unit, and a remote site connected to the wireless communications network and arranged to receive diagnostic or prognostic messages from the moving object with the transmission initiated from the moving object.

In one embodiment, a diagnostic module is provided and each sensor is coupled to or a part of the diagnostic module. The diagnostic module directs the communications unit to transmit a message to the remote site upon

determining an actual or potential failure of a component or subsystem. Each sensor may be wirelessly coupled to the communications unit, or through wires via a vehicle bus.

The remote site can be any site or location apart from the vehicle which is interested in receiving a message or indication about the diagnostic or prognostic status of one or more components or subsystems of the vehicle. For example, the remote site may be another moving object which can use the diagnostic or prognostic message to determine its course of action, a traffic control system which can use the diagnostic or prognostic message to direct traffic flow to enable the moving object to exit a traffic stream, a manufacturer of the moving object which can use the diagnostic or prognostic message to determine faults with components and notify other vehicle owners or operators about such faults, and/or a seller or repairer of the moving object which can use the diagnostic or prognostic message to contact the vehicle operator or owner to schedule repair or servicing of the moving object.

A method for monitoring the condition of at least one moving object in accordance with the invention includes arranging a communications unit on at least one moving object, enabling the communications unit to interface with a wireless communications network, monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the moving object via at least one sensor, generating diagnostic or prognostic information about the component or subsystem based on the monitoring thereof, coupling each sensor to the communications unit, connecting the wireless communications network to a remote site, initiating transmission of diagnostic or prognostic messages from the communications unit of each moving object based on the generated diagnostic or prognostic information, and receiving the transmission at the remote site for further processing.

Generating diagnostic or prognostic information about the component or subsystem may entail determining whether the component or subsystem is about to fail. In this case, the transmission of diagnostic or prognostic messages from the communications unit is a transmission of an indication of the actual potential failure of the component or subsystem.

With such a transmission, when the remote site is another moving object, it can plan its movement based on the transmission. When the remote site is a traffic control system, the traffic control system can plan traffic control measures based on the transmission, e.g., to enable the moving object to exit a traffic stream if it will be unable to move. When the remote site is a manufacturer of the moving object, the manufacturer can thereby maintain a database of information about the moving object. When the remote site is a repairer or service center of the moving object, it can contact an owner or operator of the moving object to schedule repair of the component or subsystem. The diagnostic or prognostic message may be transmitted to any or all of these remote sites.

Moreover, an interface may be provided on the moving object to enable an occupant of the vehicle to initiate the transmission of diagnostic or prognostic messages. In this case, it would be advantageous to notify the occupant of the vehicle about the transmitted message related to the diagnostic or prognostic information about the component or subsystem or simply about the diagnostic or prognostic information, e.g., via a display visible to the occupant.

A method for providing status data for vehicle maintenance in accordance with the invention includes monitoring for a triggering event on a vehicle having a wireless communications unit, the triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle, and initiating a transmission between the communications unit and a remote site in response to the triggering event. The transmission includes a

diagnostic or prognostic message about the component or subsystem, e.g., a message about a potential failure of the component or subsystem. The remote site may be a dealer, manufacturer, repair or service facility, with the transmission being directable to multiple remote sites. The triggering event may be a failure, predicted failure or fault code generation of the component or subsystem determined, for example, using a pattern recognition system such as a neural network.

A system for providing status data for vehicle maintenance in accordance with the invention includes a diagnostic module including at least one sensor for monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle, the diagnostic module being arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by each sensor and detect a triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of a component or subsystem of the vehicle, and a wireless communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network. The communications unit is coupled to the diagnostic module and initiates a transmission between the communications unit and a remote site in response to the triggering event. The transmission includes a diagnostic or prognostic message about the component or subsystem.

As used herein, an "occupant restraint device" includes any type of device which is deployable in the event of a crash involving the vehicle for the purpose of protecting an occupant from the effects of the crash and/or minimizing the potential injury to the occupant. Occupant restraint devices thus include frontal airbags, side airbags, seatbelt tensioners, knee bolsters, side curtain airbags, externally deployable airbags and the like.

As used herein, a "part" of the vehicle includes any component, sensor, system or subsystem of the vehicle such as the steering system, braking system, throttle system, navigation system, airbag system, seatbelt retractor, air bag inflation valve, air bag inflation controller and airbag vent valve, as well as those listed below in the definitions of "component" and "sensor".

As used herein, a "sensor system" includes any of the sensors listed below in the definition of "sensor" as well as any type of component or assembly of components which detect, sense and/or measure something.

Other objects and advantages of the present claimed invention and inventions disclosed below are set forth in the '186 application and others will become apparent from the following description of preferred embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The following drawings are illustrative of embodiments of the systems developed or adapted using the teachings of these inventions and are not meant to limit the scope of the invention as encompassed by the claims.

FIG. 1 is a schematic illustration of a generalized component with several signals being emitted and transmitted along a variety of paths, sensed by a variety of sensors and analyzed by the diagnostic module in accordance with the invention and for use in a method in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic of one pattern recognition methodology known as a neural network which may be used in a method in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 3 is a schematic of a vehicle with several components and several sensors and a total vehicle diagnostic system in accordance with the invention utilizing a diagnostic module in accordance with the invention and which may be used in a method in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 4 is a flow diagram of information flowing from various sensors onto the vehicle data bus and thereby into the diagnostic module in accordance with the invention with outputs to a display for notifying the driver, and to the vehicle cellular phone for notifying another person, of a potential component failure.

5 FIG. 5 is an overhead view of a roadway with vehicles and a SAW road temperature and humidity monitoring sensor.

FIG. 5A is a detail drawing of the monitoring sensor of FIG. 5.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a SAW system for locating a vehicle on a roadway, and on the earth surface if accurate maps are available, and also illustrates the use of a SAW transponder in the license plate for the location of preceding vehicles and preventing rear end impacts.

10 FIG. 7 is a partial cutaway view of a section of a fluid reservoir with a SAW fluid pressure and temperature sensor for monitoring oil, water, or other fluid pressure.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a vehicle suspension system with SAW load sensors.

FIG. 8A is a cross section detail view of a vehicle spring and shock absorber system with a SAW torque sensor system mounted for measuring the stress in the vehicle spring of the suspension system of FIG. 8.

15 FIG. 8B is a detail view of a SAW torque sensor and shaft compression sensor arrangement for use with the arrangement of FIG. 8.

FIG. 9 is a cutaway view of a vehicle showing possible mounting locations for vehicle interior temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, alcohol or other chemical or physical property measuring sensors.

20 FIG. 10A is a perspective view of a SAW tilt sensor using four SAW assemblies for tilt measurement and one for temperature.

FIG. 10B is a top view of a SAW tilt sensor using three SAW assemblies for tilt measurement each one of which can also measure temperature.

FIG. 11 is a perspective exploded view of a SAW crash sensor for sensing frontal, side or rear crashes.

FIG. 12 is a perspective view with portions cutaway of a SAW based vehicle gas gage.

25 FIG. 12A is a top detailed view of a SAW pressure and temperature monitor for use in the system of FIG. 12.

FIG. 13A is a schematic of a prior art deployment scheme for an airbag module.

FIG. 13B is a schematic of a deployment scheme for an airbag module in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 14 is a schematic of a vehicle with several accelerometers and/or gyroscopes at preferred locations in the vehicle.

30 FIG. 15A illustrates a driver with a timed RFID standing with groceries by a closed trunk.

FIG. 15B illustrates the driver with the timed RFID 5 seconds after the trunk has been opened.

FIG. 15C illustrates a trunk opening arrangement for a vehicle in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 16A is a view of a view of a SAW switch sensor for mounting on or within a surface such as a vehicle armrest.

35 FIG. 16B is a detailed perspective view of the device of FIG. 16A with the force-transmitting member rendered transparent.

FIG. 16C is a detailed perspective view of an alternate SAW device for use in FIGS. 16A and 16B showing the use of one of two possible switches, one that activates the SAW and the other that suppresses the SAW.

FIG. 17A is a detailed perspective view of a polymer and mass on SAW accelerometer for use in crash sensors, vehicle navigation, etc.

5 FIG. 17B is a detailed perspective view of a normal mass on SAW accelerometer for use in crash sensors, vehicle navigation, etc.

FIG. 18 is a view of a prior art SAW gyroscope that can be used with this invention.

FIGS. 19A, 19B and 19C are block diagrams of three interrogators that can be used with this invention to interrogate several different devices.

10 FIG. 20A is a top view of a system for obtaining information about a vehicle or a component therein, specifically information about the tires, such as pressure and/or temperature thereof.

FIG. 20B is a side view of the vehicle shown in FIG. 20A.

FIG. 20C is a schematic of the system shown in FIGS. 20A and 20B.

FIG. 21 is a top view of an alternate system for obtaining information about the tires of a vehicle.

15 FIG. 22 is a plot which is useful to illustrate the interrogator burst pulse determination for interrogating SAW devices.

FIG. 23 illustrates the shape of an echo pulse on input to the quadrature demodulator from a SAW device.

FIG. 24 illustrates the relationship between the burst and echo pulses for a 4 echo pulse SAW sensor.

20 FIG. 25 illustrates the paths taken by various surface waves on a tire temperature and pressure monitoring device of one or more of the inventions disclosed herein.

FIG. 26 is an illustration of a SAW tire temperature and pressure monitoring device.

FIG. 27 is a side view of the SAW device of FIG. 26.

25 FIG. 28 is a side view with parts cutaway and removed of a vehicle showing the passenger compartment containing a rear facing child seat on the front passenger seat and a mounting location for an occupant and rear facing child seat presence detector.

FIG. 29 is a flow chart of the methods for automatically monitoring a vehicular component in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 30 is a schematic illustration of the components used in the methods for automatically monitoring a vehicular component.

30 FIG. 31 is a side view with parts cutaway and removed showing schematically the interface between the vehicle interior monitoring system of this invention and the vehicle cellular communication system.

FIG. 32 is a diagram of one exemplifying embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 33 is a perspective view of a carbon dioxide SAW sensor for mounting in the trunk lid for monitoring the inside of the trunk for detecting trapped children or animals.

35 FIG. 33A is a detailed view of the SAW carbon dioxide sensor of FIG. 33.

FIG. 34 is a schematic view of overall telematics system in accordance with the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

1.1 General Diagnostics and Prognostics

The output of a diagnostic system is generally the present condition of the vehicle or component. However, the vehicle operator wants to repair the vehicle or replace the component before it fails, but a diagnosis system in general does not specify when that will occur. Prognostics is the process of determining when the vehicle or a component will fail, i.e., predicting an impending or likely failure. At least one of the inventions disclosed herein is concerned with prognostics. Prognostics can be based on models of vehicle or component degradation and the effects of environment and usage. In this regard, it is useful to have a quantitative formulation of how the component degradation depends on environment, usage and current component condition. This formulation may be obtained by monitoring condition, environment and usage level, and by modeling the relationships with statistical techniques or pattern recognition techniques such as neural networks, combination neural networks and fuzzy logic. In some cases, it can also be obtained by theoretical methods or from laboratory experiments.

One embodiment of the vehicle diagnostic and prognostic unit described below performs the diagnosis and prognostics, i.e., processes input from the various sensors, on the vehicle using, for example, a processor embodying a pattern recognition technique such as a neural network. The processor thus receives data or signals from the sensors and generates an output indicative or representative of the operating conditions of the vehicle or its component. A signal could thus be generated indicative of an under-inflated tire, or an overheating engine, or other component-fault conditions.

For the discussion below, the following terms are defined as follows:

The term "component" as used herein generally refers to any part or assembly of parts which is mounted to or a part of a motor vehicle and which is capable of emitting a signal representative of its operating state. The following is a partial list of general automobile and truck components, the list not being exhaustive:

Engine; transmission; brakes and associated brake assembly; tires; wheel; steering wheel and steering column assembly; water pump; alternator; shock absorber; wheel mounting assembly; radiator; battery; oil pump; fuel pump; air conditioner compressor; differential gear assembly; exhaust system; fan belts; engine valves; steering assembly; vehicle suspension including shock absorbers; vehicle wiring system; and engine cooling fan assembly.

The term "sensor" as used herein generally refers to any measuring, detecting or sensing device mounted on a vehicle or any of its components including new sensors mounted in conjunction with the diagnostic module in accordance with the invention. A partial, non-exhaustive list of sensors that are or can be mounted on an automobile or truck includes:

Airbag crash sensor; microphone; camera; chemical sensor; vapor sensor; antenna, capacitance or other electric field sensor or other electromagnetic wave sensor; stress or strain sensor; pressure sensor; weight sensor; magnetic field sensor; coolant thermometer; oil pressure sensor; oil level sensor; air flow meter; voltmeter; ammeter; humidity sensor; engine knock sensor; oil turbidity sensor; throttle position sensor; steering wheel torque sensor; wheel speed sensor; tachometer; speedometer; other velocity sensors; other position or displacement sensors; oxygen or other gas sensor; yaw, pitch and roll angular sensors; clock; odometer; power steering pressure sensor; pollution sensor; fuel gauge; cabin thermometer; transmission fluid level sensor; gyroscopes or other angular rate sensors including yaw, pitch and roll rate

sensors; accelerometers including single axis, dual axis and triaxial accelerometers; an inertial measurement unit; coolant level sensor; transmission fluid turbidity sensor; brake pressure sensor; tire pressure sensor; tire temperature sensor, tire acceleration sensor; GPS receiver; DGPS receiver; and coolant pressure sensor.

5 Such a sensor may obtain a value of a measurable characteristic of a component or subsystem associated with the sensor and generate a signal indicative or representative of the value. For example, the steering wheel torque sensor is associated with the steering wheel and measures a value of the steering wheel torque and generates a signal representative thereof.

The term “signal” as used herein generally refers to any time-varying output from a component, sensor or subsystem including electrical, acoustic, thermal, electromagnetic radiation or mechanical vibration.

10 Sensors on a vehicle are generally designed to measure particular parameters of particular vehicle components. However, frequently these sensors also measure outputs from other vehicle components. For example, electronic airbag crash sensors currently in use contain one or more accelerometers for determining the accelerations of the vehicle structure so that the associated electronic circuitry of the airbag crash sensor can determine whether a vehicle is experiencing a crash of sufficient magnitude so as to require deployment of the airbag. Each accelerometer continuously
15 monitors the vibrations in the vehicle structure regardless of the source of these vibrations. If a wheel is out of balance, or if there is extensive wear of the parts of the front wheel mounting assembly, or wear in the shock absorbers, the resulting abnormal vibrations or accelerations can, in many cases, be sensed by a crash sensor accelerometer. There are other cases, however, where the sensitivity or location of an airbag crash sensor accelerometer is not appropriate and one or more additional accelerometers or gyroscopes may be mounted onto a vehicle for the purposes of this invention.
20 Some airbag crash sensors are not sufficiently sensitive accelerometers or have sufficient dynamic range for the purposes herein.

For example, a technique for some implementations of an invention disclosed herein is the use of multiple accelerometers and/or microphones that will allow the system to locate the source of any measured vibrations based on the time of flight, time of arrival, direction of arrival and/or triangulation techniques. Once a distributed accelerometer
25 installation, or one or more IMUs, has been implemented to permit this source location, the same sensors can be used for smarter crash sensing as it can permit the determination of the location of the impact on the vehicle. Once the impact location is known, a highly tailored algorithm can be used to accurately forecast the crash severity making use of knowledge of the force vs. crush properties of the vehicle at the impact location.

Every component of a vehicle can emit various signals during its life. These signals can take the form of
30 electromagnetic radiation, acoustic radiation, thermal radiation, vibrations transmitted through the vehicle structure and voltage or current fluctuations, depending on the particular component. When a component is functioning normally, it may not emit a perceptible signal. In that case, the normal signal is no signal, i.e., the absence of a signal. In most cases, a component will emit signals that change over its life and it is these changes which typically contain information as to the state of the component, e.g., whether failure of the component is impending, or has actually occurred. Usually
35 components do not fail without warning. However, most such warnings are either not perceived or if perceived, are not understood by the vehicle operator until the component actually fails and, in some cases, a breakdown of the vehicle occurs.

An important system and method as disclosed herein for acquiring data for performing the diagnostics, prognostics and health monitoring functions makes use of the acoustic transmissions from various components. This can involve the placement of one or more microphones, accelerometers, or other vibration sensors onto and/or at a variety of locations within the vehicle where the sound or vibrations are most effectively sensed. In addition to acquiring data relative to a particular component, the same sensors can also obtain data that permits analysis of the vehicle environment. A pothole, for example, can be sensed and located for possible notification to a road authority if a location determining apparatus is also resident on the vehicle.

In a few years, it is expected that various roadways will have systems for automatically guiding vehicles operating thereon. Such systems have been called “smart highways” and are part of the field of intelligent transportation systems (ITS). If a vehicle operating on such a smart highway were to breakdown due to the failure of a component, serious disruption of the system could result and the safety of other users of the smart highway could be endangered.

When a vehicle component begins to change its operating behavior, it is not always apparent from the particular sensors which are monitoring that component, if any. The output from any one of these sensors can be normal even though the component is failing. By analyzing the output of a variety of sensors, however, the pending failure can frequently be diagnosed. For example, the rate of temperature rise in the vehicle coolant, if it were monitored, might appear normal unless it were known that the vehicle was idling and not traveling down a highway at a high speed. Even the level of coolant temperature which is in the normal range could be in fact abnormal in some situations signifying a failing coolant pump, for example, but not detectable from the coolant thermometer alone.

The pending failure of some components is difficult to diagnose and sometimes the design of the component requires modification so that the diagnosis can be more readily made. A fan belt, for example, frequently begins failing as a result of a crack of the inner surface. The belt can be designed to provide a sonic or electrical signal when this cracking begins in a variety of ways. Similarly, coolant hoses can be designed with an intentional weak spot where failure will occur first in a controlled manner that can also cause a whistle sound as a small amount of steam exits from the hose. This whistle sound can then be sensed by a general purpose microphone, for example.

In FIG. 1, a generalized component emitting several signals which are transmitted along a variety of paths, sensed by a variety of sensors and analyzed by the diagnostic device in accordance with the invention is illustrated schematically. Component 35 is mounted to a vehicle and during operation it emits a variety of signals such as acoustic, electromagnetic radiation, thermal radiation, current and voltage fluctuations in conductor and mechanical vibrations. Various sensors are mounted in the vehicle to detect the signals emitted by the component 35. These include one or more vibration sensors (accelerometers) and/or gyroscopes or one or more IMUs, one or more acoustic sensors, electromagnetic radiation sensors, heat radiation sensors and voltage or current sensors.

In addition, various other sensors measure other parameters of other components that in some manner provide information directly or indirectly on the operation of component 35. Each of the sensors illustrated in FIG. 1 can be connected to a data bus. A diagnostic module, in accordance with the invention, can also be attached to the vehicle data bus and it can receive the signals generated by the various sensors. The sensors may however be wirelessly connected to the diagnostic module and be integrated into a wireless power and communications system or

a combination of wired and wireless connections. The wireless connection of one or more sensors to a receiver, controller or diagnostic module is an important teaching of one or more of the inventions disclosed herein.

The diagnostic module 51 will analyze the received data in light of the data values or patterns itself either statically or over time. In some cases, a pattern recognition algorithm as discussed below will be used and in others, a deterministic algorithm may also be used either alone or in combination with the pattern recognition algorithm. Additionally, when a new data value or sequence is discovered the information can be sent to an off-vehicle location, perhaps a dealer or manufacturer site, and a search can be made for other similar cases and the results reported back to the vehicle. Also additionally as more and more vehicles are reporting cases that perhaps are also examined by engineers or mechanics, the results can be sent to the subject vehicle or to all similar vehicles and the diagnostic software updated automatically. Thus, all vehicles can have the benefit from information relative to performing the diagnostic function. Similarly, the vehicle dealers and manufacturers can also have up-to-date information as to how a particular class or model of vehicle is performing. This telematics function is discussed elsewhere herein. By means of this system, a vehicle diagnostic system can predict component failures long before they occur and thus prevent on-road problems.

The invention therefore contemplates a variety of automatic and wireless communications from a vehicle to an interested party remote from the vehicle, i.e., at a site remote from, separate from, apart from the vehicle, whether it is a dealer or manufacturer, repair or service center, or any combinations of these or additional parties. In addition to the communication of diagnostic or prognostic information in the form of a diagnostic or prognostic message, derived for example by one of the techniques described herein, the same wireless telecommunications link can be used by the remote-situated interested party to provide a response to the message from the vehicle. For example, the message could be as simple as an automatic notification of receipt of information from the vehicle. If the remote party is a dealer, the response might be that the analysis of the diagnostic or prognostic problem has been received and is being reviewed. The response could also be a manually generated message by the dealer and/or manufacturer's personnel. One such responsive message might provide a time for a scheduled service appointment or a block of available times to schedule an appointment.

An important function that can be performed by the diagnostic system herein is to substantially diagnose the vehicle's own problems rather than forwarding raw data to a central site for diagnosis. Eventually, a prediction as to the failure point of all significant components can be made and the owner can have a prediction that the fan belt will last another 20,000 miles, or that the tires should be rotated in 2,000 miles or replaced in 20,000 miles. This information can be displayed or reported orally or sent to the dealer, or other service center, who can then schedule a time for the customer to visit the dealership or for the dealer to visit the vehicle wherever it is located. If it is displayed, it can be automatically displayed periodically or when there is urgency or whenever the operator desires. The display can be located at any convenient place such as the dashboard or it can be a heads-up display. The display can be any convenient technology such as an LCD display or an OLED based display. This can permit the vehicle manufacturer to guarantee that the owner will never experience a vehicle breakdown provided he or she permits the dealer to service the vehicle at appropriate times based on the output of the prognostics system.

It is worth emphasizing that in many cases, it is the rate that a parameter is changing that can be as or more important than the actual value in predicting when a component is likely to fail. In a simple case when a tire is losing

pressure, for example, it is a quite different situation if it is losing one psi per day or one psi per minute. Similarly for the tire case, if the tire is heating up at one degree per hour or 100 degrees per hour may be more important in predicting failure due to delamination or overloading than the particular temperature of the tire.

5 The diagnostic module, or other component, can also consider situation awareness factors such as the age or driving habits of the operator, the location of the vehicle (e.g., is it in the desert, in the arctic in winter), the season, the weather forecast, the length of a proposed trip, the number and location of occupants of the vehicle etc. The system may even put limits on the operation of the vehicle such as turning off unnecessary power consuming components if the alternator is failing or limiting the speed of the vehicle if the driver is an elderly woman sitting close to the steering wheel, for example. Furthermore, the system may change the operational parameters of the vehicle such as the engine
10 RPM or the fuel mixture if doing so will prolong vehicle operation. In some cases where there is doubt whether a component is failing, the vehicle operating parameters may be temporarily varied by the system in order to accentuate the signal from the component to permit more accurate diagnosis.

In addition to the above discussion there are some diagnostic features already available on some vehicles some of which are related to the federally mandated OBD-II and can be included in the general diagnostics and health
15 monitoring features of this invention. In typical applications, the set of diagnostic data includes at least one of the following: diagnostic trouble codes, vehicle speed, fuel level, fuel pressure, miles per gallon, engine RPM, mileage, oil pressure, oil temperature, tire pressure, tire temperature, engine coolant temperature, intake-manifold pressure, engine-performance tuning parameters, alarm status, accelerometer status, cruise-control status, fuel-injector performance, spark-plug timing, and a status of an anti-lock braking system.

20 The data parameters within the set describe a variety of electrical, mechanical, and emissions-related functions in the vehicle. Several of the more significant parameters from the set are:

- Pending DTCs (Diagnostic Trouble Codes)
- Ignition Timing Advance
- Calculated Load Value
- 25 Air Flow Rate MAF Sensor
- Engine RPM
- Engine Coolant Temperature
- Intake Air Temperature
- Absolute Throttle Position Sensor
- 30 Vehicle Speed
- Short-Term Fuel Trim
- Long-Term Fuel Trim
- MIL Light Status
- Oxygen Sensor Voltage
- 35 Oxygen Sensor Location
- Delta Pressure Feedback EGR Pressure Sensor
- Evaporative Purge Solenoid Duty cycle

Fuel Level Input Sensor
Fuel Tank Pressure Voltage
Engine Load at the Time of Misfire
Engine RPM at the Time of Misfire
5 Throttle Position at the Time of Misfire
Vehicle Speed at the Time of Misfire
Number of Misfires
Transmission Fluid Temperature
PRNDL position (1,2,3,4,5=neutral, 6=reverse)
10 Number of Completed OBDII Trips, and
Battery Voltage.

When the diagnostic system determines that the operator is operating the vehicle in such a manner that the failure of a component is accelerated, then a warning can be issued to the operator. For example, the driver may have inadvertently placed the automatic gear shift lever in a lower gear and be driving at a higher speed than he or she should for that gear. In such a case, the driver can be notified to change gears.

Managing the diagnostics and prognostics of a complex system has been termed "System Health Management" and has not been applied to over the road vehicles such as trucks and automobiles. Such systems are used for fault detection and identification, failure prediction (estimating the time to failure), tracking degradation, maintenance scheduling, error correction in the various measurements which have been corrupted and these same tasks are applicable here.

Various sensors, both wired and wireless, will be discussed below. Representative of such sensors are those available from Honeywell which are MEMS-based sensors for measuring temperature, pressure, acoustic emission, strain, and acceleration. The devices are based on resonant microbeam force sensing technology. Coupled with a precision silicon microstructure, the resonant microbeams provide a high sensitivity for measuring inertial acceleration, inclination, and vibrations. Alternate designs based on SAW technology lend themselves more readily to wireless and powerless operation as discussed below. The Honeywell sensors can be networked wirelessly but still require power.

Since this system is independent of the dedicated sensor monitoring system and instead is observing more than one sensor, inconsistencies in sensor output can be detected and reported indicating the possible erratic or inaccurate operation of a sensor even if this is intermittent (such as may be caused by a loose wire) thus essentially eliminating many of the problems reported in the above-referenced article "What's Bugging the High-Tech Car". Furthermore, the software can be independent of the vehicle specific software for a particular sensor and system and can further be based on pattern recognition, to be discussed next, rendering it even less likely to provide the wrong diagnostic. Since the output from the diagnostic and prognostic system herein described can be sent via telematics to the dealer and vehicle manufacturer, the occurrence of a sensor or system failure can be immediately logged to form a frequency of failure log for a particular new vehicle model allowing the manufacturer to more quickly schedule a recall if a previously unknown problem surfaces in the field.

1.2 Pattern recognition

In accordance with at least one invention, each of the signals emitted by the sensors can be converted into electrical signals and then digitized (i.e., the analog signal is converted into a digital signal) to create numerical time series data which is entered into a processor. Pattern recognition algorithms can be applied by the processor to attempt to identify and classify patterns in this time series data. For a particular component, such as a tire for example, the algorithm attempts to determine from the relevant digital data whether the tire is functioning properly or whether it requires balancing, additional air, or perhaps replacement.

Frequently, the data entered into the pattern recognition algorithm needs to be preprocessed before being analyzed. The data from a wheel speed sensor, for example, might be used “as is” for determining whether a particular tire is operating abnormally in the event it is unbalanced, whereas the integral of the wheel speed data over a long time period (a preprocessing step), when compared to such sensors on different wheels, might be more useful in determining whether a particular tire is going flat and therefore needs air. This is the basis of some tire monitors now on the market. Such indirect systems are not permitted as a means for satisfying federal safety requirements. These systems generally depend on the comparison of the integral of the wheel speed to determine the distance traveled by the wheel surface and that system is then compared with other wheels on the vehicle to determine that one tire has relatively less air than another. Of course this system fails if all of the tires have low pressure. One solution is to compare the distance traveled by a wheel with the distance that it should have traveled. If the angular motion (displacement and/or velocity) of the wheel axle is known, than this comparison can be made directly. Alternately, if the position of the vehicle is accurately monitored so that the actual travel along its path can be determined through a combination of GPS and an IMU, for example, then again the pressure within a vehicle tire can be determined.

In some cases, the frequencies present in a set of data are a better predictor of component failures than the data itself. For example, when a motor begins to fail due to worn bearings, certain characteristic frequencies began to appear. In most cases, the vibrations arising from rotating components, such as the engine, will be normalized based on the rotational frequency. Moreover, the identification of which component is causing vibrations present in the vehicle structure can frequently be accomplished through a frequency analysis of the data. For these cases, a Fourier transformation of the data can be made prior to entry of the data into a pattern recognition algorithm. Wavelet transforms and other mathematical transformations are also made for particular pattern recognition purposes in practicing the teachings of this invention. Some of these include shifting and combining data to determine phase changes for example, differentiating the data, filtering the data and sampling the data. Also, there exist certain more sophisticated mathematical operations that attempt to extract or highlight specific features of the data. The inventions herein contemplate the use of a variety of these preprocessing techniques and the choice of which one or ones to use is left to the skill of the practitioner designing a particular diagnostic and prognostic module. Note, whenever diagnostics is used below it will be assumed to also include prognostics.

As shown in FIG. 1, the diagnostic module 51 has access to the output data of each of the sensors that are known to have or potentially may have information relative to or concerning the component 35. This data appears as a series of numerical values each corresponding to a measured value at a specific point in time. The cumulative data from a particular sensor is called a time series of individual data points. The diagnostic module 51 compares the patterns of data received from each sensor individually, or in combination with data from other sensors, with patterns for which the

diagnostic module has been programmed or trained to determine whether the component is functioning normally or abnormally.

In one embodiment, the diagnostic module 51 includes a processor operatively connected to the sensors for receiving signal from the sensors indicative or representative of a value of a measurable characteristic obtained by the sensor. The processor is programmed to analyze the value of the measurable characteristic, either independent of other values of measurable characteristics or in combination therewith, to recognize or determine whether the component or subsystem has a fault condition, e.g., actual or potential failure of a component or subsystem. To this end, the processor may include one or more pattern recognition algorithms wherein the signals from the sensors are input to the pattern recognition algorithm(s) which has been trained to output from these signals a fault condition of one or more components or subsystems, if present.

Important to some embodiments of the inventions herein is the manner in which the diagnostic module 51 determines a normal pattern from an abnormal pattern and the manner in which it decides what data to use from the vast amount of data available. This can be accomplished using pattern recognition technologies such as artificial neural networks and training and in particular, combination neural networks as described in U.S. patent application Serial No. 10/413,426 (Publication 20030209893). The theory of neural networks including many examples can be found in several books on the subject including: (1) Techniques And Application Of Neural Networks, edited by Taylor, M. and Lisboa, P., Ellis Horwood, West Sussex, England, 1993; (2) Naturally Intelligent Systems, by Caudill, M. and Butler, C., MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1990; (3) J. M. Zaruda, Introduction to Artificial Neural Systems, West Publishing Co., N.Y., 1992, (4) Digital Neural Networks, by Kung, S. Y., PTR Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1993, Eberhart, R., Simpson, P., (5) Dobbins, R., Computational Intelligence PC Tools, Academic Press, Inc., 1996, Orlando, Florida, (6) Cristianini, N. and Shawe-Taylor, J. An Introduction to Support Vector Machines and other kernel-based learning methods, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge England, 2000; (7) Proceedings of the 2000 6th IEEE International Workshop on Cellular Neural Networks and their Applications (CNNA 2000), IEEE, Piscataway NJ; and (8) Sinha, N.K. and Gupta, M.M. Soft Computing & Intelligent Systems, Academic Press 2000 San Diego, CA. The neural network pattern recognition technology is one of the most developed of pattern recognition technologies. The invention described herein frequently uses combinations of neural networks to improve the pattern recognition process, as discussed in U.S. patent application Serial No. 10/413,426.

The neural network pattern recognition technology is one of the most developed of pattern recognition technologies. The neural network will be used here to illustrate one example of a pattern recognition technology but it is emphasized that this invention is not limited to neural networks. Rather, the invention may apply any known pattern recognition technology including various segmentation techniques, sensor fusion and various correlation technologies. In some cases, the pattern recognition algorithm is generated by an algorithm-generating program and in other cases, it is created by, e.g., an engineer, scientist or programmer. A brief description of a particular simple example of a neural network pattern recognition technology is set forth below.

Neural networks are constructed of processing elements known as neurons that are interconnected using information channels called interconnects and are arranged in a plurality of layers. Each neuron can have multiple inputs but generally only one output. Each output however is usually connected to many, frequently all, other neurons in the

next layer. The neurons in the first layer operate collectively on the input data as described below. Neural networks learn by extracting relational information from the data and the desired output. Neural networks have been applied to a wide variety of pattern recognition problems including automobile occupant sensing, speech recognition, optical character recognition and handwriting analysis.

5 To train a neural network, data is provided in the form of one or more time series, from the sensors, that represents the condition to be diagnosed, which can be induced to artificially create an abnormally operating component, as well as normal operation. Thus, data from the sensors obtained during normal operation of each component, as well as during abnormal operation of each component, is provided to the neural network during the training stage.

10 In the training stage of the neural network or other type of pattern recognition algorithm, the time series data for both normal and abnormal component operation is entered into a processor which applies a neural network-generating program to output a neural network capable of determining abnormal operation of a component. The pattern recognition algorithm thereby detects trends or patterns in the time series received from the sensors. Once the trained pattern recognition algorithm is installed on a vehicle, during operation of the vehicle, data in the form of time series from sensors will be input to the pattern recognition algorithm to enable a determination of the actual or impending failure of a component. This determination is thereby achieved through use of the patterns in the time series which have been used to create the pattern recognition algorithm.

15 As an example, the simple case of an out-of-balance tire will be used. Various sensors on the vehicle can be used to extract information from signals emitted by the tire such as an accelerometer, a torque sensor on the steering wheel, the pressure output of the power steering system, a tire pressure monitor or tire temperature monitor. Since the vehicle components differ from vehicle to vehicle, data from sensors on one vehicle cannot be used to train a pattern recognition algorithm for installation on another vehicle and therefore, vehicle model-specific data must be provided for each vehicle. Other sensors that might not have an obvious relationship to tire unbalance (or imbalance) are also included such as, for example, the vehicle speed or wheel speed that can be determined from the anti-lock brake (ABS) system. Data is taken from a variety of vehicles where the tires were accurately balanced under a variety of operating conditions also for cases where varying amounts of tire unbalance was intentionally introduced. Once the data had been collected, some degree of pre-processing (e.g., time or frequency modification) and/or feature extraction is usually performed to reduce the total amount of data fed to the neural network-generating program. In the case of the unbalanced tire, the time period between data points might be selected such that there are at least ten data points per revolution of the wheel. For some other application, the time period might be one minute or one millisecond.

25 Once the data has been collected, it is processed by the neural network-generating program, for example, if a neural network pattern recognition system is to be used. Such programs are available commercially, e.g., from NeuralWare of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania or from International Scientific Research, Inc., of Panama for modular neural networks. The program proceeds in a trial and error manner until it successfully associates the various patterns representative of abnormal behavior, an unbalanced tire in this case, with that condition. The resulting neural network can be tested to determine if some of the input data from some of the sensors, for example, can be eliminated. In this manner, the engineer can determine what sensor data is relevant to a particular diagnostic problem. The program then generates an algorithm that is programmed onto a microprocessor, microcontroller, neural processor, FPGA, or DSP

(herein collectively referred to as a microprocessor or processor). Such a microprocessor appears inside the diagnostic module 51 in FIG. 1.

Once trained, the neural network, as represented by the algorithm, is installed in a processor unit of a motor vehicle and will now recognize an unbalanced tire on the vehicle when this event occurs. At that time, when the tire is unbalanced, the diagnostic module 51 will receive output from the sensors, determine whether the output is indicative of abnormal operation of the tire, e.g., lack of tire balance, and instruct or direct another vehicular system to respond to the unbalanced tire situation. Such an instruction may be a message to the driver indicating that the tire should now be balanced, as described below. The message to the driver is provided by an output device coupled to or incorporated within the module 51, e.g., an icon or text display, and may be a light on the dashboard, a vocal tone or any other recognizable indication apparatus. A similar message may also be sent to the dealer, vehicle manufacturer or other repair facility or remote facility via a communications channel between the vehicle and the dealer or repair facility which is established by a suitable transmission device.

It is important to note that there may be many neural networks involved in a total vehicle diagnostic system. These can be organized either in parallel, series, as an ensemble, cellular neural network or as a modular neural network system. In one implementation of a modular neural network, a primary neural network identifies that there is an abnormality and tries to identify the likely source. Once a choice has been made as to the likely source of the abnormality, another, specific neural network of a group of neural networks can be called upon to determine the exact cause of the abnormality. In this manner, the neural networks are arranged in a tree pattern with each neural network trained to perform a particular pattern recognition task. Of course, one or more combination neural networks can be used.

Discussions on the operation of a neural network can be found in the above references on the subject and are understood by those skilled in the art. Neural networks are the most well-known of the pattern recognition technologies based on training, although neural networks have only recently received widespread attention and have been applied to only very limited and specialized problems in motor vehicles such as occupant sensing (by the current assignee) and engine control (by Ford Motor Company). Other non-training based pattern recognition technologies exist, such as fuzzy logic. However, the programming required to use fuzzy logic, where the patterns must be determined by the programmer, usually render these systems impractical for general vehicle diagnostic problems such as described herein (although their use is not impossible in accordance with the teachings of the invention). Therefore, preferably the pattern recognition systems that learn by training are used herein. It should be noted that neural networks are frequently combined with fuzzy logic and such a combination is contemplated herein. The neural network is the first highly successful of what will be a variety of pattern recognition techniques based on training. There is nothing that suggests that it is the only or even the best technology. The characteristics of all of these technologies which render them applicable to this general diagnostic problem include the use of time- of frequency-based input data and that they are trainable. In most cases, the pattern recognition technology learns from examples of data characteristic of normal and abnormal component operation.

A diagram of one example of a neural network used for diagnosing an unbalanced tire, for example, based on the teachings of this invention is shown in FIG. 2. The process can be programmed to periodically test for an unbalanced

tire. Since this need be done only infrequently, the same processor can be used for many such diagnostic problems. When the particular diagnostic test is run, data from the previously determined relevant sensor(s) is preprocessed and analyzed with the neural network algorithm. For the unbalanced tire, using the data from an accelerometer for example, the digital acceleration values from the analog-to-digital converter in the accelerometer are entered into nodes 1 through n and the neural network algorithm compares the pattern of values on nodes 1 through n with patterns for which it has been trained as follows.

Each of the input nodes is usually connected to each of the second layer nodes, $h-1, h-2, \dots, h-n$, called the hidden layer, either electrically as in the case of a neural computer, or through mathematical functions containing multiplying coefficients called weights. At each hidden layer node, a summation occurs of the values from each of the input layer nodes, which have been operated on by functions containing the weights, to create a node value. Similarly, the hidden layer nodes are, in a like manner, connected to the output layer node(s), which in this example is only a single node 0 representing the decision to notify the driver, and/or a remote facility, of the unbalanced tire. During the training phase, an output node value of 1, for example, is assigned to indicate that the driver should be notified and a value of 0 is assigned to not notifying the driver.

In the example above, twenty input nodes were used, five hidden layer nodes and one output layer node. In this example, only one sensor was considered and accelerations from only one direction were used. If other data from other sensors such as accelerations from the vertical or lateral directions were also used, then the number of input layer nodes would increase. Again, the theory for determining the complexity of a neural network for a particular application has been the subject of many technical papers and will not be presented in detail here. Determining the requisite complexity for the example presented here can be accomplished by those skilled in the art of neural network design. Also one particular preferred type of neural network has been discussed. Many other types exist as discussed in the above references and the inventions herein is not limited to the particular type discussed here.

Briefly, the neural network described above defines a method, using a pattern recognition system, of sensing an unbalanced tire and determining whether to notify the driver, and/or a remote facility, and comprises the steps of:

- (a) obtaining an acceleration signal from an accelerometer mounted on a vehicle;
- (b) converting the acceleration signal into a digital time series;
- (c) entering the digital time series data into the input nodes of the neural network;
- (d) performing a mathematical operation on the data from each of the input nodes and inputting the operated on data into a second series of nodes wherein the operation performed on each of the input node data prior to inputting the operated-on value to a second series node is different from that operation performed on some other input node data (e.g., a different weight value can be used);
- (e) combining the operated-on data from most or all of the input nodes into each second series node to form a value at each second series node;
- (f) performing a mathematical operation on each of the values on the second series of nodes and inputting this operated-on data into an output series of nodes wherein the operation performed on each of the second series node data prior to inputting the operated-on value to an output series node is different from that operation performed on some other second series node data;

(g) combining the operated-on data from most or all of the second series nodes into each output series node to form a value at each output series node; and,

(h) notifying a driver if the value on one output series node is within a selected range signifying that a tire requires balancing.

5 This method can be generalized to a method of predicting that a component of a vehicle will fail comprising the steps of:

(a) sensing a signal emitted from the component;

(b) converting the sensed signal into a digital time series;

(c) entering the digital time series data into a pattern recognition algorithm;

10 (d) executing the pattern recognition algorithm to determine if there exists within the digital time series data a pattern characteristic of abnormal operation of the component; and

(e) notifying a driver and/or a remote facility if the abnormal pattern is recognized.

The analysis above is based on time series data. Sometimes the signals from a failing component are distributed in space and thus a spatial data distribution may be appropriate for use alone or in conjunction with a temporal data distribution. Neural networks and other pattern recognition systems are adept at spatial as well as temporal data analysis. The segmentation and identification of objects in an image is an example. Spatial data can frequently be represented as time series data as when a scanner is used and temporal data can be represented as spatial data as when an oscilloscope is used.

The particular neural network described and illustrated above contains a single series of hidden layer nodes. In some network designs, more than one hidden layer is used, although only rarely will more than two such layers appear. There are of course many other variations of the neural network architecture illustrated above which appear in the referenced literature. For the purposes herein, therefore, "neural network" can be defined as a system wherein the data to be processed is separated into discrete values which are then operated on and combined in at least a two stage process and where the operation performed on the data at each stage is in general different for each discrete value and where the operation performed is at least determined through a training process. A different operation here is meant any difference in the way that the output of a neuron is treated before it is inputted into another neuron such as multiplying it by a different weight or constant.

The implementation of neural networks can take on at least two forms, an algorithm programmed on a digital microprocessor, FPGA, DSP or in a neural computer (including a cellular neural network or support vector machine). In this regard, it is noted that neural computer chips are now becoming available.

In the example above, only a single component failure was discussed using only a single sensor since the data from the single sensor contains a pattern which the neural network was trained to recognize as either normal operation of the component or abnormal operation of the component. The diagnostic module 51 contains preprocessing and neural network algorithms for a number of component failures. The neural network algorithms are generally relatively simple, requiring only a relatively small number of lines of computer code. A single general neural network program can be used for multiple pattern recognition cases by specifying different coefficients for the various node inputs, one set for each

application. Thus, adding different diagnostic checks has only a small affect on the cost of the system. Also, the system can have available to it all of the information available on the data bus.

During the training process, the pattern recognition program sorts out from the available vehicle data on the data bus or from other sources, those patterns that predict failure of a particular component. If more than one sensor is used to sense the output from a component, such as two spaced-apart microphones or acceleration sensors, then the location of the component can sometimes be determined by triangulation based on the phase difference, time of arrival and/or angle of arrival of the signals to the different sensors. In this manner, a particular vibrating tire can be identified, for example. Since each tire on a vehicle does not always make the same number of revolutions in a given time period, a tire can be identified by comparing the wheel sensor output with the vibration or other signal from the tire to identify the failing tire. The phase of the failing tire will change relative to the other tires, for example. This technique can also be used to associate a tire pressure monitor RF signal with a particular tire. An alternate method for tire identification makes use of an RFID tag or an RFID switch as discussed below.

In view of the foregoing, a method for diagnosing whether one or more components of a vehicle are operating abnormally would entail in a training stage, obtaining output from the sensors during normal operation of the components, adjusting each component to induce abnormal operation thereof and obtaining output from the sensors during the induced abnormal operation, and determining which sensors provide data about abnormal operation of each component based on analysis of the output from the sensors during normal operation and during induced abnormal operation of the component, e.g., differences between signals output from the sensors during normal and abnormal operation. The output from the sensors can be processed and pre-processed as described above. When obtaining output from the sensors during abnormal component operation, different abnormalities can be induced in the components, one abnormality in one component at each time and/or multiple abnormalities in multiple components at one time.

During operation of the vehicle, output from the sensors is received and a determination is made whether any of the components are operating abnormally by analyzing the output from those sensors which have been determined to provide data about abnormal operation of that component. This determination is used to alert a driver of the vehicle, a vehicle manufacturer, a vehicle dealer or a vehicle repair facility about the abnormal operation of a component. As mentioned above, the determination of whether any of the components are operating abnormally may involve considering output from only those sensors which have been determined to provide data about abnormal operation of that component. This could be a subset of the sensors, although it is possible when using a neural network to input all of the sensor data with the neural network being designed to disregard output from sensors which have no bearing on the determination of abnormal operation of the component operating abnormally.

When a combination neural network 810 is used, its training can involve multiple steps (see the description of FIGS. 92 and 93 in the parent '240 application).

In FIG. 3, a schematic of a vehicle with several components and several sensors is shown in their approximate locations on a vehicle along with a total vehicle diagnostic system in accordance with the invention utilizing a diagnostic module in accordance with the invention. A flow diagram of information passing from the various sensors shown in FIG. 3 onto the vehicle data bus, wireless communication system, wire harness or a combination thereof, and thereby into the diagnostic device in accordance with the invention is shown in FIG. 4 along with outputs to a display for notifying the

driver and to the vehicle cellular phone, or other communication device, for notifying the dealer, vehicle manufacturer or other entity concerned with the failure of a component in the vehicle. If the vehicle is operating on a smart highway, for example, the pending component failure information may also be communicated to a highway control system and/or to other vehicles in the vicinity so that an orderly exiting of the vehicle from the smart highway can be facilitated. FIG. 4 also contains the names of the sensors shown numbered in FIG. 3.

Note, where applicable in one or more of the inventions disclosed herein, any form of wireless communication is contemplated for intra vehicle communications between various sensors and components including amplitude modulation, frequency modulation, TDMA, CDMA, spread spectrum, ultra wideband and all variations. Similarly, all such methods are also contemplated for vehicle-to-vehicle or vehicle-to-infrastructure communication.

Sensor 1 is a crash sensor having an accelerometer (alternately one or more dedicated accelerometers or IMUs can be used), sensor 2 is represents one or more microphones, sensor 3 is a coolant thermometer, sensor 4 is an oil pressure sensor, sensor 5 is an oil level sensor, sensor 6 is an air flow meter, sensor 7 is a voltmeter, sensor 8 is an ammeter, sensor 9 is a humidity sensor, sensor 10 is an engine knock sensor, sensor 11 is an oil turbidity sensor, sensor 12 is a throttle position sensor, sensor 13 is a steering torque sensor, sensor 14 is a wheel speed sensor, sensor 15 is a tachometer, sensor 16 is a speedometer, sensor 17 is an oxygen sensor, sensor 18 is a pitch/roll sensor, sensor 19 is a clock, sensor 20 is an odometer, sensor 21 is a power steering pressure sensor, sensor 22 is a pollution sensor, sensor 23 is a fuel gauge, sensor 24 is a cabin thermometer, sensor 25 is a transmission fluid level sensor, sensor 26 is a yaw sensor, sensor 27 is a coolant level sensor, sensor 28 is a transmission fluid turbidity sensor, sensor 29 is brake pressure sensor and sensor 30 is a coolant pressure sensor. Other possible sensors include a temperature transducer, a pressure transducer, a liquid level sensor, a flow meter, a position sensor, a velocity sensor, a RPM sensor, a chemical sensor and an angle sensor, angular rate sensor or gyroscope.

If a distributed group of acceleration sensors or accelerometers are used to permit a determination of the location of a vibration source, the same group can, in some cases, also be used to measure the pitch, yaw and/or roll of the vehicle eliminating the need for dedicated angular rate sensors. In addition, as mentioned above, such a suite of sensors can also be used to determine the location and severity of a vehicle crash and additionally to determine that the vehicle is on the verge of rolling over. Thus, the same suite of accelerometers optimally performs a variety of functions including inertial navigation, crash sensing, vehicle diagnostics, roll-over sensing etc.

Consider now some examples. The following is a partial list of potential component failures and the sensors from the list in FIG. 4 that might provide information to predict the failure of the component:

Out of balance tires	1,13,14,15,20,21
Front end out of alignment	1,13,21,26
Tune up required	1,3,10,12,15,17,20,22
Oil change needed	3,4,5,11
Motor failure	1,2,3,4,5,6,10,12,15,17,22
Low tire pressure	1,13,14,15,20,21
Front end looseness	1,13,16,21,26
Cooling system failure	3,15,24,27,30

	Alternator problems	1,2,7,8,15,19,20
	Transmission problems	1,3,12,15,16,20,25,28
	Differential problems	1,12,14
	Brakes	1,2,14,18,20,26,29
5	Catalytic converter and muffler	1,2,12,15,22
	Ignition	1,2,7,8,9,10,12,17,23
	Tire wear	1,13,14,15,18,20,21,26
	Fuel leakage	20,23
	Fan belt slippage	1,2,3,7,8,12,15,19,20
10	Alternator deterioration	1,2,7,8,15,19
	Coolant pump failure	1,2,3,24,27,30
	Coolant hose failure	1,2,3,27,30
	Starter failure	1,2,7,8,9,12,15
	Dirty air filter	2,3,6,11,12,17,22

15 Several interesting facts can be deduced from a review of the above list. First, all of the failure modes listed can be at least partially sensed by multiple sensors. In many cases, some of the sensors merely add information to aid in the interpretation of signals received from other sensors. In today's automobile, there are few if any cases where multiple sensors are used to diagnose or predict a problem. In fact, there is virtually no failure prediction (prognostics) undertaken at all. Second, many of the failure modes listed require information from more than one sensor. Third, information for many of the failure modes listed cannot be obtained by observing one data point in time as is now done by most vehicle sensors. Usually an analysis of the variation in a parameter as a function of time is necessary. In fact, the association of data with time to create a temporal pattern for use in diagnosing component failures in automobile is believed to be unique to the inventions herein as is the combination of several such temporal patterns. Fourth, the vibration measuring capability of the airbag crash sensor, or other accelerometer or IMU, is useful for most of the cases discussed above yet there is no such current use of accelerometers. The airbag crash sensor is used only to detect crashes of the vehicle. Fifth, the second most used sensor in the above list, a microphone, does not currently appear on any automobiles, yet sound is the signal most often used by vehicle operators and mechanics to diagnose vehicle problems. Another sensor that is listed above which also does not currently appear on automobiles is a pollution sensor. This is typically a chemical sensor mounted in the exhaust system for detecting emissions from the vehicle. It is expected that this and other chemical and biological sensors will be used more in the future. Such a sensor can be used to monitor the intake of air from outside the vehicle to permit such a flow to be cut off when it is polluted. Similarly, if the interior air is polluted, the exchange with the outside air can be initiated.

In addition, from the foregoing depiction of different sensors which receive signals from a plurality of components, it is possible for a single sensor to receive and output signals from a plurality of components which are then analyzed by the processor to determine if any one of the components for which the received signals were obtained by that sensor is operating in an abnormal state. Likewise, it is also possible to provide for a plurality of sensors each receiving a different signal related to a specific component which are then analyzed by the processor to determine if that

component is operating in an abnormal state. Neural networks can simultaneously analyze data from multiple sensors of the same type or different types (a form of sensor fusion).

As can be appreciated from the above discussion, an invention described herein brings several new improvements to vehicles including, but not limited to, the use of pattern recognition technologies to diagnose potential vehicle component failures, the use of trainable systems thereby eliminating the need of complex and extensive programming, the simultaneous use of multiple sensors to monitor a particular component, the use of a single sensor to monitor the operation of many vehicle components, the monitoring of vehicle components which have no dedicated sensors, and the notification of both the driver and possibly an outside entity of a potential component failure prior to failure so that the expected failure can be averted and vehicle breakdowns substantially eliminated. Additionally, improvements to the vehicle stability, crash avoidance, crash anticipation and occupant protection are available.

To implement a component diagnostic system for diagnosing the component utilizing a plurality of sensors not directly associated with the component, i.e., independent of the component, a series of tests are conducted. For each test, the signals received from the sensors are input into a pattern recognition training algorithm with an indication of whether the component is operating normally or abnormally (the component being intentionally altered to provide for abnormal operation). The data from the test are used to generate the pattern recognition algorithm, e.g., neural network, so that in use, the data from the sensors is input into the algorithm and the algorithm provides an indication of abnormal or normal operation of the component. Also, to provide a more versatile diagnostic module for use in conjunction with diagnosing abnormal operation of multiple components, tests may be conducted in which each component is operated abnormally while the other components are operating normally, as well as tests in which two or more components are operating abnormally. In this manner, the diagnostic module may be able to determine based on one set of signals from the sensors during use that either a single component or multiple components are operating abnormally. Additionally, if a failure occurs which was not forecasted, provision can be made to record the output of some or all of the vehicle data and later make it available to the vehicle manufacturer for inclusion into the pattern recognition training database. Also, it is not necessary that a neural network system that is on a vehicle be a static system and some amount of learning can, in some cases, be permitted. Additionally, as the vehicle manufacturer updates the neural networks, the newer version can be downloaded to particular vehicles either when the vehicle is at a dealership or wirelessly via a cellular network or by satellite.

Furthermore, the pattern recognition algorithm may be trained based on patterns within the signals from the sensors. Thus, by means of a single sensor, it would be possible to determine whether one or more components are operating abnormally. To obtain such a pattern recognition algorithm, tests are conducted using a single sensor, such as a microphone, and causing abnormal operation of one or more components, each component operating abnormally while the other components operate normally and multiple components operating abnormally. In this manner, in use, the pattern recognition algorithm may analyze a signal from a single sensor and determine abnormal operation of one or more components. Note that in some cases, simulations can be used to analytically generate the relevant data.

The discussion above has centered mainly on the blind training of a pattern recognition system, such as a neural network, so that faults can be discovered and failures forecast before they happen. Naturally, the diagnostic algorithms do not have to start out being totally dumb and in fact, the physics or structure of the systems being monitored can be

appropriately used to help structure or derive the diagnostic algorithms. Such a system is described in a recent article “Immobots Take Control”, MIT Technology Review December, 2002. Also, of course, it is contemplated that once a potential failure has been diagnosed, the diagnostic system can in some cases act to change the operation of various systems in the vehicle to prolong the time of a failing component before the failure or in some rare cases, the situation causing the failure might be corrected. An example of the first case is where the alternator is failing and various systems or components can be turned off to conserve battery power and an example of the second case is rollover of a vehicle may be preventable through the proper application of steering torque and wheel braking force. Such algorithms can be based on pattern recognition or on models, as described in the Immobile article referenced above, or a combination thereof and all such systems are contemplated by the invention described herein.

1.3 SAW and Other Wireless Sensors

Many sensors are now in vehicles and many more will be installed in vehicles. The following disclosure is primarily concerned with wireless sensors which can be based on MEMS, SAW and/or RFID technologies. Vehicle sensors include tire pressure, temperature and acceleration monitoring sensors; weight or load measuring sensors; switches; vehicle temperature, acceleration, angular position, angular rate, angular acceleration sensors; proximity; rollover; occupant presence; humidity; presence of fluids or gases; strain; road condition and friction, chemical sensors and other similar sensors providing information to a vehicle system, vehicle operator or external site. The sensors can provide information about the vehicle and/or its interior or exterior environment, about individual components, systems, vehicle occupants, subsystems, and/or about the roadway, ambient atmosphere, travel conditions and external objects.

For wireless sensors, one or more interrogators can be used each having one or more antennas that transmit energy at radio frequency, or other electromagnetic frequencies, to the sensors and receive modulated frequency signals from the sensors containing sensor and/or identification information. One interrogator can be used for sensing multiple switches or other devices. For example, an interrogator may transmit a chirp form of energy at 905 MHz to 925 MHz to a variety of sensors located within and/or in the vicinity of the vehicle. These sensors may be of the RFID electronic type and/or of the surface acoustic wave (SAW) type or a combination thereof. In the electronic type, information can be returned immediately to the interrogator in the form of a modulated backscatter RF signal. In the case of SAW devices, the information can be returned after a delay. RFID tags may also exhibit a delay due to the charging of the energy storage device. Naturally, one sensor can respond in both the electronic (either RFID or backscatter) and SAW delayed modes.

When multiple sensors are interrogated using the same technology, the returned signals from the various sensors can be time, code, space or frequency multiplexed. For example, for the case of the SAW technology, each sensor can be provided with a different delay or a different code. Alternately, each sensor can be designed to respond only to a single frequency or several frequencies. The radio frequency can be amplitude, code or frequency modulated. Space multiplexing can be achieved through the use of two or more antennas and correlating the received signals to isolate signals based on direction.

In many cases, the sensors will respond with an identification signal followed by or preceded by information relating to the sensed value, state and/or property. In the case of a SAW-based or RFID-based switch, for example, the returned signal may indicate that the switch is either on or off or, in some cases, an intermediate state can be provided

signifying that a light should be dimmed, rather than on or off, for example. Alternately or additionally, an RFID based switch can be associated with a sensor and turned on or off based on an identification code or a frequency sent from the interrogator permitting a particular sensor or class of sensors to be selected.

5 SAW devices have been used for sensing many parameters including devices for chemical and biological sensing and materials characterization in both the gas and liquid phase. They also are used for measuring pressure, strain, temperature, acceleration, angular rate and other physical states of the environment.

10 Economies are achieved by using a single interrogator or even a small number of interrogators to interrogate many types of devices. For example, a single interrogator may monitor tire pressure and temperature, the weight of an occupying item of the seat, the position of the seat and seatback, as well as a variety of switches controlling windows, door locks, seat position, etc. in a vehicle. Such an interrogator may use one or multiple antennas and when multiple antennas are used, may switch between the antennas depending on what is being monitored.

15 Similarly, the same or a different interrogator can be used to monitor various components of the vehicle's safety system including occupant position sensors, vehicle acceleration sensors, vehicle angular position, velocity and acceleration sensors, related to both frontal, side or rear impacts as well as rollover conditions. The interrogator could also be used in conjunction with other detection devices such as weight sensors, temperature sensors, accelerometers which are associated with various systems in the vehicle to enable such systems to be controlled or affected based on the measured state.

Some specific examples of the use of interrogators and responsive devices will now be described.

20 The antennas used for interrogating the vehicle tire pressure transducers can be located outside of the vehicle passenger compartment. For many other transducers to be sensed the antennas can be located at various positions within passenger compartment. At least one invention herein contemplates, therefore, a series of different antenna systems, which can be electronically switched by the interrogator circuitry. Alternately, in some cases, all of the antennas can be left connected and total transmitted power increased.

25 There are several applications for weight or load measuring devices in a vehicle including the vehicle suspension system and seat weight sensors for use with automobile safety systems. As described in US4096740, US4623813, US5585571, US5663531, US5821425 and US5910647 and International Publication No. WO 00/65320(A1), SAW devices are appropriate candidates for such weight measurement systems, although in some cases RFID systems can also be used with an associated sensor such as a strain gage. In this case, the surface acoustic wave on the lithium niobate, or other piezoelectric material, is modified in delay time, resonant frequency, amplitude and/or phase based on strain of the member upon which the SAW device is mounted. For example, the conventional bolt that is typically used to connect the passenger seat to the seat adjustment slide mechanism can be replaced with a stud which is threaded on both ends. A SAW or other strain device can be mounted to the center unthreaded section of the stud and the stud can be attached to both the seat and the slide mechanism using appropriate threaded nuts. Based on the particular geometry of the SAW device used, the stud can result in as little as a 3 mm upward displacement of the seat compared to a normal bolt mounting system. No wires are required to attach the SAW device to the stud other than for an antenna.

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In use, the interrogator transmits a radio frequency pulse at, for example, 925 MHz that excites antenna on the SAW strain measuring system. After a delay caused by the time required for the wave to travel the length of the SAW device, a modified wave is re-transmitted to the interrogator providing an indication of the strain of the stud with the weight of an object occupying the seat corresponding to the strain. For a seat that is normally bolted to the slide mechanism with four bolts, at least four SAW strain sensors could be used. Since the individual SAW devices are very small, multiple devices can be placed on a stud to provide multiple redundant measurements, or permit bending and twisting strains to be determined, and/or to permit the stud to be arbitrarily located with at least one SAW device always within direct view of the interrogator antenna. In some cases, the bolt or stud will be made on non-conductive material to limit the blockage of the RF signal. In other cases, it will be insulated from the slide (mechanism) and used as an antenna.

If two longitudinally spaced apart antennas are used to receive the SAW or RFID transmissions from the seat weight sensors, one antenna in front of the seat and the other behind the seat, then the position of the seat can be determined eliminating the need for current seat position sensors. A similar system can be used for other seat and seatback position measurements.

For strain gage weight sensing, the frequency of interrogation can be considerably higher than that of the tire monitor, for example. However, if the seat is unoccupied, then the frequency of interrogation can be substantially reduced. For an occupied seat, information as to the identity and/or category and position of an occupying item of the seat can be obtained through the multiple weight sensors described. For this reason, and due to the fact that during the pre-crash event, the position of an occupying item of the seat may be changing rapidly, interrogations as frequently as once every 10 milliseconds or faster can be desirable. This would also enable a distribution of the weight being applied to the seat to be obtained which provides an estimation of the center of pressure and thus the position of the object occupying the seat. Using pattern recognition technology, e.g., a trained neural network, sensor fusion, fuzzy logic, etc., an identification of the object can be ascertained based on the determined weight and/or determined weight distribution.

There are many other methods by which SAW devices can be used to determine the weight and/or weight distribution of an occupying item other than the method described above and all such uses of SAW strain sensors for determining the weight and weight distribution of an occupant are contemplated. For example, SAW devices with appropriate straps can be used to measure the deflection of the seat cushion top or bottom caused by an occupying item, or if placed on the seat belts, the load on the belts can be determined wirelessly and powerlessly. Geometries similar to those disclosed in US6242701 (which discloses multiple strain gage geometries) using SAW strain-measuring devices can also be constructed, e.g., any of the multiple strain gage geometries shown therein.

Generally there is an RFID implementation that corresponds to each SAW implementation. Therefore, where SAW is used herein the equivalent RFID design will also be meant where appropriate.

Although one method for using the invention is to interrogate each of the SAW devices using wireless mechanisms, in some cases, it may be desirable to supply power to and/or obtain information from one or more of the SAW devices using wires. As such, the wires would be an optional feature.

One advantage of the weight sensors of this invention along with the geometries disclosed in the '701 patent and herein below, is that in addition to the axial stress in the seat support, the bending moments in the structure can be

readily determined. For example, if a seat is supported by four “legs”, it is possible to determine the state of stress, assuming that axial twisting can be ignored, using four strain gages on each leg support for a total of 16 such gages. If the seat is supported by three legs, then this can be reduced to 12 gages. Naturally, a three-legged support is preferable to four since with four legs, the seat support is over-determined which severely complicates the determination of the stress caused by an object on the seat. Even with three supports, stresses can be introduced depending on the nature of the support at the seat rails or other floor-mounted supporting structure. If simple supports are used that do not introduce bending moments into the structure, then the number of gages per seat can be reduced to three, which is advantageous provided a good model of the seat structure is available. Unfortunately, this is usually not the case and most seats have four supports and the attachments to the vehicle not only introduce bending moments into the structure but these moments vary from one position to another and with temperature. The SAW strain gages of this invention lend themselves to the placement of multiple gages onto each support as needed to approximately determine the state of stress and thus the weight of the occupant depending on the particular vehicle application. Furthermore, the wireless nature of these gages greatly simplifies the placement of such gages at those locations that are most appropriate. Note that a strain gage here can be a bridge configuration consisting of either 2 or 4 strain sensing elements or a single strain gage element in a non-bridge or bridge configuration.

An additional point should be mentioned. In many cases, the determination of the weight of an occupant from the static strain gage readings yields inaccurate results due to the indeterminate stress state in the support structure. However, the dynamic stresses to a first order are independent of the residual stress state. Thus, the change in stress that occurs as a vehicle travels down a roadway caused by dips in the roadway can provide an accurate measurement of the weight of an object in a seat. This is especially true if an accelerometer is used to measure the vertical excitation provided to the seat.

Some vehicle models provide load leveling and ride control functions that depend on the magnitude and distribution of load carried by the vehicle suspension. Frequently, wire strain gage technology is used for these functions. That is, the wire strain gages are used to sense the load and/or load distribution of the vehicle on the vehicle suspension system. Such strain gages can be advantageously replaced with strain gages based on SAW technology with the significant advantages in terms of cost, wireless monitoring, dynamic range, and signal level. In addition, SAW strain gage systems can be more accurate than wire strain gage systems.

A strain detector in accordance with this invention can convert mechanical strain to variations in electrical signal frequency with a large dynamic range and high accuracy even for very small displacements. The frequency variation is produced through use of a surface acoustic wave (SAW) delay line as the frequency control element of an oscillator. A SAW delay line comprises a transducer deposited on a piezoelectric material such as quartz or lithium niobate which is arranged so as to be deformed by strain in the member which is to be monitored. Deformation of the piezoelectric substrate changes the frequency control characteristics of the surface acoustic wave delay line, thereby changing the frequency of the oscillator. Consequently, the oscillator frequency change is a measure of the strain in the member being monitored and thus the weight applied to the seat. A SAW strain transducer can be more accurate than a conventional resistive strain gage.

Other applications of weight measuring systems for an automobile include measuring the weight of the fuel tank or other containers of fluid to determine the quantity of fluid contained therein as described below.

5 One problem with SAW devices is that if they are designed to operate at the GHz frequency, the feature sizes become exceeding small and the devices are difficult to manufacture, although techniques are now available for making SAW devices in the tens of GHz range. On the other hand, if the frequencies are considerably lower, for example, in the
10 tens of megahertz range, then the antenna sizes become excessive. It is also more difficult to obtain antenna gain at the lower frequencies. This is also related to antenna size. One method of solving this problem is to transmit an interrogation signal in the high GHz range which is modulated at the hundred MHz range. At the SAW transducer, the transducer is tuned to the modulated frequency. Using a nonlinear device such as a Shocky diode, the modified signal can be mixed
15 with the incoming high frequency signal and re-transmitted through the same antenna. For this case, the interrogator can continuously broadcast the carrier frequency.

Devices based on RFID or SAW technology can be used as switches in a vehicle as described in US6078252, US6144288 and US6748797. There are many ways that this can be accomplished. A switch can be used to connect an antenna to either an RFID electronic device or to a SAW device. This of course requires contacts to be closed by the
20 switch activation. An alternate approach is to use pressure from an occupant's finger, for example, to alter the properties of the acoustic wave on the SAW material much as in a SAW touch screen. The properties that can be modified include the amplitude of the acoustic wave, and its phase, and/or the time delay or an external impedance connected to one of the SAW reflectors as disclosed in US6084503. In this implementation, the SAW transducer can contain two sections, one which is modified by the occupant and the other which serves as a reference. A combined signal is sent to the
25 interrogator that decodes the signal to determine that the switch has been activated. By any of these technologies, switches can be arbitrarily placed within the interior of an automobile, for example, without the need for wires. Since wires and connectors are the cause of most warranty repairs in an automobile, not only is the cost of switches substantially reduced but also the reliability of the vehicle electrical system is substantially improved.

The interrogation of switches can take place with moderate frequency such as once every 100 milliseconds.
30 Either through the use of different frequencies or different delays, a large number of switches can be time, code, space and/or frequency multiplexed to permit separation of the signals obtained by the interrogator. Alternately, an RF activated switch on some or all of the sensors can be used as discussed below.

Another approach is to attach a variable impedance device across one of the reflectors on the SAW device. The impedance can therefore be used to determine the relative reflection from the reflector compared to other reflectors on
35 the SAW device. In this manner, the magnitude as well as the presence of a force exerted by an occupant's finger, for example, can be used to provide a rate sensitivity to the desired function. In an alternate design, as shown US6144288, the switch is used to connect the antenna to the SAW device. Of course, in this case, the interrogator will not get a return from the SAW switch unless it is depressed.

Temperature measurement is another field in which SAW technology can be applied and the invention
40 encompasses several embodiments of SAW temperature sensors.

US4249418 is one of many examples of prior art SAW temperature sensors. Temperature sensors are commonly used within vehicles and many more applications might exist if a low cost wireless temperature sensor is

available such as disclosed herein. The SAW technology can be used for such temperature sensing tasks. These tasks include measuring the vehicle coolant temperature, air temperature within passenger compartment at multiple locations, seat temperature for use in conjunction with seat warming and cooling systems, outside temperatures and perhaps tire surface temperatures to provide early warning to operators of road freezing conditions. One example, is to provide air temperature sensors in the passenger compartment in the vicinity of ultrasonic transducers used in occupant sensing systems as described in US5943295, since the speed of sound in the air varies by approximately 20% from -40 °C to 85 °C. Current ultrasonic occupant sensor systems do not measure or compensate for this change in the speed of sound with the effect of reducing the accuracy of the systems at the temperature extremes. Through the judicious placement of SAW temperature sensors in the vehicle, the passenger compartment air temperature can be accurately estimated and the information provided wirelessly to the ultrasonic occupant sensor system thereby permitting corrections to be made for the change in the speed of sound.

Since the road can be either a source or a sink of thermal energy, strategically placed sensors that measure the surface temperature of a tire can also be used to provide an estimate of road temperature.

Acceleration sensing is another field in which SAW technology can be applied and the invention encompasses several embodiments of SAW accelerometers.

US4199990, US4306456 and US4549436 are examples of prior art SAW accelerometers. Most airbag crash sensors for determining whether the vehicle is experiencing a frontal or side impact currently use micromachined accelerometers. These accelerometers are usually based on the deflection of a mass which is sensed using either capacitive or piezoresistive technologies. SAW technology has previously not been used as a vehicle accelerometer or for vehicle crash sensing. Due to the importance of this function, at least one interrogator could be dedicated to this critical function. Acceleration signals from the crash sensors should be reported at least preferably every 100 microseconds. In this case, the dedicated interrogator would send an interrogation pulse to all crash sensor accelerometers every 100 microseconds and receive staggered acceleration responses from each of the SAW accelerometers wirelessly. This technology permits the placement of multiple low-cost accelerometers at ideal locations for crash sensing including inside the vehicle side doors, in the passenger compartment and in the frontal crush zone. Additionally, crash sensors can now be located in the rear of the vehicle in the crush zone to sense rear impacts. Since the acceleration data is transmitted wirelessly, concern about the detachment or cutting of wires from the sensors disappears. One of the main concerns, for example, of placing crash sensors in the vehicle doors where they most appropriately can sense vehicle side impacts, is the fear that an impact into the A-pillar of the automobile would sever the wires from the door-mounted crash sensor before the crash was sensed. This problem disappears with the current wireless technology of this invention. If two accelerometers are placed at some distance from each other, the roll acceleration of the vehicle can be determined and thus the tendency of the vehicle to rollover can be predicted in time to automatically take corrective action and/or deploy a curtain airbag or other airbag(s). Other types of sensors such as crash sensors based on pressure measurements, such as supplied by Siemens, can also now be wireless.

Although the sensitivity of measurement is considerably greater than that obtained with conventional piezo-electric or micromachined accelerometers, the frequency deviation of SAW devices remains low (in absolute value).

Accordingly, the frequency drift of thermal origin should be made as low as possible by selecting a suitable cut of the piezoelectric material. The resulting accuracy is impressive as presented in US4549436, which discloses an angular accelerometer with a dynamic a range of 1 million, temperature coefficient of 0.005%/deg F, an accuracy of 1 microradian/sec², a power consumption of 1 milliwatt, a drift of 0.01% per year, a volume of 1 cc/axis and a frequency response of 0 to 1000 Hz. The subject matter of the '436 patent is hereby included in the invention to constitute a part of the invention. A similar design can be used for acceleration sensing.

In a similar manner as the polymer-coated SAW device is used to measure pressure, a device wherein a seismic mass is attached to a SAW device through a polymer interface can be made to sense acceleration. This geometry has a particular advantage for sensing accelerations below 1 G, which has proved to be very difficult for conventional micro-machined accelerometers due to their inability to both measure low accelerations and withstand high acceleration shocks.

Gyroscopes are another field in which SAW technology can be applied and the inventions herein encompass several embodiments of SAW gyroscopes.

SAW technology is particularly applicable for gyroscopes as described in International Publication No. WO 00/79217A2 to Varadan et al. The output of such gyroscopes can be determined with an interrogator that is also used for the crash sensor accelerometers, or a dedicated interrogator can be used. Gyroscopes having an accuracy of approximately 1 degree per second have many applications in a vehicle including skid control and other dynamic stability functions. Additionally, gyroscopes of similar accuracy can be used to sense impending vehicle rollover situations in time to take corrective action.

SAW gyroscopes of the type described in WO 00/79217A2 have the capability of achieving accuracies approaching about 3 degrees per hour. This high accuracy permits use of such gyroscopes in an inertial measuring unit (IMU) that can be used with accurate vehicle navigation systems and autonomous vehicle control based on differential GPS corrections. Such a system is described in US6370475. An alternate preferred technology for an IMU is described in US4711125 to Morrison discussed below. Such navigation systems depend on the availability of four or more GPS satellites and an accurate differential correction signal such as provided by the OmniStar Corporation, NASA or through the National Differential GPS system now being deployed. The availability of these signals degrades in urban canyon environments, in tunnels and on highways when the vehicle is in the vicinity of large trucks. For this application, an IMU system should be able to accurately control the vehicle for perhaps 15 seconds and preferably for up to five minutes. IMUs based on SAW technology, the technology of US4549436 discussed above or of the US4711125 are the best-known devices capable of providing sufficient accuracies for this application at a reasonable cost. Other accurate gyroscope technologies such as fiber optic systems are more accurate but can be cost-prohibitive, although recent analysis by the current assignee indicates that such gyroscopes can eventually be made cost-competitive. In high volume production, an IMU of the required accuracy based on SAW technology is estimated to cost less than about \$100. A cost competing technology is that disclosed in US4711125 which does not use SAW technology.

A discussion of typical problems with the Morrison Cube of US4711125, known as the QUBIK™, that are encountered with sensors that try to measure multiple physical quantities at the same time and the manner in which the QUBIK solves these problems is set forth in U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460.

Once an IMU of the accuracy described above is available in the vehicle, this same device can be used to provide significant improvements to vehicle stability control and rollover prediction systems.

Keyless entry systems are another field in which SAW technology can be applied and the invention encompasses several embodiments of access control systems using SAW devices.

5 A common use of SAW or RFID technology is for access control to buildings however, the range of electronic unpowered RFID technology is usually limited to one meter or less. In contrast, the SAW technology, when powered or boosted, can permit sensing up to about 30 meters. As a keyless entry system, an automobile can be configured such that the doors unlock as the holder of a card containing the SAW ID system approaches the vehicle and similarly, the vehicle doors can be automatically locked when the occupant with the card travels beyond a certain distance from the vehicle.
10 When the occupant enters the vehicle, the doors can again automatically lock either through logic or through a current system wherein doors automatically lock when the vehicle is placed in gear. An occupant with such a card would also not need to have an ignition key. The vehicle would recognize that the SAW-based card was inside vehicle and then permit the vehicle to be started by issuing an oral command if a voice recognition system is present or by depressing a button, for example, without the need for an ignition key.

15 SAW sensors operating in the wireless mode can also be used to sense for ice on the windshield or other exterior surfaces of the vehicle, condensation on the inside of the windshield or other interior surfaces, rain sensing, heat-load sensing and many other automotive sensing functions. They can also be used to sense outside environmental properties and states including temperature, humidity, etc.

SAW sensors can be economically used to measure the temperature and humidity at numerous places both
20 inside and outside of a vehicle. When used to measure humidity inside the vehicle, a source of water vapor can be activated to increase the humidity when desirable and the air conditioning system can be activated to reduce the humidity when necessary or desirable. Temperature and humidity measurements outside of the vehicle can be an indication of potential road icing problems. Such information can be used to provide early warning to a driver of potentially dangerous conditions. Although the invention described herein is related to land vehicles, many of these
25 advances are equally applicable to other vehicles such as airplanes and even, in some cases, homes and buildings. The invention disclosed herein, therefore, is not limited to automobiles or other land vehicles.

Road condition sensing is another field in which SAW technology can be applied and the invention encompasses several embodiments of SAW road condition sensors.

The temperature and moisture content of the surface of a roadway are critical parameters in determining the
30 icing state of the roadway. Attempts have been made to measure the coefficient of friction between a tire and the roadway by placing strain gages in the tire tread. Naturally, such strain gages are ideal for the application of SAW technology especially since they can be interrogated wirelessly from a distance and they require no power for operation. As discussed herein, SAW accelerometers can also perform this function. The measurement of the friction coefficient, however, is not predictive and the vehicle operator is only able to ascertain the condition after the fact. Boosted SAW or
35 RFID based transducers have the capability of being interrogated as much as 100 feet from the interrogator. Therefore, the judicious placement of low-cost powerless SAW or RFID temperature and humidity sensors in and/or on the

roadway at critical positions can provide an advance warning to vehicle operators that the road ahead is slippery. Such devices are very inexpensive and therefore could be placed at frequent intervals along a highway.

5 An infrared sensor that looks down the highway in front of the vehicle can actually measure the road temperature prior to the vehicle traveling on that part of the roadway. This system also would not give sufficient warning if the operator waited for the occurrence of a frozen roadway. The probability of the roadway becoming frozen, on the other hand, can be predicted long before it occurs, in most cases, by watching the trend in the temperature. Once vehicle-to-vehicle communications are common, roadway icing conditions can be communicated between vehicles.

10 Some lateral control of the vehicle can also be obtained from SAW transducers or electronic RFID tags placed down the center of the lane, either above the vehicles and/or in the roadway, for example. A vehicle having two receiving antennas, for example, approaching such devices, through triangulation or direct proportion, is able to determine the lateral location of the vehicle relative to these SAW devices. If the vehicle also has an accurate map of the roadway, the identification number associated with each such device can be used to obtain highly accurate longitudinal position determinations. Ultimately, the SAW devices can be placed on structures beside the road and perhaps on every mile or tenth of a mile marker. If three antennas are used, as discussed herein, the distances from the vehicle to the SAW
15 device can be determined. These SAW devices can be powered in order to stay below current FCC power transmission limits. Such power can be supplied by a photocell, energy harvesting where applicable, by a battery or power connection.

Electronic RFID tags are also suitable for lateral and longitudinal positioning purposes, however, the range available for current electronic RFID systems can be less than that of SAW-based systems unless either are powered. On
20 the other hand, as disclosed in US6748797, the time-of-flight of the RFID system can be used to determine the distance from the vehicle to the RFID tag. Because of the inherent delay in the SAW devices and its variation with temperature, accurate distance measurement is probably not practical based on time-of-flight but somewhat less accurate distance measurements based on relative time-of-arrival can be made. Even if the exact delay imposed by the SAW device was accurately known at one temperature, such devices are usually reasonably sensitive to changes in temperature, hence
25 they make good temperature sensors, and thus the accuracy of the delay in the SAW device is more difficult to maintain. An interesting variation of an electronic RFID that is particularly applicable to this and other applications of this invention is described in A. Pohl, L. Reindl, "New passive sensors", Proc. 16th IEEE Instrumentation and Measurement Technology Conf., IMTC/99, 1999, pp. 1251-1255.

30 Many SAW devices are based on lithium niobate or similar strong piezoelectric materials. Such materials have high thermal expansion coefficients. An alternate material is quartz that has a very low thermal expansion coefficient. However, its piezoelectric properties are inferior to lithium niobate. One solution to this problem is to use lithium niobate as the coupling system between the antenna and the material or substrate upon which the surface acoustic wave travels. In this manner, the advantages of a low thermal expansion coefficient material can be obtained while using the lithium niobate for its strong piezoelectric properties. Other useful materials such as Langasite™ have properties that are
35 intermediate between lithium niobate and quartz.

The use of SAW tags as an accurate precise positioning system as described above would be applicable for accurate vehicle location, as discussed in US6370475, for lanes in tunnels, for example, or other cases where loss of satellite lock, and thus the primary vehicle location system, is common.

5 The various technologies discussed above can be used in combination. The electronic RFID tag can be incorporated into a SAW tag providing a single device that provides both a quick reflection of the radio frequency waves as well as a re-transmission at a later time. This marriage of the two technologies permits the strengths of each technology to be exploited in the same device. For most of the applications described herein, the cost of mounting such a tag in a vehicle or on the roadway far exceeds the cost of the tag itself. Therefore, combining the two technologies does not significantly affect the cost of implementing tags onto vehicles or roadways or side highway structures.

10 A variation of this design is to use an RF circuit such as in an RFID to serve as an energy source. One design could be for the RFID to operate with directional antennas at a relatively high frequency such as 2.4 GHz. This can be primarily used to charge a capacitor to provide the energy for boosting the signal from the SAW sensor using circuitry such as a circulator discussed below. The SAW sensor can operate at a lower frequency, such as 400 MHz, permitting it to not interfere with the energy transfer to the RF circuit and also permit the signal to travel better to the receiver since it will be difficult to align the antenna at all times with the interrogator. Also, by monitoring the reception of the RF signal, the angular position of the tire can be determined and the SAW circuit designed so that it only transmits when the antennas are aligned or when the vehicle is stationary. Many other opportunities now present themselves with the RF circuit operating at a different frequency from the SAW circuit which will now be obvious to one skilled in the art.

15 An alternate method to the electronic RFID tag is to simply use a radar or lidar reflector and measure the time-of-flight to the reflector and back. The reflector can even be made of a series of reflecting surfaces displaced from each other to achieve some simple coding. It should be understood that RFID antennas can be similarly configured. An improvement would be to polarize the radiation and use a reflector that rotates the polarization angle allowing the reflector to be more easily found among other reflecting objects.

20 Another field in which SAW technology can be applied is for "ultrasound-on-a-surface" type of devices. US5629681, assigned to the current assignee herein and incorporated by reference herein, describes many uses of ultrasound in a tube. Many of the applications are also candidates for ultrasound-on-a-surface devices. In this case, a micro-machined SAW device will in general be replaced by a much larger structure.

25 Based on the frequency and power available, and on FCC limitations, SAW or RFID or similar devices can be designed to permit transmission distances of many feet especially if minimal power is available. Since SAW and RFID devices can measure both temperature and humidity, they are also capable of monitoring road conditions in front of and around a vehicle. Thus, a properly equipped vehicle can determine the road conditions prior to entering a particular road section if such SAW devices are embedded in the road surface or on mounting structures close to the road surface as shown at 60 in FIG. 5. Such devices could provide advance warning of freezing conditions, for example. Although at 60 miles per hour such devices may only provide a one second warning if powered or if the FCC revises permitted power levels, this can be sufficient to provide information to a driver to prevent dangerous skidding. Additionally, since the actual temperature and humidity can be reported, the driver will be warned prior to freezing of the road surface. SAW

device 60 is shown in detail in FIG. 5A. With vehicle-to-vehicle communication, the road conditions can be communicated as needed.

If a SAW device 63 is placed in a roadway, as illustrated in FIG. 6, and if a vehicle 68 has two receiving antennas 61 and 62, an interrogator can transmit a signal from either of the two antennas and at a later time, the two antennas will receive the transmitted signal from the SAW device 63. By comparing the arrival time of the two received pulses, the position of vehicle 68 on a lane of the roadway can precisely calculated. If the SAW device 63 has an identification code encoded into the returned signal generated thereby, then a processor in the vehicle 68 can determine its position on the surface of the earth, provided a precise map is available such as by being stored in the processor's memory. If another antenna 66 is provided, for example, at the rear of the vehicle 68, then the longitudinal position of the vehicle 68 can also be accurately determined as the vehicle 68 passes the SAW device 63.

The SAW device 63 does not have to be in the center of the road. Alternate locations for positioning of the SAW device 63 are on overpasses above the road and on poles such as 64 and 65 on the roadside. For such cases, a source of power may be required. Such a system has an advantage over a competing system using radar and reflectors in that it is easier to measure the relative time between the two received pulses than it is to measure time-of-flight of a radar signal to a reflector and back. Such a system operates in all weather conditions and is known as a precise location system. Eventually, such a SAW device 63 can be placed every tenth of a mile along the roadway or at some other appropriate spacing. For the radar or laser radar reflection system, the reflectors can be active devices that provide environmental information in addition to location information to the interrogating vehicle.

If a vehicle is being guided by a DGPS and an accurate map system such as disclosed in US6405132 is used, a problem arises when the GPS receiver system loses satellite lock as would happen when the vehicle enters a tunnel, for example. If a precise location system as described above is placed at the exit of the tunnel, then the vehicle will know exactly where it is and can re-establish satellite lock in as little as one second rather than typically 15 seconds as might otherwise be required. Other methods making use of the cell phone system can be used to establish an approximate location of the vehicle suitable for rapid acquisition of satellite lock as described in G.M. Djuknic, R.E. Richton "Geolocation and Assisted GPS", Computer Magazine, February 2001, IEEE Computer Society, which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety. An alternate location system is described in US6480788.

More particularly, geolocation technologies that rely exclusively on wireless networks such as time of arrival, time difference of arrival, angle of arrival, timing advance, and multipath fingerprinting, as is known to those skilled in the art, offer a shorter time-to-first-fix (TTFF) than GPS. They also offer quick deployment and continuous tracking capability for navigation applications, without the added complexity and cost of upgrading or replacing any existing GPS receiver in vehicles. Compared to either mobile-station-based, stand-alone GPS or network-based geolocation, assisted-GPS (AGPS) technology offers superior accuracy, availability and coverage at a reasonable cost. AGPS for use with vehicles can comprise a communications unit with a minimal capability GPS receiver arranged in the vehicle, an AGPS server with a reference GPS receiver that can simultaneously "see" the same satellites as the communications unit and a wireless network infrastructure consisting at least of base stations and a mobile switching center. The network can accurately predict the GPS signal the communication unit will receive and convey that information to the mobile unit such as a vehicle, greatly reducing search space size and shortening the TTFF from minutes to a second or less. In

5 addition, an AGPS receiver in the communication unit can detect and demodulate weaker signals than those that conventional GPS receivers require. Because the network performs the location calculations, the communication unit only needs to contain a scaled-down GPS receiver. It is accurate within about 15 meters when they are outdoors, an order of magnitude more sensitive than conventional GPS. Of course with the additional of differential corrections and carrier phase corrections, the location accuracy can be improved to centimeters.

10 Since an AGPS server can obtain the vehicle's position from the mobile switching center, at least to the level of cell and sector, and at the same time monitor signals from GPS satellites seen by mobile stations, it can predict the signals received by the vehicle for any given time. Specifically, the server can predict the Doppler shift due to satellite motion of GPS signals received by the vehicle, as well as other signal parameters that are a function of the vehicle's location. In a typical sector, uncertainty in a satellite signal's predicted time of arrival at the vehicle is about $\pm 5 \mu\text{s}$, which corresponds to ± 5 chips of the GPS coarse acquisition (C/A) code. Therefore, an AGPS server can predict the phase of the pseudorandom noise (PRN) sequence that the receiver should use to despread the C/A signal from a particular satellite (each GPS satellite transmits a unique PRN sequence used for range measurements) and communicate that prediction to the vehicle. The search space for the actual Doppler shift and PRN phase is thus greatly reduced, and the AGPS receiver can accomplish the task in a fraction of the time required by conventional GPS receivers. Further, the AGPS server maintains a connection with the vehicle receiver over the wireless link, so the requirement of asking the communication unit to make specific measurements, collect the results and communicate them back is easily met. After despreading and some additional signal processing, an AGPS receiver returns back "pseudoranges" (that is, ranges measured without taking into account the discrepancy between satellite and receiver clocks) to the AGPS server, which then calculates the vehicle's location. The vehicle can even complete the location fix itself without returning any data to the server. Further discussion of cellular location-based systems can be found in Caffery, J.J. Wireless Location in CDMA Cellular Radio Systems, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999, ISBN: 0792377036.

25 Sensitivity assistance, also known as modulation wipe-off, provides another enhancement to detection of GPS signals in the vehicle's receiver. The sensitivity-assistance message contains predicted data bits of the GPS navigation message, which are expected to modulate the GPS signal of specific satellites at specified times. The mobile station receiver can therefore remove bit modulation in the received GPS signal prior to coherent integration. By extending coherent integration beyond the 20-ms GPS data-bit period (to a second or more when the receiver is stationary and to 400 ms when it is fast-moving) this approach improves receiver sensitivity. Sensitivity assistance provides an additional 3-to-4-dB improvement in receiver sensitivity. Because some of the gain provided by the basic assistance (code phases and Doppler shift values) is lost when integrating the GPS receiver chain into a mobile system, this can prove crucial to making a practical receiver.

35 Achieving optimal performance of sensitivity assistance in TIA/EIA-95 CDMA systems is relatively straightforward because base stations and mobiles synchronize with GPS time. Given that global system for mobile communication (GSM), time division multiple access (TDMA), or advanced mobile phone service (AMPS) systems do not maintain such stringent synchronization, implementation of sensitivity assistance and AGPS technology in general will require novel approaches to satisfy the timing requirement. The standardized solution for GSM and TDMA adds

time calibration receivers in the field (location measurement units) that can monitor both the wireless-system timing and GPS signals used as a timing reference.

Many factors affect the accuracy of geolocation technologies, especially terrain variations such as hilly versus flat and environmental differences such as urban versus suburban versus rural. Other factors, like cell size and interference, have smaller but noticeable effects. Hybrid approaches that use multiple geolocation technologies appear to be the most robust solution to problems of accuracy and coverage.

AGPS provides a natural fit for hybrid solutions since it uses the wireless network to supply assistance data to GPS receivers in vehicles. This feature makes it easy to augment the assistance-data message with low-accuracy distances from receiver to base stations measured by the network equipment. Such hybrid solutions benefit from the high density of base stations in dense urban environments, which are hostile to GPS signals. Conversely, rural environments, where base stations are too scarce for network-based solutions to achieve high accuracy, provide ideal operating conditions for AGPS because GPS works well there.

From the above discussion, AGPS can be a significant part of the location determining system on a vehicle and can be used to augment other more accurate systems such as DGPS and a precise positioning system based on road markers or signature matching as discussed above and in patents assigned to Intelligent Technologies International.

SAW transponders can also be placed in the license plates 67 (FIG. 6) of all vehicles at nominal cost. An appropriately equipped automobile can then determine the angular location of vehicles in its vicinity. If a third antenna 66 is placed at the center of the vehicle front, then a more accurate indication of the distance to a license plate of a preceding vehicle can also be obtained as described above. Thus, once again, a single interrogator coupled with multiple antenna systems can be used for many functions. Alternately, if more than one SAW transponder is placed spaced apart on a vehicle and if two antennas are on the other vehicle, then the direction and position of the SAW-equipped vehicle can be determined by the receiving vehicle. The vehicle-mounted SAW or RFID device can also transmit information about the vehicle on which it is mounted such as the type of vehicle (car, van, SUV, truck, emergency vehicle etc.) as well as its weight and/or mass. One problem with many of the systems disclosed above results from the low power levels permitted by the FCC. Thus changes in FCC regulations may be required before some of them can be implemented in a powerless mode.

A general SAW temperature and pressure gage which can be wireless and powerless is shown generally at 70 located in the sidewall 73 of a fluid container 74 in FIG. 7. A pressure sensor 71 is located on the inside of the container 74, where it measures deflection of the container wall, and the fluid temperature sensor 72 on the outside. The temperature measuring SAW 70 can be covered with an insulating material to avoid the influence of the ambient temperature outside of the container 74.

A SAW load sensor can also be used to measure load in the vehicle suspension system powerless and wirelessly as shown in FIG. 8. FIG. 8A illustrates a strut 75 such as either of the rear struts of the vehicle of FIG. 8. A coil spring 80 stresses in torsion as the vehicle encounters disturbances from the road and this torsion can be measured using SAW strain gages as described in US5585571 for measuring the torque in shafts. This concept is also described in US5714695. Use of SAW strain gages to measure the torsional stresses in a spring, as shown in FIG. 8B, and in particular in an automobile suspension spring, is believed to have been first disclosed by the inventor herein, or other of

the assignee's employees or agents. In FIG. 8B, the strain measured by SAW strain gage 78 is subtracted from the strain measured by SAW strain gage 77 to get the temperature compensated strain in spring 76.

Since a portion of the dynamic load is also carried by the shock absorber, the SAW strain gages 77 and 78 will only measure the steady or average load on the vehicle. However, additional SAW strain gages 79 can be placed on a piston rod 81 of the shock absorber to obtain the dynamic load. These load measurements can then be used for active or passive vehicle damping or other stability control purposes. Knowing the dynamic load on the vehicle coupled with measuring the response of the vehicle or of the load of an occupant on a seat also permits a determination of the vehicle's inertial properties and, in the case of the seat weight sensor, of the mass of an occupant and the state of the seat belt (is it buckled and what load is it adding to the seat load sensors).

FIG. 9 illustrates a vehicle passenger compartment, and the engine compartment, with multiple SAW or RFID temperature sensors 85. SAW temperature sensors can be distributed throughout the passenger compartment, such as on the A-pillar, on the B-pillar, on the steering wheel, on the seat, on the ceiling, on the headliner, and on the windshield, rear and side windows and generally in the engine compartment. These sensors, which can be independently coded with different IDs and/or different delays, can provide an accurate measurement of the temperature distribution within the vehicle interior. RFID switches as discussed below can also be used to isolate one device from another. Such a system can be used to tailor the heating and air conditioning system based on the temperature at a particular location in the passenger compartment. If this system is augmented with occupant sensors, then the temperature can be controlled based on seat occupancy and the temperature at that location. If the occupant sensor system is based on ultrasonics, then the temperature measurement system can be used to correct the ultrasonic occupant sensor system for the speed of sound within the passenger compartment. Without such a correction, the error in the sensing system can be as large as about 20 percent.

In one implementation, SAW temperature and other sensors can be made from PVDF film and incorporated within the ultrasonic transducer assembly. For the 40 kHz ultrasonic transducer case, for example, the SAW temperature sensor would return the several pulses sent to drive the ultrasonic transducer to the control circuitry using the same wires used to transmit the pulses to the transducer after a delay that is proportional to the temperature within the transducer housing. Thus, a very economical device can add this temperature sensing function using much of the same hardware that is already present for the occupant sensing system. Since the frequency is low, PVDF could be fabricated into a very low cost temperature sensor for this purpose. Other piezoelectric materials can of course also be used.

Note, the use of PVDF as a piezoelectric material for wired and wireless SAW transducers or sensors is an important disclosure of at least one of the inventions disclosed herein. Such PVDF SAW devices can be used as chemical, biological, temperature, pressure and other SAW sensors as well as for switches. Such devices are very inexpensive to manufacture and are suitable for many vehicle-mounted devices as well as for other non-vehicle-mounted sensors. Disadvantages of PVDF stem from the lower piezoelectric constant (compared with lithium niobate) and the low acoustic wave velocity thus limiting the operating frequency. The key advantage is very low cost. When coupled with plastic electronics (plastic chips), it now becomes very economical to place sensors throughout the vehicle for monitoring a wide range of parameters such as temperature, pressure, chemical concentration etc. In particular implementations, an electronic nose based on SAW or RFID technology and neural networks can be implemented in

either a wired or wireless manner for the monitoring of cargo containers or other vehicle interiors (or building interiors) for anti-terrorist or security purposes. See, for example, Reznik, A.M. "Associative Memories for Chemical Sensing", IEEE 2002 ICONIP, p. 2630- 2634, vol. 5. In this manner, other sensors can be combined with the temperature sensors 85, or used separately, to measure carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, alcohol, biological agents, radiation, humidity or other desired chemicals or agents as discussed above. Note, although the examples generally used herein are from the automotive industry, many of the devices disclosed herein can be advantageously used with other vehicles including trucks, boats, airplanes and shipping containers.

The SAW temperature sensors 85 provide the temperature at their mounting location to a processor unit 83 via an interrogator with the processor unit 83 including appropriate control algorithms for controlling the heating and air conditioning system based on the detected temperatures. The processor unit 83 can control, e.g., which vents in the vehicle are open and closed, the flow rate through vents and the temperature of air passing through the vents. In general, the processor unit 83 can control whatever adjustable components are present or form part of the heating and air conditioning system.

In FIG. 9 a child seat 84 is illustrated on the rear vehicle seat. The child seat 84 can be fabricated with one or more RFID tags or SAW tags (not shown). The RFID and SAW tag(s) can be constructed to provide information on the occupancy of the child seat, i.e., whether a child is present, based on the weight, temperature, and/or any other measurable parameter. Also, the mere transmission of waves from the RFID or SAW tag(s) on the child seat 84 would be indicative of the presence of a child seat. The RFID and SAW tag(s) can also be constructed to provide information about the orientation of the child seat 84, i.e., whether it is facing rearward or forward. Such information about the presence and occupancy of the child seat and its orientation can be used in the control of vehicular systems, such as the vehicle airbag system or heating or air conditioning system, especially useful when a child is left in a vehicle. In this case, a processor would control the airbag or HVAC system and would receive information from the RFID and SAW tag(s) via an interrogator.

There are many applications for which knowledge of the pitch and/or roll orientation of a vehicle or other object is desired. An accurate tilt sensor can be constructed using SAW devices. Such a sensor is illustrated in FIG. 10A and designated 86. This sensor 86 can utilize a substantially planar and rectangular mass 87 and four supporting SAW devices 88 which are sensitive to gravity. For example, the mass 87 acts to deflect a membrane on which the SAW device 88 resides thereby straining the SAW device 88. Other properties can also be used for a tilt sensor such as the direction of the earth's magnetic field. SAW devices 88 are shown arranged at the corners of the planar mass 87, but it must be understood that this arrangement is an exemplary embodiment only and not intended to limit the invention. A fifth SAW device 89 can be provided to measure temperature. By comparing the outputs of the four SAW devices 88, the pitch and roll of the automobile can be measured. This sensor 86 can be used to correct errors in the SAW rate gyros described above. If the vehicle has been stationary for a period of time, the yaw SAW rate gyro can be initialized to 0 and the pitch and roll SAW gyros initialized to a value determined by the tilt sensor of FIG. 10A. Many other geometries of tilt sensors utilizing one or more SAW devices can now be envisioned for automotive and other applications.

In particular, an alternate preferred configuration is illustrated in FIG. 10B where a triangular geometry is used. In this embodiment, the planar mass is triangular and the SAW devices 88 are arranged at the corners, although as with FIG. 10A, this is a non-limiting, preferred embodiment.

5 Either of the SAW accelerometers described above can be utilized for crash sensors as shown in FIG. 11. These accelerometers have a substantially higher dynamic range than competing accelerometers now used for crash sensors such as those based on MEMS silicon springs and masses and others based on MEMS capacitive sensing. As discussed above, this is partially a result of the use of frequency or phase shifts which can be measured over a very wide range. Additionally, many conventional accelerometers that are designed for low acceleration ranges are unable to withstand high acceleration shocks without breaking. This places practical limitations on many accelerometer designs so that the stresses in the silicon are not excessive. Also for capacitive accelerometers, there is a narrow limit over which distance, and thus acceleration, can be measured.

10 The SAW accelerometer for this particular crash sensor design is housed in a container 96 which is assembled into a housing 97 and covered with a cover 98. This particular implementation shows a connector 99 indicating that this sensor would require power and the response would be provided through wires. Alternately, as discussed for other devices above, the connector 99 can be eliminated and the information and power to operate the device transmitted wirelessly. Also, power can be supplied through a connector and stored in a capacitor while the information is transmitted wirelessly thus protecting the system from a wire failure during a crash when the sensor is mounted in the crush zone. Such sensors can be used as frontal, side or rear impact sensors. They can be used in the crush zone, in the passenger compartment or any other appropriate vehicle location. If two such sensors are separated and have appropriate sensitive axes, then the angular acceleration of the vehicle can also be determined. Thus, for example, forward-facing accelerometers mounted in the vehicle side doors can be used to measure the yaw acceleration of the vehicle. Alternately, two vertical sensitive axis accelerometers in the side doors can be used to measure the roll acceleration of vehicle, which would be useful for rollover sensing.

20 US6615656 and the description below provides multiple apparatus for determining the amount of liquid in a tank. Using the SAW pressure devices of this invention, multiple pressure sensors can be placed at appropriate locations within a fuel tank to measure the fluid pressure and thereby determine the quantity of fuel remaining in the tank. This can be done both statically and dynamically. This is illustrated in FIG. 12. In this example, four SAW pressure transducers 100 are placed on the bottom of the fuel tank and one SAW pressure transducer 101 is placed at the top of the fuel tank to eliminate the effects of vapor pressure within tank. Using neural networks, or other pattern recognition techniques, the quantity of fuel in the tank can be accurately determined from these pressure readings in a manner similar to that described the '656 patent and below. The SAW measuring device illustrated in FIG. 12A combines temperature and pressure measurements in a single unit using parallel paths 102 and 103 in the same manner as described above.

30 FIG. 13A shows a schematic of a prior art airbag module deployment scheme in which sensors, which detect data for use in determining whether to deploy an airbag in the airbag module, are wired to an electronic control unit (ECU) and a command to initiate deployment of the airbag in the airbag module is sent wirelessly. By contrast, as shown in FIG. 13B, in accordance with an invention herein, the sensors are wirelessly connected to the electronic control unit

and thus transmit data wirelessly. The ECU is however wired to the airbag module. The ECU could also be connected wirelessly to the airbag module. Alternately, a safety bus can be used in place of the wireless connection.

SAW sensors also have applicability to various other sectors of the vehicle, including the powertrain, chassis, and occupant comfort and convenience. For example, SAW and RFID sensors have applicability to sensors for the powertrain area including oxygen sensors, gear-tooth Hall effect sensors, variable reluctance sensors, digital speed and position sensors, oil condition sensors, rotary position sensors, low pressure sensors, manifold absolute pressure/manifold air temperature (MAP/MAT) sensors, medium pressure sensors, turbo pressure sensors, knock sensors, coolant/fluid temperature sensors, and transmission temperature sensors.

SAW sensors for chassis applications include gear-tooth Hall effect sensors, variable reluctance sensors, digital speed and position sensors, rotary position sensors, non-contact steering position sensors, and digital ABS (anti-lock braking system) sensors. In one implementation, a Hall Effect tire pressure monitor comprises a magnet that rotates with a vehicle wheel and is sensed by a Hall Effect device which is attached to a SAW or RFID device that is wirelessly interrogated. This arrangement eliminates the need to run a wire into each wheel well.

SAW sensors for the occupant comfort and convenience field include low tire pressure sensors, HVAC temperature and humidity sensors, air temperature sensors, and oil condition sensors.

SAW sensors also have applicability such areas as controlling evaporative emissions, transmission shifting, mass air flow meters, oxygen, NOx and hydrocarbon sensors. SAW based sensors are particularly useful in high temperature environments where many other technologies fail.

SAW sensors can facilitate compliance with U.S. regulations concerning evaporative system monitoring in vehicles, through a SAW fuel vapor pressure and temperature sensors that measure fuel vapor pressure within the fuel tank as well as temperature. If vapors leak into the atmosphere, the pressure within the tank drops. The sensor notifies the system of a fuel vapor leak, resulting in a warning signal to the driver and/or notification to a repair facility, vehicle manufacturer and/or compliance monitoring facility. This application is particularly important since the condition within the fuel tank can be ascertained wirelessly reducing the chance of a fuel fire in an accident. The same interrogator that monitors the tire pressure SAW sensors can also monitor the fuel vapor pressure and temperature sensors resulting in significant economies.

A SAW humidity sensor can be used for measuring the relative humidity and the resulting information can be input to the engine management system or the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system for more efficient operation. The relative humidity of the air entering an automotive engine impacts the engine's combustion efficiency; i.e., the ability of the spark plugs to ignite the fuel/air mixture in the combustion chamber at the proper time. A SAW humidity sensor in this case can measure the humidity level of the incoming engine air, helping to calculate a more precise fuel/air ratio for improved fuel economy and reduced emissions.

Dew point conditions are reached when the air is fully saturated with water. When the cabin dew point temperature matches the windshield glass temperature, water from the air condenses quickly, creating frost or fog. A SAW humidity sensor with a temperature-sensing element and a window glass-temperature-sensing element can prevent the formation of visible fog formation by automatically controlling the HVAC system.

FIG. 14 illustrates the placement of a variety of sensors, primarily accelerometers and/or gyroscopes, which can be used to diagnose the state of the vehicle itself. Sensor 105 can be located in the headliner or attached to the vehicle roof above the side door. Typically, there can be two such sensors one on either side of the vehicle. Sensor 106 is shown in a typical mounting location midway between the sides of the vehicle attached to or near the vehicle roof above the rear window. Sensor 109 is shown in a typical mounting location in the vehicle trunk adjacent the rear of the vehicle. One, two or three such sensors can be used depending on the application. If three such sensors are used, preferably one would be adjacent each side of vehicle and one in the center. Sensor 107 is shown in a typical mounting location in the vehicle door and sensor 108 is shown in a typical mounting location on the sill or floor below the door. Sensor 110, which can be also multiple sensors, is shown in a typical mounting location forward in the crush zone of the vehicle. Finally, sensor 111 can measure the acceleration of the firewall or instrument panel and is located thereon generally midway between the two sides of the vehicle. If three such sensors are used, one would be adjacent each vehicle side and one in the center. An IMU would serve basically the same functions.

In general, sensors 105-111 provide a measurement of the state of the vehicle, such as its velocity, acceleration, angular orientation or temperature, or a state of the location at which the sensor is mounted. Thus, measurements related to the state of the sensor would include measurements of the acceleration of the sensor, measurements of the temperature of the mounting location as well as changes in the state of the sensor and rates of changes of the state of the sensor. As such, any described use or function of the sensors 105-111 above is merely exemplary and is not intended to limit the form of the sensor or its function. Thus, these sensors may or may not be SAW or RFID sensors and may be powered or unpowered and may transmit their information through a wire harness, a safety or other bus or wirelessly.

Each of the sensors 105-111 may be single axis, double axis or triaxial accelerometers and/or gyroscopes typically of the MEMS type. One or more can be IMUs. These sensors 105-111 can either be wired to the central control module or processor directly wherein they would receive power and transmit information, or they could be connected onto the vehicle bus or, in some cases, using RFID, SAW or similar technology, the sensors can be wireless and would receive their power through RF from one or more interrogators located in the vehicle. In this case, the interrogators can be connected either to the vehicle bus or directly to control module. Alternately, an inductive or capacitive power and/or information transfer system can be used.

One particular implementation will now be described. In this case, each of the sensors 105-111 is a single or dual axis accelerometer. They are made using silicon micromachined technology such as described in US5121180 and US5894090. These are only representative patents of these devices and there exist more than 100 other relevant U.S. patents describing this technology. Commercially available MEMS gyroscopes such as from Systron Doner have accuracies of approximately one degree per second. In contrast, optical gyroscopes typically have accuracies of approximately one degree per hour. Unfortunately, the optical gyroscopes are believed to be expensive for automotive applications. However, new developments by the current assignee are reducing this cost and such gyroscopes are likely to become cost effective in a few years. On the other hand, typical MEMS gyroscopes are not sufficiently accurate for many control applications unless corrected using location technology such as precise positioning or GPS-based systems as described elsewhere herein.

The angular rate function can be obtained by placing accelerometers at two separated, non-co-located points in a vehicle and using the differential acceleration to obtain an indication of angular motion and angular acceleration. From the variety of accelerometers shown in FIG. 14, it can be appreciated that not only will all accelerations of key parts of the vehicle be determined, but the pitch, yaw and roll angular rates can also be determined based on the accuracy of the accelerometers. By this method, low cost systems can be developed which, although not as accurate as the optical gyroscopes, are considerably more accurate than uncorrected conventional MEMS gyroscopes. Alternately, it has been found that from a single package containing up to three low cost MEMS gyroscopes and three low cost MEMS accelerometers, when carefully calibrated, an accurate inertial measurement unit (IMU) can be constructed that performs as well as units costing a great deal more. Such a package is sold by Crossbow Technology, Inc. 41 Daggett Dr., San Jose, CA 95134. If this IMU is combined with a GPS system and sometimes other vehicle sensor inputs using a Kalman filter, accuracy approaching that of expensive military units can be achieved. One IMU that uses a single device to sense both accelerations in three directions and angular rates about three axis is described in US4711125. Although this device has been available for many years, it has not been applied to vehicle sensing and in particular automobile vehicle sensing for location and navigational purposes.

Instead of using two accelerometers at separate locations on the vehicle, a single conformal MEMS-IDT gyroscope may be used. Such a conformal MEMS-IDT gyroscope is described in a paper by V.K. Varadan, "Conformal MEMS-IDT Gyroscopes and Their Comparison With Fiber Optic Gyro", Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 3990 (2000). The MEMS-IDT gyroscope is based on the principle of surface acoustic wave (SAW) standing waves on a piezoelectric substrate. A surface acoustic wave resonator is used to create standing waves inside a cavity and the particles at the anti-nodes of the standing waves experience large amplitude of vibrations, which serves as the reference vibrating motion for the gyroscope. Arrays of metallic dots are positioned at the anti-node locations so that the effect of Coriolis force due to rotation will acoustically amplify the magnitude of the waves. Unlike other MEMS gyroscopes, the MEMS-IDT gyroscope has a planar configuration with no suspended resonating mechanical structures. Other SAW-based gyroscopes are also now under development.

The system of FIG. 14 using dual axis accelerometers, or the IMU Kalman filter system, therefore provides a complete diagnostic system of the vehicle itself and its dynamic motion. Such a system is far more accurate than any system currently available in the automotive market. This system provides very accurate crash discrimination since the exact location of the crash can be determined and, coupled with knowledge of the force deflection characteristics of the vehicle at the accident impact site, an accurate determination of the crash severity and thus the need for occupant restraint deployment can be made. Similarly, the tendency of a vehicle to rollover can be predicted in advance and signals sent to the vehicle steering, braking and throttle systems to attempt to ameliorate the rollover situation or prevent it. In the event that it cannot be prevented, the deployment side curtain airbags can be initiated in a timely manner. Additionally, the tendency of the vehicle to the slide or skid can be considerably more accurately determined and again the steering, braking and throttle systems commanded to minimize the unstable vehicle behavior. Thus, through the deployment of inexpensive accelerometers at a variety of locations in the vehicle, or the IMU Kalman filter system, significant improvements are made in vehicle stability control, crash sensing, rollover sensing and resulting occupant protection technologies.

As mentioned above, the combination of the outputs from these accelerometer sensors and the output of strain gage weight sensors in a vehicle seat, or in or on a support structure of the seat, can be used to make an accurate assessment of the occupancy of the seat and differentiate between animate and inanimate occupants as well as determining where in the seat the occupants are sitting. This can be done by observing the acceleration signals from the sensors of FIG. 14 and simultaneously the dynamic strain gage measurements from seat-mounted strain gages. The accelerometers provide the input function to the seat and the strain gages measure the reaction of the occupying item to the vehicle acceleration and thereby provide a method of determining dynamically the mass of the occupying item and its location. This is particularly important during occupant position sensing during a crash event. By combining the outputs of the accelerometers and the strain gages and appropriately processing the same, the mass and weight of an object occupying the seat can be determined as well as the gross motion of such an object so that an assessment can be made as to whether the object is a life form such as a human being.

For this embodiment, a sensor, not shown, that can be one or more strain gage weight sensors, is mounted on the seat or in connection with the seat or its support structure. Suitable mounting locations and forms of weight sensors are discussed in US6242701 and contemplated for use in the inventions disclosed herein as well. The mass or weight of the occupying item of the seat can thus be measured based on the dynamic measurement of the strain gages with optional consideration of the measurements of accelerometers on the vehicle, which are represented by any of sensors 105-111.

A SAW Pressure Sensor can also be used with bladder weight sensors permitting that device to be interrogated wirelessly and without the need to supply power. Similarly, a SAW device can be used as a general switch in a vehicle and in particular as a seatbelt buckle switch indicative of seatbelt use. SAW devices can also be used to measure seatbelt tension or the acceleration of the seatbelt adjacent to the chest or other part of the occupant and used to control the occupant's acceleration during a crash. Such systems can be boosted as disclosed herein or not as required by the application. These inventions are disclosed in patents and patent applications of the current assignee.

The operating frequency of SAW devices has hereto for been limited to less than about 500 MHz due to problems in lithography resolution, which of course is constantly improving and currently SAW devices based on lithium niobate are available that operate at 2.4 GHz. This lithography problem is related to the speed of sound in the SAW material. Diamond has the highest speed of sound and thus would be an ideal SAW material. However, diamond is not piezoelectric. This problem can be solved partially by using a combination or laminate of diamond and a piezoelectric material. Recent advances in the manufacture of diamond films that can be combined with a piezoelectric material such as lithium niobate promise to permit higher frequencies to be used since the spacing between the interdigital transducer (IDT) fingers can be increased for a given frequency. A particularly attractive frequency is 2.4 GHz or Wi-Fi as the potential exists for the use of more sophisticated antennas such as the Yagi antenna or the Motia smart antenna that have more gain and directionality. In a different development, SAW devices have been demonstrated that operate in the tens of GHz range using a novel stacking method to achieve the close spacing of the IDTs.

In a related invention, the driver can be provided with a keyless entry device, other RFID tag, smart card or cell phone with an RF transponder that can be powerless in the form of an RFID or similar device, which can also be boosted as described herein. The interrogator determines the proximity of the driver to the vehicle door or other similar object such as a building or house door or vehicle trunk. As shown in FIG. 15A, if a driver 118 remains within 1 meter, for

example, from the door or trunk lid 116, for example, for a time period such as 5 seconds, then the door or trunk lid 116 can automatically unlock and ever open in some implementations. Thus, as the driver 118 approaches the trunk with his or her arms filled with packages 117 and pauses, the trunk can automatically open (see FIG. 15B). Such a system would be especially valuable for older people. Naturally, this system can also be used for other systems in addition to vehicle doors and trunk lids.

As shown in FIG. 15C, an interrogator 115 is placed on the vehicle, e.g., in the trunk 112 as shown, and transmits waves. When the keyless entry device 113, which contains an antenna 114 and a circuit including a circulator 135 and a memory containing a unique ID code 136, is a set distance from the interrogator 115 for a certain duration of time, the interrogator 115 directs a trunk opening device 137 to open the trunk lid 116

A SAW device can also be used as a wireless switch as shown in FIGS. 16A and 16B. FIG. 16A illustrates a surface 120 containing a projection 122 on top of a SAW device 121. Surface material 120 could be, for example, the armrest of an automobile, the steering wheel airbag cover, or any other surface within the passenger compartment of an automobile or elsewhere. Projection 122 will typically be a material capable of transmitting force to the surface of SAW device 121. As shown in FIG. 20B, a projection 123 may be placed on top of the SAW device 124. This projection 123 permits force exerted on the projection 122 to create a pressure on the SAW device 124. This increased pressure changes the time delay or natural frequency of the SAW wave traveling on the surface of material. Alternately, it can affect the magnitude of the returned signal. The projection 123 is typically held slightly out of contact with the surface until forced into contact with it.

An alternate approach is to place a switch across the IDT 127 as shown in FIG. 16C. If switch 125 is open, then the device will not return a signal to the interrogator. If it is closed, than the IDT 127 will act as a reflector sending a signal back to IDT 128 and thus to the interrogator. Alternately, a switch 126 can be placed across the SAW device. In this case, a switch closure shorts the SAW device and no signal is returned to the interrogator. For the embodiment of FIG. 16C, using switch 126 instead of switch 125, a standard reflector IDT would be used in place of the IDT 127.

Most SAW-based accelerometers work on the principle of straining the SAW surface and thereby changing either the time delay or natural frequency of the system. An alternate novel accelerometer is illustrated FIG. 17A wherein a mass 130 is attached to a silicone rubber coating 131 which has been applied the SAW device. Acceleration of the mass in FIG. 17A in the direction of arrow X changes the amount of rubber in contact with the surface of the SAW device and thereby changes the damping, natural frequency or the time delay of the device. By this method, accurate measurements of acceleration below 1 G are readily obtained. Furthermore, this device can withstand high deceleration shocks without damage. FIG. 17B illustrates a more conventional approach where the strain in a beam 132 caused by the acceleration acting on a mass 133 is measured with a SAW strain sensor 134.

It is important to note that all of these devices have a high dynamic range compared with most competitive technologies. In some cases, this dynamic range can exceed 100,000 and up to 1,000,000 has been reported. This is the direct result of the ease with which frequency and phase can be accurately measured.

A gyroscope, which is suitable for automotive applications, is illustrated in FIG. 18 and described in US6516665. This SAW-based gyroscope has applicability for the vehicle navigation, dynamic control, and rollover sensing among others.

Note that any of the disclosed applications can be interrogated by the central interrogator of this invention and can either be powered or operated powerlessly as described in general above. Block diagrams of three interrogators suitable for use in this invention are illustrated in FIGS. 19A-19C. FIG. 19A illustrates a super heterodyne circuit and FIG. 19B illustrates a dual super heterodyne circuit. FIG. 19C operates as follows. During the burst time two frequencies, F_1 and F_1+F_2 , are sent by the transmitter after being generated by mixing using oscillator Osc. The two frequencies are needed by the SAW transducer where they are mixed yielding F_2 which is modulated by the SAW and contains the information. Frequency (F_1+F_2) is sent only during the burst time while frequency F_1 remains on until the signal F_2 returns from the SAW. This signal is used for mixing. The signal returned from the SAW transducer to the interrogator is F_1+F_2 where F_2 has been modulated by the SAW transducer. It is expected that the mixing operations will result in about 12 db loss in signal strength.

As discussed, theoretically a SAW can be used for any sensing function provided the surface across which the acoustic wave travels can be modified in terms of its length, mass, elastic properties or any property that affects the travel distance, speed, amplitude or damping of the surface wave. Thus, gases and vapors can be sensed through the placement of a layer on the SAW that absorbs the gas or vapor, for example (a chemical sensor or electronic nose). Similarly, a radiation sensor can result through the placement of a radiation sensitive coating on the surface of the SAW.

Normally, a SAW device is interrogated with a constant amplitude and frequency RF pulse. This need not be the case and a modulated pulse can also be used. If for example a pseudorandom or code modulation is used, then a SAW interrogator can distinguish its communication from that of another vehicle that may be in the vicinity. This doesn't totally solve the problem of interrogating a tire that is on an adjacent vehicle but it does solve the problem of the interrogator being confused by the transmission from another interrogator. This confusion can also be partially solved if the interrogator only listens for a return signal based on when it expects that signal to be present based on when it sent the signal. That expectation can be based on the physical location of the tire relative to the interrogator which is unlikely to come from a tire on an adjacent vehicle which only momentarily could be at an appropriate distance from the interrogator. The interrogator would of course need to have correlation software in order to be able to differentiate the relevant signals. The correlation technique also permits the interrogator to separate the desired signals from noise thereby improving the sensitivity of the correlator. An alternate approach as discussed elsewhere herein is to combine a SAW sensor with an RFID switch where the switch is programmed to open or close based on the receipt of the proper identification code.

As discussed elsewhere herein, the particular tire that is sending a signal can be determined if multiple antennas, such as three, each receive the signal. For a 500 MHz signal, for example, the wave length is about 60 cm. If the distance from a tire transmitter to each of three antennas is on the order of one meter, then the relative distance from each antenna to the transmitter can be determined to within a few centimeters and thus the location of the transmitter can be found by triangulation. If that location is not a possible location for a tire transmitter, then the data can be ignored thus solving the problem of a transmitter from an adjacent vehicle being read by the wrong vehicle interrogator. This will be discussed below with regard to solving the problem of a truck having 18 tires that all need to be monitored. Note also, each antenna can have associated with it some simple circuitry that permits it to receive a signal, amplify it, change

its frequency and retransmit it either through a wire or through the air to the interrogator thus eliminating the need for long and expensive coax cables.

US6622567 describes a peak strain RFID technology based device with the novelty being the use of a mechanical device that records the peak strain experienced by the device. Like the system of the invention herein, the system does not require a battery and receives its power from the RFID circuit. The invention described herein includes the use of RFID based sensors either in the peak strain mode or in the preferred continuous strain mode. This invention is not limited to measuring strain as SAW and RFID based sensors can be used for measuring many other parameters including chemical vapor concentration, temperature, acceleration, angular velocity etc.

A key aspect of at least one of the inventions disclosed herein is the use of an interrogator to wirelessly interrogate multiple sensing devices thereby reducing the cost of the system since such sensors are in general inexpensive compared to the interrogator. The sensing devices are preferably based of SAW and/or RFID technologies although other technologies are applicable.

1.3.1 Antenna considerations

Antennas are a very important aspect to SAW and RFID wireless devices such as can be used in tire monitors, seat monitors, weight sensors, child seat monitors, fluid level sensors and similar devices or sensors which monitor, detect, measure, determine or derive physical properties or characteristics of a component in or on the vehicle or of an area near the vehicle, as disclosed in the current assignee's patents and pending patent applications. In many cases, the location of a SAW or RFID device needs to be determined such as when a device is used to locate the position of a movable item in or on a vehicle such as a seat. In other cases, the particular device from a plurality of similar devices, such as a tire pressure and/or temperature monitor that is reporting, needs to be identified. Thus, a combination of antennas can be used and the time or arrival, angle of arrival, multipath signature or similar method used to identify the reporting device. One preferred method is derived from the theory of smart antennas whereby the signals from multiple antennas are combined to improve the signal-to-noise ratio of the incoming or outgoing signal in the presence of multipath effects, for example.

Additionally, since the signal level from a SAW or RFID device is frequently low, various techniques can be used to improve the signal-to-noise ratio as described below. Finally, at the frequencies frequently used such as 433 MHz, the antennas can become large and methods are needed to reduce their size. These and other antenna considerations that can be used to improve the operation of SAW, RFID and similar wireless devices are described below.

1.3.1.1 Tire information determination

One method of maintaining a single central antenna assembly while interrogating all four tires on a conventional automobile, is illustrated in FIGS. 20A and 20B. An additional antenna can be located near the spare tire, which is not shown. It should be noted that the system described below is equally applicable for vehicles with more than four tires such as trucks.

A vehicle body is illustrated as 620 having four tires 621 and a centrally mounted four element, switchable directional antenna array 622. The four beams are shown schematically as 623 with an inactivated beam as 624 and the activated beam as 625. The road surface 626 supports the vehicle. An electronic control circuit, not shown, which may

reside inside the antenna array housing 622 or elsewhere, alternately switches each of the four antennas of the array 622 which then sequentially, or in some other pattern, send RF signals to each of the four tires 621 and wait for the response from the RFID, SAW or similar tire pressure, temperature, ID, acceleration and/or other property monitor arranged in connection with or associated with the tire 621. This represents a time domain multiple access system.

5 The interrogator makes sequential interrogation of wheels as follows:

Stage 1. Interrogator radiates 8 RF pulses via the first RF port directed to the 1st wheel.

Pulse duration is about 0.8 μ s.

Pulse repetition period is about 40 μ s.

Pulse amplitude is about 8 V (peak to peak)

10 Carrier frequency is about 426.00 MHz.

(Of course, between adjacent pulses receiver opens its input and receives four-pulses echoes from transponder located in the first wheel).

Then, during a time of about 8 ms internal micro controller processes and stores received data.

Total duration of this stage is 32 μ s + 8 ms = 8.032 ms.

15 Stage 2,3,4. Interrogator repeats operations as on stage 1 for 2nd, 3rd and 4th wheel sequentially via appropriate RF ports.

Stage 5. Interrogator stops radiating RF pulses and transfers data stored during stages 1 - 4 to the external PC for final processing and displaying. Then it returns to stage 1. The time interval for data transfer equals about 35 ms.

Some notes relative to FCC Regulations:

The total duration of interrogation cycle of four wheels is

20
$$8.032 \text{ ms} * 4 + 35 \text{ ms} = 67.12 \text{ ms}.$$

During this time, interrogator radiates $8 * 4 = 32$ pulses, each of 0.8 μ s duration.

Thus, average period of pulse repetition is

$$67.12 \text{ ms} / 32 = 2.09 \text{ ms} = 2090 \mu\text{s}$$

Assuming that duration of the interrogation pulse is 0.8 μ s as mentioned, an average repetition rate is obtained

25
$$0.8 \mu\text{s} / 2090 \mu\text{s} = 0.38 * 10^{-3}$$

Finally, the radiated pulse power is

$$P_p = (4 \text{ V})^2 / (2 * 50 \text{ Ohm}) = 0.16 \text{ W}$$

and the average radiated power is

30
$$P_{ave} = 0.16 * 0.38 * 10^{-3} = 0.42 * 10^{-3} \text{ W, or } 0.42 \text{ mW}$$

In another application, the antennas of the array 622 transmit the RF signals simultaneously and space the returns through the use of a delay line in the circuitry from each antenna so that each return is spaced in time in a known manner without requiring that the antennas be switched. Another method is to offset the antenna array, as illustrated in FIG. 21, so that the returns naturally are spaced in time due to the different distances from the tires 621 to the antennas of the array 622. In this case, each signal will return with a different phase and can be separated by this difference in phase using methods known to those in the art.

In another application, not shown, two wide angle antennas can be used such that each receives any four signals but each antenna receives each signal at a slightly different time and different amplitude permitting each signal to be separated by looking at the return from both antennas since, each signal will be received differently based on its angle of arrival.

5 Additionally, each SAW or RFID device can be designed to operate on a slightly different frequency and the antennas of the array 622 can be designed to send a chirp signal and the returned signals will then be separated in frequency, permitting the four signals to be separated. Alternately, the four antennas of the array 622 can each transmit an identification signal to permit separation. This identification can be a numerical number or the length of the SAW substrate, for example, can be random so that each property monitor has a slightly different delay built in which permits
10 signal separation. The identification number can be easily achieved in RFID systems and, with some difficulty and added expense, in SAW systems. Other methods of separating the signals from each of the tires 621 will now be apparent to those skilled in the art. One preferred method in particular will be discussed below and makes use of an RFID switch.

There are two parameters of SAW system, which has led to the choice of a four echo pulse system:

- ITU frequency rules require that the radiated spectrum width be reduced to:
15 $\Delta\phi \leq 1.75 \text{ MHz}$ (in ISM band, $F = 433.92 \text{ MHz}$);
- The range of temperature measurement should be from $-40F$ up to $+260F$.

Therefore, burst (request) pulse duration should be not less than 0.6 microseconds (see FIG. 22).

$$\tau_{bur.} = 1/\Delta\phi \geq 0.6 \mu s$$

This burst pulse travels to a SAW sensor and then it is returned by the SAW to the interrogator. The sensor's
20 antenna, interdigital transducer (IDT), reflector and the interrogator are subsystems with a restricted frequency pass band. Therefore, an efficient pass band of all the subsystems $H(f)_{\Sigma}$ will be defined as product of the partial frequency characteristic of all components:

$$H(f)_{\Sigma} = H(f)_1 * H(f)_2 * \dots * H(f)_i$$

On the other hand, the frequency $H(f)_{\Sigma}$ and a time $I(\tau)_{\Sigma}$ response of any system are interlinked to each other by
25 Fourier's transform. Therefore, the shape and duration ($\tau_{echo \text{ puls}}$) an echo signal on input to the quadrature demodulator will differ from an interrogation pulse (see FIG. 23).

In other words, duration an echo signal on input to the quadrature demodulator is defined as mathematical convolution of a burst signal $\tau_{bur.}$ and the total impulse response of the system $I(\tau)_{\Sigma}$.

$$\tau_{echo} = \tau_{bur.} \otimes I(\tau)_{\Sigma}$$

30 The task is to determine maximum pulse duration on input to the quadrature demodulator τ_{echo} under a burst pulse duration $\tau_{bur.}$ of 0.6 microseconds. It is necessary to consider in time all echo signals. In addition, it is necessary to take into account the following:

- each subsequent echo signal should not begin earlier than the completion of the previous echo pulse. Otherwise, the signals will interfere with each other, and measurement will not be correct;
- 35 • for normal operation of available microcircuits, it is necessary that the signal has a flat apex with a duration not less than 0.25 microseconds ($\tau_{meg} = t_3 - t_2$, see FIG. 23). The signal's phase will be constant only on this segment;

- the total sensor's pass band (considering double transit IDT and its antenna as a reflector) constitutes 10 MHz;
- the total pass band of the interrogator constitutes no more than 4 MHz.

Conducting the corresponding calculations yields the determination that duration of impulse front ($t_2-t_1 = t_4-t_3$, see FIG. 23) constitutes about 0.35 microseconds. Therefore, total duration of one echo pulse is not less than:

$$\tau_{\text{echo.}} = (t_2 - t_1) + \tau_{\text{neg.}} + (t_4 - t_3) = 0.35 + 0.25 + 0.35 = 0.95 \mu\text{s}$$

Hence, the arrival time of each following echo pulse should be not earlier than 1.0 microsecond (see FIG. 24). This conclusion is very important.

In Appendix 1 of the '139 application, it is shown that for correct temperature measuring in the required band it is necessary to meet the following conditions:

$$(T_2-T_1) = 1/(72 * 10^{-6} \text{ 1}^\circ\text{K} * (125 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}-(-40 \text{ }^\circ\text{C})) * 434.92*106) = 194 \text{ ns}$$

This condition is outrageous. If to execute ITU frequency rules, the band of correct temperature measuring will be reduced five times:

$$(125 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}-(-40 \text{ }^\circ\text{C})) * 194 \text{ ns} / 1000 \text{ ns} = 32 \text{ }^\circ\text{C} = 58 \text{ }^\circ\text{F}$$

This is the main reason that it is necessary to add the fourth echo pulse in a sensor (see FIG. 24). The principle purpose of the fourth echo pulse is to make the temperature measurement unambiguous in a wide interval of temperatures when a longer interrogation pulse is used (the respective time intervals between the sensor's echo pulses are also longer). A mathematical model of the processing of a four-pulse echo that explains these statements is presented in Appendix 3 of the '139 application.

The duration of the interrogation pulse and the time positions of the four pulses are calculated as:

$$\begin{aligned} T_1 &> 4 * \tau_{\text{echo}} = 4.00 \mu\text{s} \\ T_2 &= T_1 + \tau_{\text{echo}} = 5.00 \mu\text{s} \\ T_3 &= T_2 + \tau_{\text{echo}} = 6.00 \mu\text{s} \\ T_4 &= T_3 + \tau_{\text{echo}} + 0.08 \mu\text{s} = 7.08 \mu\text{s} \end{aligned}$$

The sensor's design with four pulses is exhibited in FIG. 25 and FIG. 26.

τ_{bur}	0.60 μs
T1	4.00 μs
T2	5.00 μs
T3	6.00 μs
T4	7.08 μs

The reason that such a design was selected is that this design provides three important conditions:

1. It has the minimum RF signal propagation loss. Both SAW waves use for measuring (which are propagated to the left and to the right from IDT).

2. All parasitic echo signals (signals of multiple transits) are eliminated after the fourth pulse. For example, the pulse is excited by the IDT, then it is reflected from a reflector №1 and returns to the IDT. The pulse for the second time is re-emitted and it passes the second time on the same trajectory. The total time delay will be 8.0 microseconds in this case.

3. It has the minimum length.

FIGS. 25-27 illustrate the paths taken by various surface waves on a tire temperature and pressure monitoring device of one or more of the inventions disclosed herein. The pulse from the interrogator is received by the antenna 634 which excited a wave in the SAW substrate 637 by way of the interdigital transducer (IDT) 633. The pulse travels in two directions and reflects off of reflectors 631, 632, 635 and 636. The reflected pulses return to the IDT 633 and are re-radiated from the antenna 634 back to the interrogator. The pressure in the pressure capsule causes the micro-membrane 638 to deflect causing the membrane to strain in the SAW through the point of application of the force 639.

The IDT 633, reflectors 632 and 631 are rigidly fastened to a base package. Reflectors 635 and 636 are disposed on a portion of the substrate that moves under the action of changes in pressure. Therefore, it is important that magnitudes of phase shift of pulses №2 and №4 were equal for a particular pressure.

For this purpose, the point of application of the force (caused by pressure) has been arranged between reflector 635 and the IDT 633, as it is exhibited in FIG. 27. Phase shifts of echo pulses №2 and №4 vary equally with changes in pressure. The area of strain is equal for echo pulses №2 and №4. Phase shifts of echo pulses №1 and №4 do not vary with pressure.

The phase shifts of all four echo pulses vary under temperature changes (proportionally to each time delay). All necessary computing of the temperature and pressure can be executed without difficulties in this case only.

This is taken into account in a math model, which is presented below.

Although the discussion herein concerns the determination of tire information, the same system can be used to determine the location of seats, the location of child seats when equipped with sensors, information about the presence of object or chemicals in vehicular compartments and the like.

1.3.1.2 Smart Antennas

Some of the shortcomings in today's wireless products can be overcome by using smart antenna technology. A smart antenna is a multi-element antenna that significantly improves reception by intelligently combining the signals received at each antenna element and adjusting the antenna characteristics to optimize performance as the transmitter or receiver moves and the environment changes.

Smart antennas can suppress interfering signals, combat signal fading and increase signal range thereby increasing the performance and capacity of wireless systems.

A method of separating signals from multiple tires, for example, is to use a smart antenna such as that manufactured by Motia. This particular Motia device is designed to operate at 433 MHz and to mitigate multipath signals at that frequency. The signals returning to the antennas from tires, for example, contain some multipath effects that, especially if the antennas are offset somewhat from the vehicle center, are different for each wheel. Since the adaptive formula will differ for each wheel, the signals can be separated (see "enhancing 802.11 WLANs through Smart Antennas", January 2004 available at motia.com). The following is taken from that paper.

“Antenna arrays can provide gain, combat multipath fading, and suppress interfering signals, thereby increasing both the performance and capacity of wireless systems. Smart antennas have been implemented in a wide variety of wireless systems, where they have been demonstrated to provide a large performance improvement. However, the various types of spatial processing techniques have different advantages and disadvantages in each type of system.”

5 “This strategy permits the seamless integration of smart antenna technology with today’s legacy WLAN chipset architecture. Since the 802.11 system uses time division duplexing (the same frequency is used for transmit and receive), smart antennas can be used for both transmit and receive, providing a gain on both uplink and downlink, using smart antennas on either the client or access point alone. Results show a 13 dB gain with a four element smart antenna over a single antenna system with the smart antenna on one side only, and an 18 dB gain with the smart antenna on both the
10 client and access point. Thus, this “plug-and-play” adaptive array technology can provide greater range, average data rate increases per user, and better overall coverage.

“In the multibeam or phased array antenna, a beamformer forms several narrow beams, and a beam selector chooses the beam for reception that has the largest signal power. In the adaptive array, the signal is received by several antenna elements, each with similar antenna patterns, and the received signals are weighted and combined to form the
15 output signal. The multibeam antenna is simpler to implement as the beamformer is fixed, with the beam selection only needed every few seconds for user movement, while the adaptive array must calculate the complex beamforming weights at least an order of magnitude faster than the fading rate, which can be several Hertz for pedestrian users.”

“Finally, there is pattern diversity, the use of antenna elements with different patterns. The combination of these types of diversity permits the use of a large number of antennas even in a small form factor, such as a PCMCIA card or
20 handset, with near ideal performance.”

Through its adaptive beamforming technology, Motia has developed cost-effective smart antenna appliquéés that vastly improve wireless performance in a wide variety of wireless applications including Wi-Fi that can be incorporated into wireless systems without major modifications to existing products. Although the Motia chipset has been applied to several communication applications, it has yet to be applied to the monitoring applications as disclosed in the current
25 assignee’s patents and pending patent applications, and in particular vehicular monitoring applications such as tire monitoring.

The smart antenna works by determining a set of factors or weights that are used to operate on the magnitude and/or phase of the signals from each antenna before the signals are combined. However, since the geometry of a vehicle tire relative to the centralized antenna array does not change much as the tire rotates, but is different for each wheel, the
30 weights themselves contain the information as to which tire signal is being received. In fact, the weights can be chosen to optimize signal transmission from a particular tire thus providing a method of selectively interrogating each tire at the maximum antenna gain.

1.3.1.3 Distributed load Monopole

Recent antenna developments in the physics department at the University of Rhode Island have resulted in a
35 new antenna technology. The antennas developed called DLM’s (Distributed loaded monopole) are small efficient, wide bandwidth antennas. The simple design exhibits 50-ohm impedance and is easy to implement. They require only a direct feed from a coax cable and require no elaborate matching networks.

The prime advantage to this technology is a substantial reduction of the size of an antenna. Typically, the DLM antenna is about 1/3 the size of a normal dipole with only minor loss in efficiency. This is especially important for vehicle applications where space is always at a premium. Such antennas can be used for a variety of vehicle radar and communication applications as well for the monitoring of RFID, SAW and similar devices on a vehicle and especially for tire pressure, temperature, and/or acceleration monitoring as well as other monitoring purposes. Such applications have not previously been disclosed.

Although the DLM is being applied to several communication applications, it has yet to be applied to the monitoring applications as disclosed in the current assignee's patents and pending patent applications. The antenna gain that results and the ability to pack several antennas into a small package are attractive features of this technology.

1.3.1.4 Plasma Antenna

The following disclosure was taken from "Markland Technologies – Gas Plasma": (www.marklandtech.com)

"Plasma antenna technology employs ionized gas enclosed in a tube (or other enclosure) as the conducting element of an antenna. This is a fundamental change from traditional antenna design that generally employs solid metal wires as the conducting element. Ionized gas is an efficient conducting element with a number of important advantages. Since the gas is ionized only for the time of transmission or reception, "ringing" and associated effects of solid wire antenna design are eliminated. The design allows for extremely short pulses, important to many forms of digital communication and radars. The design further provides the opportunity to construct an antenna that can be compact and dynamically reconfigured for frequency, direction, bandwidth, gain and beamwidth. Plasma antenna technology will enable antennas to be designed that are efficient, low in weight and smaller in size than traditional solid wire antennas."

"When gas is electrically charged, or ionized to a plasma state it becomes conductive, allowing radio frequency (RF) signals to be transmitted or received. We employ ionized gas enclosed in a tube as the conducting element of an antenna. When the gas is not ionized, the antenna element ceases to exist. This is a fundamental change from traditional antenna design that generally employs solid metal wires as the conducting element. We believe our plasma antenna offers numerous advantages including stealth for military applications and higher digital performance in commercial applications. We also believe our technology can compete in many metal antenna applications."

"Initial studies have concluded that a plasma antenna's performance is equal to a copper wire antenna in every respect. Plasma antennas can be used for any transmission and/or modulation technique: continuous wave (CW), phase modulation, impulse, AM, FM, chirp, spread spectrum or other digital techniques. And the plasma antenna can be used over a large frequency range up to 20 GHz and employ a wide variety of gases (for example neon, argon, helium, krypton, mercury vapor and xenon). The same is true as to its value as a receive antenna."

"Plasma antenna technology has the following additional attributes:

- No antenna ringing provides an improved signal to noise ratio and reduces multipath signal distortion.
- Reduced radar cross section provides stealth due to the non-metallic elements.
- Changes in the ion density can result in instantaneous changes in bandwidth over wide dynamic ranges.
- After the gas is ionized, the plasma antenna has virtually no noise floor.

- While in operation, a plasma antenna with a low ionization level can be decoupled from an adjacent high-frequency transmitter.
- A circular scan can be performed electronically with no moving parts at a higher speed than traditional mechanical antenna structures.
- 5 • It has been mathematically illustrated that by selecting the gases and changing ion density that the electrical aperture (or apparent footprint) of a plasma antenna can be made to perform on par with a metal counterpart having a larger physical size.
- Our plasma antenna can transmit and receive from the same aperture provided the frequencies are widely separated.
- 10 • Plasma resonance, impedance and electron charge density are all dynamically reconfigurable. Ionized gas antenna elements can be constructed and configured into an array that is dynamically reconfigurable for frequency, beamwidth, power, gain, polarization and directionality - on the fly.
- A single dynamic antenna structure can use time multiplexing so that many RF subsystems can share one antenna resource reducing the number and size of antenna structures.”

15 Several of the characteristics discussed above are of particular usefulness for several of the inventions herein including the absence of ringing, the ability to turn the antenna off after transmission and then immediately back on for reception, the ability to send very short pulses, the ability to alter the directionality of the antenna and to sweep thereby allowing one antenna to service multiple devices such as tires and to know which tire is responding. Additional advantages include, smaller size, the ability to work with chirp, spread spectrum and other digital technologies, improved signal to noise ratio, wide dynamic range, circular scanning without moving parts, and antenna sharing over 20 differing frequencies, among others.

Some of the applications disclosed herein can use ultra wideband transceivers. UWB transceivers radiate most of the energy with its frequency centered on the physical length of the antenna. With the UWB connected to a plasma antenna, the center frequency of the UWB transceiver could be hopped or swept simultaneously.

25 A plasma antenna can solve the problem of multiple antennas by changing its electrical characteristic to match the function required - Time domain multiplexed. It can be used for high-gain antennas such as phase array, parabolic focus steering, log periodic, yagi, patch quadrafilers, etc. One antenna can be used for GPS, ad-hoc (such as car-to-car) communication, collision avoidance, back up sensing, cruise control, radar, toll identification and data communications.

30 Although the plasma antennas are being applied to several communication applications, they have yet to be applied to the monitoring applications as disclosed herein. The many advantages that result and the ability to pack several antenna functions into a small package are attractive features of this technology. Patents and applications that discuss plasma antennas include: US6710746, US20030160742 and US20040130497.

1.3.1.5 Dielectric antenna

35 A great deal of work is underway to make antennas from dielectric materials. In one case, the electric field that impinges on the dielectric is used to modulate a transverse electric light beam. In another case, the reduction of the speed of electro magnetic waves due to the dielectric constant is used to reduce the size of the antenna. It can be

expected that developments in this area will affect the antennas used in cell phones as well as in RFID and SAW-based communication devices in the future. Thus, dielectric antennas can be advantageously used with some of the inventions disclosed herein.

1.3.1.6 Nanotube antenna

5 Antennas made from carbon nanotubes are beginning to show promise of increasing the sensitivity of antennas and thus increasing the range for communication devices based on RFID, SAW or similar devices where the signal strength frequently limits the range of such devices. The use of these antennas is therefore contemplated herein for use in tire monitors and the other applications disclosed herein.

10 Combinations of the above antenna designs in many cases can benefit from the advantages of each type to add further improvements to the field. Thus the inventions herein are not limited to any one of the above concepts nor is it limited to their use alone. Where feasible, all combinations are contemplated herein.

1.3.1.7 Summary

15 A general system for obtaining information about a vehicle or a component thereof or therein is illustrated in FIG. 20C and includes multiple sensors 627 which may be arranged at specific locations on the vehicle, on specific components of the vehicle, on objects temporarily placed in the vehicle such as child seats, or on or in any other object in or on the vehicle or in its vicinity about which information is desired. The sensors 627 may be SAW or RFID sensors or other sensors which generate a return signal upon the detection of a transmitted radio frequency signal. A multi-element antenna array 622 is mounted on the vehicle, in either a central location as shown in FIG. 20A or in an offset location as shown in FIG. 21, to provide the radio frequency signals which cause the sensors 627 to generate the return signals.

20 A control system 628 is coupled to the antenna array 622 and controls the antennas in the array 622 to be operative as necessary to enable reception of return signals from the sensors 627. There are several ways for the control system 628 to control the array 622, including to cause the antennas to be alternately switched on in order to sequentially transmit the RF signals therefrom and receive the return signals from the sensors 627 and to cause the antennas to transmit the RF signals simultaneously and space the return signals from the sensors 627 via a delay line in circuitry from each antennas such that each return signal is spaced in time in a known manner without requiring switching of the antennas. The control system can also be used to control a smart antenna array.

25 The control system 628 also processes the return signals to provide information about the vehicle or the component. The processing of the return signals can be any known processing including the use of pattern recognition techniques, neural networks, fuzzy systems and the like.

30 The antenna array 622 and control system 628 can be housed in a common antenna array housing 630.

Once the information about the vehicle or the component is known, it is directed to a display/telematics/adjustment unit 629 where the information can be displayed on a display 629 to the driver, sent to a remote location for analysis via a telematics unit 629 and/or used to control or adjust a component on, in or near the vehicle. Although several of the figures illustrate applications of these technologies to tire monitoring, it is intended that the principles and devices disclosed can be applied to the monitoring of a wide variety of components on and off a vehicle.

1.4 Tire Monitoring

Tire monitoring sensors may be one type of sensor systems used in a control system and method disclosed herein. Significant details about specific tire monitoring sensor systems is set forth in the parent application, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/464,288 (Section 1.4 thereof) and is incorporated herein.

5 1.5 Occupant Sensing

Occupant or object presence and position sensing is another field in which SAW and/or RFID technology can be applied and the inventions herein encompasses several embodiments of SAW and RFID occupant or object presence and/or position sensors.

Many sensing systems are available to identify and locate occupants or other objects in a passenger
10 compartment of the vehicle. Such sensors include ultrasonic sensors, chemical sensors (e.g., carbon dioxide), cameras and other optical sensors, radar systems, heat and other infrared sensors, capacitance, magnetic or other field change sensors, etc. Most of these sensors require power to operate and return information to a central processor for analysis. An ultrasonic sensor, for example, may be mounted in or near the headliner of the vehicle and periodically it transmits a burst of ultrasonic waves and receives reflections of these waves from occupying items of the passenger seat. Current
15 systems on the market are controlled by electronics in a dedicated ECU.

FIG. 28 is a side view, with parts cutaway and removed of a vehicle showing the passenger compartment containing a rear-facing child seat 342 on a front passenger seat 343 and one mounting location for a first embodiment of a vehicle interior monitoring system in accordance with the invention. The interior monitoring system is capable of detecting the presence of an object, determining the type of object, determining the location of the object, and/or
20 determining another property or characteristic of the object. A property of the object could be the presence or orientation of a child seat, the velocity of an adult and the like. For example, the vehicle interior monitoring system can determine that an object is present on the seat, that the object is a child seat and that the child seat is rear-facing. The vehicle interior monitoring system could also determine that the object is an adult, that he is drunk and that he is out-of-position relative to the airbag.

25 In this embodiment, six transducers 344, 345, 346, 347, 348 and 349 are used, although any number of transducers may be used. Each transducer 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349 may comprise only a transmitter which transmits energy, waves or radiation, only a receiver which receives energy, waves or radiation, both a transmitter and a receiver capable of transmitting and receiving energy, waves or radiation, an electric field sensor, a capacitive sensor, or a self-tuning antenna-based sensor, weight sensor, chemical sensor, motion sensor or vibration sensor, for example.

30 Such transducers or receivers 344-349 may be of the type which emit or receive a continuous signal, a time varying signal (such as a capacitor or electric field sensor) or a spatial varying signal such as in a scanning system. One particular type of radiation-receiving receiver for use in the invention is a receiver capable of receiving electromagnetic waves.

When ultrasonic energy is used, transducer 345 can be used as a transmitter and transducers 344,346 as
35 receivers. Naturally, other combinations can be used such as where all transducers are transceivers (transmitters and receivers). For example, transducer 345 can be constructed to transmit ultrasonic energy toward the front passenger seat, which is modified, in this case by the occupying item of the passenger seat, i.e., the rear-facing child seat 342, and the

modified waves are received by the transducers 344 and 346, for example. A more common arrangement is where transducers 344, 345 and 346 are all transceivers. Modification of the ultrasonic energy may constitute reflection of the ultrasonic energy as the ultrasonic energy is reflected back by the occupying item of the seat. The waves received by transducers 344 and 346 vary with time depending on the shape of the object occupying the passenger seat, in this case, the rear-facing child seat 342. Each object will reflect back waves having a different pattern. Also, the pattern of waves received by transducer 344 will differ from the pattern received by transducer 346 in view of its different mounting location. This difference generally permits the determination of the location of the reflecting surface (i.e., the rear-facing child seat 342) through triangulation. Through the use of two transducers 344,346, a sort of stereographic image is received by the two transducers and recorded for analysis by processor 340, which is coupled to the transducers 344,345,346. This image will differ for each object that is placed on the vehicle seat and it will also change for each position of a particular object and for each position of the vehicle seat. Elements 344,345,346, although described as transducers, are representative of any type of component used in a wave-based analysis technique.

For ultrasonic systems, the “image” recorded from each ultrasonic transducer/receiver, is actually a time series of digitized data of the amplitude of the received signal versus time. Since there are two receivers, two time series are obtained which are processed by the processor 340. The processor 340 may include electronic circuitry and associated, embedded software. Processor 340 constitutes one form of a generating system in accordance with the invention which generates information about the occupancy of the passenger compartment based on the waves received by the transducers 344,345,346.

When different objects are placed on the front passenger seat, the two images from transducers 344,346, for example, are different but there are also similarities between all images of rear-facing child seats, for example, regardless of where on the vehicle seat they are placed and regardless of what company manufactured the child seat. Alternately, there will be similarities between all images of people sitting on the seat regardless of what they are wearing, their age or size. The problem is to find the “rules” which differentiate the images of one type of object from the images of other types of objects, e.g., which differentiate the occupant images from the rear-facing child seat images. The similarities of these images for various child seats are frequently not obvious to a person looking at plots of the time series and thus computer algorithms are developed to sort out the various patterns. For a more detailed discussion of pattern recognition, see US5943295.

The determination of these rules is important to the pattern recognition techniques used in this invention. In general, three approaches have been useful, artificial intelligence, fuzzy logic and artificial neural networks (including cellular and modular or combination neural networks and support vector machines) (although additional types of pattern recognition techniques may also be used, such as sensor fusion). In some embodiments of this invention, such as the determination that there is an object in the path of a closing window as described below, the rules are sufficiently obvious that a trained researcher can sometimes look at the returned signals and devise an algorithm to make the required determinations. In others, such as the determination of the presence of a rear-facing child seat or of an occupant, artificial neural networks are used to determine the rules. One such set of neural network software for determining the pattern recognition rules is available from the International Scientific Research, Inc. of Panama City, Panama and Kyiv, Ukraine.

The system used in one preferred implementation of inventions herein for the determination of the presence of a rear-facing child seat, of an occupant or of an empty seat is the artificial neural network. In this case, the network operates on the two returned signals as sensed by transducers 344 and 346, for example. Through a training session, the system is taught to differentiate between the three cases. This is done by conducting a large number of experiments where all possible child seats are placed in all possible orientations on the front passenger seat. Similarly, a sufficiently large number of experiments are run with human occupants and with boxes, bags of groceries and other objects (both inanimate and animate). Sometimes, as many as 1,000,000 such experiments are run before the neural network is sufficiently trained so that it can differentiate among the three cases and output the correct decision with a very high probability. Of course, it must be realized that a neural network can also be trained to differentiate among additional cases, e.g., a forward-facing child seat.

Once the network is determined, it is possible to examine the result using tools supplied International Scientific Research, for example, to determine the rules that were finally arrived at by the trial and error techniques. In that case, the rules can then be programmed into a microprocessor resulting in a fuzzy logic or other rule-based system. Alternately, a neural computer, or cellular neural network, can be used to implement the net directly. In either case, the implementation can be carried out by those skilled in the art of pattern recognition. If a microprocessor is used, a memory device is also required to store the data from the analog-to-digital converters that digitize the data from the receiving transducers. On the other hand, if a neural network computer is used, the analog signal can be fed directly from the transducers to the neural network input nodes and an intermediate memory is not required. Memory of some type is needed to store the computer programs in the case of the microprocessor system and if the neural computer is used for more than one task, a memory is needed to store the network specific values associated with each task.

Electromagnetic energy-based occupant sensors exist that use various portions of the electromagnetic spectrum. A system based on the ultraviolet, visible or infrared portions of the spectrum generally operate with a transmitter and a receiver of reflected radiation. The receiver may be a camera, focal plane array, or a photo detector such as a pin or avalanche diode as described in above-referenced patents and patent applications. At other frequencies, the absorption of the electromagnetic energy is primarily and at still other frequencies, the capacitance or electric field influencing effects are used. Generally, the human body will reflect, scatter, absorb or transmit electromagnetic energy in various degrees depending on the frequency of the electromagnetic waves. All such occupant sensors are included herein.

In the embodiment wherein electromagnetic energy is used, it is to be appreciated that any portion of the electromagnetic signals that impinges upon, surrounds or involves a body portion of the occupant is at least partially absorbed by the body portion. Sometimes, this is due to the fact that the human body is composed primarily of water, and that electromagnetic energy of certain frequencies is readily absorbed by water. The amount of electromagnetic signal absorption is related to the frequency of the signal, and size or bulk of the body portion that the signal impinges upon. For example, a torso of a human body tends to absorb a greater percentage of electromagnetic energy than a hand of a human body.

Thus, when electromagnetic waves or energy signals are transmitted by a transmitter, the returning waves received by a receiver provide an indication of the absorption of the electromagnetic energy. That is, absorption of electromagnetic energy will vary depending on the presence or absence of a human occupant, the occupant's size, bulk,

surface reflectivity, etc. depending on the frequency, so that different signals will be received relating to the degree or extent of absorption by the occupying item on the seat. The receiver will produce a signal representative of the returned waves or energy signals which will thus constitute an absorption signal as it corresponds to the absorption of electromagnetic energy by the occupying item in the seat.

5 One or more of the transducers 344,345,346 can also be image-receiving devices, such as cameras, which take images of the interior of the passenger compartment. These images can be transmitted to a remote facility to monitor the passenger compartment or can be stored in a memory device for use in the event of an accident, i.e., to determine the status of the occupants of the vehicle prior to the accident. In this manner, it can be ascertained whether the driver was falling asleep, talking on the phone, etc.

10 To aid in the detection of the presence of child seats as well as their orientation, a device 341 can be placed on the child seat in some convenient location where its presence can be sensed by a vehicle-mounted sensor that can be in the seat, dashboard, headliner or any other convenient location depending on the system design. The device 341 can be a reflector, resonator, RFID tag, SAW device, or any other tag or similar device that permits easy detection of its presence and perhaps its location or proximity. Such a device can also be placed on any other component in the vehicle to indicate
15 the presence, location or identity of the component. For example, a vehicle may have a changeable component where the properties of that component are used by another system within the vehicle and thus the identification of the particular object is needed so that the proper properties are used by the other system. An occupant monitoring system (e.g. ultrasonic, optical, electric field, etc.) may perform differently depending on whether the seat is made from cloth or leather or a weight sensor may depend on the properties of a particular seat to provide the proper occupant weight. Thus,
20 incorporation of an RFID, SAW, barcode or other tag or mark on any object that can be interrogated by an interrogator is contemplated herein.

 A memory device for storing the images of the passenger compartment, and also for receiving and storing any of the other information, parameters and variables relating to the vehicle or occupancy of the vehicle, may be in the form a standardized "black box" (instead of or in addition to a memory part in a processor 340). The IEEE Standards
25 Association is currently beginning to develop an international standard for motor vehicle event data recorders. The information stored in the black box and/or memory unit in the processor 340, can include the images of, or other information related to, the interior of the passenger compartment as well as the number of occupants and the health state of the occupants. The black box would preferably be tamper-proof and crash-proof and enable retrieval of the information after a crash. The use of wave-type sensors as the transducers 344,345,346 as well as electric field sensors is
30 discussed above. Electric field sensors and wave sensors are essentially the same from the point of view of sensing the presence of an occupant in a vehicle. In both cases, a time-varying electric field is disturbed or modified by the presence of the occupant. At high frequencies in the visual, infrared and high frequency radio wave region, the sensor is based on its capability to sense change of wave characteristics of the electromagnetic field, such as amplitude, phase or frequency. As the frequency drops, other characteristics of the field are measured. At still lower frequencies, the occupant's
35 dielectric properties modify parameters of the reactive electric field in the occupied space between/near the plates of a capacitor. In this latter case, the sensor senses the change in charge distribution on the capacitor plates by measuring, for example, the current wave magnitude or phase in the electric circuit that drives the capacitor. These measured

parameters are directly connected with parameters of the displacement current in the occupied space. In all cases, the presence of the occupant reflects, absorbs or modifies the waves or variations in the electric field in the space occupied by the occupant. Thus, for the purposes of this invention, capacitance, electric field or electromagnetic wave sensors are equivalent and although they are all technically “field” sensors they can be considered as “wave” sensors herein. What follows is a discussion comparing the similarities and differences between two types of field or wave sensors, electromagnetic wave sensors and capacitive sensors as exemplified by Kithil in US5602734 (see also US06275146, US06014602, US05844486, US05802479, US05691693 and US05366241).

An electromagnetic field disturbed or emitted by a passenger in the case of an electromagnetic wave sensor, for example, and the electric field sensor of Kithil, for example, are in many ways similar and equivalent for the purposes of this invention. The electromagnetic wave sensor is an actual electromagnetic wave sensor by definition because it senses parameters of a wave, which is a coupled pair of continuously changing electric and magnetic fields. The electric field here is not a static, potential one. It is essentially a dynamic, rotational electric field coupled with a changing magnetic one, that is, an electromagnetic wave. It cannot be produced by a steady distribution of electric charges. It is initially produced by moving electric charges in a transmitter, even if this transmitter is a passenger body for the case of a passive infrared sensor.

In the Kithil sensor, a static electric field is declared as an initial material agent coupling a passenger and a sensor (see Column 5, lines 5-7): “The proximity sensor 12 each function by creating an electrostatic field between oscillator input loop 54 and detector output loop 56, which is affected by presence of a person near by, as a result of capacitive coupling,...”. It is a potential, non-rotational electric field. It is not necessarily coupled with any magnetic field. It is the electric field of a capacitor. It can be produced with a steady distribution of electric charges. Thus, it is not an electromagnetic wave by definition but if the sensor is driven by a varying current, then it produces a quasistatic electric field in the space between/near the plates of the capacitor.

Kithil declares that his capacitance sensor uses a static electric field. Thus, from the consideration above, one can conclude that Kithil’s sensor cannot be treated as a wave sensor because there are no actual electromagnetic waves but only a static electric field of the capacitor in the sensor system. However, this is not believed to be the case. The Kithil system could not operate with a true static electric field because a steady system does not carry any information. Therefore, Kithil is forced to use an oscillator, causing an alternate current in the capacitor and a reactive quasi-static electric field in the space between the capacitor plates, and a detector to reveal an informative change of the sensor capacitance caused by the presence of an occupant (see FIG. 7 and its description in the ‘734 patent). In this case, the system becomes a “wave sensor” in the sense that it starts generating actual time-varying electric field that certainly originates electromagnetic waves according to the definition above. That is, Kithil’s sensor can be treated as a wave sensor regardless of the shape of the electric field that it creates a beam or a spread shape.

As follows from the Kithil patent, the capacitor sensor is likely a parametric system where the capacitance of the sensor is controlled by the influence of the passenger body. This influence is transferred by means of the near electromagnetic field (i.e., the wave-like process) coupling the capacitor electrodes and the body. It is important to note that the same influence takes place with a real static electric field also, that is in absence of any wave phenomenon. This

would be a situation if there were no oscillator in Kithil's system. However, such a system is not workable and thus Kithil reverts to a dynamic system using time-varying electric fields.

Thus, although Kithil declares the coupling is due to a static electric field, such a situation is not realized in his system because an alternating electromagnetic field ("quasi-wave") exists in the system due to the oscillator. Thus, the sensor is actually a wave sensor, that is, it is sensitive to a change of a wave field in the vehicle compartment. This change is measured by measuring the change of its capacitance. The capacitance of the sensor system is determined by the configuration of its electrodes, one of which is a human body, that is, the passenger inside of and the part which controls the electrode configuration and hence a sensor parameter, the capacitance.

The physics definition of "wave" from Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary is: " 11. *Physics*. A progressive disturbance propagated from point to point in a medium or space without progress or advance of the points themselves,...". In a capacitor, the time that it takes for the disturbance (a change in voltage) to propagate through space, the dielectric and to the opposite plate is generally small and neglected but it is not zero. As the frequency driving the capacitor increases and the distance separating the plates increases, this transmission time as a percentage of the period of oscillation can become significant. Nevertheless, an observer between the plates will see the rise and fall of the electric field much like a person standing in the water of an ocean in the presence of water waves. The presence of a dielectric body between the plates causes the waves to get bigger as more electrons flow to and from the plates of the capacitor. Thus, an occupant affects the magnitude of these waves which is sensed by the capacitor circuit. The electromagnetic field is a material agent that carries information about a passenger's position in both Kithil's and a beam-type electromagnetic wave sensor.

Considering now a general occupant sensor and its connection to the rest of the system, an alternate method as taught herein is to use an interrogator to send a signal to the headliner-mounted ultrasonic sensor, for example, causing that sensor to transmit and receive ultrasonic waves. The sensor in this case could perform mathematical operations on the received waves and create a vector of data containing perhaps twenty to forty values and transmit that vector wirelessly to the interrogator. By means of this system, the ultrasonic sensor need only be connected to the vehicle power system and the information can be transferred to and from the sensor wirelessly (either by electromagnetic or ultrasonic waves or equivalent). Such a system significantly reduces the wiring complexity especially when there may be multiple such sensors distributed in the passenger compartment. Then, only a power wire needs to be attached to the sensor and there does not need to be any direct connection between the sensor and the control module. The same philosophy applies to radar-based sensors, electromagnetic sensors of all kinds including cameras, capacitive or other electromagnetic field change sensitive sensors etc. In some cases, the sensor itself can operate on power supplied by the interrogator through radio frequency transmission. In this case, even the connection to the power line can be omitted. This principle can be extended to the large number of sensors and actuators that are currently in the vehicle where the only wires that are needed are those to supply power to the sensors and actuators and the information is supplied wirelessly.

Such wireless powerless sensors can also be used, for example, as close proximity sensors based on measurement of thermal radiation from an occupant. Such sensors can be mounted on any of the surfaces in the passenger compartment, including the seats, which are likely to receive such radiation.

A significant number of people are suffocated each year in automobiles due to excessive heat, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, or other dangerous fumes. The SAW sensor technology is particularly applicable to solving these kinds of problems. The temperature measurement capabilities of SAW transducers have been discussed above. If the surface of a SAW device is covered with a material which captures carbon dioxide, for example, such that the mass, elastic constants or other property of surface coating changes, the characteristics of the surface acoustic waves can be modified as described in US4637987 and elsewhere based on the carbon dioxide content of the air. Once again, an interrogator can sense the condition of these chemical-sensing sensors without the need to supply power. The interrogator can therefore communicate with the sensors wirelessly. If power is supplied then this communication can be through the wires. If a concentration of carbon monoxide is sensed, for example, an alarm can be sounded, the windows opened, and/or the engine extinguished. Similarly, if the temperature within the passenger compartment exceeds a certain level, the windows can be automatically opened a little to permit an exchange of air reducing the inside temperature and thereby perhaps saving the life of an infant or pet left in the vehicle unattended.

In a similar manner, the coating of the surface wave device can contain a chemical which is responsive to the presence of alcohol. In this case, the vehicle can be prevented from operating when the concentration of alcohol vapors in the vehicle exceeds some predetermined limit. Such a device can advantageously be mounted in the headliner above the driver's seat.

Each year, a number of children and animals are killed when they are locked into a vehicle trunk. Since children and animals emit significant amounts of carbon dioxide, a carbon dioxide sensor connected to the vehicle system wirelessly and powerlessly provides an economic way of detecting the presence of a life form in the trunk. If a life form is detected, then a control system can release a trunk lock thereby opening the trunk. Alarms can also be sounded or activated when a life form is detected in the trunk. An infrared or other sensor can perform a similar function.

Weight sensors for use in occupant sensing are disclosed in the '061 application, the occupant sensing section, with reference to FIGS. 69 and 73-74E therein.

Occupant weight sensors can give erroneous results if the seatbelt is pulled tight pushing the occupant into the seat. This is particularly a problem when the seatbelt is not attached to the seat. For such cases, it has been proposed to measure the tension in various parts of the seatbelt. Conventional technology requires that such devices be hard-wired into the vehicle complicating the wire harness.

Other components of the vehicle can also be wirelessly coupled to the processor or central control module for the purposes of data transmission and/or power transmission. A discussion of some components follows.

Seat Systems

In more enhanced applications, it is envisioned that components of the seat will be integrated into the power transmission and communication system. In many luxury cars, the seat subsystem is becoming very complicated. Seat manufacturers state that almost all warranty repairs are associated with the wiring and connectors associated with the seat. The reliability of seat systems can therefore be substantially improved and the incidence of failures or warranty repairs drastically reduced if the wires and connectors can be eliminated from the seat subsystem.

Today, there are switches located on the seat or at other locations in the vehicle for controlling the forward and backward motions, up and down motions, and rotation of the seat and seat back. These switches are connected to the appropriate motors by wires. Additionally, many seats now contain an airbag that must communicate with a sensor located, for example, in the vehicle, B-pillar, sill or door. Many occupant presence sensors and weight sensing systems are also appearing on vehicle seats. Finally, some seats contain heaters and cooling elements, vibrators, and other comfort and convenience devices that require wires and switches.

As an example, let us now look at weight sensing. Under the teachings of an invention disclosed herein, silicon strain gage weight sensors can be placed on the bolts that secure each seat to the slide mechanism as shown in FIG. 73 of the '061 application. These strain gage subsystems can contain sufficient electronics and inductive pickup coils so as to receive their operational energy from a pair of wires appropriately placed beneath the seats. The seat weight measurements can then be superimposed on the power frequency or transmitted wirelessly using RF or other convenient wireless technology. Other weight sensing technologies such as bladders and pressure sensors or two-dimensional resistive deflection sensing mats can also be handled in a similar manner.

Other methods of seat weight sensing include measuring the deflection of a part of the seat or the deflection of the bolts that connect the seat to the seat slide. For example, the strain in a bolt can be readily determined using, for example, SAW, wire or silicon strain gages, optical fiber strain gages, time of flight or phase of ultrasonic waves traveling through the strained bolt, or the capacitive change of two appropriately position capacitor plates.

Using the loosely coupled inductive system described above, power in excess of a kilowatt can be readily transferred to operate seat position motors without the use of directly connected wires. The switches can also be coupled into the inductive system without any direct wire connections and the switches, which now can be placed on the door armrest or on the seat as desired, can provide the information to control the seat motors. Additionally, since microprocessors will now be present on every motor and switch, the classical problem of the four-way seat system to control three degrees of freedom can be easily solved.

In current four-way seat systems, when an attempt is made to vertically raise the seat, the seat also rotates. Similarly, when an attempt is made to rotate the seat, it also invariably moves either up or down. This is because there are four switches to control three degrees of freedom and thus there is an infinite combination of switch settings for each seat position setting. This problem can be easily solved with an algorithm that translates the switch settings to the proper motor positions. Thus only three switches are needed.

The positions of the seat, seatback and headrest, can also be readily monitored without having direct wire connections to the vehicle. This can be done in numerous ways beginning with the encoder system that is currently in use and ending with simple RFID radar reflective tags that can be interrogated by a remote RFID tag reader. Based on the time of flight of RF waves, the positions of all of the desired surfaces of the seat can be instantly determined wirelessly.

1.6 Vehicle or Component Control

At least one invention herein is also particularly useful in light of the foreseeable implementation of smart highways. Smart highways will result in vehicles traveling down highways under partial or complete control of an automatic system, i.e., not being controlled by the driver. The on-board diagnostic system will thus be able to determine failure of a component prior to or upon failure thereof and inform the vehicle's guidance system to cause the vehicle to

move out of the stream of traffic, i.e., onto a shoulder of the highway, in a safe and orderly manner. Moreover, the diagnostic system may be controlled or programmed to prevent the movement of the disabled vehicle back into the stream of traffic until the repair of the component is satisfactorily completed.

5 In a method in accordance with this embodiment, the operation of the component would be monitored and if abnormal operation of the component is detected, e.g., by any of the methods and apparatus disclosed herein (although other component failure systems may of course be used in this implementation), the guidance system of the vehicle which controls the movement of the vehicle would be notified, e.g., via a signal from the diagnostic module to the guidance system, and the guidance system would be programmed to move the vehicle out of the stream of traffic, or off of the restricted roadway, possibly to a service station or dealer, upon reception of the particular signal from the
10 diagnostic module.

The automatic guidance systems for vehicles traveling on highways may be any existing system or system being developed, such as one based on satellite positioning techniques or ground-based positioning techniques. It can also be based on vision systems such as those used to provide lane departure warning. Since the guidance system may be programmed to ascertain the vehicle's position on the highway, it can determine the vehicle's current position, the
15 nearest location out of the stream of traffic, or off of the restricted roadway, such as an appropriate shoulder or exit to which the vehicle may be moved, and the path of movement of the vehicle from the current position to the location out of the stream of traffic, or off of the restricted roadway. The vehicle may thus be moved along this path under the control of the automatic guidance system. In the alternative, the path may be displayed to a driver (on a heads-up or other display for example) and the driver can follow the path, i.e., manually control the vehicle. The diagnostic module and/or
20 guidance system may be designed to prevent re-entry of the vehicle into the stream of traffic, or off of the restricted roadway, until the abnormal operation of the component is satisfactorily addressed.

FIG. 29 is a flow chart of some of the methods for directing a vehicle off of a roadway if a component is operating abnormally. The component's operation is monitored at step 380 and a determination is made at step 381 whether its operation is abnormal. If not, the operation of the component is monitored further. If the operation of the
25 component is abnormal, the vehicle can be directed off the roadway at step 382. More particularly, this can be accomplished by generating a signal indicating the abnormal operation of the component at step 383, directing this signal to a guidance system in the vehicle at step 384 that guides movement of the vehicle off of the roadway at step 385. Also, if the component is operating abnormally, the current position of the vehicle and the location of a site off of the roadway can be determined at step 386, e.g., using satellite-based or ground-based location determining techniques, a
30 path from the current location to the off-roadway location determined at step 387 and then the vehicle directed along this path at step 388. Periodically, a determination is made at step 389 whether the component's abnormality has been satisfactorily addressed and/or corrected and if so, the vehicle can re-enter the roadway and operation of the component begins again. If not, the re-entry of the vehicle onto the roadway is prevented at step 390.

FIG. 30 schematically shows the basic components for performing this method, i.e., a component operation
35 monitoring system 391 (such as described above), an optional satellite-based or ground-based positioning system 392 and a vehicle guidance system 393.

2.0 Telematics

2.1 Transmission of vehicle and occupant information

Described herein is a system for determining the status of occupants in a vehicle, and/or of the vehicle, and in the event of an accident or at any other appropriate time, transmitting the status of the occupants and/or the vehicle, and optionally additional information, via a communications channel or link to a remote monitoring facility. In addition to the status of the occupant, it is also important to be able to analyze the operating conditions of the vehicle and detect when a component of the vehicle is about to fail. By notifying the driver, a dealer or other repair facility and/or the vehicle manufacturer of the impending failure of the component, appropriate corrective action can be taken to avoid such failure.

As noted above, at least one invention herein relates generally to telematics and the transmission of information from a vehicle to one or more remote sites which can react to the position or status of the vehicle or occupant(s) therein.

Initially, sensing of the occupancy of the vehicle and the optional transmission of this information, which may include images, to remote locations will be discussed. This entails obtaining information from various sensors about the occupant(s) in the passenger compartment of the vehicle, e.g., the number of occupants, their type and their motion, if any. Thereafter, general vehicle diagnostic methods will be discussed with the diagnosis being transmittable via a communications device to the remote locations. Finally, a discussion of various sensors for use on the vehicle to sense different operating parameters and conditions of the vehicle is provided. All of the sensors discussed herein can be coupled directly or indirectly, e.g., through a diagnostic system or module, to a communications device enabling transmission of data, signals and/or images to the remote locations, and reception of the same from the remote locations.

FIG. 31 shows schematically the interface between a vehicle interior monitoring system in accordance with the invention and the vehicle's cellular, wireless communications system or other telematics communication system which interfaces with a wireless telecommunications network. An adult occupant 395 is shown sitting on the front passenger seat 343 and four transducers 344, 345, 347 and 348 are used to determine the presence (or absence) of the occupant on that seat 343. One of the transducers 345 in this case acts as both a transmitter and receiver while transducer 344 can act only as a receiver or as both a transmitter and receiver. Alternately, transducer 344 could serve as both a transmitter and receiver or the transmitting function could be alternated between the two transducers 344, 345. Also, in many cases more than two transmitters and receivers are used and in still other cases, other types of sensors, such as electric field, capacitance, self-tuning antennas (collectively represented by 347 and 348), weight, seatbelt, heartbeat, motion and seat position sensors, are also used in combination with the radiation sensors.

For a general object, transducers 344, 345, 347, 348 can also be used to determine the type of object, determine the location of the object and/or determine another property or characteristic of the object. A property of the object could be the presence and/or orientation of a child seat, the velocity of an adult and the like. For example, the transducers 344, 345, 347, 348 can be designed to enable a determination that an object is present on the seat, that the object is a child seat and that the child seat is rear-facing.

The transducers 344 and 345 are attached to the vehicle, for example, buried in the A-pillar trim, where their presence can be disguised, and are connected to processor 340 that may also be hidden in the trim as shown (this being a non-limiting position for the processor 340). Other mounting locations can also be used. For example, transducers 344, 345 can be mounted inside the seat (along with or in place of transducers 347 and 348), in the ceiling of the vehicle, in

the B-pillar, in the C-pillar and in the doors. Indeed, the vehicle interior monitoring system in accordance with the invention may comprise a plurality of monitoring units, each arranged to monitor a particular seating location. In this case, for the rear seating locations, transducers might be mounted in the B-pillar or C-pillar or in the rear of the front seat or in the rear side doors. Possible mounting locations for transducers, transmitters, receivers and other occupant sensing devices are disclosed in the above-referenced patents and patent applications and all of these mounting locations are contemplated for use with the transducers described herein.

The cellular phone or other wireless communications system 396 outputs to an antenna 397. The transducers 344, 345, 347 and 348 in conjunction with the pattern recognition hardware and software, which is implemented in processor 340 and is packaged on a printed circuit board or flex circuit along with the transducers 344 and 345, determine the presence of an occupant within a few seconds after the vehicle is started, or within a few seconds after the door is closed. Similar systems located to monitor the remaining seats in the vehicle also determine the presence of occupants at the other seating locations and this result is stored in the computer memory which is part of each monitoring system processor 340.

Periodically and in particular in the event of or in anticipation of an accident, the electronic system associated with the cellular phone or other telematics system 396 interrogates the various interior monitoring system memories and arrives at a count of the number of occupants in the vehicle, and optionally, even makes a determination as to whether each occupant was wearing a seatbelt and if he or she is moving after the accident. The phone or other communications system then automatically dials or otherwise contacts the EMS operator (such as 911 or through a telematics service such as OnStar®) and the information obtained from the interior monitoring systems is forwarded so that a determination can be made as to the number of ambulances and other equipment to send to the accident site, for example. Such vehicles will also have a system, such as the global positioning system, which permits the vehicle to determine its exact location and to forward this information to the EMS operator, for example.

An alternate preferred communications system is the use of satellite internet or Wi-Fi internet such is expected to be operational on vehicles in a few years. In this manner, the vehicle will always have communications access regardless of its location on the earth. This is based on the premise that Wi-Fi or equivalent will be in place for all those locations where satellite communication is not available such as in tunnels, urban canyons and the like.

Thus, in basic embodiments of the invention, wave or other energy-receiving transducers are arranged in the vehicle at appropriate locations, trained if necessary depending on the particular embodiment, and function to determine whether a life form is present in the vehicle and if so, how many life forms are present and where they are located etc. To this end, transducers can be arranged to be operative at only a single seating locations or at multiple seating locations with a provision being made to eliminate repetitive count of occupants. A determination can also be made using the transducers as to whether the life forms are humans, or more specifically, adults, children in child seats, etc. As noted above, this is possible using pattern recognition techniques. Moreover, the processor or processors associated with the transducers can be trained to determine the location of the life forms, either periodically or continuously or possibly only immediately before, during and/or after a crash. The location of the life forms can be as general or as specific as necessary depending on the system requirements, i.e., that a human is situated on the driver's seat in a normal position (general) or a determination can be made that a human is situated on the driver's seat and is leaning forward and/or to

the side at a specific angle as well as the position of his or her extremities and head and chest (specifically). The degree of detail is limited by several factors, including, for example, the number, type and position of transducers and training of the pattern recognition algorithm.

5 In addition to the use of transducers to determine the presence and location of occupants in a vehicle, other sensors could also be used. For example, a heartbeat sensor which determines the number and presence of heartbeats can also be arranged in the vehicle, which would thus also determine the number of occupants as the number of occupants would be equal to the number of heartbeats. Conventional heartbeat sensors can be adapted to differentiate between a heartbeat of an adult, a heartbeat of a child and a heartbeat of an animal. As its name implies, a heartbeat sensor detects a heartbeat, and the magnitude thereof, of a human occupant of the seat, if such a human occupant is present. The output
10 of the heartbeat sensor is input to the processor of the interior monitoring system. One heartbeat sensor for use in the invention may be of the types as disclosed in McEwan (US5573012 and US5766208). The heartbeat sensor can be positioned at any convenient position relative to the seats where occupancy is being monitored. A preferred location is within the vehicle seat back.

15 An alternative way to determine the number of occupants is to monitor the weight being applied to the seats, i.e., each seating location, by arranging weight sensors at each seating location which might also be able to provide a weight distribution of an object on the seat. Analysis of the weight and/or weight distribution by a predetermined method can provide an indication of occupancy by a human, an adult or child, or an inanimate object.

Another type of sensor which is not believed to have been used in an interior monitoring system heretofore is a micropower impulse radar (MIR) sensor which determines motion of an occupant and thus can determine his or her
20 heartbeat (as evidenced by motion of the chest). Such an MIR sensor can be arranged to detect motion in a particular area in which the occupant's chest would most likely be situated or could be coupled to an arrangement which determines the location of the occupant's chest and then adjusts the operational field of the MIR sensor based on the determined location of the occupant's chest. A motion sensor utilizing a micropower impulse radar (MIR) system is disclosed, for example, in McEwan (US5361070), as well as many other patents by the same inventor. Motion sensing is
25 accomplished by monitoring a particular range from the sensor, as disclosed in that patent. MIR is one form of radar which has applicability to occupant sensing and can be mounted at various locations in the vehicle. It has an advantage over ultrasonic sensors in that data can be acquired at a higher speed and thus the motion of an occupant can be more easily tracked. The ability to obtain returns over the entire occupancy range is somewhat more difficult than with ultrasound resulting in a more expensive system overall. MIR has additional advantages in lack of sensitivity to
30 temperature variation and has a comparable resolution to about 40 kHz ultrasound. Resolution comparable to higher frequency is also possible. Additionally, multiple MIR sensors can be used when high speed tracking of the motion of an occupant during a crash is required since they can be individually pulsed without interfering with each through time division multiplexing.

35 An alternative way to determine motion of the occupant(s) is to monitor the weight distribution of the occupant whereby changes in weight distribution after an accident would be highly suggestive of movement of the occupant. A system for determining the weight distribution of the occupants could be integrated or otherwise arranged in the right center and left, front and back vehicle seats such as 343 and several patents and publications describe such systems.

More generally, any sensor which determines the presence and health state of an occupant can also be integrated into the vehicle interior monitoring system in accordance with the invention. For example, a sensitive motion sensor can determine whether an occupant is breathing and a chemical sensor can determine the amount of carbon dioxide, or the concentration of carbon dioxide, in the air in the vehicle which can be correlated to the health state of the occupant(s). The motion sensor and chemical sensor can be designed to have a fixed operational field situated where the occupant's mouth is most likely to be located. In this manner, detection of carbon dioxide in the fixed operational field could be used as an indication of the presence of a human occupant in order to enable the determination of the number of occupants in the vehicle. In the alternative, the motion sensor and chemical sensor can be adjustable and adapted to adjust their operational field in conjunction with a determination by an occupant position and location sensor which would determine the location of specific parts of the occupant's body, e.g., his or her chest or mouth. Furthermore, an occupant position and location sensor can be used to determine the location of the occupant's eyes and determine whether the occupant is conscious, i.e., whether his or her eyes are open or closed or moving.

The use of chemical sensors can also be used to detect whether there is blood present in the vehicle, for example, after an accident. Additionally, microphones can detect whether there is noise in the vehicle caused by groaning, yelling, etc., and transmit any such noise through the cellular or other communication connection to a remote listening facility (such as operated by OnStar®).

FIG. 32 shows a schematic diagram of an embodiment of the invention including a system for determining the presence and health state of any occupants of the vehicle and a telecommunications link. This embodiment includes a system for determining the presence of any occupants 400 which may take the form of a heartbeat sensor or motion sensor as described above and a system for determining the health state of any occupants 401. The health state determining system may be integrated into the system for determining the presence of any occupants, i.e., one and the same component, or separate therefrom. Further, a system for determining the location, and optionally velocity, of the occupants or one or more parts thereof 402 are provided and may be any conventional occupant position sensor or preferably, one of the occupant position sensors as described herein (e.g., those utilizing waves. electromagnetic radiation or electric fields) or as described in the current assignee's patents and patent applications referenced above.

A processor 403 is coupled to the presence determining system 400, the health state determining system 401 and the location determining system 402. A communications system and/or unit 404 is coupled to the processor 403. The processor 403 and/or communications unit 404 can also be coupled to microphones 405 that can be distributed throughout the vehicle and include voice-processing circuitry to enable the occupant(s) to effect vocal control of the processor 403, communications unit 404 or any coupled component or oral communications via the communications unit 404. The processor 403 is also coupled to another vehicular system, component or subsystem 406 and can issue control commands to effect adjustment of the operating conditions of the system, component or subsystem. Such a system, component or subsystem can be the heating or air-conditioning system, the entertainment system, an occupant restraint device such as an airbag, a glare prevention system, etc. Also, a positioning system 407 could be coupled to the processor 403 and provides an indication of the absolute position of the vehicle, preferably using satellite-based positioning technology (e.g., a GPS receiver).

In normal use (other than after a crash), the presence determining system 400 determines whether any human occupants are present, i.e., adults or children, and the location determining system 402 determines the occupant's location. The processor 403 receives signals representative of the presence of occupants and their location and determines whether the vehicular system, component or subsystem 406 can be modified to optimize its operation for the specific arrangement of occupants. For example, if the processor 403 determines that only the front seats in the vehicle are occupied, it could control the heating system to provide heat only through vents situated to provide heat for the front-seated occupants.

Another possible vehicular system, component or subsystem is a navigational aid, i.e., a route display or map. In this case, the position of the vehicle as determined by the positioning system 407 is conveyed through processor 403 to the communications unit 404 to a remote facility and a map is transmitted from this facility to the vehicle to be displayed on the route display. If directions are needed, a request for the same could be entered into an input unit 408 associated with the processor 403 and transmitted to the facility. Data for the display map and/or vocal instructions could be transmitted from this facility to the vehicle.

Moreover, using this embodiment, it is possible to remotely monitor the health state of the occupants in the vehicle and most importantly, the driver. The health state determining system 401 may be used to detect whether the driver's breathing is erratic or indicative of a state in which the driver is dozing off. The health state determining system 401 could also include a breath-analyzer to determine whether the driver's breath contains alcohol. In this case, the health state of the driver is relayed through the processor 403 and the communications unit 404 to the remote facility and appropriate action can be taken. For example, it would be possible to transmit a command (from the remote facility) to the vehicle to activate an alarm or illuminate a warning light or if the vehicle is equipped with an automatic guidance system and ignition shut-off, to cause the vehicle to come to a stop on the shoulder of the roadway or elsewhere out of the traffic stream. The alarm, warning light, automatic guidance system and ignition shut-off are thus particular vehicular components or subsystems represented by 406.

In use after a crash, the presence determining system 400, health state determining system 401 and location determining system 402 can obtain readings from the passenger compartment and direct such readings to the processor 403. The processor 403 analyzes the information and directs or controls the transmission of the information about the occupant(s) to a remote, manned facility. Such information would include the number and type of occupants, i.e., adults, children, infants, whether any of the occupants have stopped breathing or are breathing erratically, whether the occupants are conscious (as evidenced by, e.g., eye motion), whether blood is present (as detected by a chemical sensor) and whether the occupants are making noise. Moreover, the communications link through the communications unit 404 can be activated immediately after the crash to enable personnel at the remote facility to initiate communications with the vehicle.

An occupant sensing system can also involve sensing for the presence of a living occupant in a trunk of a vehicle or in a closed vehicle, for example, when a child is inadvertently left in the vehicle or enters the trunk and the trunk closes. To this end, a SAW-based chemical sensor 410 is illustrated in FIG. 33A for mounting in a vehicle trunk as illustrated in FIG. 33. The chemical sensor 410 is designed to measure carbon dioxide concentration through the mass loading effects as described in US4895017 with a polymer coating selected that is sensitive to carbon dioxide. The speed

of the surface acoustic wave is a function of the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere. Section 412 of the chemical sensor 410 contains a coating of such a polymer and the acoustic velocity in this section is a measure of the carbon dioxide concentration. Temperature effects are eliminated through a comparison of the sonic velocities in sections 412 and 411 as described above.

5 Thus, when the trunk lid 409 is closed and a source of carbon dioxide such as a child or animal is trapped within the trunk, the chemical sensor 410 will provide information indicating the presence of the carbon dioxide producing object to the interrogator which can then release a trunk lock permitting the trunk lid 409 to automatically open. In this manner, the problem of children and animals suffocating in closed trunks is eliminated. Alternately, information that a person or animal is trapped in a trunk can be sent by the telematics system to law enforcement
10 authorities or other location or facility remote from the vehicle.

 A similar device can be distributed at various locations within the passenger compartment of vehicle along with a combined temperature sensor. If the car has been left with a child or other animal while owner is shopping, for example, and if the temperature rises within the vehicle to an unsafe level or, alternately, if the temperature drops below an unsafe level, then the vehicle can be signaled to take appropriate action which may involve opening the windows or
15 starting the vehicle with either air conditioning or heating as appropriate. Alternately, information that a person or animal is trapped within a vehicle can be sent by the telematics system to law enforcement authorities or other location remote from the vehicle. Thus, through these simple wireless powerless sensors, the problem of suffocation either from lack of oxygen or death from excessive heat or cold can all be solved in a simple, low-cost manner through using an interrogator as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,662,642.

20 Additionally, a sensitive layer on a SAW can be made to be sensitive to other chemicals such as water vapor for humidity control or alcohol for drunk-driving control. Similarly, the sensitive layer can be designed to be sensitive to carbon monoxide thereby preventing carbon monoxide poisoning. Many other chemicals can be sensed for specific applications such as to check for chemical leaks in commercial vehicles, for example. Whenever such a sensor system determines that a dangerous situation is developing, an alarm can be sounded and/or the situation can be automatically
25 communicated to an off-vehicle location through the internet, telematics, a cell phone such as a 911 call, the Internet or through a subscriber service such as OnStar®.

 The operating conditions of the vehicle can also be transmitted along with the status of the occupants to a remote monitoring facility. The operating conditions of the vehicle include whether the motor is running and whether the vehicle is moving. Thus, in a general embodiment in which information on both occupancy of the vehicle and the
30 operating conditions of the vehicle are transmitted, one or more properties or characteristics of occupancy of the vehicle are determined, such constituting information about the occupancy of the vehicle, and one or more states of the vehicle or of a component of the vehicle is determined, such constituting information about the operation of the vehicle. The information about the occupancy of the vehicle and operation of the vehicle are selectively transmitted, possibly the information about occupancy to an emergency response center and the information about the vehicle to a dispatcher, a
35 dealer or repair facility and/or the vehicle manufacturer.

 Transmission of the information about the operation of the vehicle, i.e., diagnostic information, may be achieved via a satellite and/or via the Internet. The vehicle would thus include appropriate electronic hardware and/or

software to enable the transmission of a signal to a satellite, from where it could be re-transmitted to a remote location (for example via the Internet), and/or to enable the transmission to a web site or host computer. In the latter case, the vehicle could be assigned a domain name or e-mail address for identification or transmission origination purposes.

5 Use of the Internet for diagnostic information conveying purposes involves programming the communications unit 404 on the vehicle to communicate with a wireless Internet service provider (ISP) 413 (see FIG. 29). The necessary protocols can be provided to the vehicle-resident communications system to enable such communications. Through the wireless ISP, the vehicle-resident communications unit 404 can establish communications with any remote site 427 or other vehicle-resident communications system connected to the Internet. The communications unit 404 can either alternatively communicate with only a wireless ISP or can additionally communicate with a non-ISP remote site via any
10 of the other communications techniques described above, i.e., transmission and reception of waves at a selected frequency.

When capable of using multiple communications techniques, the communications unit 404 can be designed to select which communications technique to use based on various parameters. For example, if the vehicle is a truck trailer or cargo container which is often transported by ship for transoceanic journeys, the communications unit 404 can be
15 programmed to communicate with either an ISP or a pseudo-ISP depending on the travel status. Thus, it would communicate with an ISP when it is on land, e.g., attached to a truck and being driven from one location to another, and with a communications system on the ship when it is seaborne. In the latter case, the communications unit 404 could communicate with a ship-resident pseudo-ISP, possibly even installed solely for the purpose of communicating with cargo containers, which would in turn communicate via satellite with a remote location. Other parameters which may be
20 used to determine which communications technique to be used include: the location of the vehicle, the importance of the data or information obtained by the vehicle-resident sensing system to be transmitted and the urgency with which the data or information obtained by the vehicle-resident sensing system should be transmitted. The determination may be made either by the communications unit 404 or may be made by whatever data gathering system is being used. In the latter case, the importance or urgency of the information is determined by the data gathering system and directed to the
25 communications system with an indication of the manner in which the information should be sent. A priority coding system may be used.

In one embodiment, when capable of using multiple communications techniques, the communications unit 404 can be designed to select which communications technique to use based on the detection of a wireless ISP with which the communications unit 404 can communicate. The communications unit 404 would include or be connected to an ISP
30 detection system, 414 programmed to detect the presence of a useable, secure wireless ISP wherever it is and then use this detected wireless ISP to provide information to a remote site via the Internet. A program to enable a computer device to detect available wireless ISP's is known to those skilled in the art.

The diagnostic discussion above has centered on notifying the vehicle operator of a pending problem with a vehicle component. Today, there is great competition in the automobile marketplace and the manufacturers and dealers
35 who are most responsive to customers are likely to benefit by increased sales both from repeat purchasers and new customers. The diagnostic module disclosed herein benefits the dealer by making him instantly aware, through the cellular telephone system, or other communication link, coupled to the diagnostic module or system in accordance with

the invention, when a component is likely to fail. As envisioned when the diagnostic module 33 detects a potential failure, it can not only notifies the driver through a display 34 (as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4), but also can automatically notifies the dealer through a vehicle cellular phone 32 or other telematics communication link such as the internet via satellite or Wi-Fi or equivalent. The dealer can thus contact the vehicle owner and schedule an appointment to undertake the necessary repair at each party's mutual convenience. Contact by the dealer to the vehicle owner can occur as the owner is driving the vehicle, using a communications device. Thus, the dealer can contact the driver and inform him of their mutual knowledge of the problem and discuss scheduling maintenance to attend to the problem. The customer is pleased since a potential vehicle breakdown has been avoided and the dealer is pleased since he is likely to perform the repair work. The vehicle manufacturer also benefits by early and accurate statistics on the failure rate of vehicle components. This early warning system can reduce the cost of a potential recall for components having design defects. It could even have saved lives if such a system had been in place during the Firestone tire failure problem mentioned above. The vehicle manufacturer will thus be guided toward producing higher quality vehicles thus improving his competitiveness. Finally, experience with this system will actually lead to a reduction in the number of sensors on the vehicle since only those sensors that are successful in predicting failures will be necessary.

In a more general sense, the invention provides a method for responding to data from components or subsystems of vehicles in which sensors are arranged on the vehicles and obtain a value of a measurable characteristic of the component or subsystem which is analyzed, e.g., by diagnostic module 32, to determine that the component or subsystem has a fault condition. The diagnostic module 32 directs the communications unit 33 to automatically transmit a diagnostic or prognostic message relating to the determination of the fault condition to a remote site. At the remote site, steps can be initiated to correct the fault condition. As noted above, the steps can include contacting on behalf of a repair facility the vehicle owner or operator to schedule repair of the component or subsystem with the fault condition, as well as displaying an indication of the fault condition to a vehicle occupant to enable the vehicle occupant to correct the fault condition, if possible.

In light of the foregoing, the invention allows for a method for providing status data for vehicle maintenance which entails monitoring, e.g., via the diagnostic module 33, for a triggering event on the vehicle, the triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of a component or subsystem of the vehicle which may be a failure, predicted failure, fault condition or fault code generation of the component or subsystem. Thereafter, a transmission between the communications unit 32 and a remote site is initiated in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the component or subsystem. In one embodiment, the diagnostic or prognostic message relates to the determination of a fault condition of a component or subsystem and a processor in the diagnostic module 33 directs the communications unit 32 to transmit the message to the remote site upon determining a fault condition of the component or subsystem.

The ability to initiate communications from a vehicle to a remote entity such as a dealer or manufacturer opens up a wide range of monitoring methods for monitoring operability of vehicles and specifically, the functionality and operability of components of the vehicles to prevent vehicle breakdowns. For example, a method of doing business is readily apparent since the dealer can sell a subscription to a monitoring plan to the vehicle owner which will direct the communications from the vehicle's communication system to the dealer (or an agent of the dealer). The monitoring plan

would include monitoring of the vehicle components and directing of communications about the components to a monitoring facility and preferably a plan which responds to the communications. The response could be automated advice on dealing with the problem, personal advice about the problem (whereby the data about the components can be further processed at the remote site to obtain a more thorough evaluation of the problem and a course of action generated based on the evaluation), arranging for roadside assistance and/or arranging for a service appointment with the nearest service center. The latter two functions would be aided by providing a location determining system on the vehicle to determine the vehicle's location and provide the location along with the diagnostic and/or prognostic information to enable roadside assistance or the identification of the nearest service center. The same monitoring plan could also be marketed and sold to dealers and other service facilities to enable them to be listed as possible service centers whenever vehicles have problems in a designated coverage area for each dealer or service facility. The same monitoring plan could also be marketed and sold to vehicle manufacturers who might be interested in providing a service contract for vehicle owners as an inducement to purchase their vehicles.

An advantage of the ability to transmit diagnostic and prognostic information from a vehicle to a remote site is that performance data from the components or subsystems being monitored can be collected. Since each sensor obtains a value of a measurable characteristic of the component or subsystem and these values are analyzed, e.g., by the diagnostic module 33, to determine that the component or subsystem has a fault condition, a diagnostic or prognostic message relating to the determination of the fault condition of the component or system is thus generated by the diagnostic module 33 and transmitted to the remote site via the communications unit 32. At the remote site, it now becomes possible to receive messages from multiple vehicles and thus compile statistics on a failure rate of the components or subsystems, most likely by the manufacturer as noted above. Additionally or alternatively, it is possible to notify a driver, vehicle owner, manufacturer or dealer of the fault condition of the component or subsystem. As noted above, since the communications unit and the remote site interface with a wireless communications network, the remote site receives diagnostic or prognostic messages from the communications units 33 of the vehicles with transmission of the messages being initiated from the communications unit 33.

Another advantage obtained by enabling a vehicle manufacturer to obtain diagnostic and prognostic data about their vehicles is that they can use forecasting techniques to identify problems with particular vehicle models in general or particular vehicles when operating under specific conditions. In this case, a method is contemplated wherein the manufacturer can direct a communication to the processor on identified vehicles (of the same model or type or operating under the same conditions) to initiate an interrogation of the status of these vehicle and notify the vehicle owners if there is a model-based problem. The vehicle-resident processor would be designed to accept a command from the vehicle manufacturer to initiate such an interrogation, which might entail obtaining data from all sensors coupled to the processor or a subset of the sensors. Safeguards could be built into the command to prevent unauthorized users from accessing the vehicle-resident processor. The manufacturer could, depending on the severity of the problem, request that the vehicle owner bring the vehicle for servicing to the nearest service center, which would be determined by receiving location information from the vehicle as obtained by a, e.g., GPS system on the vehicle.

Access to the vehicle's processor by the manufacturer also allows for updating of software on the vehicle. If a problem is identified in specific models, the manufacturer can perform a troubleshooting operation to identify the

problem and design a solution. If the solution can be implemented through a software update, then this software update is directed to similar vehicles by the manufacturer. The vehicle owner is not required to bring the vehicle in to a service center to be serviced but rather, a remote servicing of software is provided. Also, if the diagnostic and/or prognostic data is monitored by dealers only, then when one dealer detects a problem, they can notify the manufacturer and other dealers. They can also place a press release about the problem on the Internet and if a list of contact e-mails for vehicle owners is existing, then can direct e-mails about the problem directly to the vehicle owners.

Another use of the invention is to enable the vehicle owner or operator to obtain diagnostic and prognostic data about their vehicle, or cause a diagnostic or prognostic report to be generated and sent to a remote facility, e.g., the dealer or manufacturer. In this regard, an interface would be provided for the occupant to cause the diagnostic module 32 to begin diagnostic tests on the components and/or subsystems being monitored thereby with the results being transmitted via the communications unit 33 and possibly also display or otherwise provided to the requesting occupant, e.g., via a display visible to the occupant.

In sum, the diagnostic and prognostic system is designed to enable one or more selected parties to initiate a request for and receive a report on the diagnostic condition of the vehicle or components thereof, or a report on the predicted failure of one or more components. If the request is made by a party other than the driver, or other than using a device on the vehicle, the request could be made using a telematics system, e.g., a communications unit connected to the diagnostic module.

For most cases, it is sufficient to notify a driver that a component is about to fail through a warning display. In some critical cases, action beyond warning the driver may be required. If, for example, the diagnostic module detected that the alternator was beginning to fail, in addition to warning the driver of this eventuality, the diagnostic system could send a signal to another vehicle system to turn off all non-essential devices which use electricity thereby conserving electrical energy and maximizing the time and distance that the vehicle can travel before exhausting the energy in the battery. Additionally, this system can be coupled to a system such as OnStar® or a vehicle route guidance system, and the driver can be guided to the nearest open repair facility or a facility of his or her choice.

The Internet could be used to transmit information about the operation of the vehicle, including diagnostic information, to any remote site including the dealer and vehicle manufacturer as mentioned above and also any other entity interested in the operation of the vehicle, including for example, an automated highway system, a highway monitoring system, police or any other governmental agency, the vehicle owner if not present in the vehicle, and a vehicle management group.

FIG. 34 shows a schematic of the integration of the occupant sensing with a telematics link and the vehicle diagnosis with a telematics link. As envisioned, the occupant sensing system 415 includes those components which determine the presence, position, health state, and other information relating to the occupants, for example the transducers discussed above with reference to FIG. 28 and weight sensors. Information relating to the occupants includes information as to what the driver is doing, talking on the phone, communicating with OnStar®, the internet or other route guidance, listening to the radio, sleeping, drunk, drugged, having a heart attack, etc. The occupant sensing system may also be any of those systems and apparatus described in any of the current assignee's above-referenced patents and patent applications or any other comparable occupant sensing system which performs any or all of the same functions as

they relate to occupant sensing. Examples of sensors which might be installed on a vehicle and constitute the occupant sensing system include heartbeat sensors, motion sensors, weight sensors, ultrasonic sensors, MIR sensors, microphones and optical sensors.

5 A crash sensor 416 is provided and determines when the vehicle experiences a crash. Crash sensor 416 may be any type of crash sensor.

10 Vehicle sensors 417 include sensors which detect the operating conditions of the vehicle such as those sensors discussed with reference to FIG. 33 and others above. Also included are tire sensors such as disclosed in US6662642. Other examples include velocity and acceleration sensors, and angular and angular rate pitch, roll and yaw sensors or an IMU. Of particular importance are sensors that tell what the car is doing: speed, skidding, sliding, location, communicating with other cars or the infrastructure, etc.

15 Environment sensors 418 include sensors which provide data concerning the operating environment of the vehicle, e.g., the inside and outside temperatures, the time of day, the location of the sun and lights, the locations of other vehicles, rain, snow, sleet, visibility (fog), general road condition information, pot holes, ice, snow cover, road visibility, assessment of traffic, video pictures of an accident either involving the vehicle or another vehicle, etc. Possible sensors include optical sensors which obtain images of the environment surrounding the vehicle, blind spot detectors which provide data on the blind spot of the driver, automatic cruise control sensors that can provide images of vehicles in front of the host vehicle, and various radar and lidar devices which provide the position of other vehicles and objects relative to the subject vehicle.

20 The occupant sensing system 415, crash sensors 416, vehicle sensors 417, and environment sensors 418 can all be coupled to a communications device 419 which may contain a memory unit and appropriate electrical hardware to communicate with all of the sensors, process data from the sensors, and transmit data from the sensors. The memory unit could be useful to store data from the sensors, updated periodically, so that such information could be transmitted at set time intervals.

25 The communications device 419 can be designed to transmit information to any number of different types of facilities. For example, the communications device 419 could be designed to transmit information to an emergency response facility 420 in the event of an accident involving the vehicle. The transmission of the information could be triggered by a signal from the crash sensor 416 that the vehicle was experiencing a crash or had experienced a crash. The information transmitted could come from the occupant sensing system 415 so that the emergency response could be tailored to the status of the occupants. For example, if the vehicle was determined to have ten occupants, more ambulances might be sent than if the vehicle contained only a single occupant. Also, if the occupants are determined not to be breathing, then a higher priority call with living survivors might receive assistance first. As such, the information from the occupant sensing system 415 could be used to prioritize the duties of the emergency response personnel.

30 Information from the vehicle sensors 417 and environment sensors 418 could also be transmitted to law enforcement authorities 422 in the event of an accident so that the cause(s) of the accident could be determined. Such information can also include information from the occupant sensing system 415, which might reveal that the driver was talking on the phone, putting on make-up, eating or another distracting activity, information from the vehicle sensors 417

which might reveal a problem with the vehicle, and information from the environment sensors 418 which might reveal the existence of slippery roads, dense fog and the like.

Information from the occupant sensing system 415, vehicle sensors 417 and environment sensors 418 could also be transmitted to the vehicle manufacturer 423 in the event of an accident so that a determination can be made as to whether failure of a component of the vehicle caused or contributed to the cause of the accident. For example, the vehicle sensors might determine that the tire pressure was too low so that advice can be disseminated to avoid maintaining the tire pressure too low in order to avoid an accident. Information from the vehicle sensors 417 relating to component failure could be transmitted to a dealer/repair facility 421 which could schedule maintenance to correct the problem.

The communications device 419 could be designed to transmit particular information to each site, i.e., only information important to be considered by the personnel at that site. For example, the emergency response personnel have no need for the fact that the tire pressure was too low but such information is important to the law enforcement authorities 422 (for the possible purpose of issuing a recall of the tire and/or vehicle) and the vehicle manufacturer 423.

The communication device can be a cellular phone, DSRC, OnStar®, or other subscriber-based telematics system, a peer-to-peer vehicle communication system that eventually communicates to the infrastructure and then, perhaps, to the Internet with e-mail or instant message to the dealer, manufacturer, vehicle owner, law enforcement authorities or others. It can also be a vehicle to LEO or Geostationary satellite system such as SkyBitz which can then forward the information to the appropriate facility either directly or through the Internet or a direct connection to the internet through a satellite or 802.11 Wi-Fi link or equivalent.

The communication may need to be secret so as not to violate the privacy of the occupants and thus encrypted communication may, in many cases, be required. Other innovations described herein include the transmission of any video data from a vehicle to another vehicle or to a facility remote from the vehicle by any means such as a telematics communication system such as DSRC, OnStar®, a cellular phone system, a communication via GEO, geocentric or other satellite system and any communication that communicates the results of a pattern recognition system analysis. Also, any communication from a vehicle can combine sensor information with location information.

When optical sensors are provided as part of the occupant sensing system 415, video conferencing becomes a possibility, whether or not the vehicle experiences a crash. That is, the occupants of the vehicle can engage in a video conference with people at another location 424 via establishment of a communications channel by the communications device 419.

The vehicle diagnostic system described above using a telematics link can transmit information from any type of sensors on the vehicle.

In one particular use of the invention, a wireless sensing and communication system is provided whereby the information or data obtained through processing of input from sensors of the wireless sensing and communication system is further transmitted for reception by a remote facility. Thus, in such a construction, there is an intra-vehicle communications between the sensors on the vehicle and a processing system (control module, computer or the like) and remote communications between the same or a coupled processing system (control module, computer or the like). The electronic components for the intra-vehicle communication may be designed to transmit and receive signals over short

distances whereas the electronic components which enable remote communications should be designed to transmit and receive signals over relatively long distances.

The wireless sensing and communication system includes sensors that are located on the vehicle or in the vicinity of the vehicle and which provide information which is transmitted to one or more interrogators in the vehicle by wireless radio frequency means, using wireless radio frequency transmission technology. In some cases, the power to operate a particular sensor is supplied by the interrogator while in other cases, the sensor is independently connected to either a battery, generator (piezo electric, solar etc.), vehicle power source or some source of power external to the vehicle.

One particular system requires mentioning which is the use of high speed satellite or Wi-Fi internet service such as supplied by Wi-Fi hot spots or KVH Industries, Inc. for any and all vehicle communications including vehicle telephone, TV and radio services. With thousands of radio stations available over the internet, for example (see shoutcast.com), a high speed internet connection is clearly superior to satellite radio systems that are now being marketed. Similarly, with ubiquitous internet access that KVH supplies throughout the country, the lack of coverage problems with cell phones disappears. This capability becomes particularly useful for emergency notification when a vehicle has an accident or becomes disabled.

Once a wireless communication system is integrated into a vehicle, it could be used to receive information from remote sites. In the embodiment wherein the vehicle (the pressing unit thereof) is wirelessly communicating with the Internet (using any standard protocol including IEEE 802.xx, WiMax, XMax, Wi-Mobile, etc.), it can be designed to accept transmissions of data and updates for programs resident on the vehicle's processing unit. This bi-directional flow of data can be essentially the same as any bi-directional flow of data over the Internet.

Transmissions of data and updates for programs on the vehicle-resident processing unit or computer can be performed based on the geographical location of the vehicle. That is, the vehicle transmits its location, as determined by a GPS technology for example, to an update server or website and the update server or website commences transmission of the programs updates or data dependent on the vehicle's location (as well as other parameters typical of updating software, such as the current version of the program being updated, the required updates, the optional updates, etc.). In addition to or instead of updating the software on the vehicle-resident processing unit, it is possible to construct the vehicle-resident processing unit to allow for hardware upgrades, i.e., upgradeable processors and memory devices. Such upgrades can be performed by a dealer.

In addition to its use for transferring data between vehicles and remote sites, XMax is useful for transferring information between vehicles, provided the noise rejection is good and sufficiently accommodated for. Information can be transferred indirectly between vehicles using the Internet with each vehicle having a communications system with an identifier and which generates signals to be received by Internet portals. The signals are directed to interested vehicles based on the identifiers of those vehicles. A direct transmission system is also possible wherein the communications system of each vehicle applies the XMax technology to generate signals to be transmitted into the area around the vehicle and received by any

2.2 Docking stations and PDAs

There is a serious problem developing with vehicles such as cars, trucks, boats and private planes and computer systems. The quality and lifetime of vehicles is increasing and now many vehicles have a lifetime that exceeds ten or more years. On the other hand, computer and related electronic systems, which are proliferating on such vehicles, have shorter and shorter life spans as they are made obsolete by the exponential advances in technology. Owners do not want to dispose of their vehicles just because the electronics have become obsolete. Therefore, a solution as proposed in this invention, whereby a substantial portion of the information, programs, processing power and memory are separate from the vehicle, will increasingly become necessary. One implementation of such a system is for the information, programs, processing power and memory to be resident in a portable device that can be removed from the vehicle. Once removed, the vehicle may still be operable but with reduced functionality. The navigation system, for example, may be resident on the removable device which hereinafter will be referred to as a Personal Information Device (PID) including a GPS subsystem and perhaps an IMU along with appropriate maps allowing a person to navigate on foot as well as in the vehicle. The telephone system which can be either internet or cell phone-based and if internet-based, can be a satellite internet, Wi-Fi or equivalent system which could be equally operable in a vehicle or on foot. The software data and programs can be kept updated including all of the software for diagnostic functions, for example, for the vehicle through the internet connection. The vehicle could contain supplemental displays (such as a heads-up display), input devices including touch pads, switches, voice recognition and cameras for occupant position determination and gesture recognition, and other output devices such as speakers, warning lights etc., for example.

As computer hardware improves it can be an easy step for the owner to replace the PID with the latest version which may even be supplied to the owner under subscription by the Cell Phone Company, car dealership, vehicle manufacturer, computer manufacturer etc. Similarly, the same device can be used to operate the home computer system or entertainment system. In other words, the owner would own one device, the PID, which would contain substantially all of the processing power, software and information that the owner requires to operate his vehicles, computer systems etc. The system can also be periodically backed up (perhaps also over the Internet), automatically providing protection against loss of data in the event of a system failure. The PID can also have a biometrics-based identification system (fingerprint, voiceprint, face or iris recognition etc.) that prevents unauthorized users from using the system and an automatic call back location system based on GPS or other location technologies that permits the owner to immediately find the location of the PID in the event of misplacement or theft.

The PID can also be the repository of credit card information permitting instant purchases without the physical scanning of a separate credit card, home or car door identification system to eliminate keys and conventional keyless entry systems, and other information of a medical nature to aid emergency services in the event of a medical emergency. The possibilities are limitless for such a device. A PID, for example, can be provided with sensors to monitor the vital functions of an elderly person and signal if a problem occurs. The PID can be programmed and provided with sensors to sense fire, cold, harmful chemicals or vapors, biological agents (such as smallpox or anthrax) for use in a vehicle or any other environment. An automatic phone call, or other communication, can be initiated when a hazardous substance (or any other dangerous or hazardous situation or event) is detected to inform the authorities along with the location of the PID. Since the PID would have universal features, it could be taken from vehicle to vehicle allowing each person to have personal features in whatever vehicle he or she was operating. This would be useful for rental vehicles, for example,

seats, mirrors, radio stations, HVAC can be automatically set for the PID owner. The same feature can apply to offices, homes, etc.

The same PID can also be used to signal the presence of a particular person in a room and thereby to set the appropriate TV or radio stations, room temperature, lighting, wall pictures etc. For example, the PID could also assume the features of a remote when a person is watching TV. A person could of course have more than one PID and a PID could be used by more than one person provided a means of identification is present such as a biometric based ID or password system. Thus, each individual would need to learn to operate one device, the PID, instead of multiple devices. The PID could even be used to automatically unlock and initiate some action such as opening a door or turning on lights in a vehicle, house, apartment or building. Naturally, the PID can have a variety of associated sensors as discussed above including cameras, microphones, accelerometers, an IMU, GPS receiver, Wi-Fi receiver etc.

Other people could also determine the location of a person carrying the PID, if such a service is authorized by the PID owner. In this manner, parents can locate their children or friends can locate each other in a crowded restaurant or airport. The location or tracking information can be made available on the Internet through the Skybitz or similar low power tracking system. Also, the batteries that operate the PID can be recharged in a variety of ways including fuel cells and vibration-based power generators, solar power, induction charging systems etc. For further background, see N. Tredennick "031201 Go Reconfigure", IEEE Spectrum Magazine, p. 37-40, Dec. 2003 and D. Verkest "Machine Cameleon" ibid p. 41-46, which describe some of the non-vehicle related properties envisioned here for the PID. Also for some automotive applications see P. Hansen "Portable electronics threaten embedded electronics", Automotive Industries Magazine, Dec. 2004. Such a device could also rely heavily on whatever network it had access to when it is connected to a network such as the Internet. It could use the connected network for many processing tasks which exceed the capability of the PID or which require information that is not PID-resident. In a sense, the network can become the computer for these more demanding tasks. Using the Internet as the computer gives the automobile companies more control over the software and permits a pricing model based on use rather than a one time sale. Such a device can be based on microprocessors, FPGAs or programmable logical devices or a combination thereof. This is the first disclosure of vehicular uses of such a device to solve the mismatched lifetimes of the vehicle and its electronic hardware and software as discussed above.

When brought into a vehicle, the PID can connect (either by a wire or wirelessly using Bluetooth, Zigbee or 802.11 protocols, for example) to the vehicle system and make use of resident displays, audio systems, antennas and input devices. In this case, the display can be a heads-up display (HUD) and the input devices can be by audio, manual switches, touchpad, joystick, or cameras as disclosed in section 4 and elsewhere herein.

2.3 Satellite and Wi-Fi Internet

Ultimately vehicles will be connected to the Internet with a high speed connection. Such a connection will still be too slow for vehicle-to-vehicle communications for collision avoidance purposes but it should be adequate for most other vehicle communication purposes. Such a system will probably obsolete current cell phone systems and subscriber systems such as OnStar™. Each user can have a single identification number (which could be his or her phone number) which locates his or her address, phone number, current location etc. The vehicle navigation system can guide the vehicle to the location based on the identification number without the need to input the actual address.

The ubiquitous Internet system could be achieved by a fleet of low earth orbiting satellites (LEOs) or transmission towers transmitting and receiving signals based on one of the 802.11 protocols having a radial range of 50 miles, for example. Thus, approximately 500 such towers could cover the continental United States.

5 A high speed Internet connection can be used for software upgrade downloading and for map downloading as needed. Each vehicle can become a probe vehicle that locates road defects such as potholes, monitors traffic and monitors weather and road conditions. It can also monitor for terrorist activities such as the release of chemical or biological agents as well as provide photographs of anomalies such as traffic accidents, mud slides or fallen trees across the road, etc., any or all of this information can be automatically fed to the appropriate IP address over the Internet providing for ubiquitous information gathering and dissemination. The same or similar system can be available on other
10 vehicles such as planes, trains, boats, trucks etc.

Today, high speed Internet access is available via GEO satellite to vehicles using the KVH system. It is expected that more and more cities will provide citywide internet services via 802.11 systems including Wi-Fi, Wi-Max and Wi-Mobile or their equivalents. Eventually, it is expected that such systems will be available in rural areas thus making the Internet available nationwide and eventually worldwide through one or a combination of satellite and
15 terrestrial systems. Although the KVH system is based on GEO satellites, it is expected that eventually LEO satellites will offer a similar service at a lower price and requiring a smaller antenna. Such an antenna will probably be based on phase array technology.

2.4 Non-vehicular applications

The diagnostic and prognostic monitoring techniques and telematics aspects described above could also be
20 used in non-vehicular applications. For example, industrial machinery also commonly includes sensors and other monitoring components which monitor an ongoing process. Applying the invention to such machinery, a processor would be coupled to each sensor and be designed to enable problems with the machinery to be diagnosed or forecast, e.g., using pattern recognition techniques. A communications device would be coupled to the processor and link to the machinery's manufacturer or dealer and provide information about the operability and functionality of the machinery.
25 The manufacturer or dealer would obtain information to enable communications to the operator of the machinery so that when a problem is forecast or occurring, the manufacturer or sealer would be notified via the telecommunications link and in turn, notify the operator to remedy the problem, e.g., take steps to avoid a machinery breakdown.

2.5 Personal Data Storage

As described above, a vehicle designed with a telematics capability will have a vehicle-resident processing unit
30 or computer which communicates with other computers or servers via the Internet. This capability can be used to update programs on the vehicle-resident computer or provide new programs to the vehicle-resident computer.

Another capability which can be performed with the vehicle-resident computer linked to the Internet is to store personal data on an Internet-connected server for the vehicle-resident computer in combination with other computers used by the vehicle owner or operator. Thus, in such a system, there is a central server containing personal data and all
35 of the user's computers, including the vehicle-resident computer, are connected to the server via the Internet. In order for the vehicle-resident computer to access the personal data on the server, a personal identification code would have to be detected while the person is operating or present in the vehicle. This authorization system could be in form a keypad

which requires the user to enter a password. Alternatively, the user could be provided with a programmable electronic key which cooperates with a wireless identification and authorization system to allow for the transmission of the personal data from the server to the vehicle-resident computer via the Internet. The identifier may also be a cell phone, PDA or other general purpose device. It could also be a personal RFID device that may be integrated into a key fob used for keyless entry into the vehicle.

2.6 Computation Transfer

When diagnosing the functionality or operability of components on the vehicle in the manner described herein, generally, the data is processed on the vehicle with the end-result of the data processing being transmitted to a remote site. Thus, raw data is processed on the vehicle and an indication of the abnormal operation of a component is transmitted to the remote site.

However, it is also envisioned that in some embodiments, some or all of the data processing is performed at a remote site, which may or may not be the same as the remote site which receives the end-result of the data processing. This minimizes the computer capacity required by the vehicle-resident computer. In this scenario, raw data is transmitted from the vehicle to a remote site, processed at that site to obtain an indication of the operability or functionality of the vehicular components and then either considered at that site or transmitted to another remote site (or even possibly back to the vehicle). Indeed, it is envisioned that data processing now being done by the vehicle-resident computer can be done on a network-resident processor.

3.0 Wiring and Busses

In the discussion above, the diagnostic module of this invention assumes that a vehicle data bus exists which is used by all of the relevant sensors on the vehicle. Most vehicles today do not have a data bus although it is widely believed that most vehicles will have one in the future. In lieu of such a bus, the relevant signals can be transmitted to the diagnostic module through a variety of coupling systems other than through a data bus and this invention is not limited to vehicles having a data bus. For example, the data can be sent wirelessly to the diagnostic module using the Bluetooth™, ZIGBEE or 802.11 or similar specification. In some cases, even the sensors do not have to be wired and can obtain their power via RF from the interrogator as is well known in the RFID radio frequency identification field (either silicon or surface acoustic wave (SAW)-based)). Alternately, an inductive or capacitive power transfer system can be used.

Several technologies have been described above all of which have the objective of improving the reliability and reducing the complexity of the wiring system in an automobile and particularly the safety system. Most importantly, the bus technology described has as its objective simplification and increase in reliability of the vehicle wiring system. The safety system wiring was first conceived of as a method for permitting the location of airbag crash sensors at locations where they can most effectively sense a vehicle crash and yet permit that information to be transmitted to the airbag control circuitry which may be located in a protected portion of the interior of the vehicle or may even be located on the airbag module itself. Protecting this transmission requires a wiring system that is far more reliable and resistant to being destroyed in the very crash that the sensor is sensing. This led to the realization that the data bus that carries the information from the crash sensor must be particularly reliable. Upon designing such a data bus, however, it was found that the capacity of that data bus far exceeded the needs of the crash sensor system. This then led to a realization that the

capacity, or bandwidth, of such a bus would be sufficient to carry all of the vehicle information requirements. In some cases, this requires the use of high bandwidth bus technology such as twisted pair wires, shielded twisted pair wires, or coax cable. If a subset of all of the vehicle devices is included on the bus, then the bandwidth requirements are less and simpler bus technologies can be used instead of a coax cable, for example. The economics that accompany a data bus design which has the highest reliability, highest bandwidth, is justified if all of the vehicle devices use the same system. This is where the greatest economies and greatest reliability occur. As described above, this permits, for example, the placement of the airbag firing electronics into or adjacent the housing that contains the airbag inflator. Once the integrity of the data bus is assured, such that it will not be destroyed during the crash itself, then the proper place for the airbag intelligence can be in, or adjacent to, the airbag module itself. This further improves the reliability of the system since the shorting of the wires to the airbag module will not inadvertently set off the airbag as has happened frequently in the past.

When operating on the vehicle data bus, each device should have a unique address. For most situations, therefore, this address must be predetermined and then assigned through an agreed-upon standard for all vehicles. Thus, the left rear tail light must have a unique address so that when the turn signal is turned to flash that light, it does not also flash the right tail light, for example. Similarly, the side impact crash sensor which will operate on the same data bus as the frontal impact crash sensor, must issue a command, directly or indirectly, to the side impact airbag and not to the frontal impact airbag.

One of the key advantages of a single bus system connecting all sensors in the vehicle together is the possibility of using this data bus to diagnose the health of the entire safety system or of the entire vehicle, as described above. Thus, there are clear synergistic advantages to all the disparate technologies described above.

The design, construction, installation, and maintenance a vehicle data bus network requires attention to many issues, including: an appropriate communication protocol, physical layer transceivers for the selected media, capable microprocessors for application and protocol execution, device controller hardware and software for the required sensors and actuators, etc. Such activities are known to those skilled in the art and will not be described in detail here.

An intelligent distributed system as described above can be based on the CAN Protocol, for example, which is a common protocol used in the automotive industry. CAN is a full function network protocol that provides both message checking and correction to insure communication integrity. Many of the devices on the system will have their own special diagnostics. For instance, an inflator control system can send a warning message if its backup power supply has insufficient charge. In order to assure the integrity and reliability of the bus system, most devices will be equipped with bi-directional communication as described above. Thus, when a message is sent to the rear right taillight to turn on, the light can return a message that it has executed the instruction.

In a refinement of this embodiment, more of the electronics associated with the airbag system can be decentralized and housed within or closely adjacent to each of the airbag modules. Each module can have its own electronic package containing a power supply and diagnostic and sometimes also the occupant sensor electronics. One sensor system is still used to initiate deployment of all airbags associated with the frontal impact. To avoid the noise effects of all airbags deploying at the same time, each module sometimes has its own delay. The modules for the rear seat, for example, can have a several millisecond firing delay compared with the module for the driver and the front

passenger module can have a lesser delay. Each of the modules can also have its own occupant position sensor and associated electronics. In this configuration, there is a minimum reliance on the transmission of power and data to and from the vehicle electrical system which is the least reliable part of the airbag system, especially during a crash. Once each of the modules receives a signal from the crash sensor system, it is on its own and no longer needs either power or information from the other parts of the system. The main diagnostics for a module can also reside within the module which transmits either a ready or a fault signal to the main monitoring circuit which now needs only to turn on a warning light, and perhaps record the fault, if any of the modules either fails to transmit a ready signal or sends a fault signal.

Thus, the placement of electronic components in or near the airbag module can be important for safety and reliability reasons. The placement of the occupant sensing as well as the diagnostics electronics within or adjacent to the airbag module has additional advantages to solving several current important airbag problems. For example, there have been numerous inadvertent airbag deployments caused by wires in the system becoming shorted. Then, when the vehicle hits a pothole, which is sufficient to activate an arming sensor or otherwise disturb the sensing system, the airbag can deploy. Such an unwanted deployment of course can directly injure an occupant who is out-of-position or cause an accident resulting in occupant injuries. If the sensor were to send a coded signal to the airbag module rather than a DC voltage with sufficient power to trigger the airbag, and if the airbag module had stored within its electronic circuit sufficient energy to initiate the inflator, then these unwanted deployments could be prevented. A shorted wire cannot send a coded signal and the short can be detected by the module resident diagnostic circuitry.

This would require that the airbag module contain, or have adjacent to it, a power supply (formerly the backup power supply) which further improves the reliability of the system since the electrical connection to the sensor, or to the vehicle power, can now partially fail, as might happen during an accident, and the system will still work properly. It is well known that the electrical resistance in the "clockspring" connection system, which connects the steering wheel-mounted airbag module to the sensor and diagnostic system, has been marginal in design and prone to failure. The resistance of this electrical connection must be very low or there will not be sufficient power to reliably initiate the inflator squib. To reduce the resistance to the level required, high quality gold-plated connectors are preferably used and the wires should also be of unusually high quality. Due to space constraints, however, these wires frequently have only a marginally adequate resistance thereby reducing the reliability of the driver airbag module and increasing its cost. If, on the other hand, the power to initiate the airbag were already in the module, then only a coded signal needs to be sent to the module rather than sufficient power to initiate the inflator. Thus, the resistance problem disappears and the module reliability is increased. Additionally, the requirements for the clockspring wires become less severe and the design can be relaxed reducing the cost and complexity of the device. It may even be possible to return to the slip ring system that existed prior to the implementation of airbags.

Under this system, the power supply can be charged over a few seconds, since the power does not need to be sent to the module at the time of the required airbag deployment because it is already there. Thus, all of the electronics associated with the airbag system except the sensor and its associated electronics, if any, could be within or adjacent to the airbag module. This includes optionally the occupant sensor, the diagnostics and the (backup) power supply, which now becomes the primary power supply, and the need for a backup disappears. When a fault is detected, a message is sent to a display unit located typically in the instrument panel.

The placement of the main electronics within each module follows the development path that computers themselves have followed from a large centralized mainframe base to a network of microcomputers. The computing power required by an occupant position sensor, airbag system diagnostics and backup power supply can be greater than that required by a single point sensor or of a sensor system employing satellite sensors. For this reason, it can be more logical to put this electronic package within or adjacent to each module. In this manner, the advantages of a centralized single point sensor and diagnostic system fade since most of the intelligence will reside within or adjacent to the individual modules and not the centralized system. A simple and more effective CrushSwitch sensor such as disclosed in US5441301, for example, now becomes more cost effective than the single point sensor and diagnostic system which is now being widely adopted. Finally, this also is consistent with the migration to a bus system where the power and information are transmitted around the vehicle on a single bus system thereby significantly reducing the number of wires and the complexity of the vehicle wiring system. The decision to deploy an airbag is sent to the airbag module subsystem as a signal not as a burst of power. Although it has been assumed that the information would be sent over a wire bus, it is also possible to send the deploy command by a variety of wireless methods either using wires or wirelessly.

Partial implementations of the system just described are depicted schematically in FIGS. 81 and 83 of the '061 application.

The safety bus, or any other vehicle bus, may use a coaxial cable. A connector for joining two coaxial cables is illustrated in FIGS. 70A, 70B, 70C and 70D of the '061 application.

Consider now various uses of a bus system.

3.1 Airbag systems

The airbag system currently involves a large number of wires that carry information and power to and from the airbag central processing unit. Some vehicles have sensors mounted in the front of the vehicle and many vehicles also have sensors mounted in the side structure (the door, B-Pillar, sill, or any other location that is rigidly connected to the side crush zone of the vehicle). In addition, there are sensors and an electronic control module mounted in the passenger compartment. All cars now have passenger and driver airbags and some vehicles have as many as eight airbags considering the side impact torso airbag and head airbags as well as knee bolster airbags.

To partially cope with this problem, there is a movement to connect all of the safety systems onto a single bus (see for example US6326704). Once again, the biggest problem with the reliability of airbag systems is the wiring and connectors. By practicing the teachings of this invention, one single pair of wires can be used to connect all of the airbag sensors and airbags together and, in one preferred implementation, to do so without the use of connectors. Thus, the reliability of the system is substantially improved and the reduced installation costs more than offsets the added cost of having a loosely coupled inductive network, for example, described elsewhere herein.

With such a system, more and more of the airbag electronics can reside within or adjacent to the airbag module with the crash sensor and occupant information fed to the electronics modules for the deploy decision. Thus, all of the relevant information can reside on the vehicle safety or general bus with each airbag module making its own deploy decision locally.

3.2 Steering wheel

The steering wheel of an automobile is becoming more complex as more functions are incorporated utilizing switches and/or a touch pad, for example, on the steering wheel or other haptic or non-haptic input or even output devices. Many vehicles have controls for heating and air conditioning, cruise control, radio, etc.

5 Although previously not implemented, a steering can also be an output device by causing various locations on the steering wheel to provide a vibration, electrical shock or other output to the driver. This is in contrast to vibrating the entire steering wheel which has been proposed for an artificial rumble strip application when a vehicle departs from its lane. Such a local feedback can be used to identify for the driver which button he or she should press to complete an action such as dialing a phone number, for example (see H Kajimoto et al., SmartTouch: Electric Skin to Touch the
10 Untouchable” IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications, pp 36-43, Jan-Feb, 2004, IEEE).

Additionally, the airbag must have a very high quality connection so that it reliably deploys even when an accident is underway.

This has resulted in the use of clockspring ribbon cables that make all of the electrical connections between the vehicle and the rotating steering wheel. The ribbon cable must at least able to carry sufficient current to reliably initiate
15 airbag deployment even at very cold temperatures. This requires that the ribbon cable contain at least two heavy conductors to bring power to the airbag. Under the airbag network concept, a capacitor or battery can be used within the airbag module and kept charged thereby significantly reducing the amount of current that must pass through the ribbon cable. Thus, the ribbon cable can be kept considerably smaller, as discussed above.

An alternate and preferred solution uses the teachings of this invention to inductively couple the steering wheel
20 with the vehicle thus eliminating all wires and connectors. All of the switch functions, control functions, and airbag functions are multiplexed on top of the inductive carrier frequency. This greatly simplifies the initial installation of the steering wheel onto the vehicle since a complicated ribbon cable is no longer necessary. Similarly, it reduces warranty repairs caused by people changing steering wheels without making sure that the ribbon cable is properly positioned.

As described elsewhere herein, an input device such as a mouse pad, joy stick or even one or more switches can
25 be placed on the steering wheel and used to control a display such as a heads-up display thus permitting the vehicle operator to control many functions of a vehicle without taking his or her eyes off of the road. BMW recently introduced the IPOD haptic interface which attempts to permit the driver to control many vehicle functions (HVAC, etc.) but it lacks the display feedback and thus has been found confusing to vehicle operators. This problem disappears when such a device is coupled with a display and particularly a heads-up display as taught herein. Although a preferred location for
30 the input device is the steering wheel, it can be placed at other locations in the vehicle as is the IPOD.

The use of a haptic device can be extended to give feedback to the operator. If the phone rings, for example, a particular portion of the steering wheel can be made to vibrate indicating where the operator should depress a switch to answer the phone. The display can also indicate to the driver that the phone is ringing and perhaps indicate to him or her the location of the switch or that a oral command should be given to answer the phone.

3.3 Door subsystem

More and more electrical functions are also being placed into vehicle doors. This includes window control switches and motors as well as seat control switches, airbag crash sensors, etc. As a result the bundle of wires that must pass through the door edge and through the A-pillar has become a serious assembly and maintenance problem in the automotive industry. Using the teachings of this invention, a loosely coupled inductive system could pass anywhere near the door and an inductive pickup system placed on the other side where it obtains power and exchanges information when the mating surfaces are aligned. If these surfaces are placed in the A-pillar, then sufficient power can be available even when the door is open. Alternately, a battery or capacitive storage system can be provided in the door and the coupling can exist through the doorsill, for example. This eliminates the need for wires to pass through the door interface and greatly simplifies the assembly and installation of doors. It also greatly reduces warranty repairs caused by the constant movement of wires at the door and car body interface.

3.4 Blind spot monitor

Many accidents are caused by a driver executing a lane change when there is another vehicle in his blind spot. As a result, several firms are developing blind spot monitors based on radar, optics, or passive infrared, to detect the presence of a vehicle in the driver's blind spot and to warn the driver should he attempt such a lane change. These blind spot monitors are typically placed on the outside of the vehicle near or on the side rear view mirrors. Since the device is exposed to rain, salt, snow etc., there is a reliability problem resulting from the need to seal the sensor and to permit wires to enter the sensor and also the vehicle. Special wire, for example, should be used to prevent water from wicking through the wire. These problems as well as similar problems associated with other devices which require electric power and which are exposed to the environment, such as forward-mounted airbag crash sensors, can be solved utilizing an inductive coupling techniques of this invention.

3.5 Truck-to-trailer power and information transfer

A serious source of safety and reliability problems results from the flexible wire connections that are necessary between a truck and a trailer. The need for these flexible wire connections and their associated connector problems can be eliminated using the inductive coupling techniques of this invention. In this case, the mere attachment of the trailer to the tractor automatically aligns an inductive pickup device on the trailer with the power lines imbedded in the fifth wheel, for example.

3.6 Wireless switches

Switches in general do not consume power and therefore they can be implemented wirelessly according to the teachings of this invention in many different modes. For a simple on-off switch, a one bit RFID tag similar to what is commonly used for protecting against shoplifting in stores with a slight modification can be easily implemented. The RFID tag switch would contain its address and a single accessible bit permitting the device to be interrogated regardless of its location in the vehicle without wires. A SAW-based switch as disclosed elsewhere herein can also be used and interrogated wirelessly.

As the switch function becomes more complicated, additional power may be required and the options for interrogation become more limited. For a continuously varying switch, for example the volume control on a radio, it may be desirable to use a more complicated design where an inductive transfer of information is utilized. On the other hand,

by using momentary contact switches that would set the one bit on only while the switch is activated and by using the duration of activation, volume control type functions can still be performed even though the switch is remote from the interrogator.

5 This concept then permits the placement of switches at arbitrary locations anywhere in the vehicle without regard to the placement of wires. Additionally, multiple switches can be easily used to control the same device or a single switch can control many devices.

10 For example, a switch to control the forward and rearward motion of the driver seat can be placed on the driver door-mounted armrest and interrogated by an RFID reader or SAW interrogator located in the headliner of the vehicle. The interrogator periodically monitors all RFID or SAW switches located in the vehicle which may number over 100. If the driver armrest switch is depressed and the switch bit is changed from 0 to 1, the reader knows based on the address or identification number of the switch that the driver intends to operate his seat in a forward or reverse manner. A signal can then be sent over the inductive power transfer line to the motor controlling the seat and the motor can thus be commanded to move the seat either forward based on one switch ID or backward based on another switch ID. Thus, the switch in the armrest could actually contain two identification RFIDs or SAW switches, one for forward movement of seat and one for rearward movement of the seat. As soon the driver ceases operating the switch, the switch state returns to 0 and a command is sent to the motor to stop moving the seat. The RFID or SAW device can be passive or active.

15 By this process as taught by this invention, all of the 100 or so switches and other simple sensors can become wireless devices and vastly reduce the number of wires in a vehicle and increase the reliability and reduce warranty repairs. One such example is the switch that determines whether the seatbelt is fastened which can now be a wireless switch.

3.7 Wireless lights

20 In contrast to switches, lights require power. The power required generally exceeds that which can be easily transmitted by RF or capacitive coupling. For lights to become wireless, therefore, inductive coupling or equivalent can be required. Now, however, it is no longer necessary to have light sockets, wires and connectors. Each light bulb could be outfitted with an inductive pickup device and a microprocessor. The microprocessor can listen to the information coming over the inductive pickup line, or wirelessly, and when it recognizes its address, it activates an internal switch which turns on the light. If the information is transferred wirelessly, the RFID switch described in section 1.4.4 above can be used. The light bulb becomes a totally sealed, self-contained unit with no electrical connectors or connections to the vehicle. It is automatically connected by mounting in a holder and by its proximity, which can be as far away as several inches, to the inductive power line. It has been demonstrated that power transfer efficiencies of up to about 99 percent can be achieved by this system and power levels exceeding about 1 kW can be transferred to a device using a loosely coupled inductive system described above.

25 This invention therefore considerably simplifies the mounting of lights in a vehicle since the lights are totally self-contained and not plugged into the vehicle power system. Problems associated with sealing the light socket from the environment disappear vastly simplifying the installation of headlights, for example, into the vehicle. The skin of the vehicle need not contain any receptacles for a light plug and therefore there is no need to seal the light bulb edges to prevent water from entering behind the light bulb. Thus, the reliability of vehicle exterior lighting systems is

significantly improved. Similarly, the ease with which light bulbs can be changed when they burn out is greatly simplified since the complicated mechanisms for sealing the light bulb into the vehicle are no longer necessary. Although headlights were discussed, the same principles apply to all other lights mounted on a vehicle exterior.

Since it is contemplated that the main power transfer wire pair will travel throughout the automobile in a single branched loop, several light bulbs can be inductively attached to the inductive wire power supplier by merely locating a holder for the sealed light bulb within a few inches of the wire. Once again, no electrical connections are required.

Consider for example the activation of the right turn signal. The microprocessor associated with the turn switch on the steering column is programmed to transmit the addresses of the right front and rear turn light bulbs to turn them on. A fraction of a second later, the microprocessor sends a signal over the inductive power transfer line, or wirelessly, to turn the light bulbs off. This is repeated for as long as the turn signal switch is placed in the activation position for a right turn. The right rear turn signal light bulb receives a message with its address and a bit set for the light to be turned on and it responds by so doing and similarly, when the signal is received for turning the light off. Once again, all such transmissions occur over a single power and information inductive line and no wire connections are made to the light bulb. In this example, all power and information is transferred inductively.

3.8 Keyless entry

The RFID technology is particularly applicable to keyless entry. Instead of depressing a button on a remote vehicle door opener, the owner of vehicle need only carry an RFID card in his pocket. Upon approaching the vehicle door, the reader located in the vehicle door, activates the circuitry in the RFID card and receives the identification number, checks it and unlocks the vehicle if the code matches. It can even open the door or trunk based on the time that the driver stands near the door or trunk. Simultaneously, the vehicle now knows that this is driver No. 3, for example, and automatically sets the seat position, headrest position, mirror position, radio stations, temperature controls and all other driver specific functions including the positions of the pedals to adapt the vehicle to the particular driver. When the driver sits in the seat, no ignition key is necessary and by merely depressing a switch which can be located anywhere in the vehicle, on the armrest for example, the vehicle motor starts. The switch can be wireless and the reader or interrogator which initially read the operator's card can be connected inductively to the vehicle power system.

US5790043 describes the unlocking of a door based on a transponder held by a person approaching the door. By adding the function of measuring the distance to the person, by use of the backscatter from the transponder antenna for example, the distance from the vehicle-based transmitter and the person can be determined and the door opened when the person is within 5 feet, for example, of the door as discussed elsewhere herein.

Using the RFID switch discussed above, for example, the integration of the keyless entry system with the tire monitor and all other similar devices can be readily achieved.

3.9 In-vehicle mesh network, Intra-vehicle communications

The use of wireless networks within a vehicle has been discussed elsewhere herein. Of particular interest here is the use of a mesh network (or mesh) wherein the various wireless elements are connected via a mesh such that each device can communicate with each other to thereby add information that might aid a particular node. In the simplest case, nodes on the mesh can merely aid in the transfer of information to a central controller. In more advanced cases, the

temperature monitored by one node can be used by other nodes to compensate for the effects of temperature on the node operation. In another case, the fact that a node has been damaged or is experiencing acceleration can be used to determine the extent of and to forecast the severity of an accident. Such a mesh network can operate in the discrete frequency or in the ultra wideband mode.

5 **3.10 Road conditioning sensing -- Black ice warning**

A frequent cause of accidents is the sudden freezing of roadways or bridge surfaces when the roadway is wet and temperatures are near freezing. Sensors exist that can detect the temperature of the road surface within less than one degree either by direct measurement or by passive IR. These sensors can be mounted in locations on the vehicle where they have a clear view of the road and thus they are susceptible to assault from rain, snow, ice, salt etc. The reliability of connecting these sensors into the vehicle power and information system is thus compromised. Using the teachings of this invention, black ice warning sensors, for example, can be mounted on the exterior of the vehicle and coupled into the vehicle power and information system inductively, thus removing a significant cause of failure of such sensors. Also the use of appropriate cameras and sensors along with multispectral analysis of road surfaces can be particularly useful to discover icing.

10 Similar sensors can also used to detect the type of roadway on which the car is traveling. Gravel roads, for example, have typically a lower effective coefficient of friction than do concrete roads. Knowledge of the road characteristics can provide useful information to the vehicle control system and, for example, warn the driver when the speed driven is above what is safe for the road conditions, including the particular type of roadway.

15 **3.11 Antennas including steerable antennas**

20 As discussed above, the antennas used in the systems disclosed herein can contribute significantly to the operation of the systems. In one case, a silicon or gallium arsenide (for higher frequencies) element can be placed at an antenna to process the returned signal as needed. High gain antennas such as the yagi antenna or steerable antennas such as electronically controllable (or tunable) dielectric constant phased array antennas are also contemplated. For steerable antennas, reference is made to US6452565 "Steerable-beam multiple-feed dielectric resonator antenna". Also contemplated, in addition to those discussed above, are variable slot antennas and Rotman lenses. All of these plus other technologies go under the heading of smart antennas and all such antennas are contemplated herein.

25 The antenna situation can be improved as the frequency increases. Currently, SAW devices are difficult to make that operate much above about 2.4 GHz. It is expected that as lithography systems improve that eventually these devices will be made to operate in the higher GHz range permitting the use of antennas that are even more directional.

30 **3.12 Other miscellaneous sensors**

Many new sensors are now being adapted to an automobile to increase the safety, comfort and convenience of vehicle occupants. Each of the sensors currently requires separate wiring for power and information transfer. Under the teachings of this invention, these separate wires can become unnecessary and sensors could be added at will to the automobile at any location within a few inches of the inductive power line system or, in some cases, within range of an RF interrogator. Even sensors that were not contemplated by the vehicle manufacturer can be added later with a software change to the appropriate vehicle CPU as discussed above.

Such sensors include heat load sensors that measure the sunlight coming in through the windshield and adjust the environmental conditions inside the vehicle or darken the windshield to compensate. Seatbelt sensors that indicate that the seatbelt is buckled and the tension or acceleration experienced by the seatbelt can now also use RFID and/or SAW technology as can low power microphones. Door-open or door-ajar sensors also can use the RFID and/or SAW technology and would not need to be placed near an inductive power line. Gas tank fuel level and other fluid level sensors which do not require external power and are now possible thus eliminating any hazard of sparks igniting the fuel in the case of a rear impact accident which ruptures the fuel tank, for example.

Capacitive proximity sensors that measure the presence of a life form within a few meters of the automobile can be coupled wirelessly to the vehicle. Cameras or other vision or radar or lidar sensors that can be mounted external to the vehicle and not require unreliable electrical connections to the vehicle power system permitting such sensors to be totally sealed from the environment are also now possible. Such sensors can be based on millimeter wave radar, passive or active infrared, or optical or any other portion of the electromagnetic spectrum that is suitable for the task. Radar, passive sound or ultrasonic backup sensors or rear impact anticipatory sensors also are now feasible with significantly greater reliability.

The use of passive audio requires additional discussion. One or more directional microphones aimed from the rear of the vehicle can determine from tire-produced audio signals, for example, that a vehicle is approaching and might impact the target vehicle which contains the system. The target vehicle's tires as well as those to the side of the target vehicle will also produce sounds which need to be cancelled out of the sound from the directional microphones using well-known noise cancellation techniques. By monitoring the intensity of the sound in comparison with the intensity of the sound from the target vehicle's own tires, a determination of the approximate distance between the two vehicles can be made. Finally, a measurement of the rate of change in sound intensity can be used to estimate the time to collision. This information can then be used to pre-position the headrest, for example, or other restraint device to prepare the occupants of the target vehicle for the rear end impact and thus reduce the injuries therefrom. A similar system can be used to forecast impacts from other directions. In some cases, the microphones will need to be protected in a manner so as to reduce noise from the wind such as with a foam protection layer. This system provides a very inexpensive anticipatory crash system.

Previously, the use of radio frequency to interrogate an RFID tag has been discussed. Other forms of electromagnetic radiation are possible. For example, an infrared source can illuminate an area inside the vehicle and a pin diode or CMOS camera can receive reflections from corner cube or dihedral corner (as more fully described below) reflectors located on objects that move within the vehicle. These objects would include items such as the seat, seatback, and headrest. Through this technique, the time of flight, by pulse or phase lock loop technologies, can be measured or modulated IR radiation and phase measurements can be used to determine the distance to each of the corner cube or dihedral corner reflectors.

The above discussion has concentrated on applications primarily inside of the vehicle (although mention is often made of exterior monitoring applications). There are also a significant number of applications concerning the interaction of a vehicle with its environment. Although this might be construed as a deviation from the primary premise of this invention, which is that the device is either powerless in the sense that no power is required other than perhaps

that which can be obtained from a radio frequency signal or a powered device and where the power is obtained through induction coupling, it is encompassed within the invention.

When looking exterior to the vehicle, devices that interact with the vehicle may be located sufficiently far away that they will require power and that power cannot be obtained from the automobile. In the discussion below, two types of such devices will be considered, the first type which does not require infrastructure-supplied power and the second which does.

A rule of thumb is that an RFID tag of normal size that is located more than about a meter away from the reader or interrogator must have an internal power source. Exceptions to this involve cases where the only information that is transferred is due to the reflection off of a radar reflector-type device and for cases where the tag is physically larger. For those cases, a purely passive RFID can be five and sometimes more meters away from the interrogator. Nevertheless, we shall assume that if the device is more than a few meters away that the device must contain some kind of power supply.

An interesting application is a low-cost form of adaptive cruise control or forward collision avoidance system. In this case, a purely passive RFID tag could be placed on every rear license plate in a particular geographical area, such as a state. The subject vehicle would contain two readers, one on the forward left side of the vehicle and one on the forward right side. Upon approaching the rear of a car having the RFID license plate, the interrogators in the vehicle would be able to determine the distance, by way of reflected signal time of flight, from each reader to the license plate transducer. If the license plate RFID is passive, then the range is limited to about 5 meters depending on the size of the tag. Nevertheless, this will be sufficient to determine that there is a vehicle in front of or to the right or left side of the subject vehicle. If the relative velocity of the two vehicles is such that a collision will occur, the subject vehicle can automatically have its speed altered so as to prevent the collision, typically a rear end collision. Alternately, the front of the vehicle can have two spaced-apart tags in which case, a single interrogator could suffice.

An explanation is found in the parent '240 application and this innovation leads to a novel addition or substitution to putting an RFID tag onto a license plate is to emboss the license plate or otherwise attach to it or elsewhere on the vehicle a corner cube or dihedral corner reflector which can yield a bright reflection from a radar or ladar (laser radar) transmitter from a following vehicle, for example. Further, the reflector can be designed to rotate the polarization of a beam by 90 degrees, thus the potential problem of the receiver being blinded by another vehicle's system is reduced. Additionally, a reflector can be designed as described above to reflect a polarized beam from a non-polarized beam or better to rotate a polarized beam through an arbitrary angle. In this manner, some information about the vehicle such as its mass class can be conveyed to the interrogating vehicle. A polarization on only 0 degrees can signify a passenger car, only 90 degrees an SUV or other large passenger vehicle or pickup truck, 45 degrees a small truck, both 0 and 45 degrees (using two reflectors) a larger truck, 45 and 90 degrees a larger truck etc. yielding 7 or more classifications. Thus using a very low cost reflector, a great deal of information can be conveyed including the range to the vehicle based on time-of-flight or phase angle comparison if the transmitted beam is modulated. Noise or pseudo-noise modulated radar would also be applicable as a modulation based system for distance measurement.

Additions to an RFID-based system that can be used alone or along with the reflector system discussed above include the addition of an energy harvesting system such as solar power or power from vibrations. Thus the tag can start

out as a pure passive tag providing up to about 10 meters range and grow to an active tag providing a 30 or more meter range. With the use of RFID, a great deal of additional information can be transmitted such as the vehicle weight, license plate number, tolling ID etc. Once a tire pressure interrogator as discussed above is on the vehicle, the cost to add one or more license plate interrogating antennas is small and the cost addition to a license plate can be as low as 1-5 US dollars.

5 Since no electrical connection need be made to the vehicle, the installation cost is no more than for an ordinary license plate.

An alternate approach is to visually scan license plates using an imager such as a camera. An infrared imager and a source of infrared illumination can be used. Using such a system, the characters (numbers and letters) can be read and if the license plate-issuing authority has coded the properties (type of vehicle, weight, etc.) into these characters, a vehicle can identify those properties of a vehicle that it may soon impact and that information can be a factor in the vehicle control algorithm or restraint deployment decision.

10 Systems are under development that will permit an automobile to determine its absolute location on the surface of the earth. These systems are being developed in conjunction with intelligent transportation systems. Such location systems are frequently based on differential GPS (DGPS). One problem with such systems is that the appropriate number of GPS satellites is not always within view of the automobile. For such cases, it is necessary to have an earth-based system which will provide the information to the vehicle permitting it to absolutely locate itself within a few centimeters. One such system can involve the use of RFID tags placed above, adjacent or below the surface of the highway.

For the cases where the RFID tags are located more than a few meters from the vehicle, a battery or other power source will probably be required and this will be discussed below. For the systems without batteries, such as placing the RFID tag in the concrete, with two readers located one on each side of the vehicle, the location of the tag embedded in the concrete can be precisely determine based on the time of flight of the radar pulse from the readers to the tag and back. Using this method, the precise location of the vehicle relative to a tag within a few centimeters can be readily determined and since the position of the tag will be absolutely known by virtue of an in-vehicle resident digital map, the position of the vehicle can be absolutely determined regardless of where the vehicle is. For example, if the vehicle is in a tunnel, then it will know precisely its location from the RFID pavement embedded tags. Note that the polarization rotation reflector discussed above will also perform this task excellently.

It is also possible to determine the relative velocity of the vehicle relative to the RFID tag or reflector using the Doppler Effect based on the reflected signals. For tags located on license plates or elsewhere on the rear of vehicles, the closing velocity of the two vehicles can be determined and for tags located in or adjacent to the highway pavement, the velocity of the vehicle can be readily determined. The velocity can in both cases be determined based on differentiating two distance measurements.

30 In many cases, it may be necessary to provide power to the RFID tag since the distance to the vehicle will exceed a few meters. This is currently being used in reverse for automatic tolling situations where the RFID tag is located on the vehicle and interrogated using readers located at the toll both.

When the RFID tag to be interrogated by vehicle-mounted readers is more than a few meters from the vehicle, the tag in many cases must be supplied with power. This power can come from a variety of sources including a battery

which is part of the device, direct electrical connections to a ground wire system, solar batteries, generators that generate power from vehicle or component vibration, other forms of energy harvesting or inductive energy transfer from a power line.

5 For example, if an RFID tag were to be placed on a light post in downtown Manhattan, sufficient energy could be obtained from an inductive pickup from the wires used to power the light to recharge a battery in the RFID. Thus, when the lights are turned on at night, the RFID battery could be recharged sufficiently to provide power for operation 24 hours a day. In other cases, a battery or ultracapacitor could be included in the device and replacement or recharge of the battery would be necessitated periodically, perhaps once every two years.

10 An alternate approach to having a vehicle transmit a pulse to the tag and wait for a response, would be to have the tag periodically broadcast a few waves of information at precise timing increments. Then, the vehicle with two receivers could locate itself accurately relative to the earth-based transmitter.

15 For example, in downtown Manhattan, it would be difficult to obtain information from satellites that are constantly blocked by tall buildings. Nevertheless, inexpensive transmitters could be placed on a variety of lampposts that would periodically transmit a pulse to all vehicles in the vicinity. Such a system could be based on a broadband micropower impulse radar system as disclosed in several U.S. patents. Alternately, a narrow band signal can be used.

20 Once again, although radar type microwave pulses have been discussed, other portions of the electromagnetic spectrum can be utilized. For example, a vehicle could send a beam of modulated infrared toward infrastructure-based devices such as poles which contain corner or polarization modifying reflectors. The time of flight of IR radiation from the vehicle to the reflectors can be accurately measured and since the vehicle would know, based on accurate maps, where the reflector is located, there is the little opportunity for an error.

25 The invention is also concerned with wireless devices that contain transducers. An example is a temperature transducer coupled with appropriate circuitry which is capable of receiving power either inductively or through radio frequency energy transfer or even, and some cases, capacitively. Such temperature transducers may be used to measure the temperature inside the passenger compartment or outside of the vehicle. They also can be used to measure the temperature of some component in the vehicle, e.g., the tire. A distinctive feature of some embodiments of this invention is that such temperature transducers are not hard-wired into the vehicle and do not rely solely on batteries. Such temperature sensors have been used in other environments such as the monitoring of the temperature of domestic and farm animals for health monitoring purposes.

30 Upon receiving power inductively or through the radio frequency energy transfer, the temperature transducer conducts its temperature measurement and transmits the detected temperature to a process or central control module in the vehicle.

35 The wireless communication within a vehicle can be accomplished in several ways. The communication can be through the same path that supplies power to the device, or it can involve the transmission of waves that are received by another device in the vehicle. These waves can be either electromagnetic (radio frequency, microwave, infrared, etc) or ultrasonic. If electromagnetic, they can be sent using a variety of protocols such as CDMA, FDMA, TDMA or ultrawideband (see, e.g., Hiawatha Bray, "The next big thing is actually ultrawide", Boston Globe, Jun. 25, 2004).

Many other types of transducers or sensors can be used in this manner. The distance to an object from a vehicle can be measured using a radar reflector type RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tag which permits the distance to the tag to be determined by the time of flight of radio waves. Another method of determining distance to an object can be through the use of ultrasound wherein the device is commanded to emit an ultrasonic burst and the time required for the waves to travel to a receiver is an indication of the displacement of the device from the receiver.

Although in most cases the communication will take place within the vehicle, and some cases such as external temperature transducers or tire pressure transducers, the source of transmission will be located outside of the compartment of the vehicle.

A discussion of RFID technology including its use for distance measurement is included in the RFID Handbook, by Klaus Finkenzeller, John Wiley & Sons, New York 1999.

In one simple form, the invention can involve a single transducer and system for providing power and receiving information. An example of such a device would be an exterior temperature monitor which is placed outside of the vehicle and receives its power and transmits its information through the windshield glass. At the other extreme, a pair of parallel wires carrying high frequency alternating current can travel to all parts of the vehicle where electric power is needed. In this case, every device could be located within a few inches of this wire pair and through an appropriately designed inductive pickup system, each device receives the power for operation inductively from the wire pair. A system of this type which is designed for use in powering vehicles is described in several U.S. patents listed above.

In this case, all sensors and actuators on the vehicle can be powered by the inductive power transfer system. The communication with these devices could either be over the same system or, alternately, could be take place via RF, ultrasound, infrared or other similar communication system. If the communication takes place either by RF or over a modulated wire system, a protocol such as the Bluetooth™ or Zigbee protocol can be used. Other options include the Ethernet and token ring protocols.

The above system technology is frequently referred to as loosely coupled inductive systems. Such systems have been used for powering a vehicle down a track or roadway but have not been used within the vehicle. The loosely coupled inductive system makes use of high frequency (typically 10,000 Hz) and resonant circuits to achieve a power transfer approaching 99 percent efficiency. The resonant system is driven using a switching amplifier. As discussed herein, this is believed to be the first example of a high frequency power system for use within vehicles.

Every device that utilizes the loosely coupled inductive system would contain a microprocessor and thus would be considered a smart device. This includes every light, switch, motor, transducer, sensor etc. Each device could have an address and would respond only to information containing its address.

It is now contemplated that the power systems for next generation automobiles and trucks will change from the current standard of 12 volts to a new standard of 42 volts. The power generator or alternator in such vehicles will produce alternating current and thus will be compatible with the system described herein wherein all power within the vehicle will be transmitted using AC.

It is contemplated that some devices will require more power than can be obtained instantaneously from the inductive, capacitive or radio frequency source. In such cases, batteries, capacitors or ultra-capacitors may be used directly associated with a particular device to handle peak power requirements. Such a system can also be used when the

device is safety critical and there is a danger of disruption of the power supply during a vehicle crash, for example. In general, the battery or capacitor would be charged when the device is not being powered.

In some cases, the sensing device may be purely passive and require no power. One such example is when an infrared or optical beam of energy is reflected off of a passive reflector to determine the distance to that reflector.

5 Another example is a passive reflective RFID tag.

As noted above, several U.S. patents describe arrangements for monitoring the pressure inside a rotating tire and to transmit this information to a display inside the vehicle. A preferred approach for monitoring the pressure within a tire is to instead monitor the temperature of the tire using a temperature sensor and associated power supplying circuitry as discussed above and to compare that temperature to the temperature of other tires on the vehicle, as
10 discussed above. When the pressure within a tire decreases, this generally results in the tire temperature rising if the vehicle load is being carried by that tire. In the case where two tires are operating together at the same location such as on a truck trailer, just the opposite occurs. That is, the temperature of the fully inflated tire can increase since it is now carrying more load than the partially inflated tire.

4. Summary

15 As stated at the beginning this application is one in a series of applications covering safety and other systems for vehicles and other uses. The disclosure herein goes beyond that needed to support the claims of the particular invention that is being claimed herein. This is not to be construed that the inventor is releasing the unclaimed disclosure and subject matter into the public domain. Rather, it is intended that patent applications have been or will be filed to cover all of the subject matter disclosed above.

20 The inventions described above are, of course, susceptible to many variations, combinations of disclosed components, modifications and changes, all of which are within the skill of the art. It should be understood that all such variations, modifications and changes are within the spirit and scope of the inventions and of the appended claims. Similarly, it will be understood that inventor intends to cover and claim all changes, modifications and variations of the examples of the preferred embodiments of the invention herein disclosed for the purpose of illustration which do not
25 constitute departures from the spirit and scope of the present invention as claimed.

Although several preferred embodiments are illustrated and described above, there are possible combinations using other geometries, sensors, materials and different dimensions for the components that perform the same functions. This invention is not limited to the above embodiments and should be determined by the following claims.

CLAIMS:

1. A system for monitoring the condition of at least one moving object comprising:
at least one moving object including a communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network;
5 at least one sensor for monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the moving object, said at least one sensor being coupled to said communications unit; and
a remote site connected to said wireless communications network and arranged to receive diagnostic or prognostic messages from said at least one moving object with the transmission initiated from said at least one moving object.
10
2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a diagnostic module, said at least one sensor being a part of said diagnostic module, said diagnostic module being arranged to direct said communications unit to transmit a message to said remote site upon determining an actual or potential failure of said at least one component or subsystem.
- 15 3. The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one sensor is wirelessly coupled to said communications unit.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein said remote site is another moving object.
- 20 5. The system of claim 1, wherein said remote site is a traffic control system.
6. The system of claim 1, wherein said remote site is a manufacturer of said at least one moving object.
7. The system of claim 1, wherein said remote site is a seller or repairer of said at least one moving
25 object.
8. A method for monitoring the condition of at least one moving object comprising:
arranging a communications unit on at least one moving object;
enabling the communications unit to interface with a wireless communications network;
30 monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the moving object via at least one sensor;
generating diagnostic or prognostic information about the at least one component or subsystem through the monitoring thereof;
coupling the at least one sensor to the communications unit;
connecting the wireless communications network to a remote site;
35 initiating transmission of diagnostic or prognostic messages from the communications unit of the at least one moving object with the messages being based on the generated diagnostic or prognostic information; and
receiving the transmission at the remote site for further processing.

5 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of generating diagnostic or prognostic information about the at least one component or subsystem comprises determining whether the at least one component or subsystem is about to fail, whereby the transmission of diagnostic or prognostic messages from the communications unit is a transmission of an indication of the actual or potential failure of the at least one component or subsystem.

10 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one sensor is wirelessly coupled to the communications unit.

10 11. The method of claim 8, wherein the remote site is another moving object, further comprising enabling the another moving object to plan its movement based on the transmission.

15 12. The method of claim 8, wherein the remote site is a traffic control system, further comprising enabling the traffic control system to plan traffic control measures based on the transmission.

15 13. The method of claim 8, wherein the remote site is a manufacturer of the at least one moving object, further comprising enabling the manufacturer to maintain a database of information about the at least one moving object.

20 14. The method of claim 8, wherein the remote site is a repairer of the at least one moving object, further comprising enabling the repairer to contact an owner of the at least one moving object to schedule repair of the at least one component or subsystem.

25 15. The method of claim 8, further comprising:
providing an interface to enable an occupant of the vehicle to initiate the transmission of diagnostic or prognostic messages; and
notifying the occupant of the transmitted message.

30 16. A method for providing status data for vehicle maintenance, comprising:
monitoring for a triggering event on a vehicle having a wireless communications unit, the triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle; and
initiating a transmission between the communications unit and a remote site in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the at least one component or subsystem.

35 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a dealer, manufacturer, repair or service facility.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the triggering event is a failure, predicted failure or fault code generation of the at least one component or subsystem.

19. A system for providing status data for vehicle maintenance, comprising:

a diagnostic module including at least one sensor for monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle, said diagnostic module being arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and
5 detect a triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of the at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle; and

a wireless communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network, said communications unit being coupled to said diagnostic module and initiating a transmission between said communications unit and a remote site in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or
10 prognostic message about the at least one component or subsystem.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a dealer, manufacturer, repair or service facility.

21. The system of claim 19, wherein the triggering event is a failure, predicted failure or fault code
15 generation of the at least one component or subsystem.

ABSTRACT

5 System and method for monitoring the condition of a vehicle includes a communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network, at least one sensor for monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle and which is coupled to the communications unit, and a remote site connected to the wireless communications network and arranged to receive diagnostic or prognostic messages from the vehicle with the transmission initiated therefrom. A diagnostic module may be provided, included or coupled to the sensor(s) and directs the communications unit to transmit a message to the remote site upon determining an actual and/or potential failure of a component or subsystem.

Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:				
Filing Date:				
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods			
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed			
Filer:	Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine			
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484			
Filed as Small Entity				
Utility Filing Fees				
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Basic Filing:				
Utility filing Fee (Electronic filing)	4011	1	75	75
Utility Search Fee	2111	1	250	250
Utility Examination Fee	2311	1	100	100
Pages:				
Claims:				
Claims in excess of 20	2202	1	25	25
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:				
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:				
Extension-of-Time:				
Miscellaneous:				
Total in USD (\$)				450

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	2065399
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine
Filer Authorized By:	Brian Roffe
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	09-AUG-2007
Filing Date:	
Time Stamp:	13:13:00
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

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Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$450
RAM confirmation Number	12669
Deposit Account	500266
The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows: Charge any Additional Fees required under 37 C.F.R. Section 1.16 and 1.17	

File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes) /Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Application Data Sheet	New-Application-Application-Data-Sheet-ATI-484.pdf	1840616 2e00bc90e80375f32174bab786ac1a8861973fc2	no	9
Warnings:					
Information:					
2	Oath or Declaration filed	New-Application-Declaration-ATI-484.pdf	18274 cf388ba730cd9d8ae450417165e8a46b6facb55b	no	1
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	Drawings	New-Application-Drawings-ATI-484.pdf	985770 b84c924a4a9e0e215f5cb5d2d1bea65f7c4993b1	no	12
Warnings:					
Information:					
4	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed	New-Application-IDS-ATI-484.pdf	1212988 b5b20fa2d649bba0e29f81f38731fabfc0706197	no	6
Warnings:					
Information:					
5	Miscellaneous Incoming Letter	New-Application-IDS-form-ATI-484.pdf	17385 5bb151d6895226a1a3c665271203384ebf3a9b80	no	2
Warnings:					
Information:					
6	Specification	New-Application-Specification-ATI-484.pdf	664752 1c00fc49b7bb15a456027e35d1a2b1dcbe419fc4	no	98
Warnings:					
Information:					
7	Fee Worksheet (PTO-06)	fee-info.pdf	8498 fc17c85659a12a03612d46b22a7609da903cad0b	no	2
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):			4748283		

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New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods		
The application data sheet is part of the provisional or nonprovisional application for which it is being submitted. The following form contains the bibliographic data arranged in a format specified by the United States Patent and Trademark Office as outlined in 37 CFR 1.76. This document may be completed electronically and submitted to the Office in electronic format using the Electronic Filing System (EFS) or the document may be printed and included in a paper filed application.			

Secrecy Order 37 CFR 5.2

Portions or all of the application associated with this Application Data Sheet may fall under a Secrecy Order pursuant to 37 CFR 5.2 (Paper filers only. Applications that fall under Secrecy Order may not be filed electronically.)

Applicant Information:

Applicant 1					<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Applicant Authority		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Inventor		<input type="radio"/> Legal Representative under 35 U.S.C. 117	
				<input type="radio"/> Party of Interest under 35 U.S.C. 118	
Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix	
Dr.	David	S.	Breed		
Residence Information (Select One) <input checked="" type="radio"/> US Residency <input type="radio"/> Non US Residency <input type="radio"/> Active US Military Service					
City	Miami Beach	State/Province	FL	Country of Residence i	US
Citizenship under 37 CFR 1.41(b) i		US			
Mailing Address of Applicant:					
Address 1	800 West End Avenue				
Address 2	Apt. 545				
City	Miami Beach	State/Province	FL		
Postal Code	33139	Countryi			
All Inventors Must Be Listed - Additional Inventor Information blocks may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.					<input type="button" value="Add"/>

Correspondence Information:

Enter either Customer Number or complete the Correspondence Information section below. For further information see 37 CFR 1.33(a).			
<input type="checkbox"/> An Address is being provided for the correspondence information of this application.			
Customer Number	22846		
Email Address	broffe@optonline.net	<input type="button" value="Add Email"/>	<input type="button" value="Remove Email"/>

Application Information:

Title of the Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	Small Entity Status Claimed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Application Type	Nonprovisional		
Subject Matter	Utility		
Suggested Class (if any)		Sub Class (if any)	
Suggested Technology Center (if any)			
Total Number of Drawing Sheets (if any)	12	Suggested Figure for Publication (if any)	4

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484
	Application Number	
Title of Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods	

Publication Information:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request Early Publication (Fee required at time of Request 37 CFR 1.219)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request Not to Publish. I hereby request that the attached application not be published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b) and certify that the invention disclosed in the attached application has not been and will not be the subject of an application filed in another country, or under a multilateral agreement, that requires publication at eighteen months after filing.

Representative Information:

Representative information should be provided for all practitioners having a power of attorney in the application. Providing this information in the Application Data Sheet does not constitute a power of attorney in the application (see 37 CFR 1.32). Enter either Customer Number or complete the Representative Name section below. If both sections are completed the Customer Number will be used for the Representative Information during processing.					
Please Select One:		<input type="radio"/> Customer Number	<input checked="" type="radio"/> US Patent Practitioner	<input type="radio"/> US Representative (37 CFR 11.9)	
Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Mr.	Brian		Roffe		
Registration Number	35336				
Additional Representative Information blocks may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.					<input type="button" value="Add"/>

Domestic Priority Information:

This section allows for the applicant to claim benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e), 120, 121, or 365(c). Providing this information in the application data sheet constitutes the specific reference required by 35 U.S.C. 119(e) or 120, and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or CFR 1.78(a)(4), and need not otherwise be made part of the specification.					
Prior Application Status	Pending				<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Application Number	Continuity Type		Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	
	Continuation in part of		10331060	2002-12-27	
Prior Application Status	Patented				<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10331060	Continuation in part of	10188673	2002-07-03	6738697	
Prior Application Status	Patented				<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10188673	Continuation in part of	09753186	2001-01-02	6484080	
Prior Application Status	Patented				<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
09753186	Continuation in part of	09137918	1998-08-20	6175787	
Prior Application Status	Patented				<input type="button" value="Remove"/>

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		
		Application Number			
Title of Invention		Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods			
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
09137918	Continuation in part of	08476077	1995-06-07	5809437	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10188673	Continuation in part of	10174709	2002-06-19	6735506	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10174709	Continuation in part of	09753186	2001-01-02	6484080	
Prior Application Status		Pending		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	10638743	2003-08-11		
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10638743	Continuation in part of	10188673	2002-07-03	6738697	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10638743	Continuation in part of	10330938	2002-12-27	6823244	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10330938	Continuation in part of	10188673	2002-07-03	6738697	
Prior Application Status		Pending		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
	Continuation in part of	10940881	2004-09-13		
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10940881	Continuation in part of	10613453	2003-07-03	6850824	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10613453	Continuation of	10188673	2002-07-03	6738697	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10940881	Continuation in part of	10805903	2004-03-22	7050897	

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76			Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	
			Application Number		
Title of Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods				
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10805903	Continuation in part of	10174709	2002-06-19	6735506	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10805903	Continuation in part of	10188673	2002-07-03	6738697	
Prior Application Status	Pending		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11082739	2005-03-17		
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Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11082739	Continuation in part of	10701361	2003-11-04	6988026	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10701361	Continuation in part of	09925062	2001-08-08	6733036	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
09925062	Continuation in part of	09356314	1999-07-16	6326704	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
09356314	Continuation in part of	09137918	1998-08-20	6175787	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
09925062	Continuation in part of	09767020	2001-01-23	6533316	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
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09767020	Continuation in part of	09356314	1999-07-16	6326704	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10701361	Continuation in part of	10043557	2002-01-11	6905135	
Prior Application Status	Patented		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		
		Application Number			
Title of Invention		Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods			
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10043557	Continuation in part of	09925062	2001-08-08	6733036	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10701361	Continuation in part of	10174709	2002-06-19	6735506	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10701361	Continuation in part of	10188673	2002-07-03	6738697	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10701361	Continuation in part of	10330938	2002-12-27	6823244	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10701361	Continuation in part of	10613453	2003-07-03	6850824	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11082739	Continuation in part of	11039129	2005-01-19	7082359	
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11039129	Division of	10701361	2003-11-04	6988026	
Prior Application Status		Pending		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11131623	2005-05-18		
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11131623	Continuation in part of	10043557	2002-01-11	6905135	
Prior Application Status		Pending		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11421500	2006-06-01		
Prior Application Status		Patented		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11421500	Continuation in part of	11220139	2005-09-06	7103460	

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		
		Application Number			
Title of Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods				
Prior Application Status	Abandoned		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
11220139	Continuation in part of	11120065	2005-05-02		
Prior Application Status	Pending		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11421554	2006-06-01		
Prior Application Status	Pending		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11422240	2006-06-05		
Prior Application Status	Patented		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11422240	Continuation in part of	11220139	2005-09-06	7103460	
Prior Application Status	Abandoned		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
11220139	Continuation in part of	11120065	2005-05-02		
Prior Application Status	Pending		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11464288	2006-08-14		
Prior Application Status	Patented		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11464288	Continuation in part of	10931288	2004-08-31	7164117	
Prior Application Status	Patented		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10931288	Continuation in part of	10613453	2003-07-03	6850824	
Prior Application Status	Patented		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
10931288	Continuation in part of	10805903	2004-03-22	7050897	
Prior Application Status	Patented		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11464288	Continuation in part of	11220139	2005-09-06	7103460	
Prior Application Status	Pending		Remove		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
	Continuation in part of	11470061	2006-09-05		
Prior Application Status	Patented		Remove		

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		
		Application Number			
Title of Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods				
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Patent Number	Issue Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
11470061	Continuation in part of	11220139	2005-09-06	7103460	
Prior Application Status	Abandoned		<input type="button" value="Remove"/>		
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)		
11220139	Continuation in part of	11120065	2005-05-02		
Additional Domestic Priority Data may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.				<input type="button" value="Add"/>	

Foreign Priority Information:

This section allows for the applicant to claim benefit of foreign priority and to identify any prior foreign application for which priority is not claimed. Providing this information in the application data sheet constitutes the claim for priority as required by 35 U.S.C. 119(b) and 37 CFR 1.55(a).			
<input type="button" value="Remove"/>			
Application Number	Country ⁱ	Parent Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Priority Claimed
			<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Additional Foreign Priority Data may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.			<input type="button" value="Add"/>

Assignee Information:

Providing this information in the application data sheet does not substitute for compliance with any requirement of part 3 of Title 37 of the CFR to have an assignment recorded in the Office.			
<input type="button" value="Remove"/>			
Assignee 1			
If the Assignee is an Organization check here. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Organization Name	AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGIES INTERNATIONAL, INC.		
Mailing Address Information:			
Address 1	P.O. Box 8		
Address 2			
City	DENVILLE	State/Province	NJ
Country ⁱ	US	Postal Code	07834
Phone Number		Fax Number	
Email Address			
Additional Assignee Data may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.			<input type="button" value="Add"/>

Signature:

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with 37 CFR 1.33 and 10.18. Please see 37 CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.					
Signature	/Brian Roffe/		Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2007-08-09	
First Name	Brian	Last Name	Roffe	Registration Number	35336

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods		

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.76. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 23 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application data sheet form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

Attorney Docket Number: ATI-484

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am an original, first and sole inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC OR PROGNOSTIC MESSAGE TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

the specification of which is attached hereto.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56, including for continuation-in-part applications, material information which became available between the filing date of the prior application(s) and the national or PCT International filing date of the continuation-in-part application.

I hereby appoint the attorney(s) and/or agent(s) associated with CUSTOMER NUMBER 22846 to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under 18 U.S.C. §1001 and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole inventor, (given name, family name)

David S. Breed

Inventor's signature



Date August 9, 2007

Residence Miami Beach, Florida

Citizenship U S A

Post Office Address 800 West Avenue, Apt. 545, Miami Beach, Florida 33139

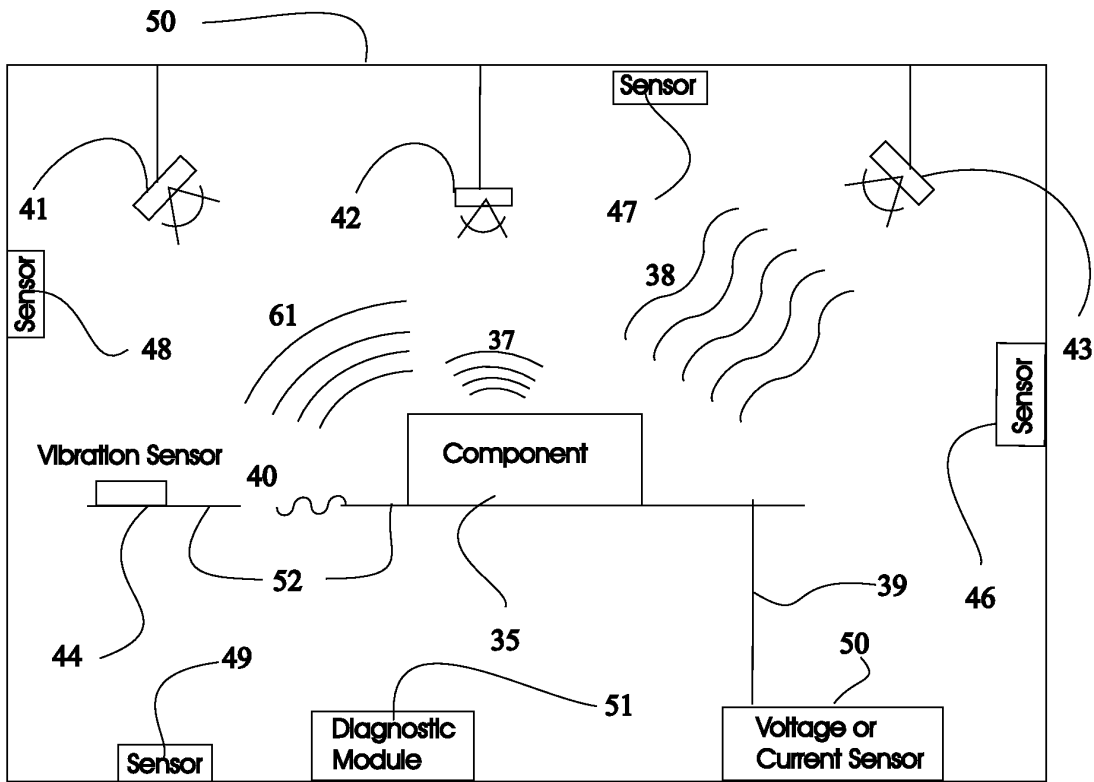


FIG. 1

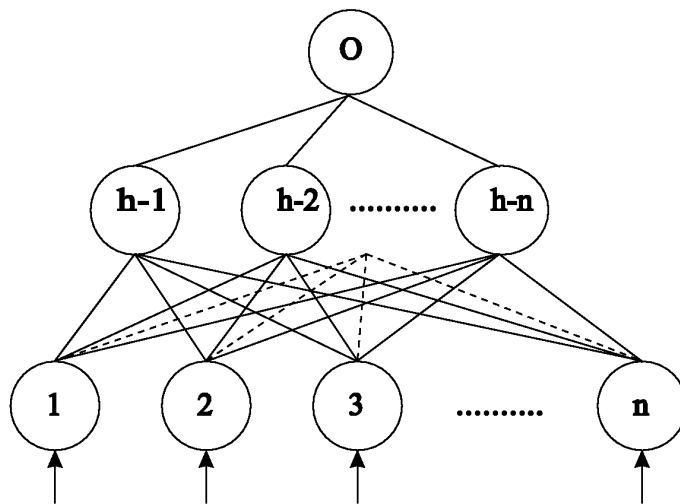


FIG. 2

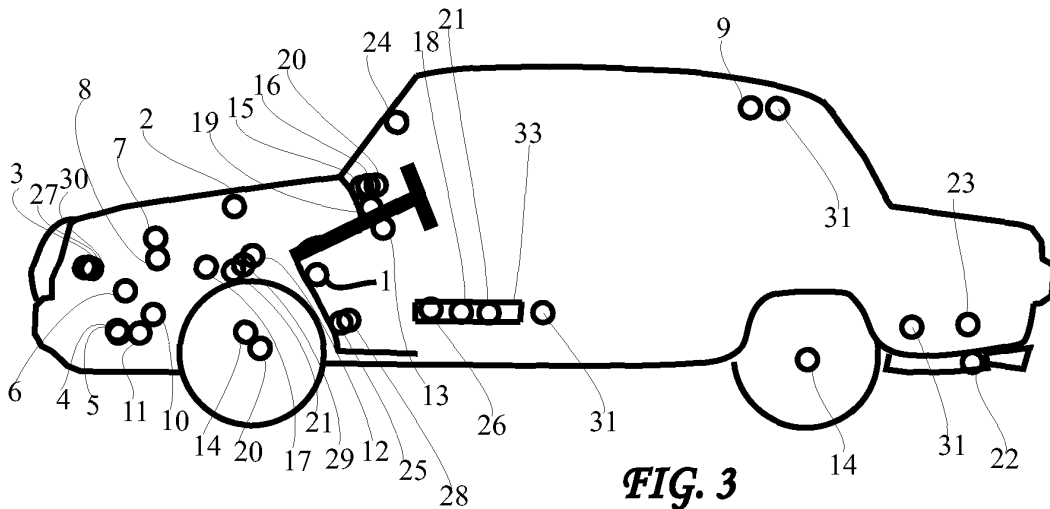


FIG. 3

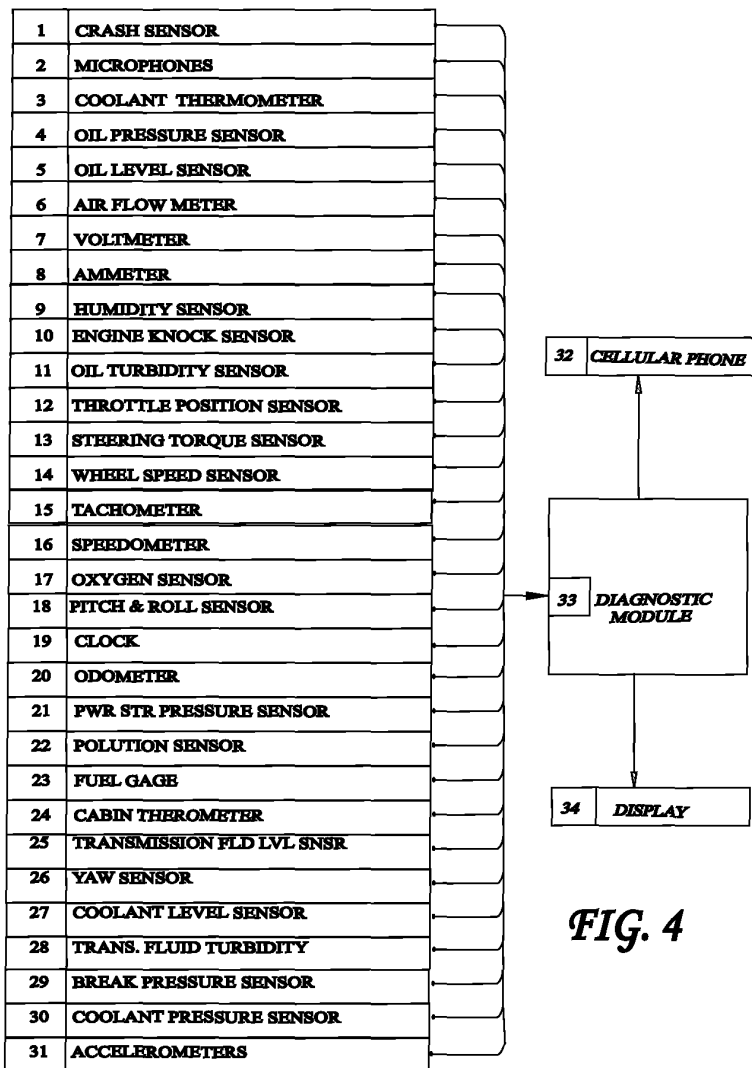
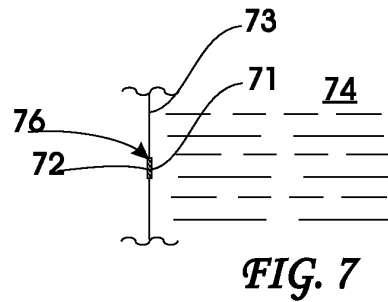
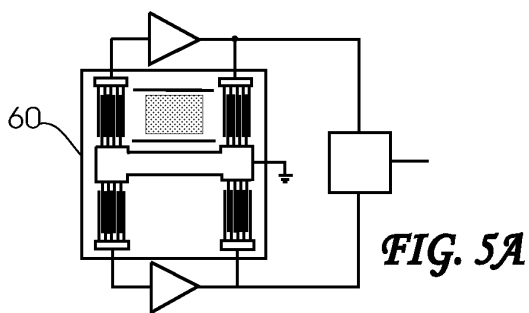
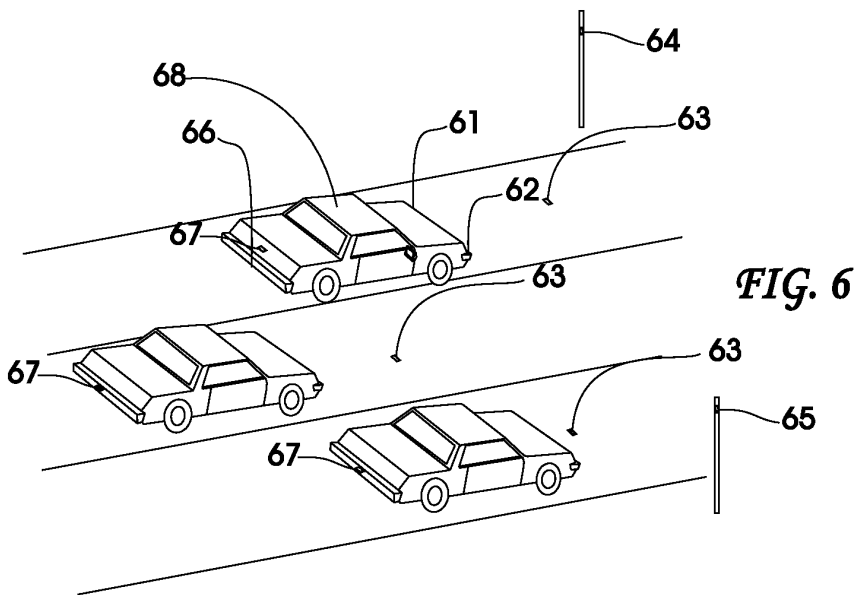
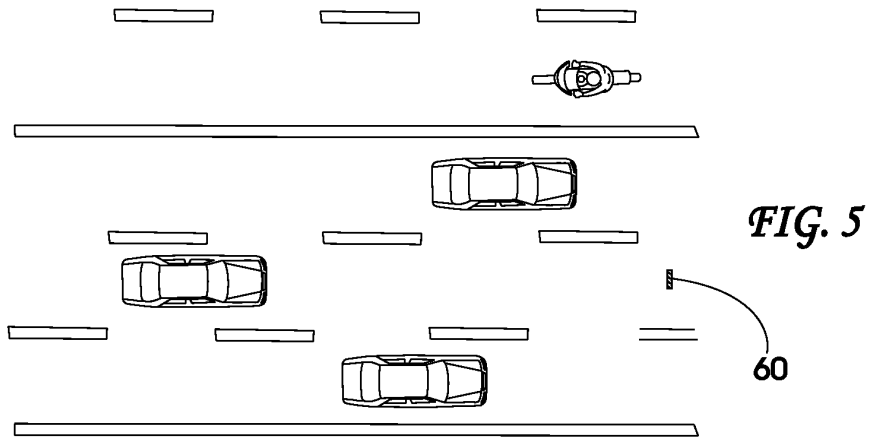
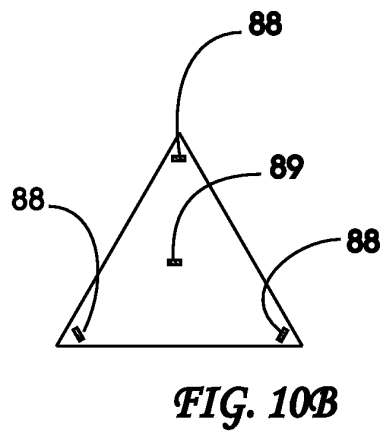
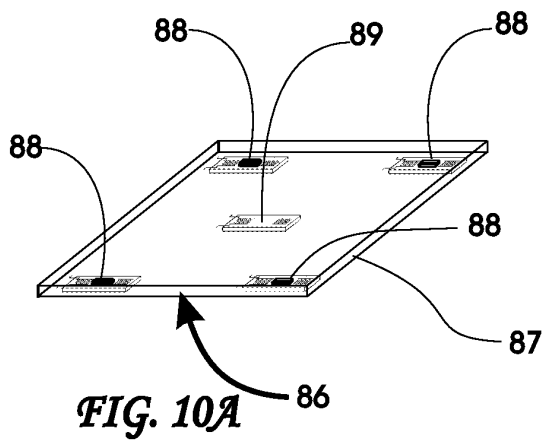
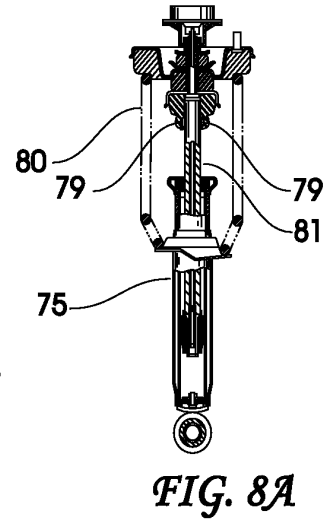
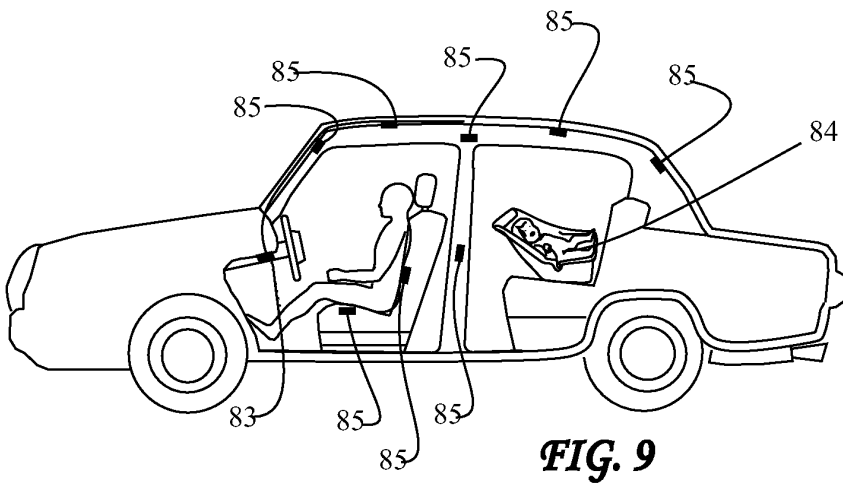
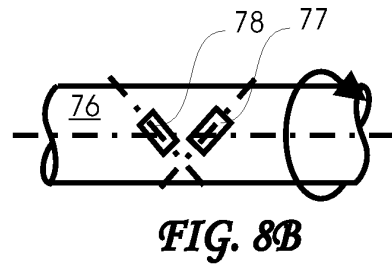
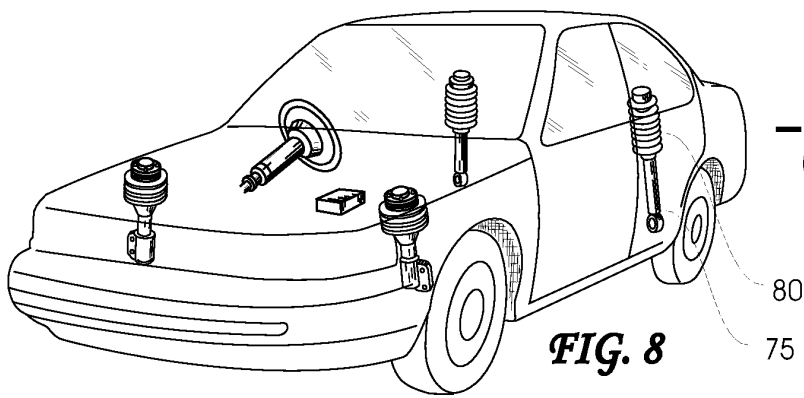


FIG. 4





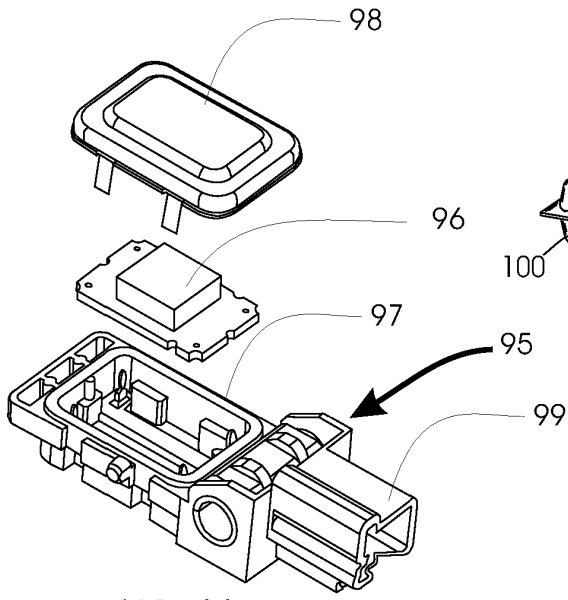


FIG. 11

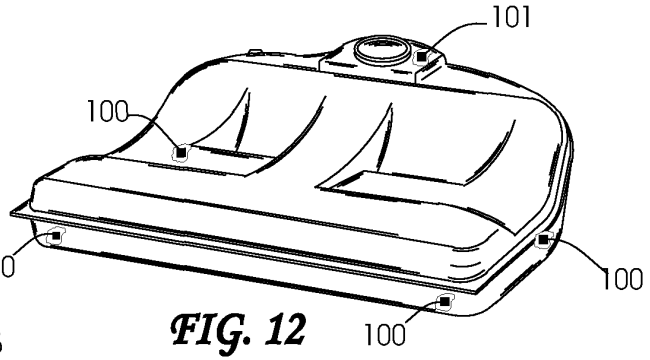


FIG. 12

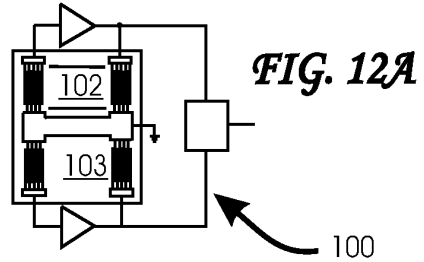


FIG. 12A

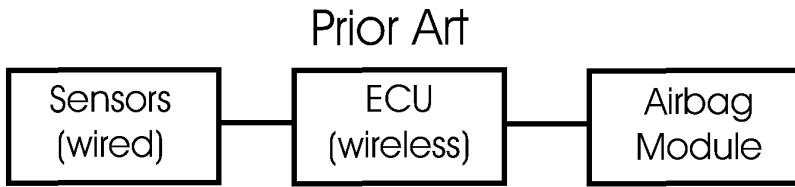


FIG. 13A



FIG. 13B

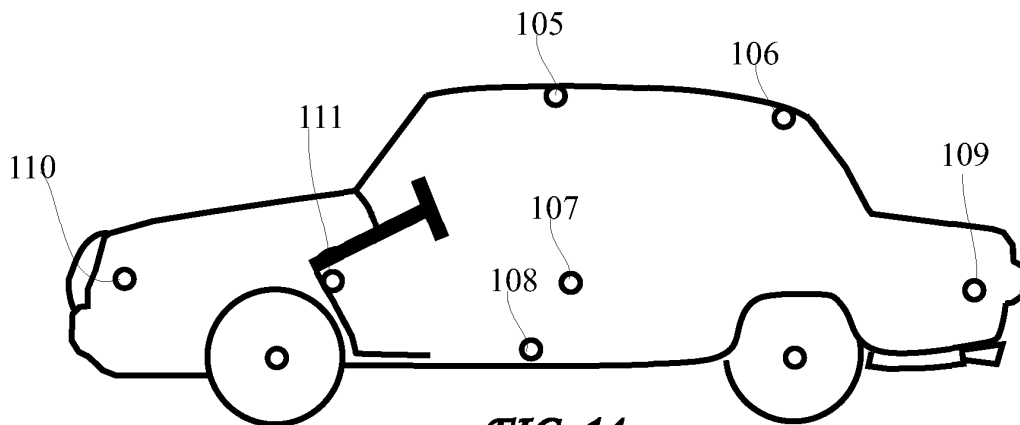
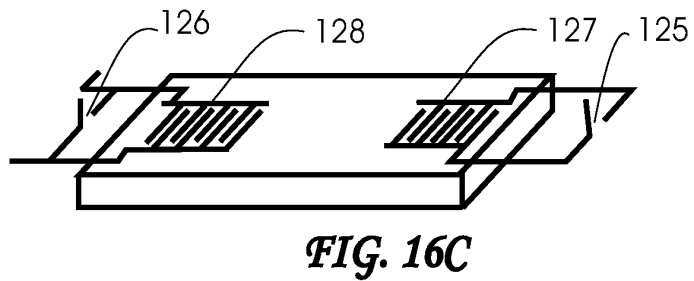
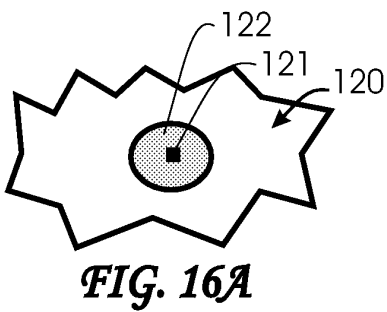
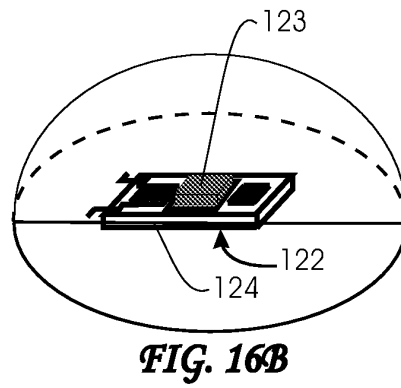
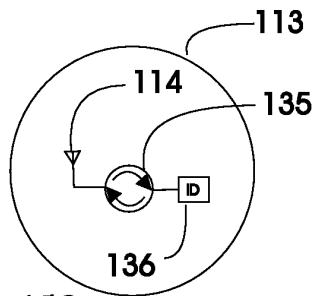
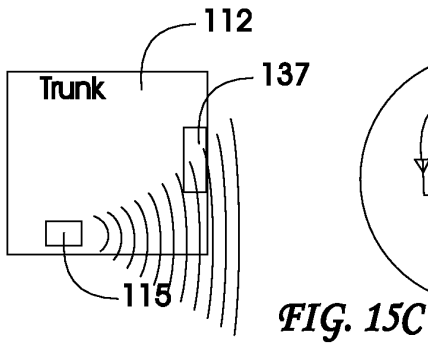
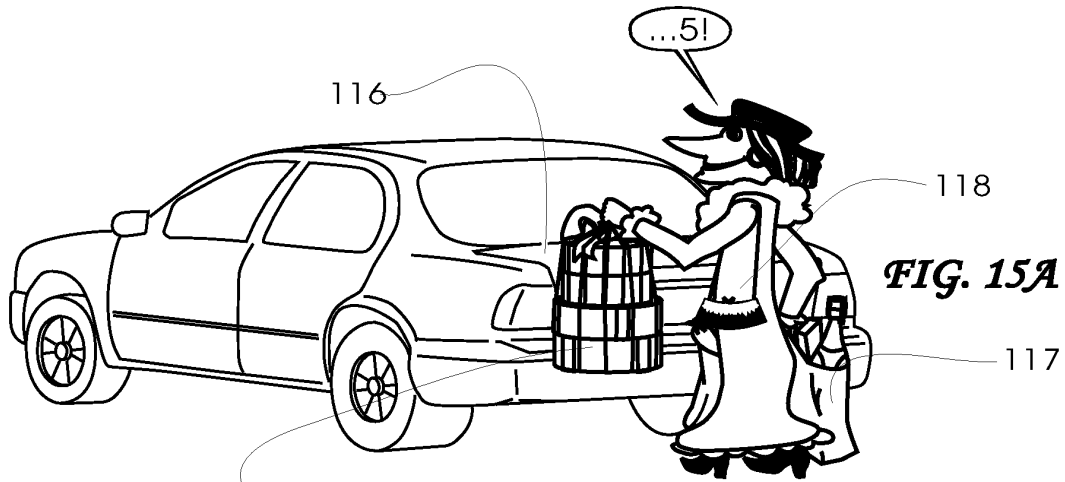


FIG. 14



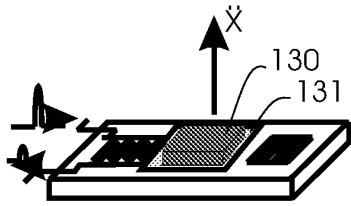


FIG. 17A

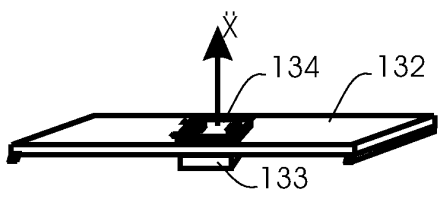
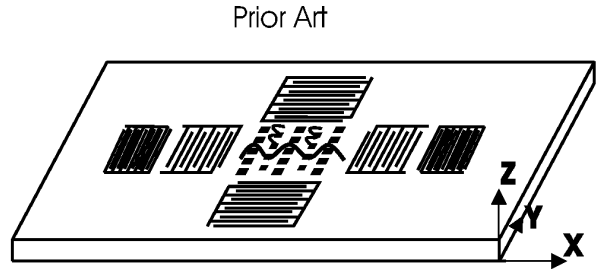


FIG. 17B

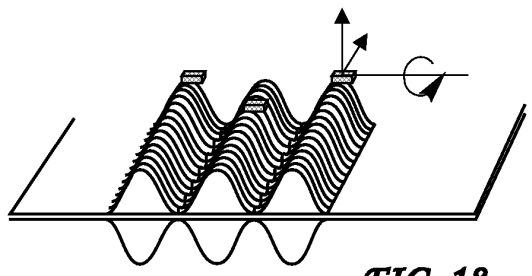


FIG. 18

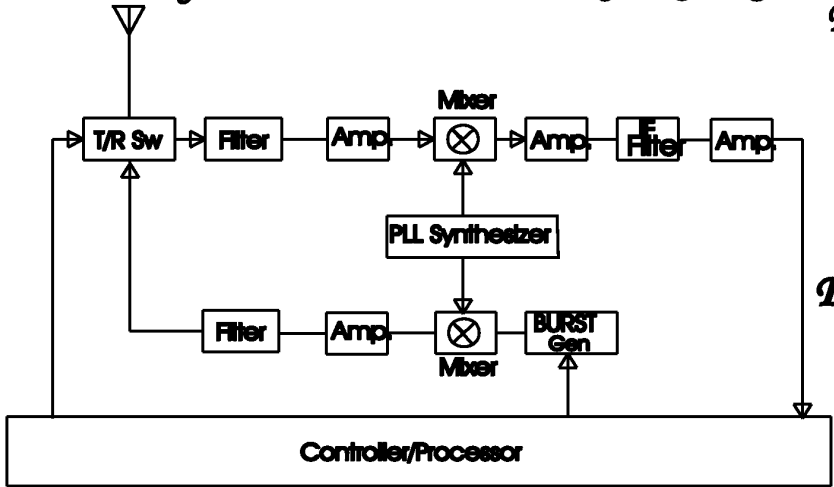


FIG. 19A

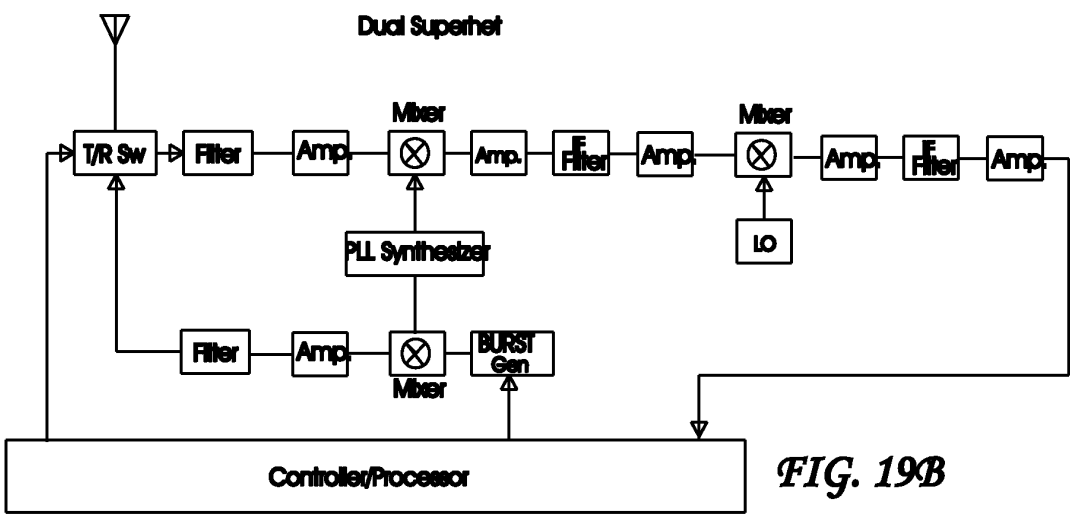


FIG. 19B

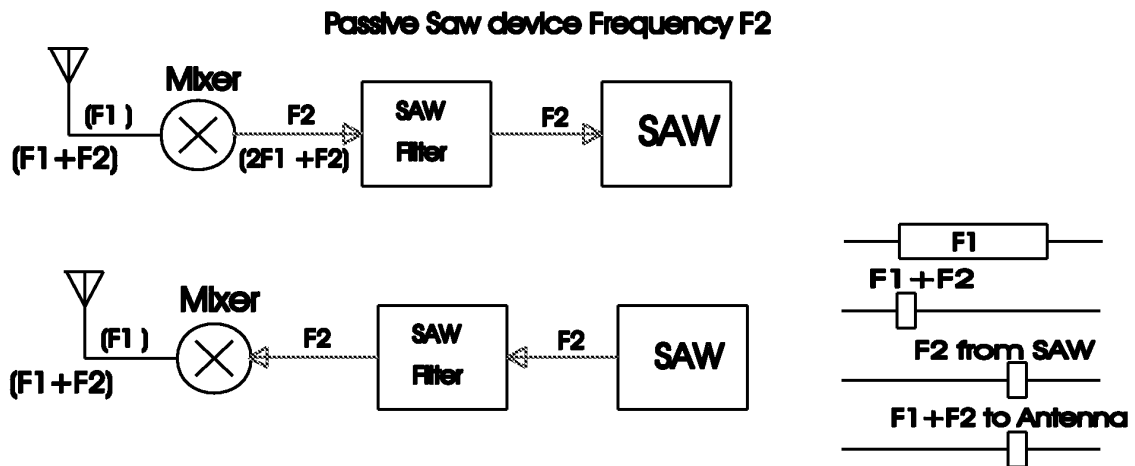
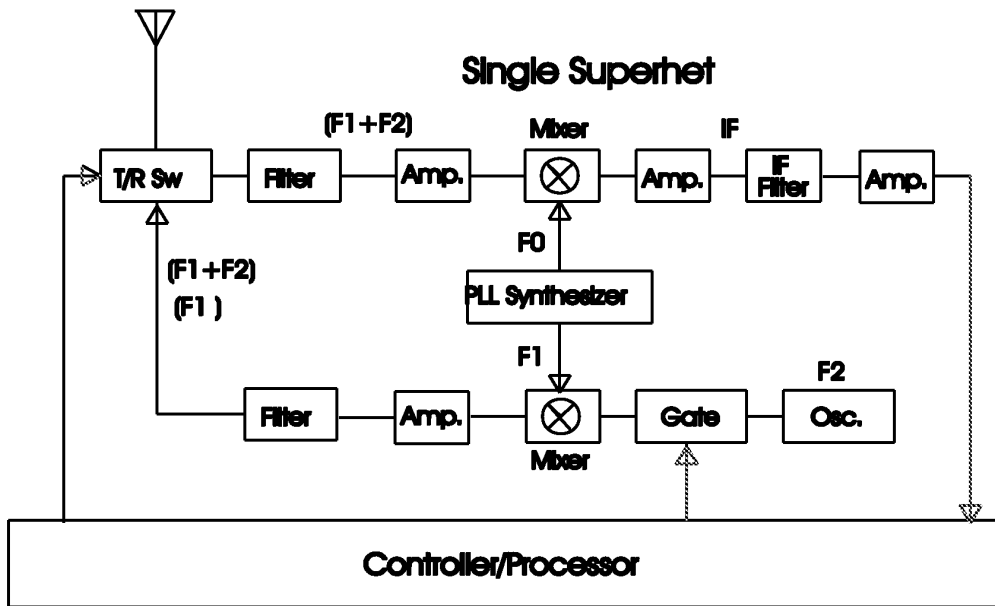
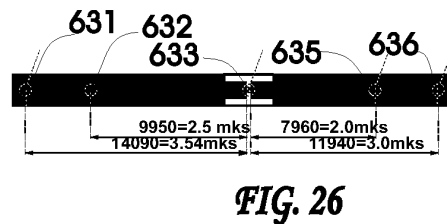
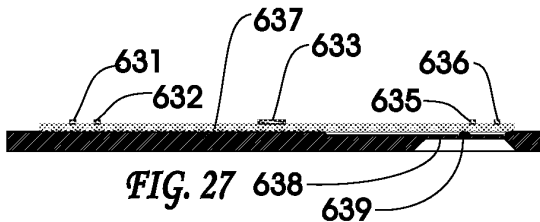
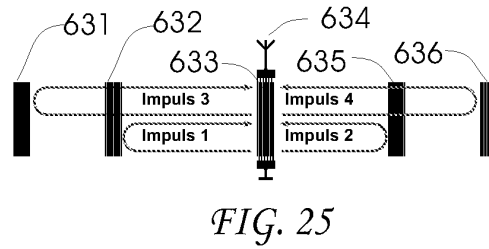
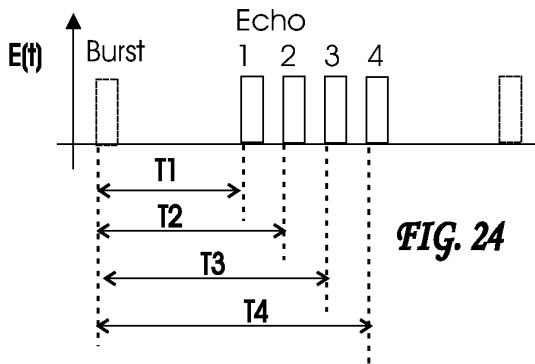
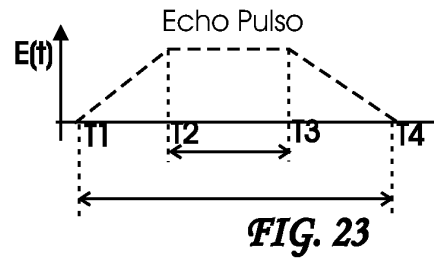
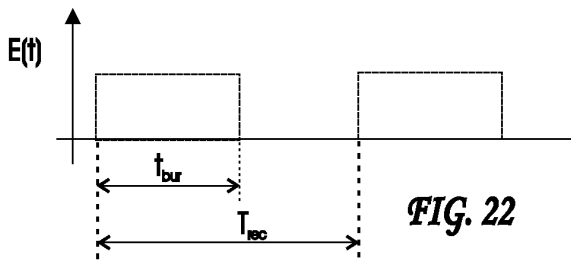
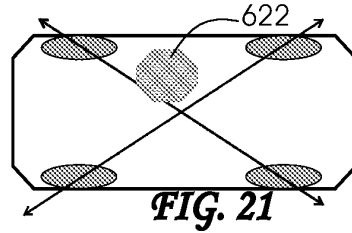
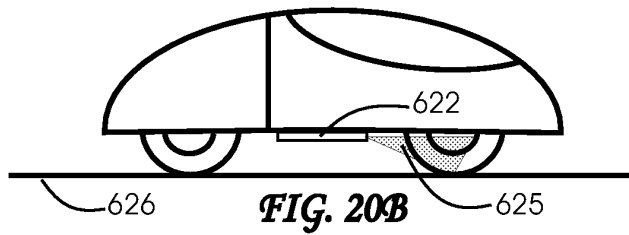
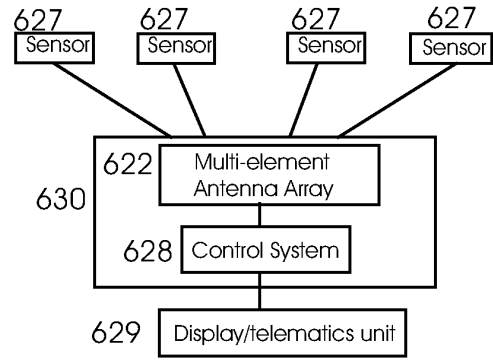
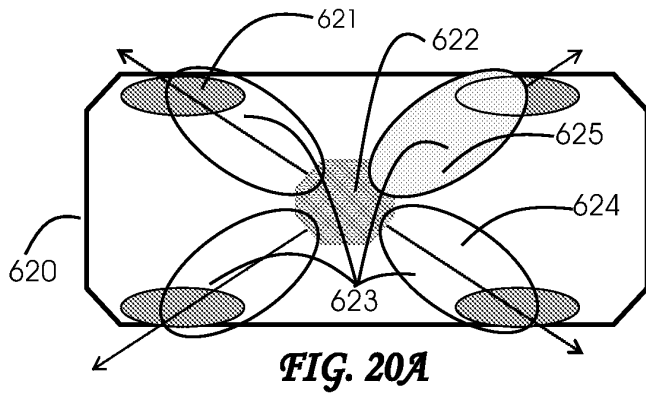
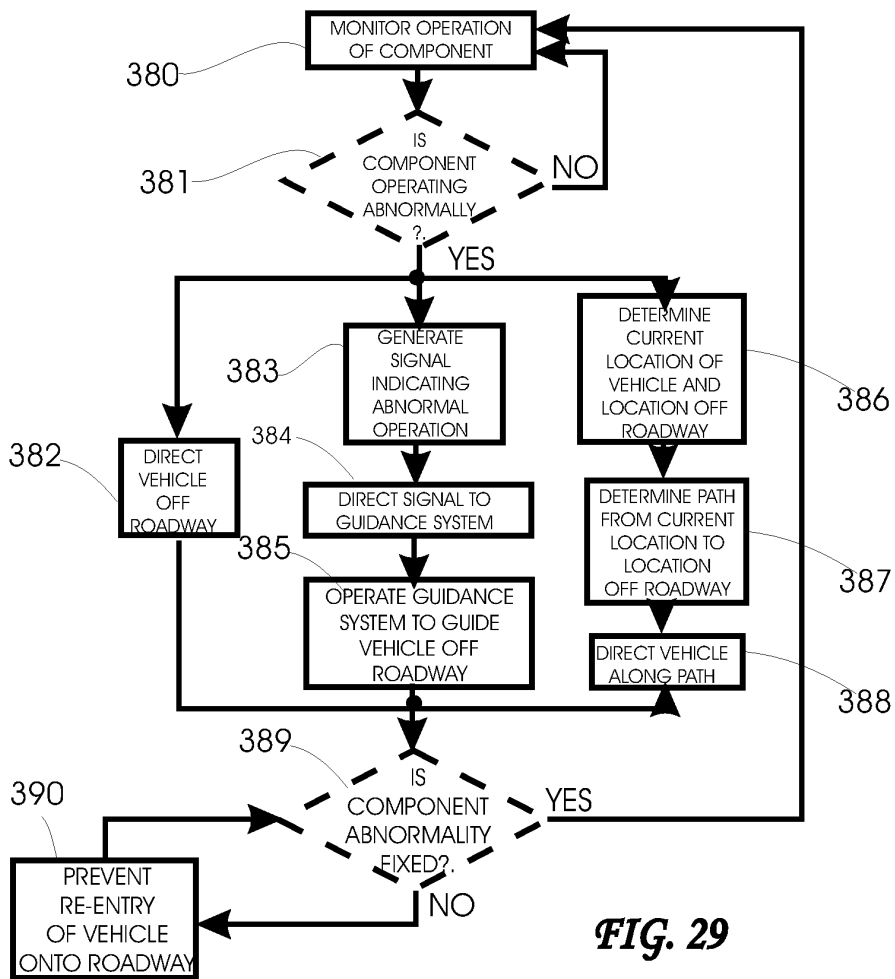
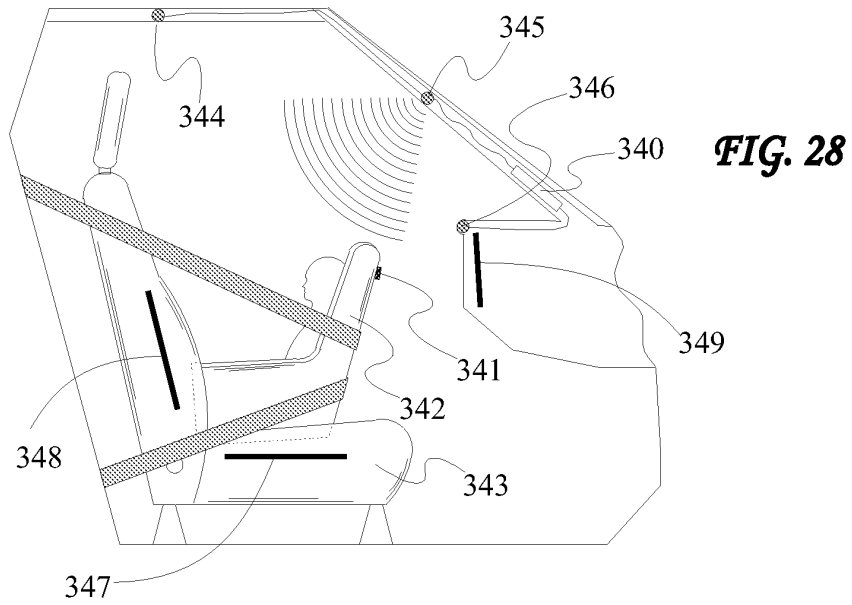


FIG. 19C





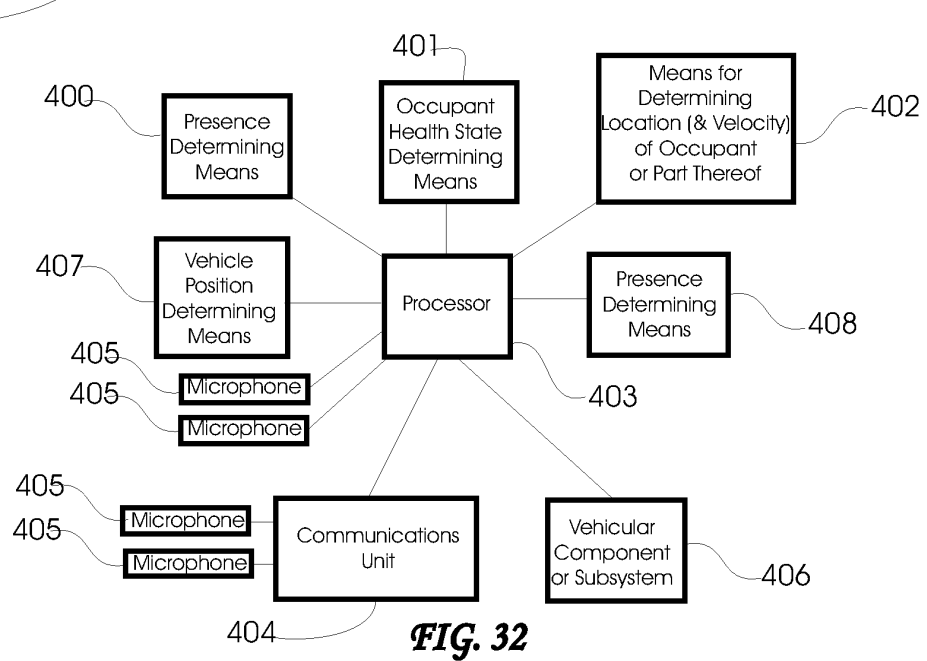
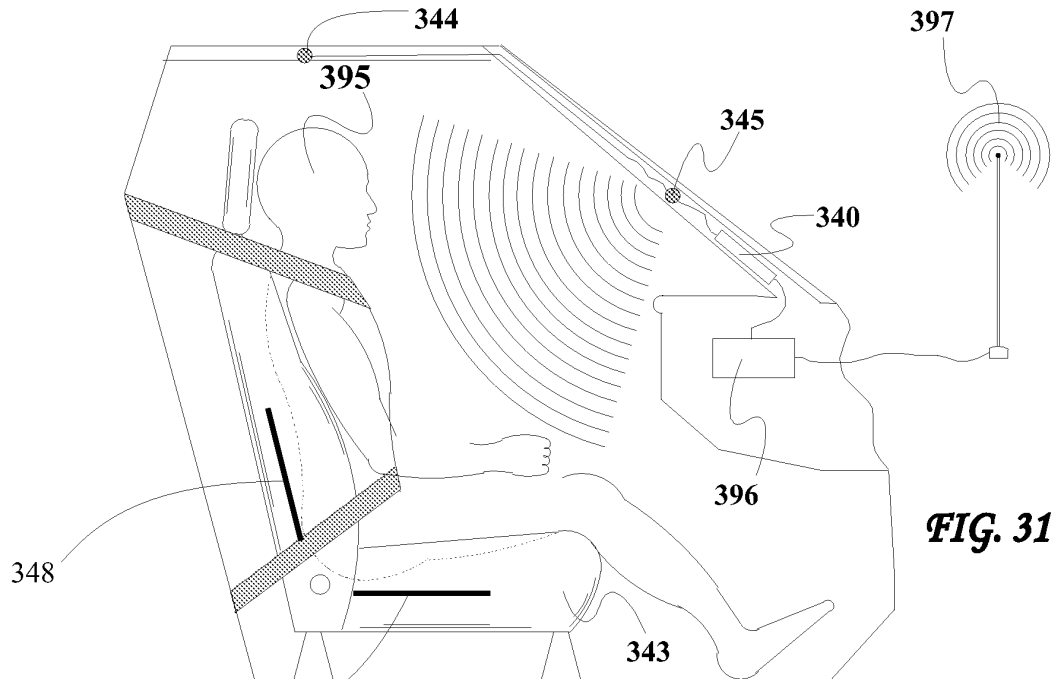
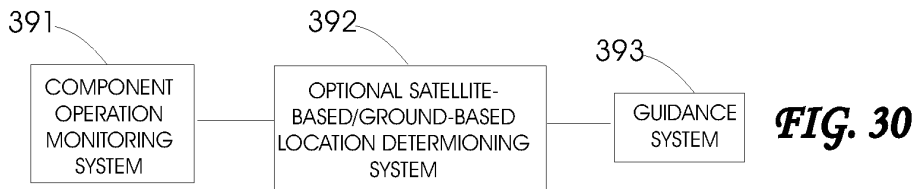


FIG. 33

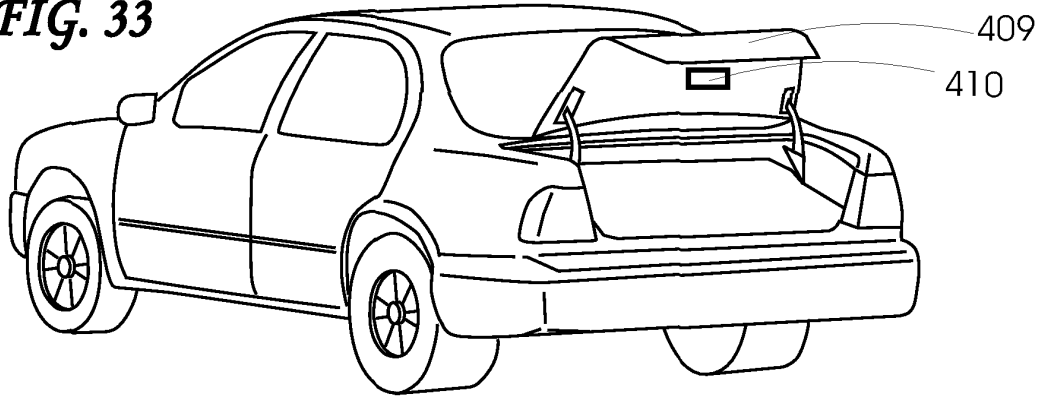
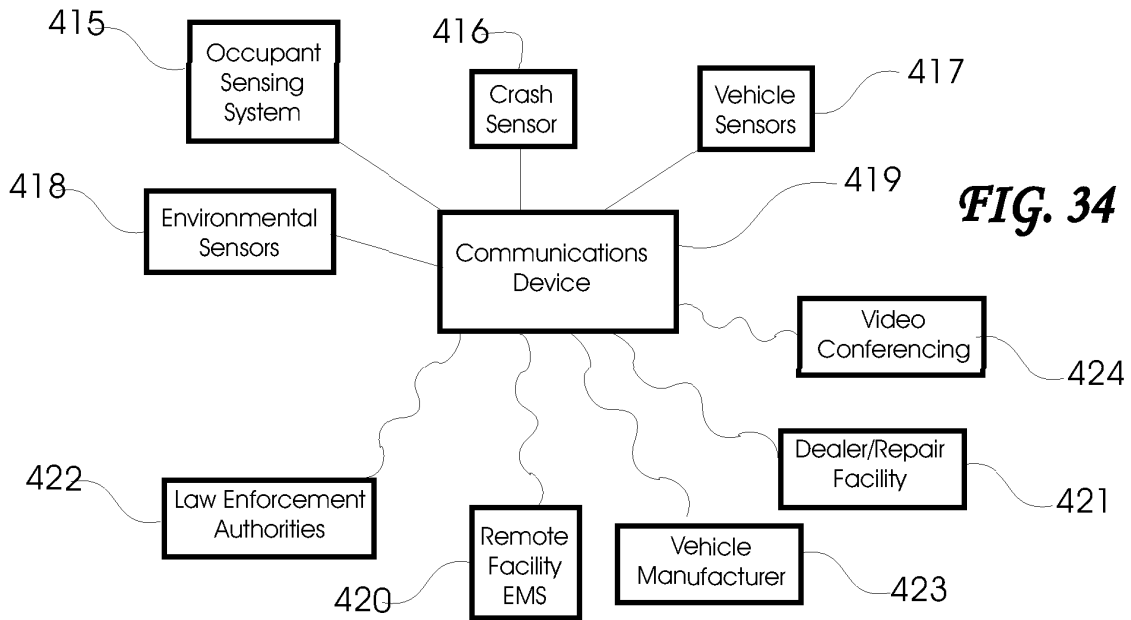
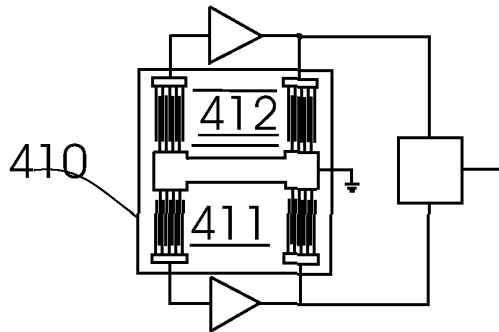


FIG. 33A



8/9/07

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	11/836,274
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APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I			SMALL ENTITY		OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
	(Column 1)	(Column 2)				
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)	RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
BASIC FEE (37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))				75		
SEARCH FEE (37 CFR 1.16(k), (l), or (m))				250		
EXAMINATION FEE (37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))				100		
TOTAL CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(j))	21	minus 20 =	X 25=	25	X 50=	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS (37 CFR 1.16(h))	4	minus 3 =	X 100=	100	X 200=	
APPLICATION SIZE FEE (37 CFR 1.16(s))	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$250 (\$125 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).					
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT (37 CFR 1.16(j))			N/A		N/A	
			TOTAL	550	TOTAL	

* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II					SMALL ENTITY		OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)					
AMENDMENT A	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	
Total (37 CFR 1.16(j))	*	Minus **	=	X =		X =		OR
Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus ***	=	X =		X =		OR
Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))								OR
FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))				N/A		N/A		OR
				TOTAL ADD'T FEE		TOTAL ADD'T FEE		OR

	(Column 1)	(Column 2)	(Column 3)					
AMENDMENT B	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	
Total (37 CFR 1.16(j))	*	Minus **	=	X =		X =		OR
Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus ***	=	X =		X =		OR
Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))								OR
FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))				N/A		N/A		OR
				TOTAL ADD'T FEE		TOTAL ADD'T FEE		OR

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.

** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".

*** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".

The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:				
Filing Date:				
Title of Invention:		Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods		
08/22/2007 HNGUYEN 00000021 500266 11836274 01 FC:2201 100.00 DA				
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:		David S. Breed		
Filer:		Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine		
Attorney Docket Number:		ATI-484		
Filed as Small Entity				
Utility Filing Fees				
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Basic Filing:				
Utility filing Fee (Electronic filing)	4011	1	75	75
Utility Search Fee	2111	1	250	250
Utility Examination Fee	2311	1	100	100
Pages:				
Claims:				
Claims in excess of 20	2202	1	25	25
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				



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Table with 7 columns: APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING or 371(c) DATE, GRP ART UNIT, FIL FEE REC'D, ATTY.DOCKET.NO, TOT CLAIMS, IND CLAIMS. Row 1: 11/836,274, 08/09/2007, 2624, 550, ATI-484, 21, 4

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

22846
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
11 SUNRISE PLAZA, SUITE 303
VALLEY STREAM, NY11580-6111

FILING RECEIPT

Date Mailed: 08/23/2007

Receipt is acknowledged of this non-provisional patent application. The application will be taken up for examination in due course. Applicant will be notified as to the results of the examination. Any correspondence concerning the application must include the following identification information: the U.S. APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING DATE, NAME OF APPLICANT, and TITLE OF INVENTION. Fees transmitted by check or draft are subject to collection. Please verify the accuracy of the data presented on this receipt. If an error is noted on this Filing Receipt, please write to the Office of Initial Patent Examination's Filing Receipt Corrections. Please provide a copy of this Filing Receipt with the changes noted thereon. If you received a "Notice to File Missing Parts" for this application, please submit any corrections to this Filing Receipt with your reply to the Notice. When the USPTO processes the reply to the Notice, the USPTO will generate another Filing Receipt incorporating the requested corrections

Applicant(s)

David S. Breed, Miami Beach, FL;

Assignment For Published Patent Application

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGIES INTERNATIONAL, INC., DENVER, NJ

Power of Attorney: The patent practitioners associated with Customer Number 22846

Domestic Priority data as claimed by applicant

This application is a CIP of 10/331,060 12/27/2002
which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
which is a CIP of 09/753,186 01/02/2001 PAT 6,484,080
which is a CIP of 09/137,918 08/20/1998 PAT 6,175,787
which is a CIP of 08/476,077 06/07/1995 PAT 5,809,437
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which is a CIP of 09/925,062 08/08/2001 PAT 6,733,036
which is a CIP of 09/356,314 07/16/1999 PAT 6,326,704
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which is a CIP of 11/220,139 09/06/2005 PAT 7,103,460
which is a CIP of 11/120,065 05/02/2005 ABN

Foreign Applications

If Required, Foreign Filing License Granted:

Projected Publication Date: To Be Determined - pending completion of Security Review

Non-Publication Request: No

Early Publication Request: No

** SMALL ENTITY **

Title

Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods

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CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

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Early Publication Request: No

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Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods

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Since the rights granted by a U.S. patent extend only throughout the territory of the United States and have no effect in a foreign country, an inventor who wishes patent protection in another country must apply for a patent in a specific country or in regional patent offices. Applicants may wish to consider the filing of an international application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). An international (PCT) application generally has the same effect as a regular national patent application in each PCT-member country. The PCT process **simplifies** the filing of patent applications on the same invention in member countries, but **does not result** in a grant of "an international patent" and does not eliminate the need of applicants to file additional documents and fees in countries where patent protection is desired.

Almost every country has its own patent law, and a person desiring a patent in a particular country must make an application for patent in that country in accordance with its particular laws. Since the laws of many countries differ in various respects from the patent law of the United States, applicants are advised to seek guidance from specific foreign countries to ensure that patent rights are not lost prematurely.

Applicants also are advised that in the case of inventions made in the United States, the Director of the USPTO must issue a license before applicants can apply for a patent in a foreign country. The filing of a U.S. patent application serves as a request for a foreign filing license. The application's filing receipt contains further information and guidance as to the status of applicant's license for foreign filing.

Applicants may wish to consult the USPTO booklet, "General Information Concerning Patents" (specifically, the section entitled "Treaties and Foreign Patents") for more information on timeframes and deadlines for filing foreign patent applications. The guide is available either by contacting the USPTO Contact Center at 800-786-9199, or it can be viewed on the USPTO website at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/doc/general/index.html>.

For information on preventing theft of your intellectual property (patents, trademarks and copyrights), you may wish to consult the U.S. Government website, <http://www.stopfakes.gov>. Part of a Department of Commerce initiative, this website includes self-help "toolkits" giving innovators guidance on how to protect intellectual property in specific countries such as China, Korea and Mexico. For questions regarding patent enforcement issues, applicants may call the U.S. Government hotline at 1-866-999-HALT (1-866-999-4158).

LICENSE FOR FOREIGN FILING UNDER

Title 35, United States Code, Section 184

Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 5.11 & 5.15

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NOT GRANTED

No license under 35 U.S.C. 184 has been granted at this time, if the phrase "IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED" DOES NOT appear on this form. Applicant may still petition for a license under 37 CFR 5.12, if a license is desired before the expiration of 6 months from the filing date of the application. If 6 months has lapsed from the filing date of this application and the licensee has not received any indication of a secrecy order under 35 U.S.C. 181, the licensee may foreign file the application pursuant to 37 CFR 5.15(b).


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
 United States Patent and Trademark Office
 Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
 P.O. Box 1450
 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
 www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING OR 371 (c) DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTORNEY DOCKET NUMBER
11/836,274	08/09/2007	David S. Breed	ATI-484

22846
 BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
 11 SUNRISE PLAZA, SUITE 303
 VALLEY STREAM, NY 11580-6111

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935
FORMALITIES
LETTER

Date Mailed: 08/24/2007

NOTICE TO FILE CORRECTED APPLICATION PAPERS

Filing Date Granted

An application number and filing date have been accorded to this application. The application is informal since it does not comply with the regulations for the reason(s) indicated below. Applicant is given TWO MONTHS from the date of this Notice within which to correct the informalities indicated below. Extensions of time may be obtained by filing a petition accompanied by the extension fee under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a):

The required item(s) identified below must be timely submitted to avoid abandonment:

- Replacement drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.84 and 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required. The drawings submitted are not acceptable because:
 - The drawings submitted to the Office are not electronically reproducible because portions of figures 3, 25 - 27 are missing and/or blurry.

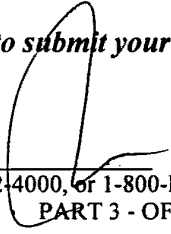
Applicant is cautioned that correction of the above items may cause the specification and drawings page count to exceed 100 pages. If the specification and drawings exceed 100 pages, applicant will need to submit the required application size fee.

Replies should be mailed to: Mail Stop Missing Parts
 Commissioner for Patents
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 Alexandria VA 22313-1450

Registered users of EFS-Web may alternatively submit their reply to this notice via EFS-Web.
<https://sportal.uspto.gov/authenticate/AuthenticateUserLocalEPF.html>

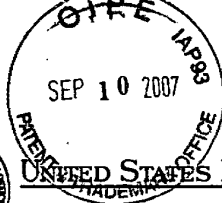
For more information about EFS-Web please call the USPTO Electronic Business Center at 1-866-217-9197 or visit our website at <http://www.uspto.gov/ebc>.

If you are not using EFS-Web to submit your reply, you must include a copy of this notice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line and a short vertical stroke.

Office of Initial Patent Examination (571) 272-4000, or 1-800-PTO-9199
PART 3 - OFFICE COPY

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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 www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING OR 371 (c) DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTORNEY DOCKET NUMBER
11/836,274	08/09/2007	David S. Breed	ATI-484

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

FORMALITIES
 LETTER

22846
 BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
 11 SUNRISE PLAZA, SUITE 303
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Date Mailed: 08/24/2007

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 - The drawings submitted to the Office are not electronically reproducible because portions of figures 3, 25 - 27 are missing and/or blurry.

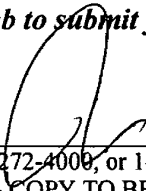
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If you are not using EFS-Web to submit your reply, you must include a copy of this notice.

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Office of Initial Patent Examination (571) 272-4000, or 1-800-PTO-9199

PART 2 - COPY TO BE RETURNED WITH RESPONSE



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 2624

Re: Application of: David S. Breed

Serial No.: 11/836,274

Filed: August 9, 2007

For: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods

Confirmation No.: 2935

Customer No.: 22846

RESPONSE TO NOTICE TO FILE CORRECTED APPLICATION PAPERS

Mail Stop Missing Parts
 Commissioner for Patents
 P.O. Box 1450
 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

September 6, 2007

Sir:

In response to the Notice to File Corrected Application Papers dated August 24, 2007 (a copy of which is enclosed), submitted herewith are replacement sheets of drawings including Figs. 3, 25, 26 and 27. Figs. 3, 25, 26 and 27 have been revised to ensure that no portion of the drawings is missing or blurry. Also submitted herewith are replacement sheets including Figs. 16B, 17A, 19A, 19B and 19C in which linework has been revised and/or text enlarged.

No new matter is introduced by the presentation of the replacement sheets of drawings.

FIRST CLASS MAIL CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in a postage-paid envelope with sufficient postage addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on September 6, 2007.

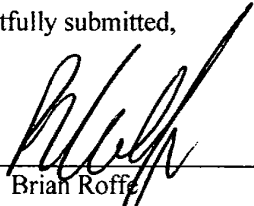
Harry Sealine

U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/836,274
Response to Notice to File Corrected Application Papers dated August 24, 2007
Response dated September 6, 2007

Upon entry of the replacement sheets of drawings submitted herewith, the specification and drawings will have the same number of pages as the originally filed specification and drawings so that no additional application size fee is due. However, if it is deemed that a fee is required for entry of this response, authorization is given to charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 50-0266.

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____


Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

Enclosures

Copy of Notice to File Corrected Application Papers
Five (5) sheets of replacement drawings



Replacement Sheet

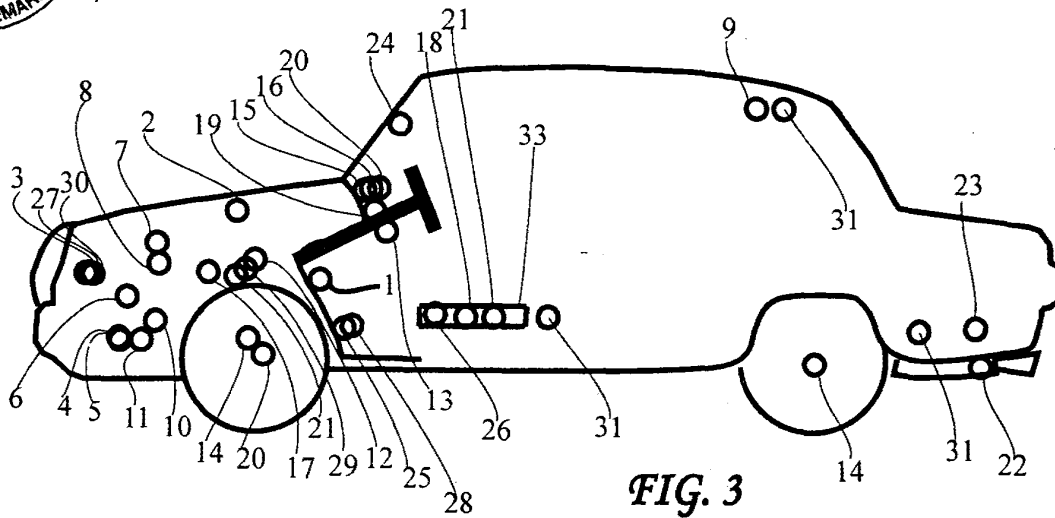


FIG. 3

1	CRASH SENSOR
2	MICROPHONES
3	COOLANT THERMOMETER
4	OIL PRESSURE SENSOR
5	OIL LEVEL SENSOR
6	AIR FLOW METER
7	VOLTMETER
8	AMMETER
9	HUMIDITY SENSOR
10	ENGINE KNOCK SENSOR
11	OIL TURBIDITY SENSOR
12	THROTTLE POSITION SENSOR
13	STIERING TORQUE SENSOR
14	WHEEL SPEED SENSOR
15	TACHOMETER
16	SPEEDOMETER
17	OXYGEN SENSOR
18	PITCH & ROLL SENSOR
19	CLOCK
20	ODOMETER
21	PWR STR PRESSURE SENSOR
22	POLUTION SENSOR
23	FUEL GAGE
24	CABIN THEROMETER
25	TRANSMISSION FLD LVL SNSR
26	YAW SENSOR
27	COOLANT LEVEL SENSOR
28	TRANS. FLUID TURBIDITY
29	BREAK PRESSURE SENSOR
30	COOLANT PRESSURE SENSOR
31	ACCELEROMETERS

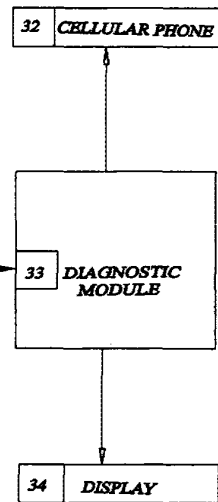


FIG. 4

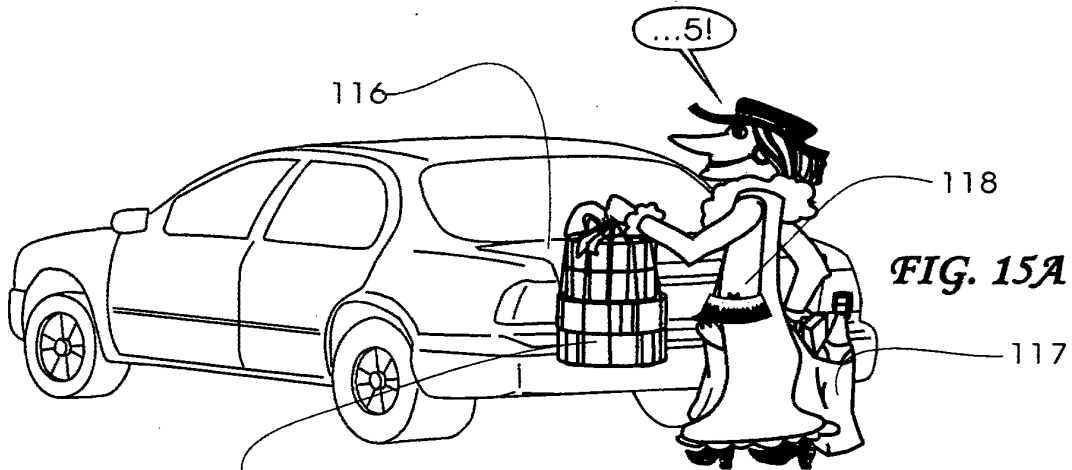


FIG. 15A



FIG. 15B

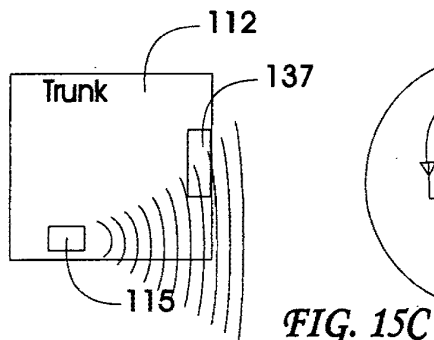


FIG. 15C

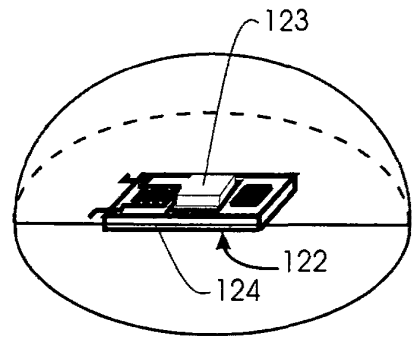
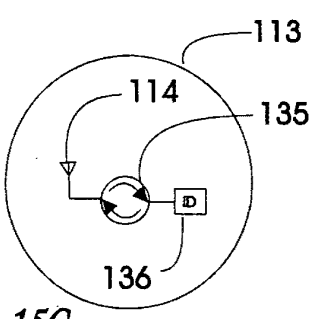


FIG. 16B

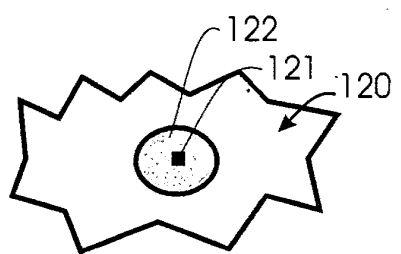


FIG. 16A

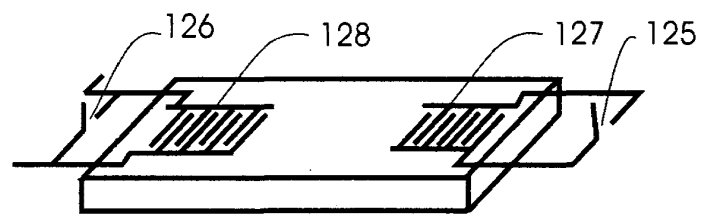


FIG. 16C

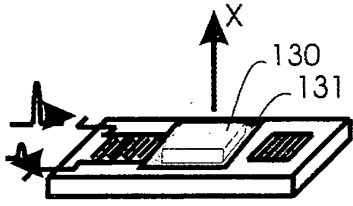


FIG. 17A

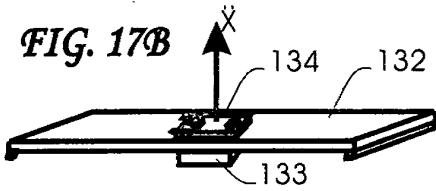
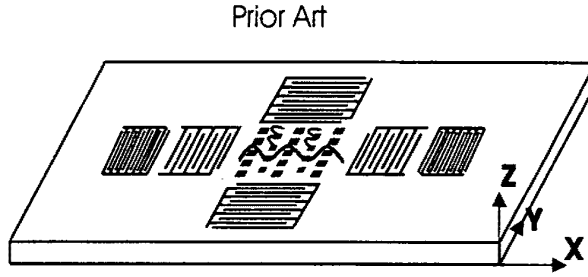


FIG. 17B

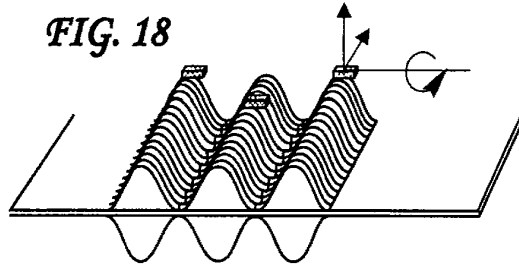


FIG. 18

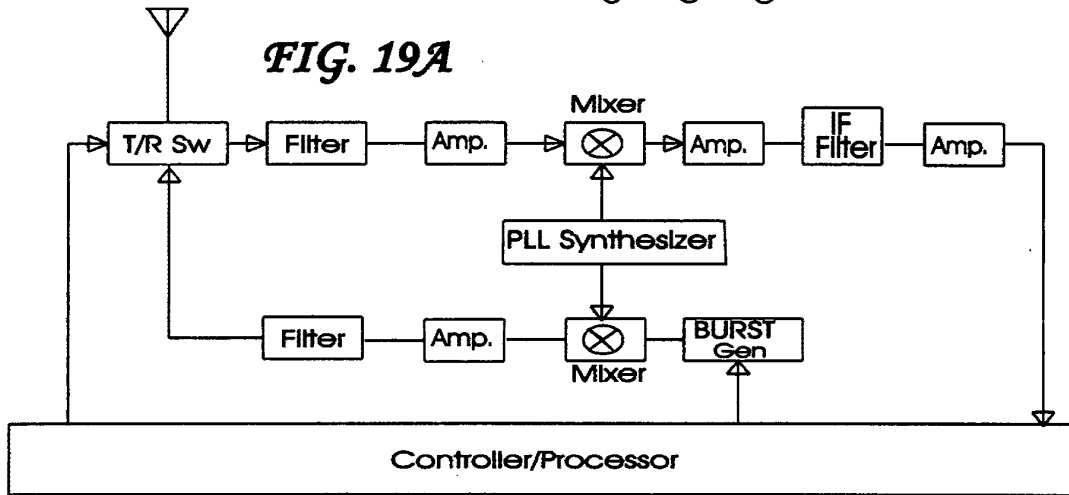


FIG. 19A

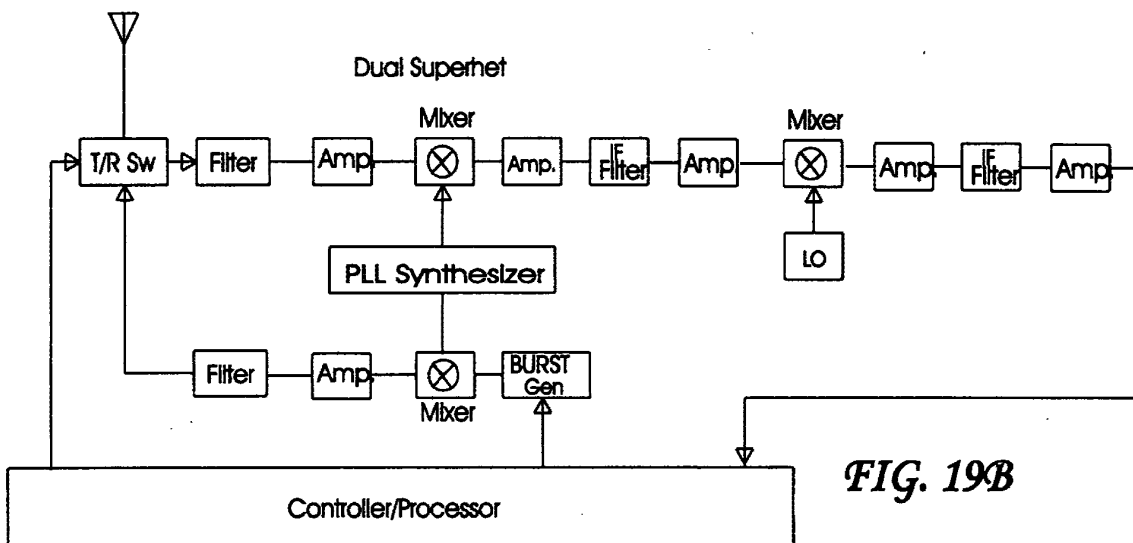


FIG. 19B

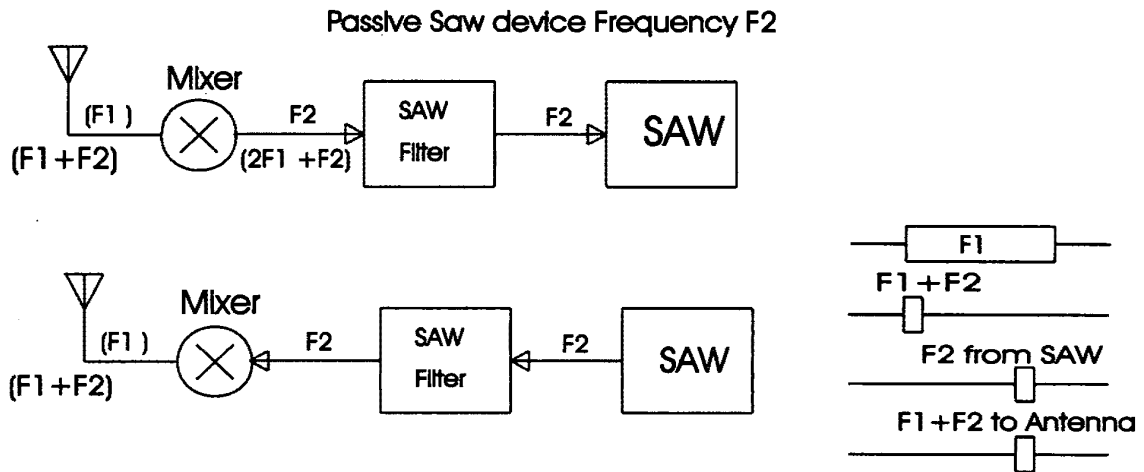
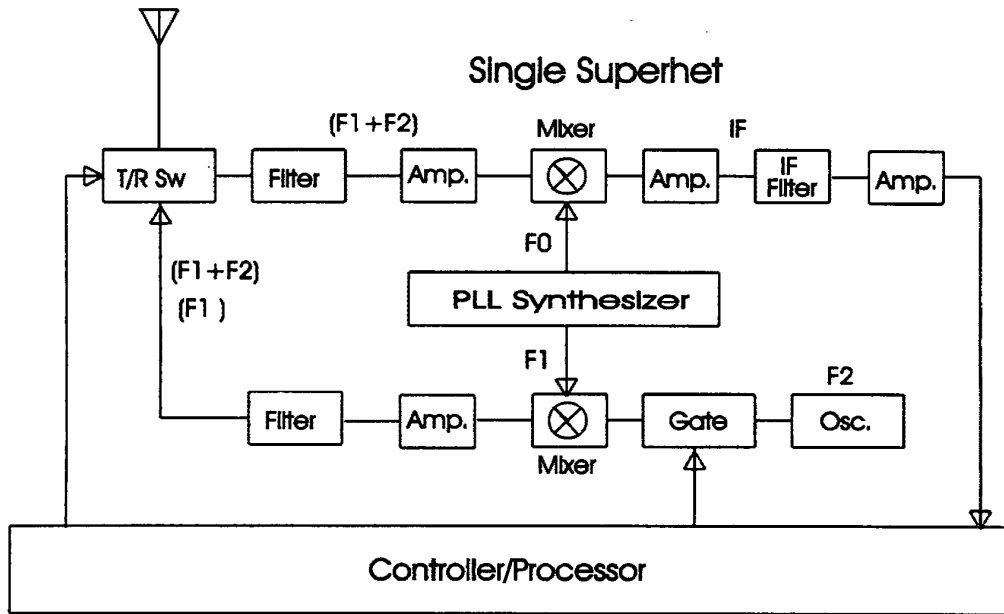
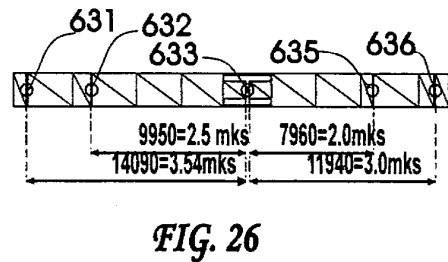
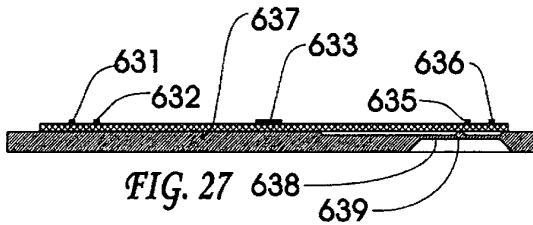
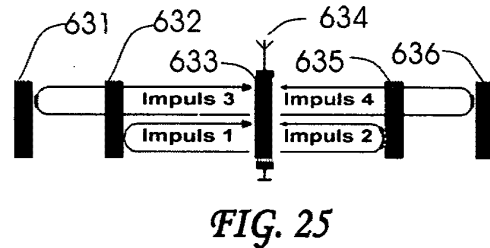
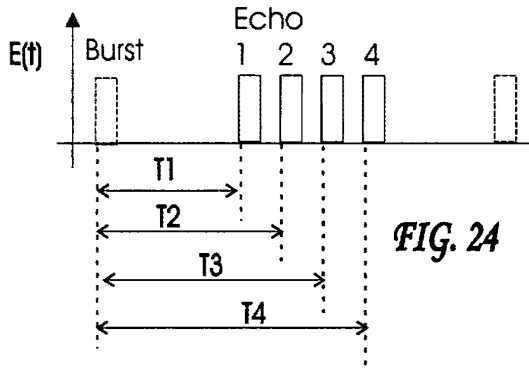
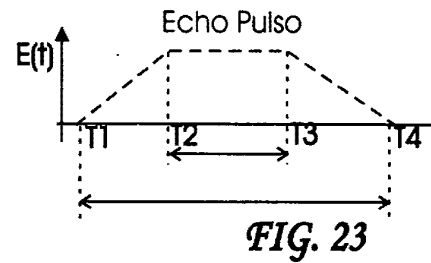
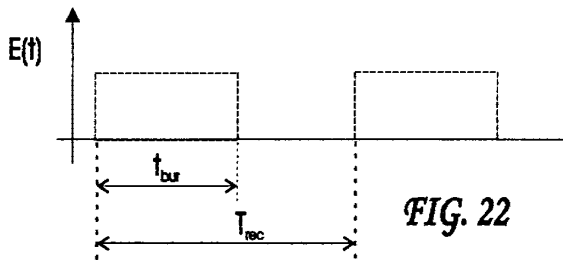
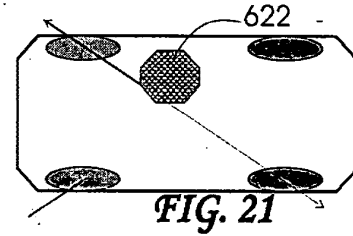
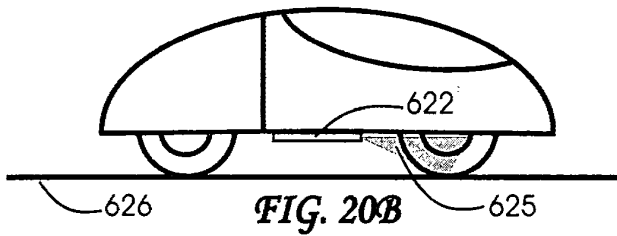
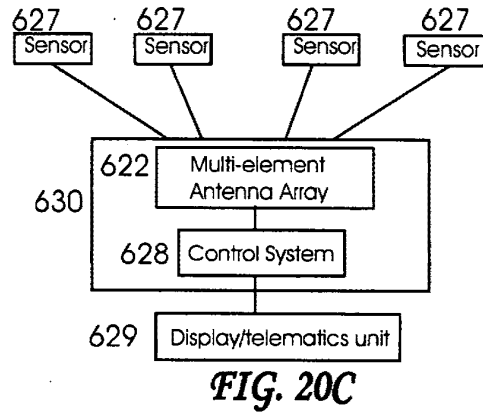
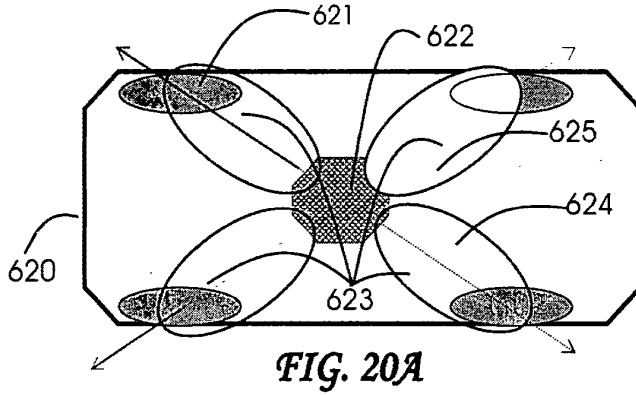


FIG. 19C





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Table with 7 columns: APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING or 371(c) DATE, GRP ART UNIT, FIL FEE REC'D, ATTY.DOCKET.NO, TOT CLAIMS, IND CLAIMS. Row 1: 11/836,274, 08/09/2007, 2624, 550, ATI-484, 21, 4

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

22846
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
11 SUNRISE PLAZA, SUITE 303
VALLEY STREAM, NY11580-6111

UPDATED FILING RECEIPT

Date Mailed: 09/24/2007

Receipt is acknowledged of this non-provisional patent application. The application will be taken up for examination in due course. Applicant will be notified as to the results of the examination. Any correspondence concerning the application must include the following identification information: the U.S. APPLICATION NUMBER, FILING DATE, NAME OF APPLICANT, and TITLE OF INVENTION. Fees transmitted by check or draft are subject to collection. Please verify the accuracy of the data presented on this receipt. If an error is noted on this Filing Receipt, please write to the Office of Initial Patent Examination's Filing Receipt Corrections. Please provide a copy of this Filing Receipt with the changes noted thereon. If you received a "Notice to File Missing Parts" for this application, please submit any corrections to this Filing Receipt with your reply to the Notice. When the USPTO processes the reply to the Notice, the USPTO will generate another Filing Receipt incorporating the requested corrections

Applicant(s)

David S. Breed, Miami Beach, FL;

Assignment For Published Patent Application

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGIES INTERNATIONAL, INC., DENVER, NJ

Power of Attorney: The patent practitioners associated with Customer Number 22846

Domestic Priority data as claimed by applicant

This application is a CIP of 10/331,060 12/27/2002
which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
which is a CIP of 09/753,186 01/02/2001 PAT 6,484,080
which is a CIP of 09/137,918 08/20/1998 PAT 6,175,787
which is a CIP of 08/476,077 06/07/1995 PAT 5,809,437
and said 10/188,673 07/03/2002
is a CIP of 10/174,709 06/19/2002 PAT 6,735,506
which is a CIP of 09/753,186 01/02/2001 PAT 6,484,080
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 10/638,743 08/11/2003
which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
and is a CIP of 10/330,938 12/27/2002 PAT 6,823,244
which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 10/940,881 09/13/2004
which is a CIP of 10/613,453 07/03/2003 PAT 6,850,824
which is a CON of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
and said 10/940,881 09/13/2004
is a CIP of 10/805,903 03/22/2004 PAT 7,050,897
which is a CIP of 10/174,709 06/19/2002 PAT 6,735,506

and is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 11/082,739 03/17/2005
which is a CIP of 10/701,361 11/04/2003 PAT 6,988,026
which is a CIP of 09/925,062 08/08/2001 PAT 6,733,036
which is a CIP of 09/356,314 07/16/1999 PAT 6,326,704
which is a CIP of 09/137,918 08/20/1998 PAT 6,175,787
and said 09/925,062 08/08/2001
is a CIP of 09/767,020 01/23/2001 PAT 6,533,316
which is a CIP of 09/356,314 07/16/1999 PAT 6,326,704
and said 10/701,361 11/04/2003
is a CIP of 10/043,557 01/11/2002 PAT 6,905,135
which is a CIP of 09/925,062 08/08/2001 PAT 6,733,036
and said 10/701,361 11/04/2003
is a CIP of 10/174,709 06/19/2002 PAT 6,735,506
and is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
and is a CIP of 10/330,938 12/27/2002 PAT 6,823,244
and is a CIP of 10/613,453 07/03/2003 PAT 6,850,824
and said 11/082,739 03/17/2005
is a CIP of 11/039,129 01/19/2005 PAT 7,082,359
which is a DIV of 10/701,361 11/04/2003 PAT 6,988,026
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 11/131,623 05/18/2005
which is a CIP of 10/043,557 01/11/2002 PAT 6,905,135
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 11/421,500 06/01/2006
which is a CIP of 11/220,139 09/06/2005 PAT 7,103,460
which is a CIP of 11/120,065 05/02/2005 ABN
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 11/421,554 06/01/2006
and is a CIP of 11/422,240 06/05/2006
which is a CIP of 11/220,139 09/06/2005 PAT 7,103,460
which is a CIP of 11/120,065 05/02/2005 ABN
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 11/464,288 08/14/2006
which is a CIP of 10/931,288 08/31/2004 PAT 7,164,117
which is a CIP of 10/613,453 07/03/2003 PAT 6,850,824
and is a CIP of 10/805,903 03/22/2004 PAT 7,050,897
and said 11/464,288 08/14/2006
is a CIP of 11/220,139 09/06/2005 PAT 7,103,460
This application 11/836,274
is a CIP of 11/470,061 09/05/2006
which is a CIP of 11/220,139 09/06/2005 PAT 7,103,460
which is a CIP of 11/120,065 05/02/2005 ABN

Foreign Applications

If Required, Foreign Filing License Granted:

Projected Publication Date: To Be Determined - pending completion of Security Review

Non-Publication Request: No

Early Publication Request: No

** SMALL ENTITY **

Title

Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods

PROTECTING YOUR INVENTION OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Since the rights granted by a U.S. patent extend only throughout the territory of the United States and have no effect in a foreign country, an inventor who wishes patent protection in another country must apply for a patent in a specific country or in regional patent offices. Applicants may wish to consider the filing of an international application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). An international (PCT) application generally has the same effect as a regular national patent application in each PCT-member country. The PCT process **simplifies** the filing of patent applications on the same invention in member countries, but **does not result** in a grant of "an international patent" and does not eliminate the need of applicants to file additional documents and fees in countries where patent protection is desired.

Almost every country has its own patent law, and a person desiring a patent in a particular country must make an application for patent in that country in accordance with its particular laws. Since the laws of many countries differ in various respects from the patent law of the United States, applicants are advised to seek guidance from specific foreign countries to ensure that patent rights are not lost prematurely.

Applicants also are advised that in the case of inventions made in the United States, the Director of the USPTO must issue a license before applicants can apply for a patent in a foreign country. The filing of a U.S. patent application serves as a request for a foreign filing license. The application's filing receipt contains further information and guidance as to the status of applicant's license for foreign filing.

Applicants may wish to consult the USPTO booklet, "General Information Concerning Patents" (specifically, the section entitled "Treaties and Foreign Patents") for more information on timeframes and deadlines for filing foreign patent applications. The guide is available either by contacting the USPTO Contact Center at 800-786-9199, or it can be viewed on the USPTO website at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/doc/general/index.html>.

For information on preventing theft of your intellectual property (patents, trademarks and copyrights), you may wish to consult the U.S. Government website, <http://www.stopfakes.gov>. Part of a Department of Commerce initiative, this website includes self-help "toolkits" giving innovators guidance on how to protect intellectual property in specific countries such as China, Korea and Mexico. For questions regarding patent enforcement issues, applicants may call the U.S. Government hotline at 1-866-999-HALT (1-866-999-4158).

LICENSE FOR FOREIGN FILING UNDER

Title 35, United States Code, Section 184

Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 5.11 & 5.15

GRANTED

The applicant has been granted a license under 35 U.S.C. 184, if the phrase "IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED" followed by a date appears on this form. Such licenses are issued in all applications where the conditions for issuance of a license have been met, regardless of whether or not a license may be required as set forth in 37 CFR 5.15. The scope and limitations of this license are set forth in 37 CFR 5.15(a) unless an earlier license has been issued under 37 CFR 5.15(b). The license is subject to revocation upon written notification. The date indicated is the effective date of the license, unless an earlier license of similar scope has been granted under 37 CFR 5.13 or 5.14.

This license is to be retained by the licensee and may be used at any time on or after the effective date thereof unless it is revoked. This license is automatically transferred to any related applications(s) filed under 37 CFR 1.53(d). This license is not retroactive.

The grant of a license does not in any way lessen the responsibility of a licensee for the security of the

subject matter as imposed by any Government contract or the provisions of existing laws relating to espionage and the national security or the export of technical data. Licensees should apprise themselves of current regulations especially with respect to certain countries, of other agencies, particularly the Office of Defense Trade Controls, Department of State (with respect to Arms, Munitions and Implements of War (22 CFR 121-128)); the Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce (15 CFR parts 730-774); the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of Treasury (31 CFR Parts 500+) and the Department of Energy.

NOT GRANTED

No license under 35 U.S.C. 184 has been granted at this time, if the phrase "IF REQUIRED, FOREIGN FILING LICENSE GRANTED" DOES NOT appear on this form. Applicant may still petition for a license under 37 CFR 5.12, if a license is desired before the expiration of 6 months from the filing date of the application. If 6 months has lapsed from the filing date of this application and the licensee has not received any indication of a secrecy order under 35 U.S.C. 181, the licensee may foreign file the application pursuant to 37 CFR 5.15(b).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ACCESS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / SECRECY ORDER RECOMMENDATION
FOR PATENT APPLICATION

Application Serial No: DP11836274 Filing Date: Date Referred: 09/11/2007

I hereby acknowledge that the Department of Defense reviewers has inspected this application in administration of 35 USC 181 on behalf of the Agencies/Commands specified below. DoD reviewers will not divulge any information from this application for any purpose other than administration of 35 USC 181.

Defense Agency	Recommendation	Reviewer Name	Date Reviewed
Army	Secrecy Not Recommended	Herbert Rose	02/13/2008
Navy	Secrecy Not Recommended	Lawana Brady	10/16/2007

<i>Type of Recommendations:</i> <i>SNR: Secrecy Not Recommended</i> <i>SR: Secrecy Recommended</i> <i>NC: No Comment</i>
--

Instructions to Reviewers:

1. All DoD personnel reviewing this application will be listed on this form regardless of whether they are making a secrecy order recommendation.
2. This form will be forwarded to USPTO once all assigned DoD entities have provided their secrecy order recommendation.

Time for Completion of Review:

Pursuant to 35 USC 184, the subject matter of this applicaiton may be filed in a foreign country for the purposed of filing a patent application without a license anytime after the expriation of six (6) months from filing date unless the application becomes the subject of a secrecy order.

<i>The USPTO publishes patent application at 18 months from the earliest claimed filing date. The USPTO will delay the publication of a patent application made available to a defense agency under 35 USC 181 until no earlier than 6 months from the filing date or 90 days from the date of referral to that agency. This application will be cleared for publication 6 months from the filing date or 90 days from the above Date Referred, whichever is later, unless a response is is provided to the USPTO regarding the necessary recommendations as to the imposition of a secrecy order.</i>
--

DoD Completion of Review: Final Forwarded to USPTO: 02/13/2008 By: Oksana Nesterczuk
--



APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING OR 371(c) DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTY. DOCKET NO./TITLE
11/836,274	08/09/2007	David S. Breed	ATI-484

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

22846
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
11 SUNRISE PLAZA, SUITE 303
VALLEY STREAM, NY11580-6111

Date Mailed. 03/13/2008

NOTICE OF NEW OR REVISED PROJECTED PUBLICATION DATE

The above-identified application has a new or revised projected publication date. The current projected publication date for this application is 06/19/2008. If this is a new projected publication date (there was no previous projected publication date), the application has been cleared by Licensing & Review or a secrecy order has been rescinded and the application is now in the publication queue.

If this is a revised projected publication date (one that is different from a previously communicated projected publication date), the publication date has been revised due to processing delays in the USPTO or the abandonment and subsequent revival of an application. The application is anticipated to be published on a date that is more than six weeks different from the originally-projected publication date.

More detailed publication information is available through the private side of Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) System. The direct link to access PAIR is currently <http://pair.uspto.gov>. Further assistance in electronically accessing the publication, or about PAIR, is available by calling the Patent Electronic Business Center at 1-866-217-9197.

Questions relating to this Notice should be directed to the Office of Patent Publication at 1-888-786-0101.

PART 1 - ATTORNEY/APPLICANT COPY



APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING OR 371(c) DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTY. DOCKET NO./TITLE
11/836,274	08/09/2007	David S. Breed	ATI-484

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

22846
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
11 SUNRISE PLAZA, SUITE 303
VALLEY STREAM, NY11580-6111

Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods

Publication No. US-2008-0147265-A1

Publication Date: 06/19/2008

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION OF APPLICATION

The above-identified application will be electronically published as a patent application publication pursuant to 37 CFR 1.211, et seq. The patent application publication number and publication date are set forth above.

The publication may be accessed through the USPTO's publically available Searchable Databases via the Internet at www.uspto.gov. The direct link to access the publication is currently <http://www.uspto.gov/patft/>.

The publication process established by the Office does not provide for mailing a copy of the publication to applicant. A copy of the publication may be obtained from the Office upon payment of the appropriate fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.19(a)(1). Orders for copies of patent application publications are handled by the USPTO's Office of Public Records. The Office of Public Records can be reached by telephone at (703) 308-9726 or (800) 972-6382, by facsimile at (703) 305-8759, by mail addressed to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Office of Public Records, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 or via the Internet.

In addition, information on the status of the application, including the mailing date of Office actions and the dates of receipt of correspondence filed in the Office, may also be accessed via the Internet through the Patent Electronic Business Center at www.uspto.gov using the public side of the Patent Application Information and Retrieval (PAIR) system. The direct link to access this status information is currently <http://pair.uspto.gov/>. Prior to publication, such status information is confidential and may only be obtained by applicant using the private side of PAIR.

Further assistance in electronically accessing the publication, or about PAIR, is available by calling the Patent Electronic Business Center at 1-866-217-9197.

Pre-Grant Publication Division, 703-605-4283

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 2624

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: 11/836,274
Confirmation No.: 2935
Filing Date: August 9, 2007
Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

September 17, 2008

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits documents from litigation involving U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,484,080 and 6,850,824, both of which issued from parent applications of the instant application, namely Defendant's Invalidity Contentions of claims of each patent and the references mentioned therein, if not already of record.

Applicant also notifies the Examiner of a terminated reexamination proceeding for the '080 patent, i.e., reexamination proceeding Control No. 90/008,346.

Applicant also identifies pending, related U.S. patent applications as follows, with a publication number if published:

1. Ser. No. 11/421,500 (20060212194);
2. Ser. No. 11/464,288 (20070005202);
3. Ser. No. 11/833,033 (20080046149);
4. Ser. No. 11/833,052 (20080040005);
5. Ser. No. 11/836,341 (20080161989);

U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/836,274
Information Disclosure Statement filed Sep. 17, 2008

6. Ser. No. 11/930,954;
7. Ser. No. 12/034,779 (20080147271); and
8. Ser. No. 12/034,832.

An Office Action on the merits has not been received to date and therefore no fee is due for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that these documents be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	2624
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	5232243		1993-08-03	Blackburn et al.	
	2	6397677		2002-06-04	Kinsley	
	3	5573269		1996-11-12	Gentry	
	4	5767766		1996-12-03	Kwun	
	5	5684460		1997-11-04	Scanlon	
	6	6484080		2002-11-19	Breed	
	7	6850824		2005-02-01	Breed	
If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.						
U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS						

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	2624
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	20060212194		2006-09-21	Breed	
	2	20070005202		2007-01-04	Breed	
	3	20080046149		2008-02-21	Breed	
	4	20080161989		2008-07-03	Breed	
	5	20080147271		2008-06-19	Breed	
	6	20080040005		2008-02-14	Breed	

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ² i	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button

NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274
Filing Date		2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
Art Unit	2624	
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1	Defendant's Invalidity Contentions of claims 1, 2, 4, 6-11, 15, 19, 20, 22, 24-27, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38-41, 44, 48, 52-55 and 59 of US 6484080 from Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc., et al. Civil Action No. 06-187-GMS, United States District Court, District of Delaware.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2	Defendant's Invalidity Contentions of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 12 of US 6850824 from Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc., et al. Civil Action No. 06-187-GMS, United States District Court, District of Delaware.	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	2624
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2008-09-17
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 2624

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: 11/836,274
Confirmation No.: 2935
Filing Date: August 9, 2007
Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

NOTIFICATION OF EXISTING LITIGATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

September 17, 2008

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to MPEP §2001.06(c), applicant hereby notifies the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office of the existence of litigation involving the subject matter of the application and for which a patent is being sought. The litigation is captioned:

1. Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc., et al. Civil Action No. 06-187-GMS, United States District Court, District of Delaware; and
2. Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. Hyundai Motor America et al., Civil Action No. 06-391-GMS, United States District Court, District of Delaware.

These litigation matters involve, among others, U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080 and 6,850,824 which issued from parent applications. The litigation also involves U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,901,978, 6,397,136, 6,422,595, 6,712,387, 6,757,602, 6,942,248, 6,869,100, 6,325,414, 6,242,701 and 6,958,451.

These proceedings have been stayed pending resolution of reexaminations of patents involved in the proceedings. The '080 patent is the subject of reexamination proceeding Control

No. 90/008,346, the '136 patent is the subject of reexamination proceeding Control No. 95/001,003, the '248 patent is the subject of merged reexamination proceeding Control Nos. 95/001,012 and 90/008,351, the '387 patent is the subject of merged reexamination proceeding Control Nos. 95/001,035 and 90/008,352, the '414 patent is the subject of merged reexamination proceeding Control Nos. 95/001,011 and 90/008,348, the '595 patent is the subject of reexamination proceeding Control No. 95/001,002, the '602 patent is the subject of reexamination proceeding Control No. 90/008,350, and the '978 patent is the subject of reexamination proceeding Control No. 90/001,025.

Documents relating to the '080 and '824 patents are being identified in an Information Disclosure Statement being filed simultaneously herewith along with the Defendant's Preliminary Invalidity Contentions of claims of these patents.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	3955653
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe
Filer Authorized By:	
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	17-SEP-2008
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	11:44:29
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	NPL Documents	6484080_Invalidity_Chart.pdf	121825 bd4511241ed37e54c5354ce029b05c137fe2f6dd	no	17

Warnings:

Information:

2	NPL Documents	6850824_Invalidity_Chart.pdf	36801 914dce656c491d4adac45b68c3550e5236f9078e	no	3
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	Information Disclosure Statement Letter	ATI-484_IDS_2.pdf	16721 fa00e23131f05914cea0b3f163e70b39d2511e5d	no	2
Warnings:					
Information:					
4	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	ATI-484_IDS_Form_2.pdf	42367 ec0eb750368d6ac2f0a2910cd9614decf415a21e	no	5
Warnings:					
Information:					
This is not an USPTO supplied IDS fillable form					
5	Miscellaneous Incoming Letter	ATI-484_litigation_notification.pdf	19088 6a271a0a5eff790bbd4c4cf3b5695d3681a4c4d8	no	2
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):			236802		
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>					

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	6028537		2000-02-22	Suman et al.	

If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.

U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1					

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS								
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ^{2;i}	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button

NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS		
Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274
Filing Date		2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
Art Unit	3664	
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

	1		<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2008-11-10
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Ex.: Group Art Unit: 3664

Re: Application of: David S. Breed

Serial No.: 11/836,274

Confirmation No.: 2935

Filed: August 9, 2007

For: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods

Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non-Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

November 13, 2008

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits a list of a potentially material reference cited in an Office Action for a related U.S. patent application, namely, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/421,500. Since this application is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publication has been waived.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better prior art exists. While the term "reference" is used in citing the publication called to the Examiner's attention herein, applicant does not make any admission that it is a "prior art" reference within the meaning of the statutory and case law.

Applicant reserves the right to contend, where appropriate, that the reference is not prior art under the facts and the law.

U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/836,274
Information Disclosure Statement filed Nov. 13, 2008

Applicant also reserves the right to present appropriate arguments and/or evidence to establish patentability over the reference, should it be applied against the claims of the present application.

An Office Action on the merits has not been received and therefore no fee is due for the submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that the reference be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

By: Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

Enclosure
PTO-1449 (4 pages)

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	4280913
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine
Filer Authorized By:	Brian Roffe
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	13-NOV-2008
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	10:05:03
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	USSN-11836274-IDS-ATI-484. pdf	36053 <small>1b4d670c6ba17ab806a1d4945e03ef7b133 18617</small>	no	4

Warnings:

Information:

This is not an USPTO supplied IDS fillable form

2	Information Disclosure Statement Letter	USSN-11836274-IDS-form-ATI-484.pdf	17244 <small>6e4d26b82bda67116bc28b0aad651882a958e9f5</small>	no	2
---	---	------------------------------------	--	----	---

Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes): 53297

This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS							Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	
	1	7133755	B2	2006-11-07	Salman et al.		
	2	7136729	B2	2006-11-14	Salman et al.		
	3	6738697	B2	2004-05-18	Breed		
If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.							Add
U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS							Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	
	1	20080284575	A1	2008-11-20	Breed		
	2	20070271014	A1	2007-11-22	Breed		
	3	20070156311	A1	2007-07-05	Elcock et al.		
If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.							Add
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS							Remove

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274	
Filing Date		2007-08-09	
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed		
Art Unit	3664		
Examiner Name			
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ² i	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button

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NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

Remove

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1		<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274	
Filing Date		2007-08-09	
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed		
Art Unit	3664		
Examiner Name			
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

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See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2008-12-11
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
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9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 3664

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: 11/836,274
Confirmation No.: 2935
Filing Date: August 9, 2007
Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

December 11, 2008

Sir:

Applicant herewith identifies additional pending, related U.S. patent applications as follows, with a publication number if published:

1. Ser. No. 11/422,240; and
2. Ser. No. 11/832,870 (20070271014).

Applicant also lists the publication of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/930,954, identified in the Information Disclosure Statement filed September 17, 2008, on the attached list of references, Publ. No. 20080284575.

Applicant also lists additional patent publications potentially material to the claimed subject matter.

Review of the claims of these applications for possible double patenting rejections, along with the claims of other related applications identified in the Information Disclosure Statement filed September 17, 2008 and patents, including U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,809,437, 6,175,787, 6,484,080, 6,738,697 and 6,850,824, is respectfully requested.

U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/836,274
Information Disclosure Statement filed Dec. 11, 2008

An Office Action on the merits has not been received to date and therefore no fee is due for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that these documents be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	4435803
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe
Filer Authorized By:	
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	11-DEC-2008
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	11:38:58
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	USSN-11836274-IDS-ATI-484. pdf	521443 <small>0ea2d1431ed2c9f67ed097aea5aa902632c ad9cb</small>	no	4

Warnings:

Information:

2	Information Disclosure Statement Letter	081211_ATI-484_IDS-3.pdf	16719 ad1b9133bf7feaa7f871223989ab36466f09c848	no	2
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Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes):	538162
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This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	5408411		1995-04-18	Nakamura et al.	
	2	4985835		1991-01-15	Sterler et al.	
	3	5322323		1994-06-21	Ohno et al.	
	4	5202831		1993-04-13	Blackburn et al.	
	5	5609358		1997-03-11	Iyoda et al.	
	6	5513109		1996-04-30	Fujishima	
	7	5439249		1995-08-08	Steffens et al.	
	8	5074583		1991-12-24	Fujita et al.	

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

9	5411289		1995-05-02	Smith et al.	
10	5413378		1995-05-09	Steffens et al.	
11	5390951		1995-02-21	lyoda	
12	5483447		1996-01-09	Jeenicke et al.	
13	5071160		1991-12-10	White et al.	
14	5161820		1992-11-10	Vollmer	

If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.

U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1					

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ² i	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

1	4046843	JP		1992-02-17	Nishitake et al.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	1229741	JP		1989-09-13	Muramoto	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	56147530	JP		1981-11-16	Ohmori	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button

NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1	Defendant's Preliminary Invalidation Contentions for U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080 presented in Automotive Technologies, Inc. v. Delphi Corporation Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2	Exhibit E to Defendant's Preliminary Invalidation Contentions for U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080 presented in Automotive Technologies, Inc. v. Delphi Corporation Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3	Abstract of JP 4046843	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4	Abstract of JP 1229741	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	Abstract of JP 56147530	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2008-12-22
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
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3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 3664

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: 11/836,274
Confirmation No.: 2935
Filing Date: August 2, 2007
Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

December 22, 2008

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits a list of references including documents from litigation involving U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080, which issued from a parent application of the instant application, namely Delphi Corporation's Preliminary Invalidity Contentions of claims of the patent (see pages 23-26 therein) and Exhibit E referred to therein. The references mentioned in Exhibit E are also listed, other than those already of record.

Since this correspondence is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publications has been waived. Copies of the foreign patent references and non-patent literature references are submitted herewith.

U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/836,274
Information Disclosure Statement filed Dec. 22, 2008

An Office Action on the merits has not been received to date and therefore no fee is due for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that these documents be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
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Tel.: (516) 256-5636
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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	4500384
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine
Filer Authorized By:	Brian Roffe
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	22-DEC-2008
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	12:29:58
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Miscellaneous Incoming Letter	USSN-11836274-litigation-notification-ATI-484.pdf	14599 b3cf8ec7c1429340e349e658d526d77fc6a8bf8d	no	1

Warnings:

Information:

2	Foreign Reference	USSN-11836274-IDS- JP56147530-ATI-484.pdf	131099	no	3
			6d1122d015d9068a3f1944a0eb00892e4e b4cf1		
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	Foreign Reference	USSN-11836274-IDS- JP4046843-ATI-484.pdf	1131031	no	13
			3f4386ddf8e51e032bb21933dd6b1ec71a7 c3c09		
Warnings:					
Information:					
4	Foreign Reference	USSN-11836274-IDS- JP1229741-ATI-484.pdf	315325	no	7
			5e1ef8ec138d7ea31f4f72c5e67981128deb ffe7		
Warnings:					
Information:					
5	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	USSN-11836274-IDS-Invalid- Content-ATI-484.pdf	45183	no	6
			d63162d763409e0eea304f9516861490243 69220		
Warnings:					
Information:					
This is not an USPTO supplied IDS fillable form					
6	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS- InvalidContent-ATI-484.pdf	255697	no	43
			bff842d7197b06db56a46e3bd2662d8ae11 84eab		
Warnings:					
Information:					
7	Information Disclosure Statement Letter	USSN-11836274-IDS-form- ATI-484.pdf	16404	no	2
			fd6b9d617b56fbc8917b15452a0ab0a3782 9d3b6		
Warnings:					
Information:					
8	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS-Exhibit-E- US6484080-ATI-484.pdf	464970	no	85
			9f7a5f3169eba1cefce04cc92121edf2ceafce b8		
Warnings:					
Information:					
9	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS- AbstractJP56147530-ATI-484. pdf	10985	no	1
			0069a7347467720b419e1b31e5bd4d832e 26e4e2		
Warnings:					
Information:					
10	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS- AbstractJP4046843-ATI-484.pdf	89540	no	1
			5db576c6bc515d02cc92692cd233c682a28 c9263		

Warnings:**Information:**

11	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS- AbstractJP1229741-ATI-484.pdf	10593 <small>4b460a22144782afd7c4f3bf01ed2f3d2360ef95</small>	no	1
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Warnings:**Information:**

Total Files Size (in bytes):	2485426
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This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 2624

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: 11/836,274
Confirmation No.: 2935
Filing Date: August 9, 2007
Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

NOTIFICATION OF EXISTING LITIGATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

December 18, 2008

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to MPEP §2001.06(c), applicant hereby notifies the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office of the existence of litigation potentially involving the subject matter of the application and for which a patent is being sought. The litigation is captioned: Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. Delphi Corp., Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division.

This litigation involves, among others, U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,484,080 and 6,850,824, which issued from parent applications. The litigation also involves U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,757,602, 6,833,516, 6,869,100, 7,243,945 and 7,407,029.

Respectfully submitted,
/Brian Roffe/
Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant, Reg. No. 35,336

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Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
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⑨ 日本国特許庁 (JP)

⑩ 特許出願公開

⑫ 公開特許公報 (A)

昭56—147530

⑪ Int. Cl.³
H 04 B 7/26
B 60 R 16/02

識別記号
庁内整理番号
6429—5K
6839—3D

⑬ 公開 昭和56年(1981)11月16日

発明の数 1
審査請求 未請求

(全 3 頁)

⑭ 自動車電話装置

横浜市港北区綱島東4丁目3番
1号松下通信工業株式会社内

⑮ 特 願 昭55—52144
⑯ 出 願 昭55(1980)4月18日
⑰ 発 明 者 大森珠介

⑱ 出 願 人 松下電器産業株式会社
門真市大字門真1006番地
⑲ 代 理 人 弁理士 宮井暎夫

明 細 書

1. 発明の名称

自動車電話装置

2. 特許請求の範囲

自動車に搭載した電話端末機と、前記自動車の事故を検出する事故センサと、この事故センサの事故検出信号に回答して前記電話端末機をフックアップさせて無線基地局を呼び出すフックアップ手段と、前記事故センサの事故検出信号に回答して前記無線基地局を通じて事故信号受信設備を呼び出すためのダイヤル信号を前記電話端末機に付与するダイヤル信号付与手段と、前記電話端末機の回線接続信号に回答して前記事故センサの事故検出信号を前記電話端末機に付与することにより前記事故信号受信設備に事故検出信号を送る事故検出信号付与手段とを備えた自動車電話装置。

3. 発明の詳細な説明

この発明は自動車電話装置に関するものである。従来の自動車電話システムは、走行中の自動車に事故が発生し、その乗員が負傷または死亡して

電話機の操作を行なえなくなった場合には事故の発生を通報することが不可能であるという欠点があった。

したがって、この発明の目的は、自動車事故の発生を自動的に通報することができる自動車電話装置を提供することである。

この発明の一実施例の自動車電話システムを第1図および第2図に基づいて説明する。第1図はこの自動車電話システムの移動局側の系統図であり、1aは衝撃センサ、1bは温度センサ、2はエンコーダ、3は自動車電話端末機、4は電源スイッチ、5はバッテリー、6は移動局空中線、7は発呼信号入力端子、8は情報入力端子、9は制御信号出力端子、10は無線信号入出力端子である。第2図はこの自動車電話システムの無線基地局側の系統図であり、11は基地局空中線、12は無線基地局装置、13は交換設備、14aは110番受信設備、14bは119番受信設備である。

つぎに、この自動車電話システムの動作について説明する。走行中の自動車に衝突または火災が

発生した時には、それぞれに応じた衝撃センサ1aまたは温度センサ1bがこれを検知してその出力をエンコーダ2に加える。エンコーダ2は、それに対応して電源スイッチ4をオンにすることによりバッテリー5より給電を開始して自動車電話端末機3を作動させるとともに、発呼信号入力端子7を通してフックアップ信号および事故の種類に応じて110番あるいは119番等のダイヤル信号を自動車電話端末機3に送り込む。それにより、自動車電話端末機3は、無線信号入出力端子10から移動局空中線6を通して110番あるいは119番等のダイヤル信号を無線基地局に対して送出する。ついで回線の接続が制御信号出力端子9からの信号により確認されると、エンコーダ2により符号化された事故情報が情報入力端子8を通して自動車電話端末機3に送り込まれ、無線基地局に対して送出される。事故情報の送出が完了すると、制御信号出力端子9からの制御信号により自動車電話端末機3がフックダウンし、電源スイッチ4がオフとなる。

アップさせて無線基地局を呼び出すフックアップ手段と、前記事故センサの事故検出信号に回答して前記無線基地局を通じて事故信号受信設備を呼び出すためのダイヤル信号を前記電話端末機に付与するダイヤル信号付与手段と、前記電話端末機の回線接続信号に回答して前記事故センサの事故検出信号を前記電話端末機に付与することにより前記事故信号受信設備に事故検出信号を送る事故検出信号付与手段とを備えているので、自動車事故の発生を自動的に通報できるという効果がある。

4. 図面の簡単な説明

第1図はこの発明の一実施例の自動車電話システムの移動局側の系統図、第2図は同じくこの自動車電話システムの無線基地局側の系統図である。

1a…衝撃センサ(事故センサ)、1b…温度センサ(事故センサ)、2…エンコーダ(フックアップ手段、ダイヤル信号付与手段、事故検出信号付与手段)、3…自動車電話端末機、4…電源スイッチ、5…バッテリー、6…移動局空中線、7…発呼信号入力端子、8…情報入力端子、9…制

一方、無線基地局装置12では、移動局からのダイヤル信号を受信して自動車電話端末機3と110番受信設備14aまたは119番受信設備14bとの回線を接続した後、事故情報に加えて発信者のダイヤル番号や事故発生地域を示す情報が伝送される。この場合、事故発生地域は、事故発生地点が属する無線基地局がカバーする地域(ゾーン)として表示される。

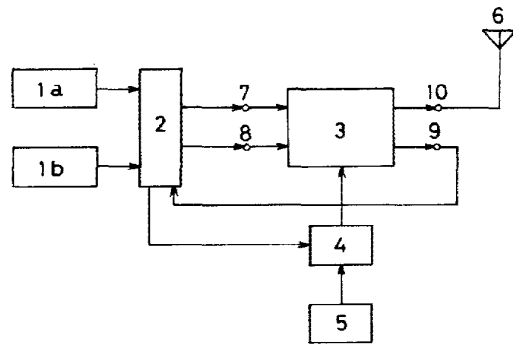
このように、この実施例の自動車電話システムは、自動車事故を検出して電話端末機3を作動させ、事故情報等を無線基地局に送信して110番受信設備14aまたは119番受信設備14b等に通報するようにしたので、自動車事故の発生を自動的に通報して迅速な事故処理を行うことができる。

なお、この発明は、既設の自動車電話システムに対して付加することも比較的容易に行える。

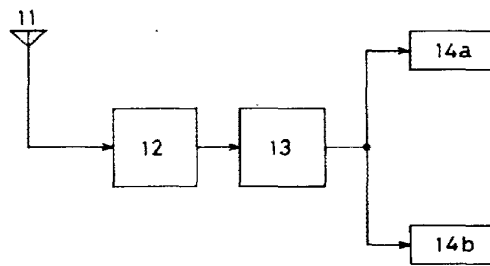
以上のように、この発明の自動車電話装置は、自動車に搭載した電話端末機と、前記自動車の事故を検出する事故センサと、この事故センサの事故検出信号に回答して前記電話端末機をフックア

御信号出力端子、10…無線入出力端子、11…基地局空中線、12…無線基地局装置、13…交換設備、14a…110番受信設備(事故信号受信設備)、14b…119番受信設備(事故信号受信設備)

代理人 弁理士 官 井 咲 夫



第 1 図



第 2 図

⑩ 日本国特許庁(JP)

⑪ 特許出願公開

⑫ 公開特許公報(A) 平4-46843

⑬ Int. Cl.⁴

識別記号

庁内整理番号

⑭ 公開 平成4年(1992)2月17日

B 60 R 21/32
21/16

7149-3D
7149-3D

審査請求 未請求 請求項の数 2 (全11頁)

⑮ 発明の名称 車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置

⑯ 特 願 平2-154883

⑰ 出 願 平2(1990)6月13日

⑱ 発 明 者	西 竹 秀 樹	広島県安芸郡府中町新地3番1号	マツダ株式会社内
⑲ 発 明 者	奥 田 憲 一	広島県安芸郡府中町新地3番1号	マツダ株式会社内
⑳ 出 願 人	マツダ株式会社	広島県安芸郡府中町新地3番1号	
㉑ 代 理 人	弁理士 神原 貞昭		

明 細 書

1. 発明の名称

車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置

2. 特許請求の範囲

1. 車体側部の車室側部分に設けられ、エネルギー吸収バッグが収縮状態とされて格納されるとともにバッグ膨張手段が配されたバッグ格納部と、

上記車体側部に加えられた衝撃を検出する衝撃検出手段と、

上記車体側部の車室側部分に対する乗員の着座状態を検出する着座状態検出手段と、

上記衝撃検出手段から衝撃検出力信号が得られたとき、上記着座状態検出手段からの検出出力信号があらわす上記乗員の着座状態に応じて上記バッグ膨張手段を作動させ、収縮状態とされた上記エネルギー吸収バッグに上記乗員の着座状態に応じたタイミングのもとに車室側に向かって膨張する状態をとらせる制御部と、

を備えて構成される車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置、

2. 着座状態検出手段が、上記乗員の上記車体側部の車室側部分からの距離をあらわす検出出力信号を送出するものとされるときともに、制御部が、上記着座状態検出手段からの検出出力信号があらわす距離が大である際、上記衝撃検出手段からの衝撃検出力信号が得られたときから上記エネルギー吸収バッグが膨張を開始するまでの時間を長くする制御を行うものとされたことを特徴とする請求項1記載の車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置。

3. 発明の詳細な説明

(産業上の利用分野)

本発明は、車体側部にその外部から比較的大なる衝撃が加えられたとき、それによる衝撃エネルギーを吸収して車内の乗員の保護を図る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置に関する。

(従来の技術)

車両にあっては、衝突時等において車体に比較

的大なる衝撃が加えられたとき、平常時においては収縮状態とされている、通常エアバッグと称される、エネルギー吸収バッグを急激膨張させて、衝撃エネルギーを膨張状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグにより吸収させることにより、車内の乗員に及ぼされる衝撃の影響を緩和して乗員の保護を図るようになすことが提案されている。

斯かるエネルギー吸収バッグが備えられた車両においては、例えば、実開平1-117957号公報にも示される如く、車体側部を形成するドアの車室側に設けられたアームレスト部の内部に、折り畳まれたエネルギー吸収バッグが収納されるとともに、不活性ガス発生剤、及び、不活性ガス発生剤に不活性ガス発生状態をとらせる点火装置が収容され、さらに、例えば、ドアの下方に位置する車体のサイドシル内に、サイドシルに加えられた比較的大なる衝撃を検知する衝撃検知用センサが設けられる。そして、衝撃検知用センサが衝撃検出出力を発生するとき、それに応じて点火装置が作動せしめられて不活性ガス発生剤が不活性ガスを発

生させる状態とされ、その不活性ガスが折り畳まれていたエネルギー吸収バッグ内に急速に送り込まれて、エネルギー吸収バッグがアームレストに形成された開口部を破ってアームレストの外方に急激に膨張せしめられるようにされる。このように車体側部にエネルギー吸収バッグが備えられたものにおいては、例えば、車体側部に衝突(車両に対する他の車両等による側方からの衝突)による衝撃が加えられると、エネルギー吸収バッグが車室内側に瞬時に膨張して、車体側部、例えば、ドアとそのドアの内側に着座した乗員との間に介在せしめられるものとされる。それにより、車体側部に加えられる衝撃による衝撃エネルギーが膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグにより吸収されて、乗員にその側方から作用する衝撃力が低減され、乗員の保護が図られることになる。なお、エネルギー吸収バッグが膨張した際にそれに衝突することになる乗員がエネルギー吸収バッグから受ける衝撃を軽減すべく、エネルギー吸収バッグには、通常、複数のガス抜孔が設けられていて、膨張の完了後には、ガス抜孔

から内部に充填せしめられたガスが抜かれるようにされる。

(発明が解決しようとする課題)

車両の車室内に配された座席に着座する乗員は、座席に対して常時一定の位置をとるものとなるには限られず、特に、車幅方向においては、座席の中央部に位置する状態、座席の一方の端部側に偏って位置し、その結果、車両の車体側部に近接した状態、及び、座席の他方の端部側に偏って位置し、その結果、車両の車体側部から離隔した状態等を選択的にとることになる。従って、上述の如くに、車体側部の一部に折り畳まれたエネルギー吸収バッグ、ガス発生剤及び点火装置が収容され、車体側部に外部からの比較的大なる衝撃が加えられたとき、点火装置を作動させてガス発生剤にガスを発生させ、それにより、エネルギー吸収バッグを急激に膨張させて、車体側部と乗員との間に膨張させたエネルギー吸収バッグ介在させ、衝撃エネルギーを膨張状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグにより吸収させるようにした車両においては、車体側

部の内側において着座した乗員が、車体側部に近接した状態にあるか、あるいは、車体側部から離隔した状態にあるかによって、車体側部に外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき車体側部と乗員との間に膨張させたエネルギー吸収バッグを介在させることにより得られる効果に差が生じることが考えられる。

即ち、車体側部の内側において着座した乗員が車体側部に近接した状態にある場合には、車体側部に外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき、車体側部に倒れ込む乗員の上体は極めて短時間のうちに車体側部に到達することになる状態とされるが、斯かる際には、車体側部に外部からの衝撃が加えられた後直ちに車体側部と乗員との間に膨張させたエネルギー吸収バッグを介在させることによって、乗員の上体の車体側部側への倒込みが膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグによって受け止められて、乗員の上体の車体側部への着接が阻止されるのに対して、車体側部の内側において着座した乗員が車体側部から離隔した状態にある場合には、車体側部

に外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき、車体側部側に倒れ込む乗員の上体は所定の時間をかけて車体側部に到達することになり、斯かる際には、車体側部に外部からの衝撃が加えられた後直ちに車体側部と乗員との間に膨張させたエネルギー吸収バッグを介在させても、膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグが実際に乗員の上体の車体側部側への倒込みを受け止めるときには、エネルギー吸収バッグは、既に膨張完了後の状態にあり、乗員の上体の車体側部側への倒込みが効果的に抑制されることが考えられる。

斯かる点に鑑み、本発明は、車体側部にその外部から衝撃が加えられたとき、車体側部と車体側部の内側に着座した乗員との間にエネルギー吸収バッグを膨張した状態で介在させ、そのエネルギー吸収バッグによって衝撃エネルギーを吸収するようになすに当たり、車体側部にその外部から衝撃が加えられた際において、エネルギー吸収バッグを車体側部に対する乗員の着座状態、例えば、車体側部に近接した状態あるいは車体側部から離隔した状

態のいずれにも適切に対応して、適正な膨張状態をもって車体側部と乗員との間に介在せしめられるものとでき、それにより乗員に及ぼされる衝撃の影響を効果的に緩和することができるようにされた、車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置を提供することを目的とする。

(課題を解決するための手段)

上述の目的を達成すべく、本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置は、車体側部の車室側部分に設けられ、エネルギー吸収バッグが収縮状態とされて格納されるとともにバッグ膨張手段が配されたバッグ格納部と、車体側部に加えられた衝撃を検出する衝撃検出手段と、車体側部の車室側部分に対する乗員の着座状態を検出する着座状態検出手段と、バッグ膨張手段に対する制御部とを備え、制御部が、衝撃検出手段から衝撃検出力信号が得られたとき、着座状態検出手段からの検出力信号があらわす乗員の着座状態に応じてバッグ膨張手段を作動させ、収縮状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグに乗員の着座状態に応じたタイミングの

とともに車室側に向かって膨張する状態をとらせるものとされて、構成される。

さらに、本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例においては、着座状態検出手段が、乗員の車体側部の車室側部分からの距離をあらわす検出力信号を送出するものとされるときともに、衝撃検出手段から衝撃検出力信号に応じた制御部のバッグ膨張手段に対する制御が、座状態検出手段からの検出力信号があらわす距離が大である程、衝撃検出手段からの衝撃検出力信号が得られたときからエネルギー吸収バッグが膨張を開始するまでの時間を長くするように行われる。

(作用)

上述の如くに構成される本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置にあっては、車体側部に外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき、衝撃検出手段からの衝撃検出力信号に応じて作動する制御部により、バッグ膨張手段が着座状態検出手段からの検出力信号があらわす乗員の着座状態に応じて制御されて、車体側部の車室側部分に設けられたバ

ッグ格納部に収縮状態で格納された状態から車室側に向かって膨張するものとされるエネルギー吸収バッグの膨張開始タイミングが、乗員の着座状態に応じて設定されるものとなされ、例えば、乗員の車体側部の車室側部分からの距離が大である程衝撃検出手段からの衝撃検出力信号が得られたときからエネルギー吸収バッグが膨張を開始するまでの時間が長くされる。従って、エネルギー吸収バッグが、車体側部の車室側部分に対する乗員の着座状態、例えば、車体側部に近接した状態あるいは車体側部から離隔した状態のいずれにも適切に対応して、適正な膨張状態をもって車体側部と乗員との間に介在せしめられることになり、それにより乗員に及ぼされる衝撃の影響が効果的に緩和せしめられる。

(実施例)

第2図は、本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例が適用された車両の車室部分を示す。

第2図に示される車室部分においては、右車体側部を形成する運転席側ドア3が、その車室側部

分からアームレスト6を運転席8に向けて突出させて設けられ、また、左車体側部を形成する助手席側ドア4が、その車室側部分からアームレスト7を助手席9に向けて突出させて設けられている。

運転席側ドア3は、第3図に示される如く、ドアパネル11及びドアガラス12を合んで構成され、ドアパネル11は、車外側に配されたドアアウトーパーネル13と車室側に配されたドアインナーパネル14とにより形成されている。ドアインナーパネル14には、その車室側の面にドアトリム15が取り付けられていて、ドアインナーパネル14とドアトリム15とにより、運転席側ドア3の車室側部分が形成されている。

また、ドアガラス12は、ドアアウトーパーネル13とドアインナーパネル14との間に、ウインドレギュレータ等の昇降機構によって昇降可能に支持されて配されている。

ドアパネル11内には、運転席8に乗員が着座したとき乗員の腕部に対応することになるアームレスト6の上方位置、及び、運転席8に乗員

が着座したとき乗員の腰部に対応することになるアームレスト6の下方位置に、夫々、折り畳まれて収縮状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグが格納されるとともにエネルギー吸収バッグに対するインフレーターが配された上方バッグ格納部16、及び、同じく折り畳まれて収縮状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグが格納されるとともにエネルギー吸収バッグに対するインフレーターが配された下方バッグ格納部17が、ドアインナーパネル14に取り付けられて設けられている。従って、運転席側ドア3の車室側部分に、アームレスト6を挟む上下位置をもって、上方バッグ格納部16及び下方バッグ格納部17が設けられているのである。

上方バッグ格納部16及び下方バッグ格納部17の夫々は互いに同様に構成され、第4図に示される如く、ドアインナーパネル14の内面側に取り付けられたカップ状のケース18を有するものとされている。ドアインナーパネル14におけるケース18が取り付けられた部分には開口部14aが形成されており、ケース18はドアインナー

パネル14における開口部14aの周囲部分にボルト締結により固定されている。そして、ドアインナーパネル14の開口部14aは、ドアトリム15に設けられた閉塞部15aによって塞がれており、ドアトリム15における閉塞部15aは、直線状に伸びるものとして設けられたヒンジ部15bとヒンジ部15bに対してコ字状をなして伸びるものとして設けられた内面溝部15cとによって包囲されて、ドアトリム15における他の部分から取外されている。内面溝部15cは、比較的小なる引張力によって取外される部分とされている。

ケース18内には、インフレーター19がケース18の内面に囲着されて配されており、インフレーター19の内部は、透孔が設けられた仕切壁部材20によって2室に分割されていて、インフレーター19における一方の室には、点火剤21、点火剤21を着火させるヒータ22、及び、点火剤21が着火することによって燃焼せしめられ、大量の窒素ガスを発生させるガス発生剤23が収容さ

れており、また、インフレーター19における他方の室には、その一側壁部にそれを買通す複数のフィルタ部24が設けられている。斯かるインフレーター19に設けられた複数のフィルタ部24は、インフレーター19とドアインナーパネル14の開口部14aを塞ぐドアトリム15に設けられた閉塞部15aとの間に折り畳まれて配された、エネルギー吸収バッグ25の基端部に設けられた複数のガス導入口部26に夫々連結されており、インフレーター19における仕切壁部材20によって仕切られた2室のうちの一方において発生せしめられた窒素ガスが、仕切壁部材20に設けられた透孔を通じて仕切壁部材20によって仕切られた2室のうちの他方に導かれ、そこから複数のフィルタ部24を通過した後、複数のガス導入口部26を通じてエネルギー吸収バッグ25の内部に導かれる。なお、エネルギー吸収バッグ25には、複数のガス抜用透孔25aが設けられている。

さらに、第3図に示される如く、運転席側ドア3におけるドアガラス12とドアアウトーパーネル

13との間には、運転席側ドア3を含む右車体側部に加えらるる外部からの衝撃を検出して衝撃検出力信号を発生する衝撃センサ30が設けられている。

また、車室内に配された運転席8においては、その背席部8Aの左右方向における中央部分、右側部分及び左側部分に夫々荷重センサ31a、31b及び31cが埋め込まれ、さらに、着座部9Bの左右方向における中央部分、右側部分及び左側部分に夫々荷重センサ32a、32b及び32cが埋め込まれている。荷重センサ31a、31b及び31cの夫々は、運転席8に着座した乗員によって背席部8Aに加えらるる荷重に応じた荷重検出力信号を発生し、また、荷重センサ32a、32b及び32cの夫々は、運転席8に着座した乗員によって着座部8Bに加えらるる荷重に応じた荷重検出力信号を発生する。

第2図に示される如く、車室部分における中央部前方に設けられたコンソールボックス40内に、上方バッグ格納部16及び下方バッグ格納部17

腕部に対応することになるアームレスト7の上方位置、及び、助手席9に乗員が着座したとき乗員の腰部に対応することになるアームレスト7の下方位置に、夫々、折り畳まれて収納状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグが格納されるとともにエネルギー吸収バッグに対するインフレーターが配された上方バッグ格納部、及び、同じく折り畳まれて収納状態とされたエネルギー吸収バッグが格納されるとともにエネルギー吸収バッグに対するインフレーターが配された下方バッグ格納部が、ドアインナーパネルに取り付けられて設けられている。従って、助手席側ドア4の車室側部分に、アームレスト7を挟む上下位置をもって、上方バッグ格納部及び下方バッグ格納部が設けられているのである。そして、斯かる上方バッグ格納部及び下方バッグ格納部の夫々に格納されたエネルギー吸収バッグ及びインフレーターも、夫々、第4図に示されるエネルギー吸収バッグ25及びインフレーター19と同様に構成されている。また、助手席側ドア4の内部には、助手席側ドア4を含む左車体側部に加えら

の夫々におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22、衝撃センサ30、荷重センサ31a、31b、31c、32a、32b及び32cの夫々との電気的接続がなされたインフレーター制御ユニット41配されている。インフレーター制御ユニット41は、衝撃センサ30からの衝撃検出力信号が供給される時、上方バッグ格納部16におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22に対する駆動信号、及び、下方バッグ格納部17におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22に対する駆動信号を夫々形成し、それら駆動信号を、荷重センサ31a、31b、31c、32a、32b及び32cの夫々から得られる荷重検出力信号に基づいて設定したタイミングをもって、上方バッグ格納部16及び下方バッグ格納部17の夫々におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22に供給する。

一方、助手席側ドア4及び助手席9も夫々運転席側ドア3及び運転席8と同様な構成をとるものとされ、助手席側ドア4を構成するドアパネル内には、助手席9に乗員が着座したとき乗員の上

る外部からの衝撃を検出する衝撃センサ33が設けられている。さらに、助手席9には、その背席部9Aの左右方向における中央部分、右側部分及び左側部分に3個の荷重センサが夫々埋め込まれ、さらに、着座部9Bの左右方向における中央部分、右側部分及び左側部分に3個の荷重センサが夫々埋め込まれている。

これら助手席側ドア4内に設けられた上方バッグ格納部及び下方バッグ格納部の夫々におけるインフレータのヒータ及び衝撃センサ33、及び、助手席9における背席部9Aに埋め込まれた3個の荷重センサ及び着座部9Bに埋め込まれた3個の荷重センサの夫々も、インフレーター制御ユニット41との電気的接続がなされており、インフレーター制御ユニット41は、衝撃センサ33からの衝撃検出力信号が供給される時、助手席側ドア4に設けられた上方バッグ格納部及び下方バッグ格納部の夫々におけるインフレータのヒータに対する駆動信号を形成し、それら駆動信号を、助手席9における背席部9A及び着座部9Bに埋め

込まれた6個の荷重センサの夫々から得られる荷重検出力信号に基づいて設定したタイミングをもって、助手席側ドア4に設けられた上方バッグ格納部及び下方バッグ格納部の夫々におけるインフレータのヒータに供給する。

運転席側ドア3内に設けられた、夫々がエネルギー吸収バッグ19及びインフレータ25を内蔵するものとされた上方バッグ格納部16及び下方バッグ格納部17、及び、衝撃センサ30、運転席8に埋め込まれた荷重センサ31a~31c及び32a~32c、及び、コンソールボックス40内に記されたインフレータ制御ユニット41は、右車体側部側の衝撃エネルギー吸収システムを構成して、運転席側ドア3を含む右車体側部に衝突等による比較的大なる外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき、その衝撃エネルギーを吸収して、運転席8に着座した乗員の保護を図る機能を果たすものとされ、また、同様に、助手席側ドア4内に設けられた、夫々がエネルギー吸収バッグ及びインフレータを内蔵するものとされた上方バッグ格納部及び下

方バッグ格納部、及び、衝撃センサ33、助手席9に埋め込まれた6個の荷重センサ、及び、コンソールボックス40内に記されたインフレータ制御ユニット41は、左車体側部側の衝撃エネルギー吸収システムを構成して、助手席側ドア4を含む左車体側部に衝突等による比較的大なる外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき、その衝撃エネルギーを吸収して、助手席9に着座した乗員の保護を図る機能を果たすものとされている。以下においては、右車体側部側の衝撃エネルギー吸収システムについて説明され、左車体側部側の衝撃エネルギー吸収システムについての説明は省略される。

上述の如く構成のもとに、インフレータ制御ユニット41には、第1図に示される如く、運転席8の背席部8Aに埋め込まれた荷重センサ31a~31cから得られる背席部8Aの左右方向における中央部分、運転席側ドア3に近接した右側部分、及び、運転席側ドア3から離隔した左側部分に加えられる荷重を夫々あらわす荷重検出力信号PA、PB及びPCと、運転席8の着座部8

Bに埋め込まれた荷重センサ32a~32cから得られる着座部8Bの左右方向における中央部分、運転席側ドア3に近接した右側部分、及び、運転席側ドア3から離隔した左側部分に加えられる荷重を夫々あらわす荷重検出力信号QA、QB及びQCとが供給される。

そして、運転席側ドア3を含む右車体側部に衝突等による比較的大なる衝撃が加えられた場合には、第1図に示される如く、運転席側ドア3内に記された衝撃センサ30から衝撃検出力信号SAが送出されて、それがインフレータ制御ユニット41に供給される。

インフレータ制御ユニット41は、衝撃センサ30からの衝撃検出力信号SAが供給されると、上方バッグ格納部16におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に対する駆動信号DU及び下方バッグ格納部17におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に対する駆動信号DLを形成するとともに、荷重センサ31a~31cから供給される荷重検出力信号PA、PB及びPC及び荷重センサ32

a~32cから供給される荷重検出力信号QA、QB及びQCとに基づいて、運転席8に着座した乗員の着座状態を検知し、検知された乗員の着座状態に感じた駆動信号DU及びDLの夫々の送出タイミングを設定した後、駆動信号DUを設定された送出タイミングをもって上方バッグ格納部16におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に供給するとともに、駆動信号DLを設定された送出タイミングをもって下方バッグ格納部17におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に供給する。斯かる際における駆動信号DU及びDLの夫々の送出タイミングは、運転席8に着座した乗員の運転席側ドア3の車室側部分からの距離が大である程、衝撃センサ30からの衝撃検出力信号SAが供給されたときからの時間が大となる時点とされるように設定される。

上方バッグ格納部16及び下方バッグ格納部17の夫々におけるインフレータ19においては、そのヒータ22にインフレータ制御ユニット41から駆動信号DUもしくはDLが供給されると、

ヒータ22が瞬時に発熱して点火剤21を着火させる。そして、点火剤21の着火によりインフレーター19に収容されたガス発生剤23が燃焼せしめられて、大量の窒素ガスを発生する状態とされ、発生せしめられた大量の窒素ガスが、インフレーター19に設けられたフィルタ部24を通過し、ガス導入口部26を通じてエネルギー吸収バッグ25内に迅速に流入し、それによってエネルギー吸収バッグ25を急激に膨張させる。その際、エネルギー吸収バッグ25は、膨張するにあたって、ドアインナーパネル14に設けられた開口部14aを塞ぐものとされたドアトリム18における閉塞部15aを、内面溝部15cを破断することによって、ヒンジ部15bを開動中心として上方に運動させ、第5図に示される如くに、ドアインナーパネル14に設けられた開口部14aを通じて、運転席8朝に向かって膨張する。そして、第5図に示される如く、上方バッグ格納部17からの膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグ25が、運転席8に着座した乗員の着座状態に適切に応じた適正なタイミングを

もって、運転席側ドア3と運転席8に着座した乗員Mの上体との間に介在せしめられ、また、下方バッグ格納部17からの膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグ25が、運転席8に着座した乗員の着座状態に適切に応じた適正なタイミングをもって、運転席側ドア3と運転席8に着座した乗員Mの腰部との間に介在せしめられる。

従って、運転席側ドア3と運転席8に着座した乗員Mの上体及び腰部の夫々との間に介在せしめられた、膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグ25によって、右車体側部に衝突等により加えられた衝撃による衝撃エネルギーが効果的に吸収され、運転席8に着座した乗員Mにおける上体及び腰部に加えらるる打撃が軽減せしめられて、運転席側ドア3を含む右車体側部に衝突等により加えられた比較的大なる衝撃に対しての乗員Mの保護が図られる。なお、膨張したエネルギー吸収バッグ25は、膨張が完了した後は、内部に充填せしめられた窒素ガスがガス放用透孔25aを通じて抜ける状態とされる。

インフレーター制御ユニット41による、荷重センサ31a、31b及び31cから供給される荷重検出力信号PA、PB及びPC、及び、荷重センサ32a、32b及び32cから供給される荷重検出力信号QA、QB及びQCとに基づいての運転席8に着座した乗員の着座状態の検知、及び、検知された乗員の着座状態に応じた駆動信号DU及びDLの夫々の送出タイミングの設定は、例えば、以下の如くになされる。

荷重検出力信号PA～PCのうち、荷重検出力信号PBがあらゆる荷重が最大であり、かつ、荷重検出力信号QA～QCのうち、荷重検出力信号QBがあらゆる荷重が最大であるときには、乗員Mがその上体及び腰部の両者を運転席側ドア3に近接させた位置に居ると判断し、駆動信号DU及びDLの両者の送出タイミングを衝撃検出力信号SAの供給時点直後の時点(Ta)とする。荷重検出力信号PA～PCのうち、荷重検出力信号PAがあらゆる荷重が最大であり、かつ、荷重検出力信号QA～QCのうち、荷重検

出力信号QAがあらゆる荷重が最大であるときには、乗員Mがその上体及び腰部の両者を運転席8における中央部に位置させた状態に居ると判断し、駆動信号DU及びDLの両者の送出タイミングを衝撃検出力信号SAの供給時点直後の時点Taから僅かに遅れた時点(Tb)とする。荷重検出力信号PA～PCのうち、荷重検出力信号PCがあらゆる荷重が最大であり、かつ、荷重検出力信号QA～QCのうち、荷重検出力信号QCがあらゆる荷重が最大であるときには、乗員Mがその上体及び腰部の両者を運転席側ドア3から助手席9側に離隔させた位置に居ると判断し、駆動信号DU及びDLの両者の送出タイミングを衝撃検出力信号SAの供給時点直後の時点Taから僅かに遅れた時点Tbよりさらに遅れた時点(Tc)とする。

また、荷重検出力信号PA～PCのうち、荷重検出力信号PBがあらゆる荷重が最大であり、かつ、荷重検出力信号QA～QCのうち、荷重検出力信号QAあるいはQCがあらゆる荷重が

最大であるときには、乗員Mが、その上体を運転席側ドア3に近接させ、かつ、その腰部を運転席8の中央部あるいは運転席側ドア3から助手席9側に離隔した位置においた、第5図において一点鎖線により示される如くの状態に居ると判断し、駆動信号DUの送出タイミングを時点T_aとするとともに、駆動信号DLの送出タイミングを時点T_bからT_cまでの間の時点とする。さらに、荷重検出力信号PA~PCのうち、荷重検出力信号PCがあらゆる荷重が最大であり、かつ、荷重検出力信号QA~QCのうち、荷重検出力信号QAあるいはQBがあらゆる荷重が最大であるときには、乗員Mが、その上体を運転席側ドア3から助手席9側に離隔させ、かつ、その腰部を運転席8の中央部あるいは運転席側ドア3に近接した位置においた、第5図において二点鎖線により示される如くの状態に居ると判断し、駆動信号DLの送出タイミングを時点T_aとするとともに、駆動信号DUの送出タイミングを時点T_bからT_cまでの間の時点とする。

席8に着座した乗員の腰部の位置に適切に応じたタイミングをもって膨張せしめられて、乗員の腰部を衝撃が効果的に低減せしめられる状態をもって受け止めるものとされる。

上述の如くの動作を行うインフレーター制御ユニット41は、例えば、マイクロコンピュータを用いられて構成されるが、漸かる際にマイクロコンピュータが駆動信号DU及びDLの送出にあたって実行するプログラムについて、第6図を参照して述べる。

第6図に示されるプログラムにおいては、スタート後、ステップ51において、荷重検出力信号PA~PC及びQA~QCを含む各種信号を取り込み、続くステップ52において、衝撃検出力信号SAが到来したかを判断する。その結果、衝撃検出力信号SAが到来していなければ、ステップ51に戻って各種信号の取込みを繰り返す。

ステップ52における判断の結果、衝撃検出力信号SAが到来したことが検知された場合には、ステップ53において、駆動信号DU及びDLを

このようにされることにより、上方バッグ格納部16におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22に供給される駆動信号DUの送出タイミングが、運転席8に着座した乗員の上体の運転席側ドア3の車室側部分からの距離が大である程、衝撃センサ30からの衝撃検出力信号SAが供給されたときからの時間が大となる時点とされ、また、下方バッグ格納部17におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22に供給される駆動信号DLの送出タイミングが、運転席8に着座した乗員の腰部の運転席側ドア3の車室側部分からの距離が大である程、衝撃センサ30からの衝撃検出力信号SAが供給されたときからの時間が大となる時点とされることになり、その結果、上方バッグ格納部16に格納されたエネルギー吸収バッグ25が、運転席8に着座した乗員の上体の位置に適切に応じたタイミングをもって膨張せしめられて、乗員の上体を衝撃が効果的に低減せしめられる状態をもって受け止めるものとされ、また、下方バッグ格納部17に格納されたエネルギー吸収バッグ25が、運転

形成し、続くステップ54において、荷重検出力信号PA~PC及びQA~QCに基づき、駆動信号DUの送出タイミングをあらゆる時点T_U、及び、駆動信号DLの送出タイミングをあらゆる時点T_Lを夫々設定する。

次に、ステップ55において、時点T_Uが時点T_Lより早い(時点T_Uの値が時点T_Lの値より小)か否かを判断し、時点T_Uが時点T_Lより早い場合には、ステップ56において、時点T_Uとなったか否かを判断し、時点T_Uになっていなければステップ56における判断を繰り返す。そして、ステップ56における判断の結果、時点T_Uになった場合には、ステップ57において、駆動信号DUを上方バッグ格納部16におけるインフレーター19のヒータ22に送出し、その後、ステップ58において、時点T_Lとなったか否かを判断し、時点T_Lになっていなければステップ58における判断を繰り返す。そして、ステップ58における判断の結果、時点T_Lになった場合には、ステップ59において、駆動信号DLを下方バ

グ格納部17におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に送出して、ステップ51に戻る。

また、ステップ55における判断の結果、時点TUが時点TLより早くない場合には、ステップ60において、時点TUが時点TLに一致しているか否かを判断する。その結果、時点TUが時点TLに一致していない場合、従って、時点TUが時点TLより遅い(時点TUの値が時点TLの値より大)場合には、ステップ61において、時点TLとなったか否かを判断し、時点TLになっていなければステップ61における判断を繰り返す。そして、ステップ61における判断の結果、時点TLになった場合には、ステップ62において、駆動信号DLを下方バグ格納部17におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に送出し、その後、ステップ63において、時点TUとなったか否かを判断し、時点TUになっていなければステップ63における判断を繰り返す。そして、ステップ63における判断の結果、時点TUになった場合には、ステップ64において、駆動信号DUを上

方バグ格納部16におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に送出して、ステップ51に戻る。

さらに、ステップ60における判断の結果、時点TUが時点TLに一致している場合には、ステップ65において、時点TU(=TL)となったか否かを判断し、時点TUになっていなければステップ65における判断を繰り返す。そして、ステップ65における判断の結果、時点TUになった場合には、ステップ66において、駆動信号DU及び駆動信号DLを上方バグ格納部16におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22及び下方バグ格納部17におけるインフレータ19のヒータ22に夫々供給して、ステップ51に戻る。

なお、上述の例は、車体側部に加えられる外部からの衝撃からの乗員の保護が2つのエネルギー吸収バグによって行われる構成がとられているが、本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置は、斯かる構成に限られるものではなく、例えば、車体側部に加えられる外部からの衝撃から乗員を保護するに効果的な部分が選択されて、その選択され

た部分に、所定の膨張時寸法を有するものとされた1個のエネルギー吸収バグが設置される構成がとられてもよい。

(発明の効果)

以上の説明により明らかな如く、本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置によれば、車体側部にその外部から衝撃が加えられたとき、車体側部と車体側部の内側に着座した乗員との間にエネルギー吸収バグを膨張した状態で介在させ、そのエネルギー吸収バグによって衝撃エネルギーを吸収するようになすに当たり、車体側部に外部からの衝撃が加えられたとき、衝撃検出手段からの衝撃検出出力信号に応じて作動する制御部により、車体側部の車室側部分に設けられたバグ格納部に収納状態で格納されたエネルギー吸収バグに対するバグ膨張手段が、着座状態検出手段からの検出出力信号があらわす乗員の着座状態に応じて制御されて、収縮状態から車室側部に向かって膨張するものとされるエネルギー吸収バグの膨張開始タイミングが、例えば、乗員の車体側部の車室側部分

からの距離が大である種衝撃検出手段からの衝撃検出出力信号が得られたときからエネルギー吸収バグが膨張を開始するまでの時間が長くされるといふ如くに、乗員の着座状態に応じて設定されるので、エネルギー吸収バグを、車体側部の車室側部分に対する乗員の着座状態、例えば、車体側部に近接した状態あるいは車体側部から離隔した状態のいずれにも適切に対応して、適正な膨張状態をもって車体側部と乗員との間に介在せしめられるものとすることができ、それにより、乗員に及ぼされる衝撃の影響を効果的に緩和させることができることになる。

4. 図面の簡単な説明

第1図は本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例の要部を示すブロック接続図、第2図は本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例が適用された車両の車室部分と共に示す概略斜視図、第3図は本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例におけるセンサの配列態様を示す図、第4図は本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸

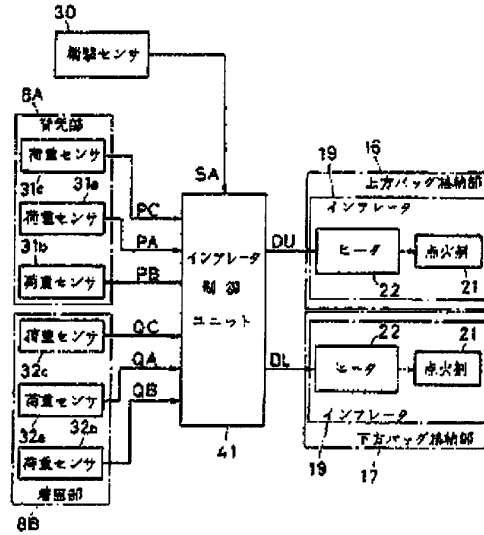
収装置の一例におけるバッグ格納部を示す断面図、第5図は本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例の動作説明に供される図、第6図は本発明に係る車体側部のエネルギー吸収装置の一例におけるインフレーター制御ユニットがマイクロコンピュータによって構成された場合における、そのマイクロコンピュータが実行するプログラムを示すフローチャートである。

图中、8は運転席側ドア、4は助手席側ドア、9は運転席、9は助手席、14はドアフィンナーパネル、15はドアトリム、16は上方バッグ格納部、17は下方バッグ格納部、19はインフレーター、22はヒータ、23はガス発生剤、25はエネルギー吸収バッグ、30及び33は衝撃センサ、31a~31c及び32a~32cは荷重センサ、41はインフレーター制御ユニットである。

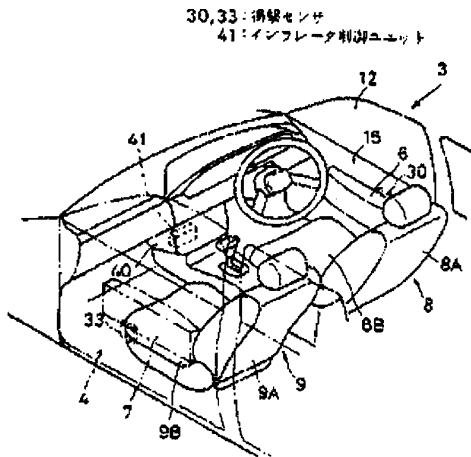
特許出願人 マツダ株式会社
代理人 弁理士 神原貞昭



第1図

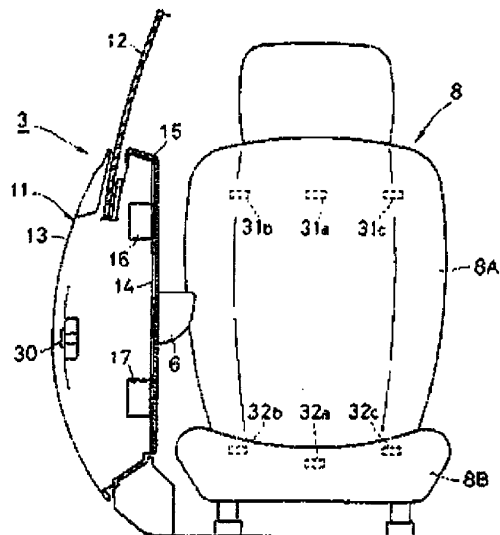


第2図

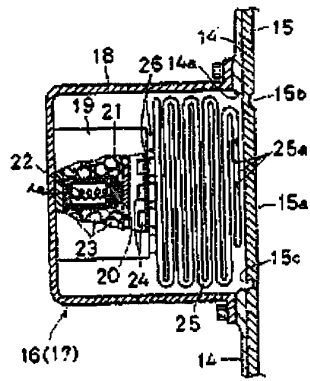


第3図

16: 上方バッグ格納部
17: 下方バッグ格納部
30: 衝撃センサ
31a~31c: 荷重センサ
32a~32c: 荷重センサ

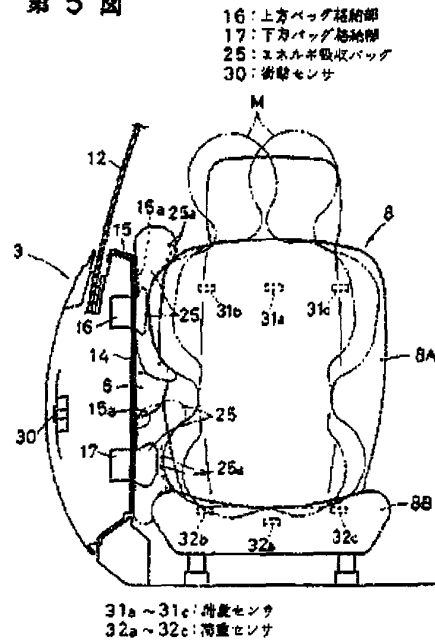


第4図



- 16: 上方バッグ格納部
- (17): 下方バッグ格納部
- 19: インフレーション
- 22: ヒータ
- 25: エネルギー吸収バッグ

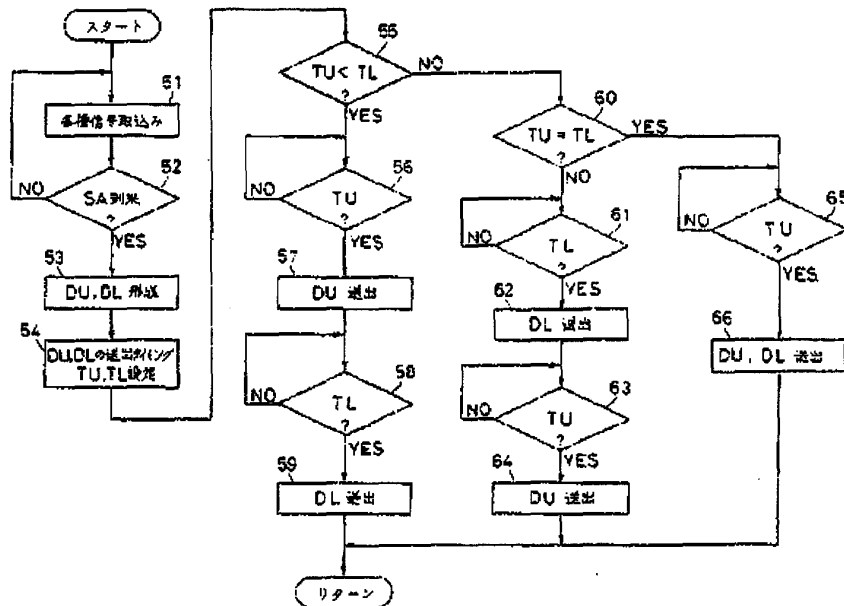
第5図



- 16: 上方バッグ格納部
- 17: 下方バッグ格納部
- 25: エネルギー吸収バッグ
- 30: 衝撃センサ

- 31a ~ 31c: 荷重センサ
- 32a ~ 32c: 荷重センサ

第6図



【公報種別】特許法第17条の2の規定による補正の掲載
【部門区分】第2部門第5区分
【発行日】平成10年(1998)12月2日

【公開番号】特開平4-46843
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【出願番号】特願平2-154883
【国際特許分類第6版】

B66R 21/32
21/16

[F I]

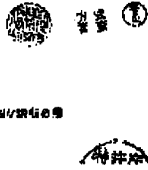
B66R 21/32
21/16

特許補正書

平成9年5月9日

特許庁長官 殿

1. 事件の表示
平成2年特許願第154000号
2. 補正をすべき者
本件との関係 発明者本人
住 所 広島県安芸郡中野町3番1号
名 称 (社) ヲツダ株式会社
代 表 者 ヘルシー・ジョー・ウォレス
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仲 介 特 許 専 門 店
電 話 044-861-1870
4. 第五命題の日付 自 然
5. 補正により撤回する請求項の番号 なし
6. 補正の対象
明細書の発明請求の範囲の展覧及び図面の添削/修正の態
7. 補正の内容



特

- 10 特許請求の範囲を初稿のとおりに補正する。
- 11 明細書中、第1頁第11行、「重量制部分・・・バッグの側面」とあるを「重量制部分に設けられ、重量的に配された位置に位置した重量の上体と車体側面との間に介在せしめられる制振装置とる上方エネルギー吸収バッグと、上方エネルギー吸収バッグを駆動させる駆動装置とる第1のバッグ駆動手段と、車体側面の車室部分に設けられ、重量に等しい重量の側面と車室部分との間に介在せしめられる制振装置とる下方エネルギー吸収バッグと、下方エネルギー吸収バッグを駆動させる駆動装置とる第2のバッグ駆動手段」とに訂正する。
- 12 同中、第1頁13～15行、「本車側部分・・・重量制部分」とあるを「重量制部分の重量に等しい重量の上体との間の間隔距離に於て第1の駆動力機構、及び、車体側部分と重量に等しい重量の側面との間の距離に於て第2の駆動力機構を駆動する駆動装置とる第1及び第2の」に訂正する。
- 13 同中、第1頁17行～第2頁17行、「駆動装置は車室からの・・・回動して」とあるを「第1及び第2のバッグ駆動手段、相互駆動装置からの回動して」とあるを「第1及び第2の駆動力機構が、駆動装置とる第1及び第2のバッグ駆動手段の共に作用する制振が、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから上方エネルギー吸収バッグが駆動を開始するまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから下方エネルギー吸収バッグが駆動を開始するまでの期間と、共に、駆動装置とる第1の駆動力機構からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間」とに訂正する。
- 14 同中、第2頁2～10行、「各駆動装置は、・・・時間」とあるを「重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間、及び、重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときから重量制部分からの駆動力が供給されたときまでの期間」とに訂正する。

⑫ 公開特許公報(A) 平1-229741

⑮ Int. Cl. 4

識別記号

庁内整理番号

⑬ 公開 平成1年(1989)9月13日

B 60 R 21/32

7626-3D

審査請求 未請求 請求項の数 3 (全7頁)

⑭ 発明の名称 車両用エアバック制御装置

⑯ 特 願 昭63-57923

⑰ 出 願 昭63(1988)3月10日

⑱ 発 明 者 村 本 久 雄 広島県安芸郡府中町新地3番1号 マツダ株式会社内

⑲ 出 願 人 マツダ株式会社 広島県安芸郡府中町新地3番1号

⑳ 代 理 人 弁理士 小谷 悦司 外2名

明 細 書

1. 発明の名称

車両用エアバック制御装置

2. 特許請求の範囲

1. 車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置において、衝突時からインフレーター作動までの時間を設定する時間設定手段と、インフレーター周辺の温度を検出する温度検出手段と、この温度検出手段からの信号をもって前記設定時間を補正する補正手段とを設け、この補正手段をもって前記設定時間が高温時より低温時の方が短くなるように補正するようにしたことを特徴とする車両用エアバック制御装置。

2. 車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置において、衝突時からインフレーター作動までの時間を設定する時間設定手段と、乗員用シートの位置を検出するシート位置検出手段と、このシート位置検出手段からの信号をもって前記設定時間

を補正する補正手段とを設け、この補正手段をもって前記設定時間が最後端より最前端の方が短くなるように補正するようにしたことを特徴とする車両用エアバック制御装置。

3. 車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置において、衝突時からインフレーター作動までの時間を設定する時間設定手段と、乗員用シートベルトの着脱を検出するシートベルト着脱検出手段と、このシートベルト着脱検出手段からの信号をもって前記設定時間を補正する補正手段とを設け、この補正手段をもって前記設定時間がシートベルト装着時よりシートベルト非装着時の方が短くなるように補正するようにしたことを特徴とする車両用エアバック制御装置。

3. 発明の詳細な説明

(産業上の利用分野)

本発明は、車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置におけるインフレーター作動時間の設定手

段並びに補正手段に関するものである。

(従来技術)

従来、車両用エアバック制御装置は、例えば、特公昭51-21509号公報に示されるように、車両の衝突を検知あるいは予知する手段と、車両衝突時に膨脹するエアバックと、このエアバックを作動させるインフレーターから構成され、エアバックの膨脹でもって衝突時の衝撃を吸収し、乗員を保護するようになっていた。

(発明が解決しようとする課題)

従来の車両用エアバック制御装置にあっては、車両衝突時からエアバック作動開始までの時間はほぼ一定であった。ところが、エアバックの膨脹時間は周囲温度によって異なり、エアバックが最もよく衝撃を吸収するタイミングと衝突時の衝撃が最も大きくなるタイミングとが一致しない場合が数多くあるといった問題を有し、また、乗員の姿勢(シート位置)あるいは乗員用シートベルトの装着の有無によっても、前記タイミングが一致しなくなるといった問題を有していた。

の時間を設定する時間設定手段と、乗員用シートの位置を検出するシート位置検出手段と、このシート位置検出手段からの信号でもって前記設定時間を補正する補正手段とを設け、この補正手段でもって前記設定時間が最後端より最前端の方が短くなるように補正するようにしてもよい。

さらに、車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置において、衝突時からインフレーター作動までの時間を設定する時間設定手段と、乗員用シートベルトの着脱を検出するシートベルト着脱検出手段と、このシートベルト着脱検出手段からの信号でもって前記設定時間を補正する補正手段とを設け、この補正手段でもって前記設定時間がシートベルト装着時よりシートベルト非装着時の方が短くなるように補正するようにしてもよい。

(作用)

前記構成の車両用エアバック制御装置によれば、車両衝突からエアバック作動開始までの時間を設定でき、さらに、この時間を周囲温度、乗員の姿

本発明は、車両衝突を検知あるいは予知した時からエアバック作動開始までの時間を設定することができ、さらに、この時間を周囲温度、乗員の姿勢あるいはシートベルトの装着の有無によって補正することができる車両用エアバック制御装置を提供することを目的とする。

(課題を解決するための手段)

前記目的を達成するために、本発明は、車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置において、衝突時からインフレーター作動までの時間を設定する時間設定手段と、インフレーター周辺の温度を検出する温度検出手段と、この温度検出手段からの信号でもって前記設定時間を補正する補正手段とを設け、この補正手段でもって前記設定時間が高温時より低温時の方が短くなるように補正するようにしたものである。

また、車両衝突時にインフレーターに電源供給してエアバックを作動させる車両用エアバック制御装置において、衝突時からインフレーター作動まで

勢あるいはシートベルトの装着の有無によって補正することができるので、エアバックが最もよく衝撃を吸収するタイミングと衝突時の衝撃が最も大きくなるタイミングとを一致させることができる。

(実施例)

第1図は本発明の第1実施例のブロック構成を示している。

同図において、1は衝突検出用センサ1a, 1bを備えた検出部で、このセンサ1a, 1bが同時に閉じたときに衝突検出信号を出力するようになっている。2は温度センサ2aを備え、この温度センサ2aでもって後記インフレーター6の周辺の温度を検出し温度検出信号を出力する温度検出手段、3は時間設定手段4と補正手段5とからなる制御部で、前記時間設定手段4は前記衝突検出信号が入力された時から後記インフレーター6の作動開始までの時間を設定し、前記補正手段5は前記温度検出信号に基づいて前記設定時間を補正するようになっている。インフレーター6は前記補正

された設定時間の経過後に着火し、この着火でもってエアバック7に気体を充填し膨脹させるものである。

第2図は本実施例の各部の車内における概略的な配置を示しており、同図において、8は検出部1と温度検出手段2と制御部3とを内設したコントロールユニットである。また、インフレーター6とエアバック7とが車室内の乗員用シート9前方にシート9と空間を介して位置するステアリング等に配設されており、また、このエアバック7の近傍に温度センサ2aが配設され、さらに、センサ1a、1bがそれぞれダッシュパネル、フロントバンパ等(図示せず)に配設されている。

次に、前記構成による実施例の動作について説明する。

まず、車両が衝突し、この衝突が検出部1でもって検出されると、時間設定手段4はインフレーター6の着火開始までの時間を補正手段5による補正に基づいて設定する。すなわち、エアバック7の膨脹時間は低温であれば長くなり、逆に高温に

ものである。制御部3は、前記予測時間と温度検出手段2による検出温度とに基づいてインフレーター6の作動開始までの時間を補正して設定し、インフレーター6は、この時間経過後に着火してエアバック7を膨脹させるようになっている。

なお、前述の説明では、超音波レーダ1cは距離のみを検出するものであったが、これに加えて衝突対象物との相対速度も検出するように構成することで、例えば、衝突対象物が走行中の車両であっても正確に衝突までの時間を予測できるようにすることができる。

次に、第1図の温度検出手段2をシートスライド位置検出手段11に変更した第3実施例について第6図を用いて説明する。

同図において、検出部1と制御部3とインフレーター6とエアバック7とは第1図の構成と同様であり、第1図と異なる点は、温度検出手段2をポテンシオメータ11aを備えたシートスライド位置検出手段11に変更したことである。

つまり、前記シートスライド位置検出手段11

なるほど短くなるので、第3図に示すように、時間設定手段4は、温度センサ2aでもって検出された温度が高温になるほどインフレーター6の着火開始までの時間を遅らせるように時間を設定し、この設定時間経過後にインフレーター6が着火を開始してエアバック7を膨脹させ、エアバック7が最もよく衝撃を吸収するタイミングと衝突時の衝撃が最も大きくなるタイミングとを一致させる。

次に、第1図の検出部1を超音波レーダを用いて車両衝突時間を予測し得る構成にした第2実施例について第4図を用いて説明する。

同図において、検出部1は超音波レーダ1cと車速検出手段1dと時間予測手段1eとからなり、前記超音波レーダ1cは、第5図に示すように、車両10のフロントバンパ10aに配設された超音波発振部1fと超音波受信部1gとを用いて、例えば、壁、電柱等の衝突対象物との距離を検出し、前記車速検出手段1dは車両10の現在の車速を検出し、前記時間予測手段1eは前記の距離および車速に基づいて衝突までの時間を予測する

は、第7図の概略配置図に示すように、乗員用シート9の下部9aに配設されたポテンシオメータ11aでもってシート9の位置に対応した位置信号を出力するようになっており、補正手段5はこの位置信号により時間設定手段4の設定時間を補正するようになっている。

次に、前記構成による実施例の動作について説明する。

まず、車両衝突が検出部1でもって検出されると、時間設定手段4は、シートスライド位置検出手段11からの位置信号に基づいて時間を設定する。すなわち、第8図の実線Aに示すように、補正手段5は、ポテンシオメータ11aでもって検出されたシート9の位置が後方であるほど、インフレーター6の着火開始までの時間を遅らせるように設定時間を補正する。そして、この設定時間経過後にインフレーター6が着火を開始してエアバック7を膨脹させる。

なお、第8図の実線Aは、最前端から最後端までのシート9のスライド位置と着火開始までの遅

れ時間とが、第3図と同様に、正比例になるように設定した一例であり、同図の実線Bに示すように、シート9の中立位置付近の遅れ時間を、実線Aの例よりも長くするように設定してもよい。

かくして、乗員用シート9の位置に応じてインフレーター6の着火タイミングを補正することになるので、エアバック7が最もよく衝撃を吸収するタイミングと衝突時に乗員の受ける衝撃が最も大きくなるタイミングとを一致させることができる。

次に、第1図の温度検出手段2をシートベルト着脱検出手段12に変更した第4実施例について第9図、第10図(a)、(b)を用いて説明する。

第9図において、検出部1と制御部3とインフレーター6とエアバック7とは第1図の構成と同様であり、第1図と異なる点は、温度検出手段2をシートベルト装着検出スイッチ12aを有したシートベルト着脱検出手段12に変更したことである。

つまり、前記シートベルト着脱検出手段12は、

ミングとを一致させることができる。

なお、以上の説明では、設定時間の補正をインフレーター6周辺の温度、またはシート9の位置、またはシートベルト装着の有無でもって行ったが、これらを2つ以上併用して補正を行ってもよい。(発明の効果)

本発明は、車両衝突からエアバック作動開始までの時間を設定し、さらに、この時間を周囲温度、乗員の姿勢あるいはシートベルトの装着の有無によって補正することにより、常にエアバックが最もよく衝撃を吸収するタイミングと衝突時の衝撃が最も大きくなるタイミングとを一致させることができるので、衝突時の衝撃を確実に吸収でき、乗員を安全に保護することができる。

4. 図面の簡単な説明

第1図は本発明の第1実施例のブロック構成図、第2図は本実施例の各部の車内における概略配置図、第3図は温度検出手段による検出温度とインフレータの作動開始までの時間との関係を示す図、第4図は本発明の第2実施例のブロック構成図、

第10図(a)、(b)に示すように、シートベルトのバックル9b内部に配設した検出スイッチ12aでもって着脱を検出し、この着脱検出信号を出力するようになっており、補正手段5はこの位置信号により時間設定手段4の設定時間を補正するようになっている。

次に、本実施例構成の動作について説明する。

まず、車両衝突が検出部1でもって検出されると、時間設定手段4は、シートベルト着脱検出手段12からの着脱検出信号に基づいて時間を設定する。すなわち、第11図のC、Dに示すように、シートベルト装着時Dはシートベルト非装着時Cよりもインフレーター6の作動開始までの時間を遅らせるように設定時間を補正し、この設定時間経過後にインフレーター6が作動を開始してエアバック7を膨脹させる。

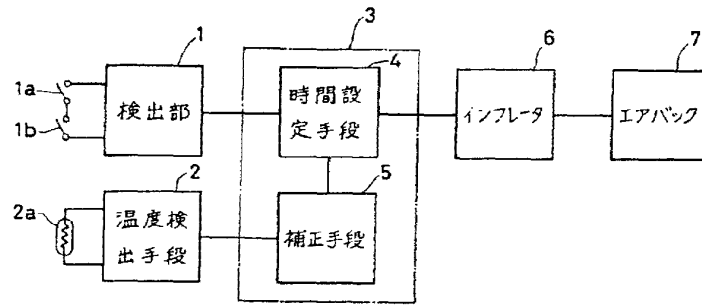
かくして、シートベルト装着の有無に応じてインフレーター6の着火タイミングを補正するので、エアバック7が最も衝撃を吸収するタイミングと衝突時に乗員の受ける衝撃が最も大きくなるタイ

第5図は車両に配設された超音波発振部と超音波受信部の位置を示す図、第6図は本発明の第3実施例のブロック構成図、第7図は第3実施例の各部の車内における概略配置図、第8図はシートのスライド位置と遅れ時間との関係を示す図、第9図は本発明の第4実施例のブロック構成図、第10図(a)、(b)は第4実施例の各部の車内における概略配置図、第11図はシートベルト装着の有無と遅れ時間との関係を示す図である。

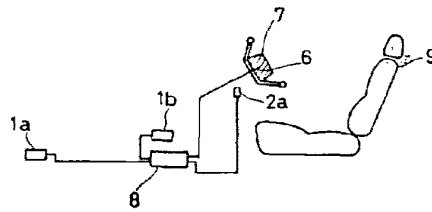
2…温度検出手段、4…時間設定手段、5…補正手段、6…インフレーター、7…エアバック、11…シート位置検出手段、12…シートベルト着脱検出手段。

特許出願人	マツダ株式会社
代理人	弁理士 小谷 悦司
同	弁理士 長田 正
同	弁理士 板谷 康夫

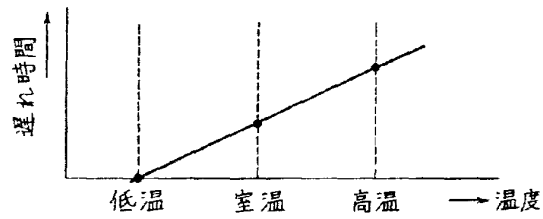
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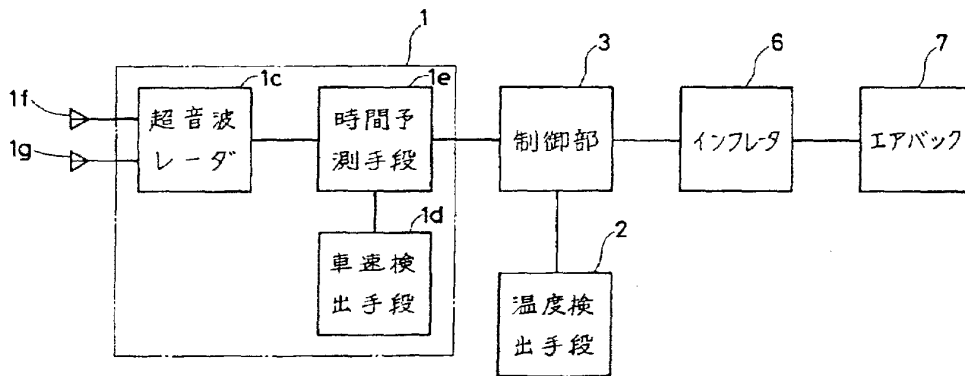
第 2 図



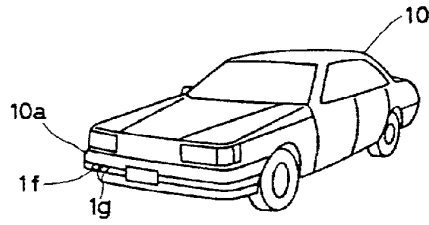
第 3 図



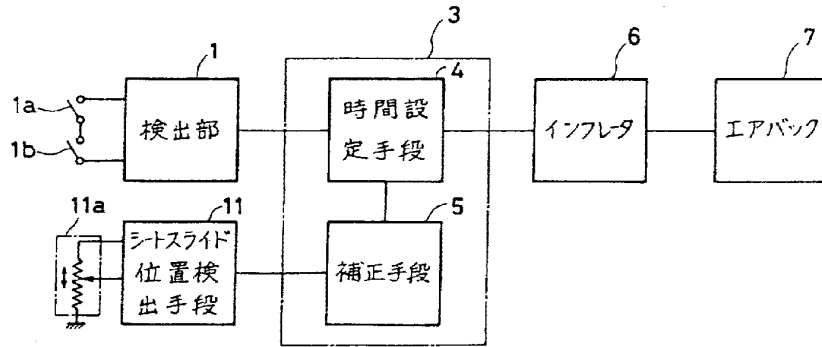
第 4 図



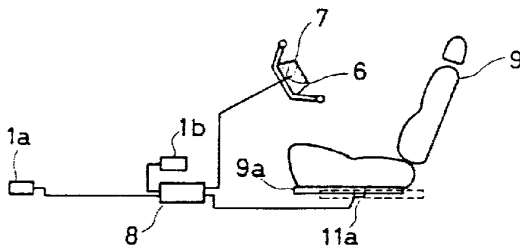
第 5 図



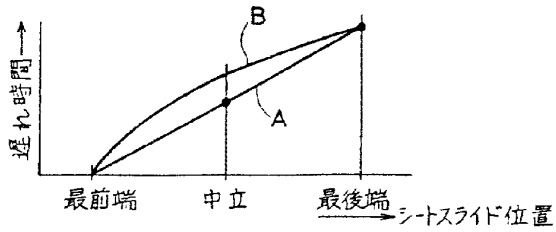
第 6 図



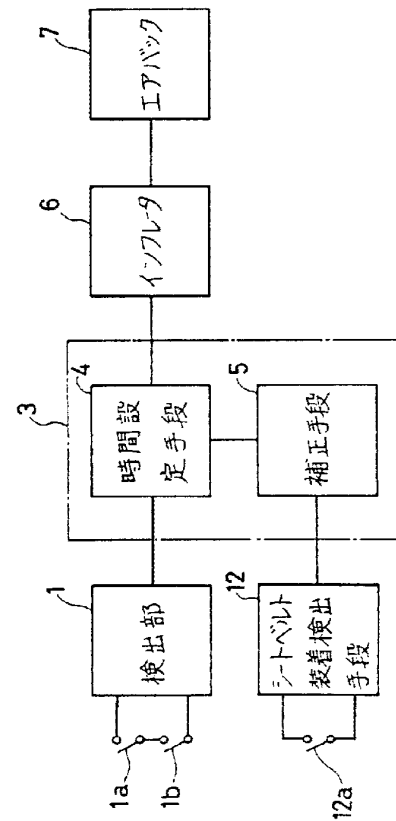
第 7 図



第 8 図

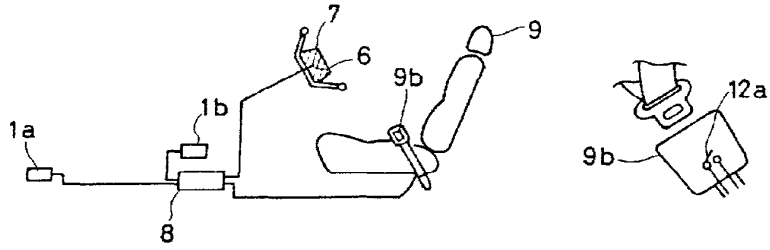


第 9 図

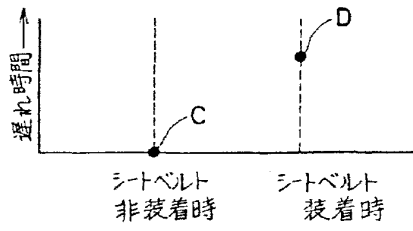


第 10 図 (a)

第 10 図 (b)



第 11 図



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 2624

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: 11/836,274
Confirmation No.: 2935
Filing Date: August 9, 2007
Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

December 30, 2008

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits a list of references related to litigation involving U.S. Pat. No. 6,850,824, which issued from a parent application of the instant application, namely Exhibit A of Delphi Corporation's Preliminary Invalidity Contentions of claims of the patent (see pages 4-7 therein). The Preliminary Invalidity Contentions were previously submitted in an Information Disclosure Statement filed December 22, 2008. References mentioned in the Invalidity Contentions and Exhibit A are also listed, other than those already of record.

Since this correspondence is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publications has been waived.

U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/836,274
Information Disclosure Statement filed Dec. 30, 2008

An Office Action on the merits has not been received to date and therefore no fee is due for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that these documents be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-08
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	4022146		1977-05-10	Sadler	
	2	4243248		1981-01-06	Scholtz et al.	
	3	4278971		1981-07-14	Yasui et al.	
	4	4549436		1985-10-29	Barkhoudarian	
	5	4645233		1987-02-24	Bruse et al.	
	6	4698571		1987-10-06	Mizuta et al.	
	7	4851705		1989-07-25	Musser et al.	
	8	4980573		1990-12-25	White et al.	

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274
Filing Date		2007-08-08
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
Art Unit	3664	
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

	9	5118134		1992-06-02	Mattes et al.	
	10	5670853		1997-09-23	Bauer	
	11	5748473		1998-05-05	Breed et al.	
	12	5822707		1998-10-13	Breed et al.	
	13	5164901		1992-11-17	Blackburn et al.	

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U.S. PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS

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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274
Filing Date		2007-08-08
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
Art Unit	3664	
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1	Exhibit A of Defendant's Preliminary Invalidation Contentions dated December 10, 2008 presented in Automotive Technologies, Inc. v. Delphi Corporation Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274	
Filing Date		2007-08-08	
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed		
Art Unit	3664		
Examiner Name			
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		

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That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

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See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2008-12-30
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

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EFS ID:	4536073
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe
Filer Authorized By:	
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	30-DEC-2008
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	14:26:44
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Information Disclosure Statement Letter	081230_ATI-484_IDS-4.pdf	16422 <small>92fa0f42057f434959846b5855d1b0e31f039098</small>	no	2

Warnings:

Information:

2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	USSN-11836274-IDS-ATI-484_4. pdf	522026 0857678efcb4ac4a32135bb3224bd9f6121 13178	no	5
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	NPL Documents	Exhibit_A.pdf	286890 dd34cb67398ab9a39b35c00295b8fa44211 8fb35	no	58
Warnings:					
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Total Files Size (in bytes):			825338		
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	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	5343411		1994-08-30	Olsson	
	2	5330226		1994-07-19	Gentry et al.	
	3	5446661		1995-08-29	Gioutsos et al.	

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	1	9423973	WO		1994-10-27	Gioutsos et al.		<input type="checkbox"/>

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Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
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Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2009-03-09
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Ex.: Not yet assigned Group Art Unit: 3664

Re: Application of: David S. Breed

Serial No.: 11/836,274

Confirmation No.: 2935

Filed: August 9, 2007

For: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods

Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non-Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

March 9, 2009

Sir:

Further to the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 30, 2008, applicant herewith submits a list of potentially material references that are listed in a litigation document for U.S. Pat. No. 6,850,824, one of the parent applications of the instant application. Since this application is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publications has been waived.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better prior art exists. While the term “reference” is used in citing each of the publications called to the Examiner’s attention herein, applicant does not make any admission that each or all of them are “prior art” references within the meaning of the statutory and case law.

Applicant reserves the right to contend, where appropriate, that a reference asserted against any claim of the present application is not prior art under the facts and the law.

Applicant also reserves the right to present appropriate arguments and/or evidence to establish patentability over the references, should one or more of the references be applied against the claims of the present application.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner independently determine those items that the Examiner would consider the most pertinent of all the references cited herein.

An Office Action on the merits has not been received and therefore no fee is due for the submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that these references be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

By: Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

Enclosure
PTO-1449 (4 pages)

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	4925431
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine
Filer Authorized By:	Brian Roffe
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	09-MAR-2009
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	11:14:38
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	USSN-11836274-IDS2-ATI-484. pdf	36755 <small>e23ec70236e7b1d630ae93015ebfc1725f513d59</small>	no	4

Warnings:

Information:

This is not an USPTO supplied IDS fillable form

2	Information Disclosure Statement Letter	USSN-11836274-IDS2-form-ATI-484.pdf	17438 96b6e4c6b1f7577901ef4e0111acd0285c28b48	no	2
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Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes): 54193

This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	5539638		1996-07-23	Keeler et al.	
	2	6212455		2001-04-03	Weaver	

If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.

U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1					

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button

NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number		11836274
Filing Date		2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
Art Unit	3664	
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1	SAE Paper No. 950759, ANTON T. VAN ZANTEEN, et al., "VDC, The Vehicle Dynamics Control System of Bosch", International Congress and Exposition, Detroit, MI, February 27 - March 2, 1995, 20 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2	SAE Paper No. 970606, PETER STEINER, et al., "Roll Over Detection", International Congress and Exposition, Detroit, MI, February 24-27, 1997, 7 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
--------------------	--	-----------------	--

*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

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See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2009-06-11
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	5499967
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe/Harry Sealine
Filer Authorized By:	Brian Roffe
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	11-JUN-2009
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	16:03:38
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	USSN-11836274-IDS3-ATI-484. pdf	37203 <small>07b2564e4a63656671093b70238e577654 d11ea7</small>	no	4

Warnings:

Information:

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2	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS3- SAE950759-ATI-484.pdf	1413468	no	20
			3bf5e01597d0b201ab46f99c6870922788c b83f3		

Warnings:

Information:

3	NPL Documents	USSN-11836274-IDS3- SAE970606-ATI-484.pdf	4498541	no	7
			571cc0473c6b1a715a391c3b69ce285442d 7d84e		

Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes):			5949212
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This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
11/836,274	08/09/2007	David S. Breed	ATI-484	2935
22846	7590	11/02/2010	EXAMINER	
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ 8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223 Skokie, IL 60076-2914			BEAULIEU, YONEL	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3661	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			11/02/2010	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1 - 15, drawn to monitoring the condition of at least one moving object, classified in class 701, subclass 36.
- II. Claims 16 - 21, drawn to providing status data for vehicle maintenance, classified in class 701, subclass 29.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, the different inventions are *monitoring condition of a moving* and *providing status data for a vehicle* and have acquired different modes of operation and classification.

Restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper because all these inventions listed in this action are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious search and/or examination burden if restriction were not required because at least the following reason(s) apply: different classification or mode of operation.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse. Traversal must be presented at the time of election in order to be considered timely. Failure to timely traverse the requirement will result in the loss of right to petition under 37 CFR 1.144. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable upon the elected invention.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Yonel Beaulieu/ whose telephone number is (571) 272-6955. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon., Wed. & Thur. between 0900 and 1600.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas BLACK can be reached on (571) 272-6956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Yonel Beaulieu/
Yonel Beaulieu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3661

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		11836274	
	Filing Date		2007-08-09	
	First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED		
	Art Unit	3661		
	Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU		
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484		

U.S.PATENTS	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
--------------------	---------------------------------------

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1					

If you wish to add additional U.S. Patent citation information please click the Add button.

U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	20100057290	A1	2010-03-04	BRILLHART ET AL.	
	2	20100063677	A1	2010-03-11	FUHRMAN ET AL.	
	3	20070168089	A1	2007-07-19	GOLDBECK ET AL.	
	4	20070108749	A1	2007-05-17	WEIDNER ET AL.	
	5	20030176959	A1	2003-09-18	BREED	

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>
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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED
Art Unit	3661
Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ² j	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional Foreign Patent Document citation information please click the Add button

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NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

Remove

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
	1		<input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to add additional non-patent literature document citation information please click the Add button

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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	Date Considered
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*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through a citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹ See Kind Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.USPTO.GOV or MPEP 901.04. ² Enter office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ³ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁴ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁵ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED
Art Unit	3661
Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe, Reg. No. 35336/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2010-11-08
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

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9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	8786996
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe
Filer Authorized By:	
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	08-NOV-2010
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	11:48:48
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	101108_ATI-484_IDS-5.pdf	16014 <small>8f95859c37bd0542926f36ea4b6360cccd397788</small>	no	2

Warnings:

Information:

This is not an USPTO supplied IDS fillable form

2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	101108_ATI-468_IDS.pdf	612556 <small>2a88f8dc79bc47084fa59a0be0ea342fd2371ea</small>	no	4
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Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes): 628570

This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Ex. Yonel Beaulieu Art Unit: 3661

Re: Application of: David S. Breed

Serial No.: 11/836,274

Confirmation No.: 2935

Filing Date: August 9, 2007

Title: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods

Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Mail Stop Non Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

November 8, 2010

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits a list of references cited during the prosecution of related applications, namely:

U.S. Pat. Appln Publ. Nos. 2010/0057290, 2010/0063677, 2070/0168089 and 2007/0108749 cited in an Office Action dated November 1, 2010 for U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/833,033; and

U.S. Pat. Appln Publ. No. 2003/0176959 cited in an Office Action dated October 21, 2010 for U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/833,052.

Since this correspondence is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publications has been waived.

An Office Action on the merits has not been received to date and therefore no fee is due for submission of this Information Disclosure Statement.

It is respectfully requested that these documents be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223
Skokie, Illinois 60076-2959
Tel.: (516) 448-6435
Fax: (847) 637-0335

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Examiner:	Yonel Beaulieu	Art Unit:	3661
Re:	Application of:	David S. Breed	
	Serial No.:	11/836,274	
	Confirmation No.:	2935	
	Filing Date:	August 9, 2007	
	Title:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods	
	Customer Number:	22846	

AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

November 10, 2010

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated November 2, 2010, which set a shortened one-month statutory term for response expiring on December 2, 2010, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begin on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 5 of this paper.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method for providing status data for vehicle maintenance, comprising:

monitoring for a triggering event on a vehicle having a wireless communications unit, the triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle; and

initiating a wireless transmission between the communications unit and a remote site separate and apart from the vehicle in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the at least one component or subsystem.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a dealer of the vehicle ~~manufacturer, repair or service facility~~.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the triggering event is a failure, predicted failure or fault code generation of the at least one component or subsystem.

19. (Currently Amended) A system for providing status data for vehicle maintenance, comprising:

a diagnostic module including at least one sensor for monitoring at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle, said diagnostic module being arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and detect a triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of the at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle; and

a wireless communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network, said communications unit being coupled to said diagnostic module and initiating a wireless transmission between said communications unit and a remote site separate and apart from the vehicle in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the at least one component or subsystem.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a dealer of the vehicle, ~~manufacturer, repair or service facility~~.

21. (Original) The system of claim 19, wherein the triggering event is a failure, predicted failure or fault code generation of the at least one component or subsystem.

22. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of monitoring for the triggering event comprises providing at least one sensor that monitors the at least one component or subsystem.

23. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein the at least one sensor is part of a diagnostic module on the vehicle, further comprising configuring the diagnostic module to analyze data obtained by the at least one sensor in order to diagnose operability of the at least one component of subsystem and generate the triggering event based on diagnostic criteria.

24. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein the at least one sensor is part of a diagnostic module on the vehicle, further comprising configuring the diagnostic module to analyze data obtained by the at least one sensor in order to predict failure of the at least one component of subsystem and generate the triggering event based on prognostic criteria.

25. (New) The method of claim 22, further comprising wirelessly coupling the diagnostic module to the communications unit.

26. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of monitoring for the triggering event comprises providing a plurality of different sensors that monitor the at least one component or subsystem.

27. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a manufacturer of the vehicle.

28. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a repair or service facility for the vehicle.

29. (New) The method of claim 16, further comprising storing, in a data storage unit, diagnostic and prognostic messages about the at least one component or subsystem from a plurality of vehicles for further analysis.

30. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module is arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and detect the triggering event relating to predictive, prognostic analysis of the at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle.

31. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module is arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and detect the triggering event relating to diagnostic analysis of the at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle.

32. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module is wireless coupled to said communications unit.

33. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module comprises a plurality of different, sensors.

34. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a manufacturer of the vehicle.

35. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a repair or service facility for the vehicle.

36. (New) The system of claim 19, further comprising a data storage unit that stores the diagnostic and prognostic messages about the at least one component or subsystem from a plurality of vehicles for further analysis.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the present application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 16-21 and new claims 22-36 are presently active in this application, claims 1-15 having been canceled.

Claims 16, 17, 19 and 20 are amended and the changes to the claims do not relate to patentability.

Restriction Requirement

In response to the restriction requirement, applicant hereby elects to prosecute in this application, claims 16-21, drawn to methods and systems for providing status data for vehicle maintenance. Claims 16-21 read on the elected invention. Non-elected claims 1-15 have been canceled without prejudice to filing a divisional application directed to the subject matter of these claims.

New Claims

Claims 22-36 are presented and depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 16 or 19. Claims 22-36 read on the elected invention. No fee is due for the presentation of claims 22-36 in view of the cancellation of claims 1-15.

Information Disclosure Statement

An Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith listing references potentially relevant to the claimed subject matter of U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,809,437, 6,326,704 and 6,738,697. The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider possible double patenting issues with the claims of these patents, as well as with respect to the claims of U.S. Pat. No. 6,850,824.

An early and favorable action on the merits upon entry and consideration of this amendment is earnestly solicited.

FOR THE APPLICANT
Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223
Skokie, Illinois 60076-2959
Tel.: (516) 448-6435
Fax: (837) 637-0335

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		11836274
	Filing Date		2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED	
	Art Unit		3661
	Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU	
	Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1	5193513		1993-03-16	Marko et al.	
	2	5414645		1995-05-09	Hirano	
	3	5313407		1994-05-17	Tiernan et al.	
	4	5821412		1998-10-13	Bryant et al.	
	5	5445019		1995-08-29	Glidewell et al.	
	6	4267569		1981-05-12	Baumann et al.	
	7	4398258		1983-08-09	Naitoh et al.	
	8	4437342		1984-03-20	Hosaka et al.	

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
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Application Number		11836274
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First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED	
Art Unit	3661	
Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

9	4491109		1985-01-01	Kishi et al.	
10	5463567		1995-10-31	Boen et al.	
11	5745027		1998-04-28	Malville	
12	4532594		1985-07-30	Hosaka et al.	
13	4547734		1985-10-15	Spaude	
14	4677308		1987-06-30	Wroblewski et al.	
15	4698764		1987-10-06	Inagaki et al.	
16	4779490		1988-10-25	Milunas et al.	
17	4817418		1989-04-04	Asami et al.	
18	4820966		1989-04-11	Fridman	
19	4825362		1989-04-25	Minami et al.	

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First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED	
Art Unit		3661
Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU	
Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484

	20	4962744		1990-10-16	Uranishi et al.	
	21	4989146		1991-01-29	Imajo	
	22	5381658		1995-01-17	Meguro	
	23	5372411		1994-12-13	Gerstenmaier et al.	
	24	5121112		1992-06-09	Nakadozono	
	25	5477827		1995-12-26	Weisman, II et al.	
	26	5081586		1992-01-14	Barthel et al.	
	27	4926331		1990-05-15	Windle et al.	
	28	5157610		1992-10-22	Asano et al.	
	29	5257190		1993-10-26	Crane	
	30	5513107		1996-04-30	Gormley	

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Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

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U.S.PATENT APPLICATION PUBLICATIONS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Publication Number	Kind Code ¹	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
	1					

If you wish to add additional U.S. Published Application citation information please click the Add button.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ² j	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
	1							<input type="checkbox"/>

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NON-PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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Signature	/Brian Roffe, Reg. No. 35336/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2010-11-10
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
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Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	8806430
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe
Filer Authorized By:	
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	10-NOV-2010
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	11:44:36
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	no
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File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1		101110_ATI-484_amendment.pdf	29830 5c2cc9443e67125330ce899ba36ffd89bfdd d3b0	yes	5

Multipart Description/PDF files in .zip description			
Document Description	Start	End	
Amendment/Req. Reconsideration-After Non-Final Reject	1	1	
Claims	2	4	
Applicant Arguments/Remarks Made in an Amendment	5	5	

Warnings:

Information:

2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	101110_ATI-484_IDSpdf.pdf	613529	no	6
			2a009be6d61d2768dfc3c29339743ebcf8c ef2e		

Warnings:

Information:

Total Files Size (in bytes):	643359
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This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.

New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 11/836,274	Filing Date 08/09/2007	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
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APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I			OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY			
FOR	NUMBER FILED (Column 1)	NUMBER EXTRA (Column 2)	SMALL ENTITY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OR	OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
			RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)	RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))</small>	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(k), (l), or (m))</small>	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(o), (p), or (q))</small>	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	minus 20 =	*	X \$ =		X \$ =	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	minus 3 =	*	X \$ =		X \$ =	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$250 (\$125 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).					
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>						
			TOTAL		TOTAL	

* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II					OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY			
AMENDMENT	11/10/2010	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	SMALL ENTITY	OR	OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
					RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	* 21	Minus	** 21	=	0	X \$ =	
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	* 2	Minus	***4	=	0	X \$ =	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))							
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))							
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE		TOTAL ADD'L FEE	

AMENDMENT	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	SMALL ENTITY	OR	OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY	
				RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)
	Total (37 CFR 1.16(i))	*	Minus	**	=		X \$ =
	Independent (37 CFR 1.16(h))	*	Minus	***	=		X \$ =
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee (37 CFR 1.16(s))						
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM (37 CFR 1.16(j))						
				TOTAL ADD'L FEE		TOTAL ADD'L FEE	

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".
 The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

Legal Instrument Examiner:
/CATHERINE d. SMITH/

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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Table with columns: APPLICATION NO., FILING DATE, FIRST NAMED INVENTOR, ATTORNEY DOCKET NO., CONFIRMATION NO.
Row 1: 11/836,274, 08/09/2007, David S. Breed, ATI-484, 2935
Row 2: 22846, 7590, 12/09/2010, BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ, 8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223, Skokie, IL 60076-2914
Row 3: EXAMINER, BEAULIEU, YONEL
Row 4: ART UNIT, PAPER NUMBER, 3661
Row 5: MAIL DATE, DELIVERY MODE, 12/09/2010, PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 11/836,274	Applicant(s) BREED, DAVID S.	
	Examiner /Yonel Beaulieu/	Art Unit 3661	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 16-36 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 16-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 10 September 2007 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>See Continuation Sheet</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

Continuation of Attachment(s) 3). Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08), Paper No(s)/Mail Date :8/9/07;9/17/08;11/13/08;12/11/08;12/22/08;12/30/08;03/09/09;06/11/09;11/08/10;11/10/10.

Specification

The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: it is suggested to update the status of *all* related applications (for example, SN 10/331060, 10/638743, 10/940881 etc.). Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 16, 18, 19, 21 – 26, 28 – 33, 35, and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US 6434458 B1 to Laguer-Diaz et al. (“Laguer-Diaz”).

Regarding claims 16, 19, 22 – 25, 31, and 32, Laguer-Diaz teaches a method/system (title at least) for providing status data for vehicle maintenance comprising monitoring (by way of diagnostic module/sensor 10) a triggering event relating to a diagnostic analysis of at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle (form item 12) and initiating, by interfacing a wireless communication unit (14) that is coupled to the module (see fig. 1) for transmitting between the unit and a remote site (18) separate and apart from the vehicle (fig. 1; col. 4, line 45 – col. 6, line 37 at least).

Regarding claims 18, 21, and 30, Laguer-Diaz further teaches the triggering event is a generated failure, predicted failure or fault code (col. 1, lines 46 – 56; col. 4, lines 45 – 58; col. 8, lines 5 – 18 at least).

Regarding claims 26 and 33, Laguer-Diaz further teaches a plurality of different sensors (12 in fig. 1).

Regarding claims 28 and 35, Laguer-Diaz further teaches the remote site is a repair or service facility for the vehicle (col. 1, lines 9 - 14; col. 1, line 57 - col. 2, line 21; col. 4, lines 59 - 67 at least).

Regarding claims 29 and 36, Laguer-Diaz further teaches storing in a data storage unit (within item 10) diagnostic messages about the component or subsystem from a plurality of vehicles (locomotives) for further analysis (col. 2, line 47 – col. 3, line 7; col. 5, lines 1 – 37 at least).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 17, 20, 27, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Laguer-Diaz ('458 B1) as applied to claims 16 and 19 above.

As discussed above, Laguer-Diaz teaches all of the limitations except for the remote site being a dealer or manufacturer of the vehicle.

However, Laguer-Diaz teaches a remote site that must know the software version running on the vehicle in order to dispatch repair crew to service the vehicle (note col. 2, line 47 - col. 3, line 7 at least).

Art Unit: 3661

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention making the remote site a dealer or a manufacturer is consistent with Laguer-Diaz's teaching in order to enhance accuracy of the diagnosis.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Yonel Beaulieu/ whose telephone number is (571) 272-6955. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon., Wed. & Thur. between 0900 and 1600.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas BLACK can be reached on (571) 272-6956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3661

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Yonel Beaulieu/
Yonel Beaulieu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3661

Notice of References Cited	Application/Control No. 11/836,274	Applicant(s)/Patent Under Reexamination BREED, DAVID S.	
	Examiner /Yonel Beaulieu/	Art Unit 3661	Page 1 of 1

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

*	Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Name	Classification
*	A US-6,434,458	08-2002	Laguer-Diaz et al.	701/35
B	US-			
C	US-			
D	US-			
E	US-			
F	US-			
G	US-			
H	US-			
I	US-			
J	US-			
K	US-			
L	US-			
M	US-			

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

*	Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Country	Name	Classification
N					
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T					

NON-PATENT DOCUMENTS

*	Include as applicable: Author, Title Date, Publisher, Edition or Volume, Pertinent Pages)
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V	
W	
X	

*A copy of this reference is not being furnished with this Office action. (See MPEP § 707.05(a).)
Dates in MM-YYYY format are publication dates. Classifications may be US or foreign.

Index of Claims



Application/Control No.
11/836,274
Applicant(s)/Patent under Reexamination
BREED, DAVID S.
Examiner
/Yonel Beaulieu/
Art Unit
3661

√	Rejected
=	Allowed

—	(Through numeral) Cancelled
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N	Non-Elected
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A	Appeal
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Claim		Date			
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Refine Search

Search Results

Terms	Documents
L12 and L11	20

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Database:

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- US Patents Full-Text Database
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Search Type: Prior Art Interference

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L13

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Search History

DATE: Thursday, November 25, 2010 [Purge Queries](#) [Printable Copy](#) [Create Case](#)

<u>Set Name</u> Side by Side	<u>Query</u>	<u>Hit Count</u>	<u>Set Name</u> Result Set	<u>Set Name</u> Grid
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Prior Art Searches

DB=USPT; PLUR=YES; OP=OR

<u>L13</u>	L12 and l11	20	<u>L13</u>	<u>L13</u>
<u>L12</u>	fault or fail\$ or event	1225221	<u>L12</u>	<u>L12</u>
<u>L11</u>	L10 and l8	20	<u>L11</u>	<u>L11</u>
<u>L10</u>	wireless	190465	<u>L10</u>	<u>L10</u>

<u>L9</u>	L8 and prognos\$	3	<u>L9</u>	<u>L9</u>
<u>L8</u>	L7 and l6	20	<u>L8</u>	<u>L8</u>
<u>L7</u>	diagnos\$	218239	<u>L7</u>	<u>L7</u>
<u>L6</u>	L5 and l4	23	<u>L6</u>	<u>L6</u>
<u>L5</u>	remote\$	528925	<u>L5</u>	<u>L5</u>
<u>L4</u>	L3 and l2	29	<u>L4</u>	<u>L4</u>
<u>L3</u>	trigger\$ adj event	11519	<u>L3</u>	<u>L3</u>
<u>L2</u>	vehicle adj maintenance	1111	<u>L2</u>	<u>L2</u>
<u>L1</u>	(5809437 6326704 6738697 6850824).pn.	4	<u>L1</u>	<u>L1</u>

END OF SEARCH HISTORY



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BIB DATA SHEET

CONFIRMATION NO. 2935

SERIAL NUMBER	FILING or 371(c) DATE	CLASS	GROUP ART UNIT	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
11/836,274	08/09/2007	382	3661	ATI-484
	RULE			

APPLICANTS

David S. Breed, Miami Beach, FL;

**** CONTINUING DATA *******

This application is a CIP of 10/331,060 12/27/2002 PAT 7,635,043
 which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
 which is a CIP of 09/753,186 01/02/2001 PAT 6,484,080
 which is a CIP of 09/137,918 08/20/1998 PAT 6,175,787
 which is a CIP of 08/476,077 06/07/1995 PAT 5,809,437
 and said 10/188,673 07/03/2002

is a CIP of 10/174,709 06/19/2002 PAT 6,735,506
 which is a CIP of 09/753,186 01/02/2001 PAT 6,484,080

This application 11/836,274 08/09/2007

is a CIP of 10/638,743 08/11/2003 PAT 7,284,769
 which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
 and is a CIP of 10/330,938 12/27/2002 PAT 6,823,244
 which is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697

This application 11/836,274 08/09/2007

is a CIP of 10/940,881 09/13/2004 PAT 7,663,502
 which is a CIP of 10/613,453 07/03/2003 PAT 6,850,824
 which is a CON of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
 and said 10/940,881 09/13/2004
 is a CIP of 10/805,903 03/22/2004 PAT 7,050,897
 which is a CIP of 10/174,709 06/19/2002 PAT 6,735,506
 and is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697

This application 11/836,274 08/09/2007

is a CIP of 11/082,739 03/17/2005 PAT 7,421,321
 which is a CIP of 10/701,361 11/04/2003 PAT 6,988,026
 which is a CIP of 09/925,062 08/08/2001 PAT 6,733,036
 which is a CIP of 09/356,314 07/16/1999 PAT 6,326,704
 which is a CIP of 09/137,918 08/20/1998 PAT 6,175,787
 and said 09/925,062 08/08/2001
 is a CIP of 09/767,020 01/23/2001 PAT 6,533,316
 which is a CIP of 09/356,314 07/16/1999 PAT 6,326,704
 and said 10/701,361 11/04/2003
 is a CIP of 10/043,557 01/11/2002 PAT 6,905,135
 which is a CIP of 09/925,062 08/08/2001 PAT 6,733,036
 and said 10/701,361 11/04/2003
 is a CIP of 10/174,709 06/19/2002 PAT 6,735,506
 and is a CIP of 10/188,673 07/03/2002 PAT 6,738,697
 and is a CIP of 10/330,938 12/27/2002 PAT 6,823,244
 and is a CIP of 10/613,453 07/03/2003 PAT 6,850,824
 and said 11/082,739 03/17/2005
 is a CIP of 11/039,129 01/19/2005 PAT 7,082,359
 which is a DIV of 10/701,361 11/04/2003 PAT 6,988,026

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number	11836274
	Filing Date	2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
	Art Unit	3664
	Examiner Name	
	Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	5343411		1994-08-30	Olsson	
/YB/	2	5330226		1994-07-19	Gentry et al.	
/YB/	3	5446661		1995-08-29	Gioutsos et al.	

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	1					

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Foreign Document Number ³	Country Code ²	Kind Code ⁴	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁵
/YB/	1	9423973	WO		1994-10-27	Gioutsos et al.		<input type="checkbox"/>

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**
(Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)

Application Number	11836274
Filing Date	2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed
Art Unit	3664
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

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Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
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U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	5539638		1996-07-23	Keeler et al.	
/YB/	2	6212455		2001-04-03	Weaver	

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/YB/	1	SAE Paper No. 950759, ANTON T. VAN ZANTEEN, et al., "VDC, The Vehicle Dynamics Control System of Bosch", International Congress and Exposition, Detroit, MI, February 27 - March 2, 1995, 20 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	2	SAE Paper No. 970606, PETER STEINER, et al., "Roll Over Detection", International Congress and Exposition, Detroit, MI, February 24-27, 1997, 7 pages	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	4390953		1983-06-28	Johnstone	
/YB/	2	5041976		1991-08-20	Marko et al.	
/YB/	3	5123017		1992-06-16	Simpkins et al.	
/YB/	4	5400018		1995-03-21	Scholl et al.	
/YB/	5	5442553		1995-08-15	Parrillo	
/YB/	6	5481906		1996-01-09	Nagayoshi et al.	
/YB/	7	5528698		1996-06-18	Kamei et al.	
/YB/	8	5722686		1998-03-03	Blackburn et al.	

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Filing Date		2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
Art Unit		
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484

/YB/	9	5758300		1998-05-26	Abe	
/YB/	10	5809437		1998-09-15	Breed	
/YB/	11	5922037		1999-07-13	Potts	
/YB/	12	6078537		2000-06-20	Zellner et al.	
/YB/	13	6175787		2001-01-16	Breed	
/YB/	14	6175934		2001-01-16	Hershey et al.	
/YB/	15	6181994		2001-01-30	Colson et al.	
/YB/	16	6567730		2003-05-20	Tanaka	
/YB/	17	6636790		2003-10-21	Lightner et al.	
/YB/	18	6643571		2003-11-04	Gotvall et al.	
/YB/	19	6732031		2004-05-04	Lightner et al.	

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/YB/	20	6745153		2004-06-01	White et al.	
/YB/	21	6735506		2004-05-11	Breed et al.	

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First Named Inventor	David S. Breed		
Art Unit			
Examiner Name			
Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484	

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Please see 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98 to make the appropriate selection(s):

That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

Fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

None

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2007-08-09
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35,336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

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6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
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9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Attorney Docket No. ATI-484

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Re: Application of: David S. Breed
Serial No.: Not yet known
Filed: August 9, 2007
For: Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message
Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number: 22846

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

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Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

August 9, 2007

Sir:

Applicant herewith submits a list of references potentially material to the subject matter of the above-referenced application and/or which have been made of record in one or more of the parent applications: Ser. Nos. 10/331,060, 10/188,673, 09/753,186, 09/137,918, 08/476,077, 10/174,709, 10/638,743, 10/330,938, 10/940,881, 10/613,453, 10/805,903, 11/082,739, 10/701,361, 09/925,062, 09/356,314, 09/767,020, 10/043,557, 11/039,129, 11/131,623, 11/421,500, 11/220,139, 11/120,065, 11/421,554, 11/422,240, 11/464,288, 10/931,288, and 11/470,061. Since this application is being filed after June 30, 2003, the requirement for a copy of the U.S. patent publications has been waived.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better prior art exists. While the term "reference" is used in citing each of the publications called to the

Examiner's attention herein, applicant does not make any admission that each or all of them are "prior art" references within the meaning of the statutory and case law.

Applicant reserves the right to contend, where appropriate, that a reference asserted against any claim of the present application is not prior art under the facts and the law.

Applicant also reserves the right to present appropriate arguments and/or evidence to establish patentability over the references, should one or more of the references be applied against the claims of the present application.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner independently determine those items that the Examiner would consider the most pertinent of all the references cited herein.

It is respectfully requested that these references be considered and made of record.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 35,336

Brian Roffe, Esq.
11 Sunrise Plaza, Suite 303
Valley Stream, New York 11580-6111
Tel.: (516) 256-5636
Fax: (516) 256-5638

Enclosure
PTO-1449 (6 pages)

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		11836274
	Filing Date		2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	David S. Breed	
	Art Unit		2624
	Examiner Name		
	Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484

U.S.PATENTS						
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	5232243		1993-08-03	Blackburn et al.	
/YB/	2	6397677		2002-06-04	Kinsley	
/YB/	3	5573269		1996-11-12	Gentry	
/YB/	4	5767766		1996-12-03	Kwun	
/YB/	5	5684460		1997-11-04	Scanlon	
/YB/	6	6484080		2002-11-19	Breed	
/YB/	7	6850824		2005-02-01	Breed	

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/YB/	1	20060212194		2006-09-21	Breed	
/YB/	2	20070005202		2007-01-04	Breed	
/YB/	3	20080046149		2008-02-21	Breed	
/YB/	4	20080161989		2008-07-03	Breed	
/YB/	5	20080147271		2008-06-19	Breed	
/YB/	6	20080040005		2008-02-14	Breed	

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/YB/	1	Defendant's Invalidity Contentions of claims 1, 2, 4, 6-11, 15, 19, 20, 22, 24-27, 31, 33, 35, 36, 38-41, 44, 48, 52-55 and 59 of US 6484080 from Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc., et al. Civil Action No. 06-187-GMS, United States District Court, District of Delaware.	<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	2	Defendant's Invalidity Contentions of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 12 of US 6850824 from Automotive Technologies International, Inc. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc., et al. Civil Action No. 06-187-GMS, United States District Court, District of Delaware.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU
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/YB/	1	20100057290	A1	2010-03-04	BRILLHART ET AL.		
/YB/	2	20100063677	A1	2010-03-11	FUHRMAN ET AL.		
/YB/	3	20070168089	A1	2007-07-19	GOLDBECK ET AL.		
/YB/	4	20070108749	A1	2007-05-17	WEIDNER ET AL.		
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/YB/	1	5193513		1993-03-16	Marko et al.		
/YB/	2	5414645		1995-05-09	Hirano		
/YB/	3	5313407		1994-05-17	Tierman et al.		
/YB/	4	5821412		1998-10-13	Bryant et al.		
/YB/	5	5445019		1995-08-29	Glidewell et al.		
/YB/	6	4267569		1981-05-12	Baumann et al.		
/YB/	7	4398258		1983-08-09	Naitoh et al.		
/YB/	8	4437342		1984-03-20	Hosaka et al.		

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Application Number		11836274
Filing Date		2007-08-09
First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED	
Art Unit	3661	
Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU	
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

/YB/	9	4491109		1985-01-01	Kishi et al.	
/YB/	10	5463567		1995-10-31	Boen et al.	
/YB/	11	5745027		1998-04-28	Malville	
/YB/	12	4532594		1985-07-30	Hosaka et al.	
/YB/	13	4547734		1985-10-15	Spaude	
/YB/	14	4677308		1987-06-30	Wroblewski et al.	
/YB/	15	4698764		1987-10-06	Inagaki et al.	
/YB/	16	4779490		1988-10-25	Milunas et al.	
/YB/	17	4817418		1989-04-04	Asami et al.	
/YB/	18	4820966		1989-04-11	Fridman	
/YB/	19	4825362		1989-04-25	Minami et al.	

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/YB/	20	4962744		1990-10-16	Uranishi et al.	
/YB/	21	4989146		1991-01-29	Imajo	
/YB/	22	5381658		1995-01-17	Meguro	
/YB/	23	5372411		1994-12-13	Gerstenmaier et al.	
/YB/	24	5121112		1992-06-09	Nakadozono	
/YB/	25	5477827		1995-12-26	Weisman, II et al.	
/YB/	26	5081586		1992-01-14	Barthel et al.	
/YB/	27	4926331		1990-05-15	Windle et al.	
/YB/	28	5157610		1992-10-22	Asano et al.	
/YB/	29	5257190		1993-10-26	Crane	
/YB/	30	5513107		1996-04-30	Gormley	

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages,Columns,Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	6028537		2000-02-22	Suman et al.	

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/YB/	1	7133755	B2	2006-11-07	Salman et al.		
/YB/	2	7136729	B2	2006-11-14	Salman et al.		
/YB/	3	6738697	B2	2004-05-18	Breed		

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/YB/	1	20080284575	A1	2008-11-20	Breed		
/YB/	2	20070271014	A1	2007-11-22	Breed		
/YB/	3	20070156311	A1	2007-07-05	Elcock et al.		

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/YB/	1	5408411		1995-04-18	Nakamura et al.	
/YB/	2	4985835		1991-01-15	Sterler et al.	
/YB/	3	5322323		1994-06-21	Ohno et al.	
/YB/	4	5202831		1993-04-13	Blackburn et al.	
/YB/	5	5609358		1997-03-11	Iyoda et al.	
/YB/	6	5513109		1996-04-30	Fujishima	
/YB/	7	5439249		1995-08-08	Steffens et al.	
/YB/	8	5074583		1991-12-24	Fujita et al.	

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/YB/	9	5411289		1995-05-02	Smith et al.	
/YB/	10	5413378		1995-05-09	Steffens et al.	
/YB/	11	5390951		1995-02-21	Iyoda	
/YB/	12	5483447		1996-01-09	Jeenicke et al.	
/YB/	13	5071160		1991-12-10	White et al.	
/YB/	14	5161820		1992-11-10	Vollmer	

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Art Unit	3664	
Examiner Name		
Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484	

/YB/	1	4046843	JP		1992-02-17	Nishitake et al.		<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	2	1229741	JP		1989-09-13	Muramoto		<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	3	56147530	JP		1981-11-16	Ohmori		<input type="checkbox"/>

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/YB/	1	Defendant's Preliminary Invalidity Contentions for U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080 presented in Automotive Technologies, Inc. v. Delphi Corporation Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	2	Exhibit E to Defendant's Preliminary Invalidity Contentions for U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080 presented in Automotive Technologies, Inc. v. Delphi Corporation Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division	<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	3	Abstract of JP 4046843	<input type="checkbox"/>
/YB/	4	Abstract of JP 1229741	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5	Abstract of JP 56147530	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	4022146		1977-05-10	Sadler	
/YB/	2	4243248		1981-01-06	Scholtz et al.	
/YB/	3	4278971		1981-07-14	Yasui et al.	
/YB/	4	4549436		1985-10-29	Barkhoudarian	
/YB/	5	4645233		1987-02-24	Bruse et al.	
/YB/	6	4698571		1987-10-06	Mizuta et al.	
/YB/	7	4851705		1989-07-25	Musser et al.	
/YB/	8	4980573		1990-12-25	White et al.	

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/YB/	9	5118134		1992-06-02	Mattes et al.	
/YB/	10	5670853		1997-09-23	Bauer	
/YB/	11	5748473		1998-05-05	Breed et al.	
/YB/	12	5822707		1998-10-13	Breed et al.	
/YB/	13	5164901		1992-11-17	Blackburn et al.	

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/YB/	1	Exhibit A of Defendant's Preliminary Invalidation Contentions dated December 10, 2008 presented in Automotive Technologies, Inc. v. Delphi Corporation Civil Action No. 08-CV-11048, United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	2	4970496	A	1990-11-13	KIRKPATRICK	
	3	4989146	A	1991-01-29	IMAJO	
	4	5257190	A	1993-10-26	CRANE	
	5	5313407	A	1994-05-17	TIERNAN ET AL.	
	6	5377112	A	1994-12-27	BROWN, JR ET AL.	
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9	5450321	A	1995-09-12	CRANE	
10	5754965	A	1998-05-19	HAGENBUCH	
11	6263268	B1	2001-07-17	NATHANSON	
12	6285931	B1	2001-09-04	HATTORI ET AL.	
13	6546363	B1	2003-04-08	HAGENBUCH	
14	6609051	B2	2003-08-19	FEICHTER ET AL.	
15	6662091	B2	2003-12-09	WILSON ET AL.	
16	6701232	B2	2004-03-02	YAMAKI	
17	6728619	B2	2004-04-27	ADACHI ET AL.	
18	6836710	B2	2004-12-28	YAMAKI	
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Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

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That each item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was first cited in any communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(1).

OR

That no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application, and, to the knowledge of the person signing the certification after making reasonable inquiry, no item of information contained in the information disclosure statement was known to any individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) more than three months prior to the filing of the information disclosure statement. See 37 CFR 1.97(e)(2).

See attached certification statement.

The fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17 (p) has been submitted herewith.

A certification statement is not submitted herewith.

SIGNATURE

A signature of the applicant or representative is required in accordance with CFR 1.33, 10.18. Please see CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/Brian Roffe, Reg. No. 35336/	Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2011-03-09
Name/Print	Brian Roffe	Registration Number	35336

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 1 hour to complete, including gathering, preparing and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

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Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:	11836274			
Filing Date:	09-Aug-2007			
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods			
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed			
Filer:	Brian Roffe			
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484			
Filed as Large Entity				
Utility under 35 USC 111(a) Filing Fees				
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Basic Filing:				
Pages:				
Claims:				
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:				
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:				
Extension-of-Time:				

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Miscellaneous:				
Submission- Information Disclosure Stmt	1806	1	180	180
Total in USD (\$)				180

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	9621458
Application Number:	11836274
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	2935
Title of Invention:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	David S. Breed
Customer Number:	22846
Filer:	Brian Roffe
Filer Authorized By:	
Attorney Docket Number:	ATI-484
Receipt Date:	09-MAR-2011
Filing Date:	09-AUG-2007
Time Stamp:	15:29:09
Application Type:	Utility under 35 USC 111(a)

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	Credit Card
Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$180
RAM confirmation Number	1549
Deposit Account	
Authorized User	

File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
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1		110309_ATI-484_amendment.pdf	64446 eb85e29fe3a7aec5b651ea8f7799d7016c325e6a	yes	12
Multipart Description/PDF files in .zip description					
		Document Description	Start	End	
		Amendment/Req. Reconsideration-After Non-Final Reject	1	1	
		Specification	2	4	
		Claims	5	7	
		Applicant Arguments/Remarks Made in an Amendment	8	12	
Warnings:					
Information:					
2	Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) Filed (SB/08)	101108_ATI-484_IDS_6.pdf	613243 23673d90336a2974b32b2fd5e148802239f46486	no	5
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	Fee Worksheet (PTO-875)	fee-info.pdf	29966 4bf4c579f1698adb6ec5c89cf1a2dc6d027447f	no	2
Warnings:					
Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):			707655		
<p>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</p> <p><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u> If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</p> <p><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u> If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</p> <p><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u> If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</p>					

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Examiner: Yonel Beaulieu	Art Unit: 3661
Re: Application of:	David S. Breed
Serial No.:	11/836,274
Confirmation No.:	2935
Filing Date:	August 9, 2007
Title:	Vehicle Diagnostic or Prognostic Message Transmission Systems and Methods
Customer Number:	22846

AMENDMENT

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

March 9, 2011

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated December 9, 2010, which set a shortened one-month statutory term for response expiring on March 9, 2011, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begin on page 5 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 8 of this paper.

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 3 as follows:

1. a continuation-in-part (CIP) of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/331,060 filed Dec. 27, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,635,043, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/188,673 filed Jul. 3, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,738,697, which is:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 12 as follows:

2. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/638,743 filed Aug. 11, 2003, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,284,769, which is

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 18 as follows:

3. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/940,881 filed Sep. 13, 2004, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,663,502, which is:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 28 as follows:

4. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/082,739 filed Mar. 17, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,421,321, which is:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 21 as follows:

5. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/131,623 filed May 18, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,481,453, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/043,557 filed Jan. 11, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,905,135;

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 23 as follows:

6. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/421,500 filed Jun. 1, 2006, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,672,756, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/120,065 filed May 2, 2005, now abandoned;

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 26 as follows:

7. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/421,554 filed Jun. 1, 2006, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,832,762;

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 27 as follows:

8. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/422,240 filed Jun. 5, 2006, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,630,802, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/120,065 filed May 2, 2005, now abandoned;

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 30 as follows:

9. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/464,288 filed Aug. 14, 2006, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,650,210, which is:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 3 as follows:

10. a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/470,061 filed Sep. 5, 2006, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,527,288, which is a CIP of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/220,139 filed Sep. 6, 2005, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,103,460.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 24 as follows:

A detailed background of the invention is found in the parent applications, e.g., U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/476,077, now U.S. Pat. No. 5,809,437, and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/753,186, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,484,080, incorporated by reference herein.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 50, line 6 as follows:

FIGS. 25-27 illustrate the paths taken by various surface waves on a tire temperature and pressure monitoring device of one or more of the inventions disclosed herein. The pulse ~~from~~ from the interrogator is received by the antenna 634 which excited a wave in the SAW substrate 637 by way of the interdigital transducer (IDT) 633. The pulse travels in two directions and reflects off of reflectors 631, 632, 635 and 636. The reflected pulses return to the IDT 633 and are re-radiated from the antenna 634 back to the interrogator. The pressure in the pressure capsule causes the micro-membrane 638 to deflect causing the membrane to strain in the SAW through the point of application of the force 639.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 69, line 20 as follows:

Additionally, a sensitive layer on a SAW can be made to be sensitive to other chemicals such as water vapor for humidity control or alcohol for drunk-driving control. Similarly, the sensitive layer can be designed to be sensitive to carbon monoxide thereby preventing carbon monoxide poisoning. Many

other chemicals can be sensed for specific applications such as to check for chemical leaks in commercial vehicles, for example. Whenever such a sensor system determines that a dangerous situation is developing, an alarm can be sounded and/or the situation can be automatically communicated to an off-vehicle location through the internet, telematics, a cell phone such as a 911 call, the Internet or ~~through~~ through a subscriber service such as OnStar®.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 79, line 32 as follows:

Another capability which can be performed with the vehicle-resident computer linked to the Internet is to store personal data on an Internet-connected server for the vehicle-resident computer in combination with other computers used by the vehicle owner or operator. Thus, in such a system, there is a central server containing personal data and all of the user's computers, including the vehicle-resident computer, are connected to the server via the Internet. In order for the vehicle-resident computer to access the personal data on the server, a personal identification code would have to be detected while the person is operating or present in the vehicle. This authorization system could be in the form of a keypad which requires the user to enter a password. Alternatively, the user could be provided with a programmable electronic key which cooperates with a wireless identification and authorization system to allow for the transmission of the personal data from the server to the vehicle-resident computer via the Internet. The identifier may also be a cell phone, PDA or other general purpose device. It could also be a personal RFID device that may be integrated into a key fob used for keyless entry into the vehicle.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method for providing status data for vehicle maintenance, comprising:

monitoring for a triggering event on a vehicle having a wireless communications unit, the triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of at least one ~~component or subsystem~~ of a plurality of different components or subsystems of the vehicle; and

initiating a wireless transmission between the communications unit and a remote site separate and apart from the vehicle in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the at least one component or subsystem.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a dealer of the vehicle.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the triggering event is a failure, predicted failure or fault code generation of the at least one component or subsystem.

19. (Currently Amended) A system for providing status data for vehicle maintenance, comprising:

a diagnostic module including at least one sensor for monitoring ~~at least one component or subsystem~~ a plurality of different components or subsystems of the vehicle, said diagnostic module being arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and detect a triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of ~~the at least one component or subsystem~~ of the plurality of different components or subsystems of the vehicle; and

a wireless communications unit arranged to interface with a wireless communications network, said communications unit being coupled to said diagnostic module and initiating a wireless transmission between said communications unit and a remote site separate and apart from the vehicle in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the at least one component or subsystem.

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a dealer of the vehicle.

21. (Original) The system of claim 19, wherein the triggering event is a failure, predicted failure or fault code generation of the at least one component or subsystem.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of monitoring for the triggering event comprises providing at least one sensor that monitors the at least one component or subsystem.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the at least one sensor is part of a diagnostic module on the vehicle, further comprising configuring the diagnostic module to analyze data obtained by the at least one sensor in order to diagnose operability of the at least one component of subsystem and generate the triggering event based on diagnostic criteria.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the at least one sensor is part of a diagnostic module on the vehicle, further comprising configuring the diagnostic module to analyze data obtained by the at least one sensor in order to predict failure of the at least one component of subsystem and generate the triggering event based on prognostic criteria.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, wherein the at least one sensor is part of a diagnostic module on the vehicle, further comprising:

arranging the diagnostic module and the communications unit on the vehicle; and
wirelessly coupling the diagnostic module on the vehicle to the communications unit on the vehicle.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of monitoring for the triggering event comprises providing a plurality of different sensors that monitor the at least one component or subsystem.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a manufacturer of the vehicle.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the remote site is a repair or service facility for the vehicle.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising storing, in a data storage unit, diagnostic and prognostic messages about the at least one component or subsystem from a plurality of vehicles for further analysis.

30. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module is arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and detect the triggering event relating to predictive, prognostic analysis of the at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle.

31. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module is arranged to analyze monitoring data provided by said at least one sensor and detect the triggering event relating to diagnostic analysis of the at least one component or subsystem of the vehicle.

32. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module and said communications unit are arranged on the vehicle, and wherein said diagnostic module is wireless coupled to said communications unit.

33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein said diagnostic module comprises a plurality of different, sensors.

34. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a manufacturer of the vehicle.

35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein the remote site is a repair or service facility for the vehicle.

36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, further comprising a data storage unit that stores the diagnostic and prognostic messages about the at least one component or subsystem from a plurality of vehicles for further analysis.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the present application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 16-36 are presently active in this application, claims 1-15 having been canceled.

Claims 16, 19, 25 and 32 are amended and the changes to the claims do not relate to patentability.

Specification

The specification has been reviewed and amended to include the status of patent applications mentioned therein and to correct minor typographical errors. No new matter is introduced by the changes to the specification. In view of the changes, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's objection to the disclosure has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Rejections of Claims-35 U.S.C. §102/§103

Claims 16, 18, 19, 21-26, 28-33, 35 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Laguer-Diaz et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,434,458); and claims 17, 20, 27 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Laguer-Diaz et al.

Claims 16-24, 26-31 and 33-36

The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed on the grounds that claims 16-24, 26-31 and 33-36 are entitled to the benefit of a filing date that precedes the effective filing date of Laguer-Diaz et al.

Specifically, the pending claims are entitled to the benefit of the filing date of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 08/476,077 filed June 7, 1995 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §120. Reference to the '077 application is set forth in the specification at page 1, lines 2-8, and there is a common inventor of the '786 application and the instant application, i.e., David S. Breed. The subject matter of claims 16-24, 26-31 and 33-36 is disclosed in the '077 application, namely (with reference to U.S. Pat. No. 5,809,437 that issued from the '077 application) at col. 2, lines 3-9 and 37-39, col. 4, line 44 to col. 5, line 15, col. 5, lines 35-48, col. 5, line 57 to col. 6, line 14, col. 7, lines 25-32, col. 9, line 49 to col. 12, line 29, with the disclosed features being shown in Figs. 1, 3 and 4.

Laguer-Diaz et al. was filed October 26, 2000, and not before the Breed '077 application. As such, Laguer-Diaz et al. cannot constitute prior art under any provision of 35 U.S.C. §102.

Accordingly, in view of the disclosure of the claimed subject matter in the '077 application and the claim to the benefit of the filing date of the '077 application under 35 U.S.C. §120, Laguer-Diaz et al.

is not available as prior art and the Examiner's rejections of claims 16-24, 26-31 and 33-36 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) or 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by or unpatentable over Laguer-Diaz et al. have therefore been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 25 and 32

Claim 25 recites that the at least one sensor is part of a diagnostic module on the vehicle and arranging the diagnostic module and the communications unit on the vehicle, and wirelessly coupling the diagnostic module on the vehicle to the communications unit on the vehicle. Claim 32 recites that the diagnostic module and communications unit are arranged on the vehicle, and the diagnostic module is wirelessly coupled to the communications unit.

Laguer-Diaz et al. does not disclose a wirelessly coupling between two components arranged on a vehicle, i.e., the diagnostic module and the communications units. Rather, the wirelessly connection in Laguer-Diaz et al. is a wireless coupling between a receiver-transmitter 16 on board the locomotive and a remote site 18 separate and apart from the locomotive 18 (see Fig. 1).

Accordingly, Laguer-Diaz et al. does not disclose all of the features of claims 25 and 32 and cannot anticipate the embodiments of the invention set forth in these claims. The Examiner's rejections of claims 25 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Laguer-Diaz et al. has therefore been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Information Disclosure Statement

An Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith listing additional references for consideration by the Examiner.

Included in the list is U.S. Pat. No. 4,970,496 (Kirkpatrick) which describes a system for monitoring a compartment of a refrigerator tractor or trailer. The system comprises a plurality of sensors mounted on the vehicle, which sensors provide data affected by the operation of ancillary equipment, e.g., two temperature sensors (col. 4, lines 1-14, Figs. 1, 2), a door sensor (col. 4, lines 15-18, Figs. 1, 2) and pressure sensors (col. 5, lines 43-46). Data acquired by the sensors is fed to a data acquisition module. The data acquisition module monitors and diagnoses abnormal behavior of the compressor of the trailer by monitoring compressor inlet and outlet pressures and compressor motor operating temperatures (col. 5, lines 19-24). By monitoring the compressor for abnormal behavior, impending compressor failures is said to be predictable while keeping the product temperature within acceptable limits so that remedial action can be taken before refrigerated trailer loads are lost (col. 5, lines 24-38).

Also included in the list is U.S. Pat. No. 5,445,347 (Ng) which describes a status monitor and diagnostic unit (SMDU) 12 (Fig. 3) installed in every car 14, 16 (Fig. 1) of a magnetic levitation train 18

(Fig. 1) or other vehicle, and includes sensors 38, 40, 42, 44, 48, 52 (Fig. 3) for monitoring the operational status or condition of the car. The sensors in the SMDU 12 continuously monitor the operating conditions of engine 14 and cars 16 of the train 18, and store data signals representing the sensed operating conditions in the SMDU memories 36. As illustrated in FIG. 6, the network status interface units (NSIU) 22 installed at road stations 24 (Fig. 1) continuously transmit polling signals in the form of control messages 98. When the train 18 passes proximate to one of the stations 24 or the maintenance facility 26, a control message 98 is received by the transceivers 60 in the SMDUs 12. Upon receipt of the control message 98, each SMDU computer 34 randomly selects a TDMA message time slot and transmits a network entry message 100 to the NSIU. The maintenance control center (MCC) 28 receives and analyzes the data signals 25 from the NSIU 22 to determine the operating condition of the train 18. If the train 18 is operating normally, no action will be taken unless scheduled maintenance is due. However, if the data signals indicate that the performance of one or more components of the train 18 are degrading (i.e. the failure is developing) or operating abnormally, the condition is analyzed and appropriate maintenance action is scheduled. If the condition of the train 18 is such that one or more components are determined to become worn beyond tolerance or may malfunction in the near future, but not imminently or in a dangerous manner, the MCC 28 schedules an appropriate maintenance action for the train 18, and sends messages to the train 18 and maintenance facility indicating the required maintenance action and the time at which it is to be performed. The prognostic processor 84 is programmed to predict expected failures in time to take corrective action to prevent them from becoming operational problems. This is accomplished by continuously comparing baseline data signatures with near real time data from the SMDUs 12 (thus, patterns are analyzed). Robust statistical trending algorithms are preferably implemented to analyze failures in all components in which degradation of performance can be monitored and followed. Vibration signature analysis utilizes background noise cancellation and digital signal processing techniques.

Also included is U.S. Pat. No. 5,313,407 (Tiernan et al.) which describes an active vibration cancellation system that includes a sensor 13, a digital signal processing controller 14 and an actuator 15 (Fig. 1). Sensor 13 senses machine vibration and provides an electrical signal to DSP controller 14. The signals are digitally processed in DSP controller 14 to produce counter-vibration signal which is provided to actuator 15. Counter vibrations are provided by actuator 15 and coupled to media 11 where counter-vibrations 16 are added with machine vibrations 12 resulting in reduced or eliminated vibration pattern 17 in media 11. A machine analyzer 20 is connected to the active vibration cancellation system, i.e., to sensor 13 and/or DSP controller 14 for collecting signals that are analyzed in a manner to identify the operating status of machine 10 based on the produced vibrations. The input signals employed by machine

analyzer 20 (e.g., vibration signals coming from sensor 13, canceling vibration signals going to actuator 15, and/or system values from DSP controller 14) and the manner of performing the analysis depend upon the operating states of machine 10 which are desired to be identified. As shown in Fig. 3, a diagnostic output 72 is connected to performance analyzer 71 for indicating to a vehicle operator or a service person the operating status or faults which are identified.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,539,638 (Keeler et al.) describes usage of neural networks for analysis of data obtained from sensors, including sensors in a vehicle engine. Pattern recognition is disclosed as a virtual network with training capabilities (Col. 4, lines 32-54). Processed values from the sensors indicating operation of the engine are compared to predicted values (Col. 14, lines 32-49) and depending on the result various actions can be taken, for example, opening or closing of intake valves in the injection system to change air-fuel ratio (Col. 13, lines 36-48 and Col. 16, lines 22-37). An alarm is generated when the predictive emission value exceeds the internal threshold value (col. 2, lines 58-60) or when any of the sensors fails (col. 4, lines 28-32) and may need either a repair or calibration (col. 9, lines 43-47). The alarm can be displayed to the occupant of the vehicle by means of a light on the dashboard or it can be an audible signal. The alarm can also be sent to a maintenance station requiring a check (Col. 19, lines 4-16).

U.S. Pat. No. 6,546,363 (Hagenbuch) describes an apparatus for monitoring "health" of the vehicle, i.e., operating parameters of its subsystems. The preferred embodiments reference a truck as an example (Figs. 1A-1C). The list of parameters measured by sensors is presented at Col. 6, lines 31-61. Parameter values are stored in memory and analyzed by the processor (Col. 7, lines 26-62). When a parameter exceeds its pre-programmed value (indicating a failure or possible impending failure of a component), the processor presents this information to the operator of the vehicle (Col. 9, line 45 to Col. 10, line 7). The information is displayed to the operator via a display (Col. 14, lines 1-14).

U.S. Pat. No. 4,843,557 (Ina et al.) describes a plurality of control systems and a diagnostic system mounted on a vehicle and comprising a plurality of sensors.

U.S. Pat. No. 4,989,146 (Imajo) describes a vehicular diagnosing system with a pre-diagnosing device on board the vehicle. The main diagnosis is performed by a computer located in the head office of the service firm. When the driver foresees a trouble of the vehicle during driving by a warning display, the driver is required to take some actions in order to establish communication channel with the remote diagnostic system.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,377,112 (Brown, Jr. et al.) describes a method for diagnosing an engine including sensing a parameter of the engine and determining a modeled value of a first operating characteristic based on the sensed parameter, sensing the actual value of the first operating characteristic, comparing

the actual characteristic value and the modeled characteristic value and producing a difference signal.
The engine is diagnosed as a function of the difference signals.

An early and favorable action on the merits upon entry and consideration of this amendment is earnestly solicited.

FOR THE APPLICANT
Respectfully submitted,

/Brian Roffe/

Brian Roffe
Reg. No. 35,336

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Skokie, Illinois 60076-2914
Tel.: (516) 448-6435
Fax: (837) 637-0335

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PATENT APPLICATION FEE DETERMINATION RECORD Substitute for Form PTO-875	Application or Docket Number 11/836,274	Filing Date 08/09/2007	<input type="checkbox"/> To be Mailed
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APPLICATION AS FILED – PART I			OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY					
(Column 1)		(Column 2)	SMALL ENTITY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		OR	SMALL ENTITY		
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)	OR	RATE (\$)	FEE (\$)	
<input type="checkbox"/> BASIC FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(a), (b), or (c))</small>	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> SEARCH FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(k), (j), or (m))</small>	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXAMINATION FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(c), (p), or (q))</small>	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A	
TOTAL CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(i))</small>	minus 20 =	*	X \$ =				X \$ =	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	minus 3 =	*	X \$ =				X \$ =	
<input type="checkbox"/> APPLICATION SIZE FEE <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>	If the specification and drawings exceed 100 sheets of paper, the application size fee due is \$250 (\$125 for small entity) for each additional 50 sheets or fraction thereof. See 35 U.S.C. 41(a)(1)(G) and 37 CFR 1.16(s).							
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>								
* If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2.			TOTAL			TOTAL		

APPLICATION AS AMENDED – PART II					OTHER THAN SMALL ENTITY						
(Column 1)		(Column 2)	(Column 3)	SMALL ENTITY		OR	SMALL ENTITY				
AMENDMENT	03/09/2011	CLAIMS REMAINING AFTER AMENDMENT	HIGHEST NUMBER PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR	PRESENT EXTRA	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	OR	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)		
	Total <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>	* 21	Minus	** 21	= 0	X \$26 =		0		X \$ =	
	Independent <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	* 2	Minus	***4	= 0	X \$110 =		0		X \$ =	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>										
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>										
					TOTAL ADD'L FEE	0		TOTAL ADD'L FEE			

(Column 1)		(Column 2)	(Column 3)	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)	OR	RATE (\$)	ADDITIONAL FEE (\$)		
AMENDMENT	Total <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>	*	Minus	**	=			X \$ =		
	Independent <small>(37 CFR 1.16(h))</small>	*	Minus	***	=			X \$ =		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Application Size Fee <small>(37 CFR 1.16(s))</small>									
	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRST PRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM <small>(37 CFR 1.16(j))</small>									
						TOTAL ADD'L FEE		TOTAL ADD'L FEE		

* If the entry in column 1 is less than the entry in column 2, write "0" in column 3.
 ** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 20, enter "20".
 *** If the "Highest Number Previously Paid For" IN THIS SPACE is less than 3, enter "3".
 The "Highest Number Previously Paid For" (Total or Independent) is the highest number found in the appropriate box in column 1.

Legal Instrument Examiner:
/NICOLE LOVE-HENSLEY/

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.16. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**
 If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

22846 7590 05/25/2011
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223
Skokie, IL 60076-2914

EXAMINER

BEAULIEU, YONEL

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3661

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2011

Table with 5 columns: APPLICATION NO., FILING DATE, FIRST NAMED INVENTOR, ATTORNEY DOCKET NO., CONFIRMATION NO.
11/836,274 08/09/2007 David S. Breed ATI-484 2935

TITLE OF INVENTION: VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC OR PROGNOSTIC MESSAGE TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

Table with 7 columns: APPLN. TYPE, SMALL ENTITY, ISSUE FEE DUE, PUBLICATION FEE DUE, PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE, TOTAL FEE(S) DUE, DATE DUE
nonprovisional YES \$755 \$300 \$0 \$1055 08/25/2011

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

- A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.
B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

- A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or
B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

**Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: Mail Mail Stop ISSUE FEE
 Commissioner for Patents
 P.O. Box 1450
 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
 or Fax (571)-273-2885**

INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

22846 7590 05/25/2011
BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
 8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223
 Skokie, IL 60076-2914

Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

_____ (Depositor's name)
_____ (Signature)
_____ (Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
11/836,274	08/09/2007	David S. Breed	ATI-484	2935

TITLE OF INVENTION: VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC OR PROGNOSTIC MESSAGE TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	YES	\$755	\$300	\$0	\$1055	08/25/2011

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
BEAULIEU, YONEL	3661	701-030000

<p>1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a Customer Number is required.</p>	<p>2. For printing on the patent front page, list</p> <p>(1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, _____ 1</p> <p>(2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. _____ 2</p> <p>_____ 3</p>
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3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE _____ (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY) _____

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): Individual Corporation or other private group entity Government

<p>4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Issue Fee</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Advance Order - # of Copies _____</p>	<p>4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A check is enclosed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).</p>
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5. **Change in Entity Status** (from status indicated above)

a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____

Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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Table with columns: APPLICATION NO., FILING DATE, FIRST NAMED INVENTOR, ATTORNEY DOCKET NO., CONFIRMATION NO., EXAMINER, ART UNIT, PAPER NUMBER. Includes details for application 11/836,274 and inventor David S. Breed.

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2011

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)
(application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 754 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 754 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (http://pair.uspto.gov).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

1. The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether disclosure of these records is required by the Freedom of Information Act.
2. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
3. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
4. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
5. A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
6. A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
7. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
8. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspection or an issued patent.
9. A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	11/836,274	BREED, DAVID S.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	YONEL BEAULIEU	3661	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendments/arguments filed 3/9/11.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 16-36.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ . 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |
|--|---|

	/Yonel Beaulieu/ Yonel Beaulieu
--	------------------------------------

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 16 – 36 are allowed. As argued, the prior art of record fail to teach a method for providing status data for vehicle maintenance monitoring for a triggering event on a vehicle having a wireless communications unit, the triggering event relating to a diagnostic or prognostic analysis of at least one of a plurality of different components or subsystems of the vehicle and initiating a wireless transmission between the communications unit and a remote site separate and apart from the vehicle in response to the triggering event, the transmission including a diagnostic or prognostic message about the at least one component or system.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to YONEL BEAULIEU whose telephone number is (571)272-6955. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday between 0900 and 1600.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas BLACK can be reached on (571) 272-6956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3661

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Yonel Beaulieu/
Yonel Beaulieu
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3661

Index of Claims



Application/Control No.

11/836,274

Examiner

YONEL BEAULIEU

Applicant(s)/Patent under Reexamination

BREED, DAVID S.

Art Unit

3661

√	Rejected
=	Allowed

—	(Through numeral) Cancelled
÷	Restricted


N	Non-Elected
I	Interference

A	Appeal
O	Objected

Claim		Date									
Final	Original	5/19/11									
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Issue Classification 	Application/Control No.	Applicant(s)/Patent under Reexamination	
	11/836,274	BREED, DAVID S.	
Examiner	YONEL BEAULIEU	Art Unit	3661

ISSUE CLASSIFICATION											
ORIGINAL					CROSS REFERENCE(S)						
CLASS	SUBCLASS				CLASS	SUBCLASS (ONE SUBCLASS PER BLOCK)					
701	30				701	29	33				
INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION											
G	0	1	M	17/00							
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XXXXXXXXXXXXX (Assistant Examiner) (Date)					/Yonel Beaulieu/ Yonel Beaulieu 5/19/11					Total Claims Allowed: 21	
(Legal Instruments Examiner) (Date)					(Primary Examiner) (Date)					O.G. Print Claim(s) 1	O.G. Print Fig. 4

<input type="checkbox"/> Claims renumbered in the same order as presented by applicant		<input type="checkbox"/> CPA		<input type="checkbox"/> T.D.		<input type="checkbox"/> R.1.47	
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Refine Search

Search Results

Terms	Documents
L14 and L13	4

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Database:

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Search Type: Prior Art Interference

Search:

L15

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<u>Set Name</u> Side by Side	<u>Query</u>	<u>Hit Count</u>	<u>Set Name</u> Result Set	<u>Set Name</u> Grid
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Interference Searches

DB=PGPB,USPT,UPAD; PLUR=YES; OP=OR

L15	L14 and I13	4	L15	L15
L14	wire\$	1703547	L14	L14
L13	L12 and I9	4	L13	L13
L12	data adj transfer\$	266067	L12	L12

<u>L11</u>	L10 and 19	0	<u>L11</u>	<u>L11</u>
<u>L10</u>	wireless adj transfer\$	2252	<u>L10</u>	<u>L10</u>
<u>L9</u>	L8 and 17	19	<u>L9</u>	<u>L9</u>
<u>L8</u>	vehicle	1050199	<u>L8</u>	<u>L8</u>
<u>L7</u>	L6 and 15	19	<u>L7</u>	<u>L7</u>
<u>L6</u>	12 or 14	222	<u>L6</u>	<u>L6</u>
<u>L5</u>	diagnos\$ and prognos\$	44920	<u>L5</u>	<u>L5</u>

DB=USPT; PLUR=YES; OP=OR

<u>L4</u>	(4798055 4267569 4882564 4531189 6085253 4667176 4497057 5754965 5233513 4404639 4525783 4790143 4593357 4561057 4463348 4517468 4583176 4546647 4521885 4490798 4551801 4443784 4385289 4694295)! [PN]	24	<u>L4</u>	<u>L4</u>
<u>L3</u>	("6434458" "4970496" "4843557" "4989146")[PN]	4	<u>L3</u>	<u>L3</u>
<u>L2</u>	("6434458" "4970496" "4843557" "4989146")[URPN]	198	<u>L2</u>	<u>L2</u>

DB=PGPB,USPT,UPAD; PLUR=YES; OP=OR

<u>L1</u>	(6434458 4970496 4843557 4989146).pn.	4	<u>L1</u>	<u>L1</u>
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END OF SEARCH HISTORY

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Not for submission under 37 CFR 1.99)	Application Number		11836274
	Filing Date		2007-08-09
	First Named Inventor	DAVID S. BREED	
	Art Unit		3661
	Examiner Name	YONEL BEAULIEU	
	Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484

U.S. PATENTS						Remove
Examiner Initial*	Cite No	Patent Number	Kind Code ¹	Issue Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant of cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
/YB/	1	4843557	A	1989-06-27	INA ET AL.	
/YB/	2	4970496	A	1990-11-13	KIRKPATRICK	
/YB/	3	4989146	A	1991-01-29	IMAJO	
/YB/	4	5257190	A	1993-10-26	CRANE	
/YB/	5	5313407	A	1994-05-17	TIERNAN ET AL.	
/YB/	6	5377112	A	1994-12-27	BROWN, JR ET AL.	
/YB/	7	5424720	A	1995-06-12	KIRKPATRICK	
/YB/	8	5445347	A	1994-08-29	NG	

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Attorney Docket Number		ATI-484

/YB/	9	5450321	A	1995-09-12	CRANE	
/YB/	10	5754965	A	1998-05-19	HAGENBUCH	
/YB/	11	6263268	B1	2001-07-17	NATHANSON	
/YB/	12	6285931	B1	2001-09-04	HATTORI ET AL.	
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/YB/	15	6662091	B2	2003-12-09	WILSON ET AL.	
/YB/	16	6701232	B2	2004-03-02	YAMAKI	
/YB/	17	6728619	B2	2004-04-27	ADACHI ET AL.	
/YB/	18	6836710	B2	2004-12-28	YAMAKI	
/YB/	19	7079982	B2	2006-07-18	OGURA ET AL.	

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Attorney Docket Number	ATI-484

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Examiner Initials*	Cite No	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc), date, pages(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.	T ⁵
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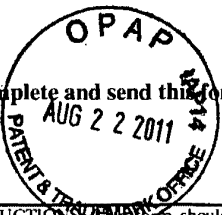
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EXAMINER SIGNATURE

Examiner Signature	/Yonel Beaulieu/ (05/19/2011)	Date Considered	
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Form with fields: Brian Roffe (Depositor's name), [Signature] (Signature), August 18, 2011 (Date)

Table with 5 columns: APPLICATION NO., FILING DATE, FIRST NAMED INVENTOR, ATTORNEY DOCKET NO., CONFIRMATION NO. Values: 11/836,274, 08/09/2007, David S. Breed, ATI-484, 2935

TITLE OF INVENTION: VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC OR PROGNOSTIC MESSAGE TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

08/23/2011 EHA1U1 00000014 11836274

Table with 7 columns: APPLN. TYPE, SMALL ENTITY, ISSUE FEE DUE, PUBLICATION FEE DUE, PREV. PAID, TOTAL FEE(S) DUE, DATE DUE. Values: nonprovisional, YES, \$755, \$300, 00000000, \$1055, 08/23/2011

Table with 3 columns: EXAMINER, ART UNIT, CLASS-SUBCLASS. Values: BEAULIEU, YONEL, 3661, 701-030000

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2. For printing on the patent front page, list (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, (2) the name of a single firm... Brian Roffe

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type) PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE: Automotive Technologies International, Inc. (B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY): Denville, New Jersey

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4a. The following fee(s) are submitted: [X] Issue Fee [X] Publication Fee... 4b. Payment of Fee(s): [] A check is enclosed. [X] Payment by credit card... [X] The Director is hereby authorized to charge...

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11/836,274	10/11/2011	8036788	ATI-484	2935
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22846 7590 09/21/2011

BRIAN ROFFE, ESQ
8170 McCormick Boulevard, Suite 223
Skokie, IL 60076-2914

ISSUE NOTIFICATION

The projected patent number and issue date are specified above.

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment is 1097 day(s). Any patent to issue from the above-identified application will include an indication of the adjustment on the front page.

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Application Assistance Unit (AAU) of the Office of Data Management (ODM) at (571)-272-4200.

APPLICANT(s) (Please see PAIR WEB site <http://pair.uspto.gov> for additional applicants):

David S. Breed, Miami Beach, FL;